

Ski Trip 2019

This February a group of senior pupils went to Serre Chavelier in the Southern French alps on a ski trip. It was a joint trip between Sir E Scott the Nicholson Institute. It was good being with the Nicholson because it meant there was more people to socialise with in the evenings. On the first day of skiing everyone from Harris were beginners and had never been skiing before. The first day was very tiring and sore but was still great fun. On the second day we started doing some of the nursery slopes and got used to slowing down. On the third day we headed up onto the hill in the gondola to do our first blue graded run, there was a lot of crashes but by the end of the day we were getting good at turning. On the fourth day we did our first red graded run which was really fun now that we were used to skiing. On the fifth day we were getting fast and were really enjoying it. On the sixth day we did some off-piste skiing in the morning, in the afternoon we went up to the jump park and then did our first ever black graded run. It was an amazing week and everyone had loads of fun. Anish Toor, S4



Notes From the Head Teacher

Welcome to our March Newsletter, which highlights aspects of work from this term in the secondary department.

Former Pupil

Pupils and staff wish Kelly MacKay, a former pupil at SES, all our best wishes as she stands for election in the Scottish Youth Parliament. Kelly recently came in to the school to speak to our S1-6 pupils. Voting for the Scottish Youth Parliament Elections closes on Friday 29th March

Staffing

On behalf of the children, staff and parents I wish Mrs Mary Ann McCombe, Sgoil Àraich Play leader all the very best as she leaves us on Friday 29th March to take up a new venture. We will undoubtedly miss Mary Ann's many years of experience but hope to see her back with us from time to time when we are looking for relief cover.

Congratulations to Mrs Donna Joan MacLeod who has been interviewed and accepted the position of Play leader, which she will take up on Monday 1st April. Consequently, the vacancy keyworker position has been advertised with a closing date of Monday 25th March, with the intention to interview as soon as possible after that within a 2-week window.

Congratulations also to Hannah Macleod, S6 who recently completed her SVQ2 Social Services Children & Young People course, supported by Maggie Drummond, Peripatetic Assessor with CNES Accredited training section. Hannah applied for the outstanding 8 hours' lunchtime cover required between Monday and Thursday on a weekly basis in the Sgoil Àraich and was subsequently interviewed for the post. Hannah will take up this position after the Easter break, which will be a fixed term contract that will be reviewed at the end of June 2019. Hannah will also continue to develop her Gaelic fluency skills through lessons currently on offer from E-sgoil for all CNES apprentices.

Congratulations to Mrs Liz Rodgers who took up her position as newly appointed Faculty PT on Monday 18th March and to Mrs Kate Langley who was appointed to the vacant SFLA post (8 hours) fixed term contract to end of June 2018. Mrs Langley will take up post on Thursday 21st March. Thank you to Mrs Shona Bertin, Relief SFLA who has covered this position since the start of this term.

We were pleased to accommodate two PGDE students studying with UHI (Stornoway Campus) for this term's school placement. Cat Campbell was placed in the Business Studies Department and Ella MacAulay in the English Department. We wish them both continued success as they complete the PGDE course and for their future career in the teaching profession.

Notes From the Head Teacher – Continued

Learning & teaching

Reflecting on this term, a lot of hard work continues in preparing pupils for their SQA exams in May. The prelims at the end of January provided a basis for pupils and staff as to where pupils were in relation to their set targets and what was required to improve performance in the interim period. Post prelim interviews allowed pupils themselves to self-reflect and discuss with Mr Johnson, PT Pupil Support their next steps. Encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own learning continues to be a focus for improvement at all stages of the secondary department.

Reporting to parents has been a major task in the secondary department this term, with progress reports issued to S2, S3, S4, S5 & S6 parents. I hope these reports gave you a clear overview of your child's strengths and what they have to do next to further improve their performance and attainment. Attendance at Parents' Evenings on reporting pupils' progress has, as always, been very good. Pupil choices across S2 –S5 is now more or less completed and the next step is to create a working timetable which we hope to have in place by the beginning of June 2019.

You will find some interesting articles in this term's newsletter on a range of activities pupils have engaged in, some within the school setting and others off campus. I would like to thank the staff who have taken the opportunity and the time to organise visits to An Lanntair, Lewis Castle College, further afield to Glasgow for the Weir Wise Engineering programme for S2 girls and S1 FilmG and to France for the joint ski trip with The Nicolson Institute. The Technical & Art Departments have organized a variety of visitors to come in to the school to further enhance pupils' learning experiences in their particular subjects.

