



Auchinleck Academy Christmas Newsline

Head Teachers Message

What an incredibly busy year this has been! A whole host of new initiatives and events have been taken forward both within and outwith the curriculum.

There is no doubt however about the main school event of the year; in November, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited our school.

During their visit, they talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the school's leadership team and staff. They gathered evidence to enable them to evaluate the quality of leadership, learning and teaching and our pupils' achievements and wellbeing. There was particular nervousness about the inspection this time around as we were one of the first schools to be inspected using the new 'How Good is Our School 4?' document which aims to increase the challenge to schools and 'raise the bar' in school improvement.

Although we have not yet received our official report, the inspection team were very impressed with our school and commented on a number of particular strengths in our work. These included:

- The strong leadership across the school.
- High expectations which have raised the aspirations of our young people.
- The school's nurturing and caring ethos
- The high level of commitment of staff to continually improve the experiences and outcomes for all young people.
- The impact of steps taken to seek, listen and respond to the views of young people.
- Improvements in attainment in the senior school, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- The school's success in supporting almost all young people to move to a positive destination on leaving school
- The increasing numbers entering higher education.

The team also agreed areas for continued improvement with myself, the Senior Leadership Team and East Ayrshire Council. These included:

- Continue to monitor attainment over time
- Continue to improve the consistency of learning and teaching across the school.
- Continue to involve staff, parents, partners and young people in focussing and streamlining the school's priorities for improvement.

I am certainly very proud of our pupils and staff who thoroughly deserve this very positive feedback. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all pupils and staff for their work during the year and, most particularly, during the inspection. I also wish to thank all parents, carers and partners for all their support and the very positive comments provided to the inspectors.

We expect the more detailed report, including a summary of pupil, parents and staff comments early in January. Once we receive it, copies will be made available to all in our community.

We are all looking forward to the holiday period between now and 9 January which provides staff and pupils with a chance to relax and enjoy Christmas and New Year. Our senior pupils will also have some real quality study time in preparation for their prelims. Good luck to all. You know exactly what I expect from you!

Finally, I would like to wish all pupils, parents, carers and friends of Auchinleck Academy a very Happy Christmas, a relaxing and enjoyable break and a very successful New Year.

P. Gilchrist.

Head Teacher





Auchinleck Academy Rugby Review

Wow what a run up to Christmas we have had at Auchinleck Academy Rugby with all fixtures arranged managing to be played. All of our boys' sides were undefeated in the East Ayrshire Conference.

Our U13 players are developing into a skilful rugby team who show great effort and commitment in all games with a never give up attitude.

Our U14 team dominated the Conference winning every game comfortably to get to the final where they unfortunately lost in the last minutes of the game to Belmont Academy. This side were Ayrshire finalists last year and have played with a clear focus of trying to go one better this year so this result must be used as a key learning opportunity for everyone to ensure that the squad come back next year even better.

The U16 team had a mixed six months losing in the second round of the Scottish Cup to Carrick Academy and then going out in the quarter final of the Shield, although this is a great achievement to reach the quarter finals of a national competition. It was a different story in the Conference league with superb performances seeing the team win the final against Belmont Academy at Rugby Park, Kilmarnock.



The U15 girls have had a brilliant few months. From taking part in the National qualifying tournament at Whitecraigs RFC in horrendously wet weather, to a brilliant performance against a combined Grange/Loudoun Academy side to beating Duncanrig Secondary in the Scottish Cup, the girls have displayed great commitment and dedication to their sport. A hard loss to a very physical and aggressive Shawlands Academy saw the girls in the Shield completion where they went all the way to the final losing to a very experienced combined Royal High/Liberton High School team. With Auchinleck fielding eight S1 girls the future is certainly very bright for girl's rugby at the Academy.

Overall it was a very successful conference campaign for all age groups with each team getting to the conference semi-finals undefeated. School of Rugby numbers at S1 continue to increase and the S2 playing squad is also increasing so Mr Raby is a very happy Head of Rugby.

Fixtures are now being sought for the New Year, any pupil that is thinking of playing rugby should speak with Mr Raby. From everyone involved with Auchinleck Academy Rugby have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year. Remember "Happiness is Egg Shaped!"



Rights Respecting School



Auchinleck Academy was delighted to be awarded the Recognition of Commitment Award in September.

This is the first step on the Rights Respecting School journey.

Friday 7th October saw Auchinleck Academy undertake their second charity day in partnership with Mary's Meals, as we aimed to get closer to our target of sponsoring a school in Liberia, Africa.

After a successful 'wear blue' day at the end of last term, Friday's events involved a sponsored walk, sponsored cycle and sponsored silence. Pupils were given a choice as to what event they wanted to participate in and the uptake was great! The walk was to Dumfries House and both staff and pupils thoroughly enjoyed the dry October weather.



The cycle took place in the PE department where pupils cycled in groups. Their hard work and effort has to be highlighted, with some pupils cycling non-stop for over 20 minutes. The sponsored silence took place in the library where the pupils involved managed to stay silent for almost two hours - no mean feat for some! There was also a highly successful staff coffee morning and bake sale.



Together we managed to smash our target and raise a massive £3977.57! This will allow us to feed all of the pupils in a primary school in Liberia for a full year. What an amazing achievement and excellent team effort! Huge thanks to all of the pupils who got involved, and to the parents, carers, friends and relatives who sponsored pupils or provided donations - your efforts will make a huge difference to young people's lives! Thanks also to the Rights Respecting School group and to all of the pupils and staff who helped to organise these events





S2 Mediators Group

The mediator group have been meeting regularly all term and completed a number of problem solving and team building challenges. They conquered the Blindfold Basketball Shot, the Celtic Knot and many others. It has also been a term of discovery, finding out about our team and trying to understand each other's values and what it is important to them.

As we near Christmas the team are coming to their final selection with a view to moving onto the peer mediator training event in January and hopefully to become fully fledged mediators working closely with our SLT to resolve disputes and arguments amongst their peers. Exciting times ahead for those who make the grade.

Biology/Geography Fieldtrip

Geography and Biology pupils from Auchinleck Academy took part in a residential fieldtrip at the Field Studies Council, Millport last weekend. Pupils all gained excellent knowledge and skills that will be a great benefit to their National studies. The National 4/5 pupils took part in studies including beach profiles, flood defences and identification skills and gathered data to allow them to complete the assignment element of the course. Both staff and pupils praised the centre for the quality of accommodation and the excellent teaching. We would also like to thank the Co-op in Mauchline who provided the group with some snacks to keep energy levels up!



Severe Weather Routine

During spells of hard frost or snow, it is important that pupils are aware of the dangers from slipping on un-treated paths. The Janitors have priorities to consider when gritting areas around the School. Therefore when pupils are coming into school they should keep to the paths cleared.

From the bus drop off point a path will be cleared to the dining hall.

- ✓ When entering from Auchinleck a path will be clear from the bus stop entrance, around the assembly hall and down to the dining hall.
- ✓ Pupils being dropped off by car should also use the bus drop off point as highlighted.