Curricular transitions for P7 pupils at SES and LMS have been well planned and delivered this term by Mrs Macleod, DHT primary; Miss Meaden P5-7 GM teacher. Mr McCririck, Science Department and Miss MacLennan, History Department. The 3-18 school campus provides such enriched opportunities for curricular transitions between primary and secondary departments and I am pleased to see an increase in this type of activity, with the HE and Technical Departments keen to be involved next term.

Undoubtedly, these opportunities do enhance our young people's learning and teaching experiences and more importantly can provide a great boost in pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

Celebrating our Successes

It is very pleasing to see our pupils continue to do well at local and national competitions and events, and I am grateful to teaching staff for continuing to support and provide pupils with these opportunities. We are particularly proud of our pupils' recent achievements – Mairianna Binns and Anna Macleod's successful application to the Weir Wise Engineering Programme for S2 girls, our S1 success in FilmG 2019; Emma Peterson S2 in recent Highland Dancing Competitions; Rachael Johnstone's continued success as a young footballer now signed up by Celtic FC in the U19 team; Jessica Macleod, who is also doing well in football

Notes From the Head Teacher – Continued

circles, playing for the Nicolson Institute U18 team.

The inaugural Outer Hebrides First Lego League competition took place at SES School on Wednesday 30th January. Congratulations to the SES team who came away on the day with the Research project award. The team who were ably supported by Mr Willie Macleod, Technical Department consisted of the following pupils:

William Atkinson S1, Eilidh Macdonald S1 Dylan Brown S1. Jordan Mackay S4, Anish Toor S4, Seamus Morrison S6, Eddie Owens S6 and Sean Martin S6

Our 1st-year team members (William Atkinson, Eilidh Macdonald & Dylan Brown) deserve special acknowledgement for their tireless work in doing the majority of the research and preparation of the presentation.

Congratulations to all pupils and staff, including tutors, involved in the excellent Spring Concert that took place on Tuesday 5th March. The evening was a fantastic showcase of the musical skills and talents of some of our children and young people, who are ably taught and tutored at SES School. It was also good opportunity to share with parents and the community our recent FilmG 2019 success. It was pleasing to have had a good turnout on the night with many positive comments coming from the audience and via email the following day. A special thank you to Christine Hurley, Music Department for taking the time to lead on the planning and organization of this very successful event. The sum of £ 421.80 was raised for school funds.

Parent Council Fundraising Event

I would like to thank the Parent Council for planning and organising a very successful Family Quiz & Pizza Night on Friday 22nd March. It was very pleasing to see a good turnout of parents, grandparents, children, young people and a few community members at this event. On behalf of the school I would like to thank Alison MacDonald, Chairperson, along with Rhoda Campbell, co-Chair and several parent council members for ensuring the evening ran very smoothly. I would also like to thank Bill Scott, Harris Hotel for the delicious pizzas, his helpers Diane Lightbody and Andrew Craig; Murdo MacKinnon (parent) for taking on the role of Quizmaster; Kate Macleod, Sean Martin and Hannah Macleod, our S6 helpers; FES janitors for setting up; Dale Shearer, Technician for setting up the sound system; and Mary Catherine Martin, Office Clerk and Parent Council Secretary for efficiently carrying out all administrative tasks. As a school, we are also very grateful to local businesses who continue to be very generous in offering raffle prizes and on this occasion our thanks go to Delights (Stornoway), Maybury Gardens, Harris Distillery, Tesco, Joanne MacKinnon, Grosebay, Becca Globe Mission House Studio, and to parents who donated prizes and baking. The sum of £ 604.34 was raised for school funds.

Notes From the Head Teacher – Continued

In conclusion

I would like to congratulate a few of our S5 & S6 pupils who have secured unconditional offers from recent UCAS/UHI applications and interviews, whilst others have conditional offers to work towards.

The summer term will see our senior pupils (S4-6) sitting their SQA exams and it is important that they set aside some time for study during the forthcoming holiday. We wish them well at this crucial stage of their education.

I wish you all a good Spring break. School resumes for staff and for pupils on Monday 15th April.

Aileen M MacSween

Lucy Robertson Workshop

As part of a design unit on Smart Textiles S2 pupils in Art and Design enjoyed a morning workshop with textile designer Lucy Robertson. Following an interesting talk from Lucy, each pupil was given a bag containing all the parts required to make a light up bird brooch. The thread used conducted energy from a tiny battery to light the birds' eyes and the whole class concentrated on the task and reflected on how technologies can be used in fabrics to create useful products.

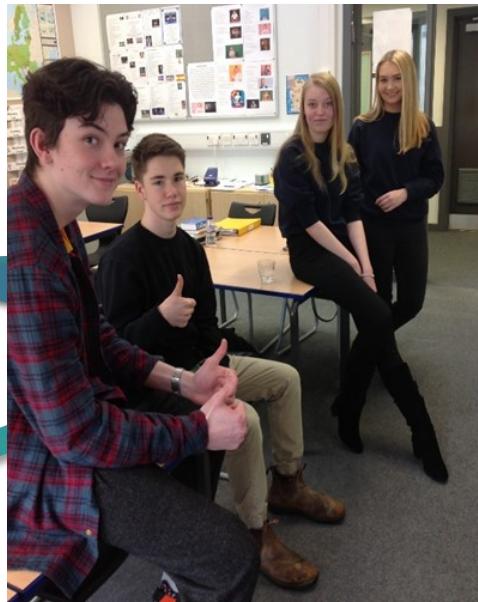
Lucy had brought examples of her work in this area which included a textile map of the Western Isles where, when an area of the map was touched, Gaelic words specific to that district could be heard from a small speaker behind the map. This type of work has seen Lucy having very positive collaborations with older people in our community and it was really interesting to see.

Thank you to Lanntair and Lucy for sharing your time and expertise with us.



Francophone Links

On Tuesday 12 March our Higher French class got the opportunity to converse in with two Canadian boys, Niall Hetherington and Tom Bondy who are both fluent French speakers. We were able to use our knowledge of French to converse with them about a number of topics as well as getting to know a bit about their life in Canada. It was an interesting experience to hear how different Canadian French is to the French we learn in school.



First Lego League

The inaugural Outer Hebrides First Lego League competition was hosted by Sir E Scott School on the 30th January 2019. The SES team (named STEMNOS) comprised of William Atkinson, Eilidh Macdonald, Dylan Brown (all S1), Jordan Mackay, Anish Toor (both S4), Seamus Morrison and Eddie Owens (both S6). It was good to see the full spectrum of the secondary represented and working together. The previous day was spent in a last minute dash to finish as much as possible – the junior members doing an excellent job of finalising the team project and the senior members engaging well with 3D modelling and robot programming.

Teams from Castlebay, Lionacleit, The Nicolson Institute and Sir E Scott gathered together on the 30th January to compete for a place in the UK national championship. Poor weather failed to dampen spirits and the tournament started at 10AM with a warm welcome by our MC, Mr Smith (Technical).

Teams then moved around rooms in the Technical and Business Studies department where they presented to judges both locally and over video links on three main topics – Team Project, Programming and Core Values. Each topic was allocated a room complete with a local judge and a remote judge linking in over VScene.

Judges on the whole were very impressed by the work that the pupils had done and commended them on their hard work. Point and Sandwick Trust who had provided funding to allow teams to travel to the event sent along a journalist and a photographer as well as a trustee who judged the “Lego Core Values” aspects.

First Lego League—Continued

Due to the need for the Southern Isles teams to catch the Sound of Harris afternoon ferry it was necessary to stick to a very tight timetable and some judges were better than others at doing so! So much for them to question the pupils on and so little time to do so. All pupils presented some part of their teams' presentation, a feat that can be quite intimidating but ultimately went well.

Once the teams had completed their three presentations we all headed downstairs to the dance studio which had been set up with two challenge tables for the robot tournament. This involved completing pre-set challenges (set by Lego and used internationally) within a set time span of two minutes. Judges from Lewis Castle College oversaw the table challenges and it was nice to see former SES pupils now LCC students helping out.

While we all enjoyed a meal in the canteen the judges convened together and agreed the scores:

Core values award – Castlebay

Robot challenge award – Lionacleit

Research project award – **Sir E Scott**

Overall competition winner – Lionacleit

One slightly frustrating issue for those of us who had used light sensors in our robots was that the dance studio ambient lighting levels were quite low and as a result code was not performing as expected when tested elsewhere in normal classroom settings. Castlebay pupils tried using mobile phone LEDs as improvised flood lights but ultimately Lionacleit deserved their win as they completed a good number of the challenges well.

We were happy with our research project award – the feedback form given showed exemplary work in most categories within the research project and the SES pupils who carried out the work should be very proud.



Catriona Black Workshop

On the 13th of March the S3 Art class enjoyed a talk from the illustrator and animator Catriona Black.

Catriona is probably best known for her short film *Tha Thu air Aigean m'Inntinn* which was commissioned by an Lanntair as part of the centenary commemorations to mark the *lolaire* disaster.

It was fascinating to hear Catriona talk about the careful process of creating animation, particularly one with such a strong resonance for the local community. The five minute long film took most of a year to create and Catriona brought her animation software to show us how layers of textures and colours can combine with her drawings so successfully. The pupils were then given the opportunity to use her drawing tablet and software to create their own short clips. We hope to continue the process with a future animation workshop courtesy of an Lanntair.



Ocean Plastics

On Monday 11th March we were pleased to welcome Professor Ian Lambert and Dr Katharina Vones from Napier University in Edinburgh to Sir E Scott for a series of workshops looking at issues surrounding plastics in our ocean. "Ocean Plastics" is a theme we currently see a lot of in the news and current affairs – a growing awareness of the problems of waste plastics polluting the environment and killing sea life.

Prof. Lambert and his team are engaged with research to quantify the amount and types of waste plastics around Scottish coasts and to look at how it can be used as a resource locally. At the moment we know to pick up waste plastics from the shore and put in into bins but how else can it be used? And how do we go about recycling it locally?

Three sessions were organised, with the 3rd year Design and Manufacture class taking part in the first morning session. Approximately 50 hexagonal plastic pieces were laid out on a bench – these were 3d printed from satellite maps of Harris and outlying islands. Pupils then assembled the map correctly – easier said than done! The team discussed where they had found

Ocean Plastics – Continued

large amounts of plastics, referencing the 3d printed map while doing so.

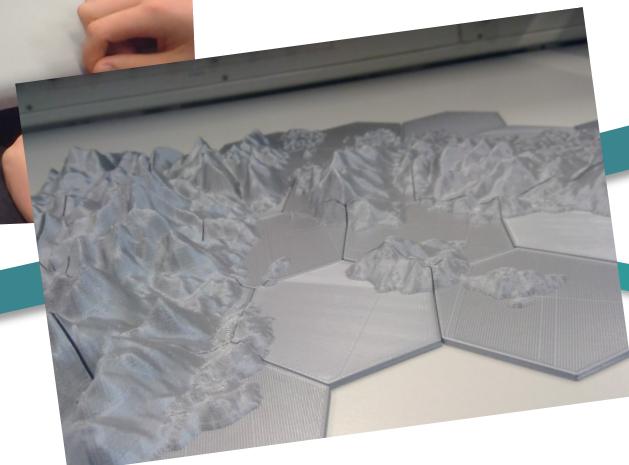
A brief PowerPoint presentation showed some of their work to date, including some quite disappointing pictures showing large amounts of plastics on remote non-inhabited island beaches. The next stage was an overview of how plastics can be recycled and a demonstration of extruding plastic from granular form into filament suitable for 3d printers. It was amazing to both see small amounts of ocean debris and smell the ocean from the recycled plastic.

Pupils had the opportunity to select a favourite region of Harris and 3d print a model hexagonal tile on the Napier 3D printers, and also experience 3D “Doodle Pens” to generate freehand 3D models – easier said than done but a good learning experience and demonstrated potential uses for recycled materials.

The afternoon session with S1B was a repeat of the morning session – in the intervening “lunchtime” the Napier team had been out and about on the shoreline to acquire more information as to the plastics on the shores locally. Later in the evening they ran a public lecture on their research and enjoyed interacting with locals with a concern with the problems and a desire to change things for the better, it was very full on for the team with every minute accounted for.

It was planned to have a final session with S1A on Tuesday morning, however the Tarbert/Uig ferry was cancelled and as the team had an appointment at Mallaig High School on Wednesday (the only other school they were running this scheme at) they had to cancel the session at Sir E Scott and head off on the Stornoway/Ullapool boat.

We are grateful for Prof. Lambert and his team for taking the time to come to Sir E Scott, taking so much interesting equipment for us to use and explaining how we can help be part of the global solution to ocean plastic pollution at a local level.



Rights Respecting School Awards

The Rights Respecting Schools Award was recently launched at Sir E Scott and we had a whole school assembly, with Alison Frizzel and her team as Guest speakers. Alison works for 'Who Cares Scotland' and gave a very interesting and challenging presentation on Children's Rights.

As a school we are planning on achieving the Silver Award over the coming months and to do this we need pupils, staff, parents and the wider community involved and participating in this exciting initiative.



Marc Brown 'Best of you' Programme

Twelve pupils from S3 participated in the Marc Brown 'Best of You' Programme. This programme is designed to explore and uncover their own unique potential. That they will use the four pillars of the programme, confidence, motivation, inspiration and aspiration, to take charge of their own destiny and use these skills and tools to affect positive change in every area of their life. It has been an absolutely brilliant programme, with lots of inspiring strategies, techniques and advice for all the pupils who participated.
'There is more in you than you think! '



Rachael Johnstone—Football

The Secondary school staff and pupils took the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate in Rachael Johnstone's continuing success in Football. She has been signed by Glasgow Celtic Football Club and selected once more to represent Scotland. She was named in the squad who participated in an International tournament in Portugal, with fixtures against the home nation, Germany and the Netherlands.

We are incredibly proud of Rachael's achievements to date and she is such a positive role model for us all, by demonstrating that with aspiration, hard work and resilience you can succeed in whatever life ambitions you may have. Rachael, keep doing what you do best and we wish you well as you embark on your next sporting endeavour.



Kenny Shiels Visit

Kenny Shiels (ex Kilmanock FC Manager) spent a Friday afternoon in SES and ran a coaching session. Lots of new skills and techniques were learnt and Kenny had a really important message of having pride in your performance.

“If you’re doing your best, you won’t have time to worry about failure.”



Weir-Wise Engineering Event

At the end of October, we were given the opportunity of applying to Strathclyde University to take part in the Weir-Wise Engineering trip for girls. In late January, over the course of two days we, as part of a group of 50 girls, took part in fun experiments and challenges that helped us explore different types of engineering (chemical, space and mechanical). It was a good opportunity to work as part of a team and with others we hadn't met before.

We also got a tour of Strathclyde University which was massive! It was a really enjoyable trip and we were grateful to have been selected to attend. We would highly recommend this course to someone who is interested in engineering or is considering a career in this area.

CalumPorteus—Writing Competition

Calum entered a couple of writing competitions in term 2.

One was The Young Walter Scott Prize which draws entries from across Britain at 11-18 and is, I think, quite prestigious. The judges include the writers Elizabeth Laird and Eleanor Updale.

Calum's story was called *The Last Viking*.

While Calum didn't win a prize, they were kind enough to write back thanking him for his entry, praising the quality of his writing and offering some feedback. This is what they said.

CalumPorteus—The Last Viking

My sword swung upwards slicing through the fire giant's thick skin. I could hardly comprehend what was currently happening! Ragnarök had come. The nine realms were falling into chaos and the battle between the gods of Asgard and the fire giants of Muspelheim had begun.

Tyr was dead, and Thor was badly wounded, yet I knew there were more casualties to come. I waded into battle, my sword cutting through the infinite sea of giants. Fatigue washed over me like a wave. Then Surt, King of the fire giants turned and locked his fire rimmed eyes on to mine.

I jolted awake in my berth, sea spray splashed in my face and the air smelt like ozone. I could hear Hrönn crashing against the dragon masthead of our langskip. My dream was still vivid in my mind. The day of doom was nearing, the gods would soon be destroyed, and the Vikings would be overthrown by the forces of evil. Was this a terrible sign of what was to come?

Finally, I recovered my fortitude and began to act, we needed to take the sail down immediately. As I moved towards the sail I saw tall black spires of rock appear from the depths of the storm, I stood paralysed with fear as our ship was driven into the dark mass. The masthead splintered off with a sharp crack and flew into the churning sea, another rock cleaved through our ship and cast the crew and I into the water.

The ocean knocked the air out of my lungs. My sword was weighing me down, dragging me to the bottom. I fought with every bit of strength I had. If I died here my soul would swirl into the nets of the goddess Ran. If I died here my death would be dishonourable, a terrible fate for any Viking. With that harrowing thought in my head I was thrown violently against the rocks. Pain flared through my body. The world started to dim around me.

I was back in the chaos of Ragnarök the cataclysmic destruction of the cosmos. Surt had been annihilated by Frey but the battle still raged around me. My sword slashed at anything that came too close as anarchy reigned supreme.

Without warning a massive tidal wave ripped through the battlefield, I could see the watery forms of the Nine Daughters of Ægir working as one, destroying anything that stood in their path. Giants and Gods alike. The sea takes all.

As I woke, I found myself lying on the cold floor of a cave. It's tall rocky ceiling loomed above me. Shadows of objects I couldn't quite make out stretched across the room. I assumed there must be a fire because the whole cavern basked in a warm orange glow. The pain in my chest still ached but I managed to sit up. Over on the other side of the cave I saw an old man who seemed to be mixing herbs in a small bowl.

‘Ciamar a tha sibh?’ said the old man. ‘Is mise Ruairidh, Dè an t-ainm a th’ oirbh?’

It took me a while to realise he was speaking Gaelic, not Norse. I had learned some Gaelic from my grandmother. My ears tuned in to the native language and I replied in Gaelic.

‘I am Magnús Óláfsson, King of the Isles and son of Óláfr the Black. My ship was caught in a storm near the Isle of Harris. We were on our way to attack the Scots, who have been raiding throughout the Hebrides. I need you to tell me where I am and if any of my crew survived.’

‘You are on the Isle of Taransay, off the coast of Harris. I found you washed up on the beach. As for your crew, I’m sorry but you’re the only survivor.’ Ruairidh said in a dispirited tone.

This was a dreadful omen from the gods. My ship and my crew gone, I wondered what I had done to anger them?

‘This is fate’ I said ‘The gods deemed it so. I can’t change my fate, I can only trifle with the details.’

Ruairidh looked at me, I could see the scepticism in his eyes. ‘You truly believe that? I am a man of God, I believe in redemption, in making your own path. I have lived on this island for many years as a hermit, contemplating God and Christianity.’

‘I am a Viking’ I said indignantly ‘We are all but mere pawns for the gods. We have absorbed Christianity into our culture, but the ways of old will always be absolute and incontestable.’

As my anger started to dissipate, I concluded that this old man lived in a cave with nothing but his god for comfort. He had never seen battle. He would never know honour. He wasn't like me.

Ruairidh came over and said in a gentle voice. 'You're injured, you must rest to recover your strength. Lie back and sleep.'

I felt the warmth of the fire on my face. The pain in my chest slowly started to recede and I succumbed to sleep.

Odin stood amongst the carnage. He looked drained of all hope. He desperately tried to rally the gods, but to no avail. A blur of dark fur shot past me, it was Fenris wolf, the bane of the gods. Somehow, he had broken free of his eternal bonds. He lunged forward sinking his dagger like fangs into Odin's neck. In the blink of an eye the King of all Gods was dead. This was the end. Evil had prevailed.

I sank to my knees the battle was over. Standing triumphantly over Odin's body was Loki. It was foretold by the Norns that he would win Ragnarök and wreak havoc across the nine realms. The battle died out around me, as everyone began to realise that Odin was dead. This was the end of the Viking world. I could not grasp that this was happening, it was beyond all comprehension.

Loki strode over to me and raised his sword over my head. His eyes were filled with pure malice and his mouth curled in a permanent snarl.

"Fool" he hissed sensing my disbelief 'You still don't get it, do you? This is the beginning of a new mighty age Magnús, your dynasty is at an end. You're still bent on the old ways. That is your undoing.'

I braced myself for the final death blow from Loki's sword.

Nothing.

"No" said Loki " I won't kill you Magnús. Then you would die honourably. No, better to let you fade away into history, along with your culture your beliefs and your memories.

With that he threw back his head and rasped a twisted laugh that would haunt my dreams forever.

Conclusion

Thank you very much for reading this term's edition of the school newsletter. We hope you have a wonderful holiday and look forward to seeing you all again on Monday the 15th of April.

Eddie Owens S6

Editor