



SES NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2020

FIRST LEGO LEAGUE FINALS

Congratulations to the SES team that went through to the First Lego League Finals in Perth who won the ESP award for Inspiration for their design idea and consideration of the local community. Congratulations also to Mr Atkinson and Mrs Laing for their support and guidance of the pupils at both local and national competition. We are also grateful to all who contributed to the funding costs involved to allow SES to participate in the national finals in Perth. Mealaibh 'ur naidheachd, rinn sibh fìor mhath!



GAELIC CHAMPION AWARD

Mealadh naidheachd air Mgr Maclain a fhuair Duais Na Gàidhlig bho luchd-teagaisg agus clann a' Bhun-sgoil aig a' Chruinneachadh aca air Dihaoine 28mh An Gearran! Cùm ag ionnsachadh a Ghàidhlig, tha thu a deanamh fìor mhath!

Congratulations to Mr. Johnson who was nominated for the week's Gaelic Champion Award by primary pupils and staff at their Assembly on Friday 28th February. Keep up the good work, Mr Johnson!



NOTES FROM THE HEAD TEACHER: MARCH 2020

Welcome to our March Newsletter, which provides you with a taster of some of the events and opportunities our young people in the secondary department have engaged in this term. A term that brought many opportunities and successes for our young people, but which also very sadly for us all came to an abrupt closure on Friday 20th March when the Scottish Government announced the closure of all Scottish Schools due to the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. It was certainly one of the heaviest hearted days I have experienced in my teaching career and as a Head teacher having to close our school to pupils and staff for an unknown period of time.

I am pleased to say that we have moved on quite a bit since then and seem to be settling as a school community to a new way of working in delivering learning and teaching experiences to our children and young people. We are extremely fortunate to have the technology and the infrastructure in place to be able to work remotely as staff, pupils and parents but I also think our progress to date shows we are also fortunate to have a high level of resilience amongst us all in moving forward.

I would like to thank the parents who have sent such supportive and much appreciated messages to us as a school at what has undoubtedly been a trying and difficult time. I am also extremely grateful to my staff for their support and care, their commitment to their profession and to the children and young people in their care at this unprecedented time in our lives. As we officially start our Easter holidays on Friday 27th March, I hope we can all manage to get a well-earned rest and be at peace with our current situation during the 2 week Easter holidays, and that more importantly we all stay safe and well.

Schools will resume on **Tuesday 14th April** with home learning being delivered and further developed until such time as we return to normal school education again. Thank you so much for your continued support and assistance which will be vital to us moving forward, to ensure your children and young people continue to engage in their learning during this period of school closure. We can't afford to do anything less for them at such a crucial stage in their young lives.

NEW PUPILS

We welcomed new families into our midst this term, with Annabel Townsend joining S3 and Angus MacKinnon joining S5. We have been very pleased to see Annabel and Angus settle so well to their new school setting.

STAFFING

We are sorry to be losing two much valued members of staff from our team at the end of this term. Janice Macleod, SFLA finishes on Friday 27th March, while Samantha Morrison, Sgoil- Àraich Key worker finishes on Tuesday 31st March.

Janice MacLeod has been a very effective Support for Learning Assistant at SES over the last 17 years and will undoubtedly be missed by the children and young people she has supported so well and with whom she enjoyed mutually respectful relationships.

Samantha Morrison on the other hand has come through her secondary education, on to a Modern Apprenticeship and on to a full time position at Sir E Scott School, which has been very pleasing to see and that such opportunities are available on campus for our young people.

Samantha has also been a very effective keyworker whom the children will miss very much. Nevertheless, we are delighted for both members of staff in successfully securing these new positions and wish them both all the very best from all the children, staff and parents at SES School.

We were pleased to accommodate two PGDE students studying with UHI (Stornoway Campus) for this term's school placement. Eilidh Graham was placed in the Gaelic Department and Anneline MacLeod in the Biology Department. We wish them both continued success as they complete the PGDE course and for their future career in the teaching profession.

THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK - SMAOINICH MUS ÒL THU!

S1 pupils distributed SES branded water bottles around the school on Friday 21st February as part of their campaign to reduce single use plastics in the school. The bottles were kindly donated to the school by an anonymous source and now every pupil in school has either their own or a newly gifted bottle to sip on Harris's fine drinking water during their day. The pupils chose the slogan Think Before You Drink as a reminder to everyone to do their bit to reduce plastic waste in the school and community. 'S math a rinn sibh Clas 1 AS!



RACHAEL JOHNSTONE



Rachael Johnstone was due to go off on another international sporting tour, after being selected to play for Scotland once again.

Rachael, who signed for Celtic on her 15th birthday, a year ago, had been chosen for the Scotland women's under-17 squad and were due to head off to compete in the UEFA elite round in the Netherlands on Saturday 14 March, Germany on Tuesday 17 and Croatia on Friday 20 March. However, due to the Coronavirus COVID- 19 pandemic this trip had to be cancelled. We are very confident that Rachael will be chosen again for such opportunities as they arise in the future.

SHARE AND CARE CAFE

The 'Share and Care' Cafe started on Tuesday 25th February with Amy Mackenzie, Martin MacSween and Angus Mackinnon taking the lead on this community project. They have been assisted by members of staff and Mrs Mairi MacIver, CLD.



MARITIME SKILLS FOR WORK

The three Maritime Skills for Work students completed the MCA Sea Survival Course as part of their course, albeit in the comforts of the Isle of Harris pool! This is a key qualification for all who work in the marine environment.



SCOTTISH SCHOOLS PIPE BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

SES pupils competed in The 2020 Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships at The William McIlvanney Campus in Kilmarnock with the Lewis and Harris Youth Pipe Band.



At the beginning of March, a group of seven pipers from the Nicolson Institute and Sir E Scott went down to Kilmarnock for the Scottish Schools Piping Championships to represent the Lewis and Harris Youth Pipe Band. We entered two quartets into the competition including our piping instructor Ashley. In one quartet there was Hamish, Millie, Finlay and Aaron, and in the other there was myself, Jamie, Kieran and our instructor Ashley.

It was a long mini bus ride all the way down and back up again, but we had fun playing our chanters almost all the way down. We had to be up the road to Stornoway from Harris by 5am and at the ferry terminal for 6am to meet the other pipers, we were all quite tired by the end of it! The day of the competition, we arrived at the school the championships were being held at, and went straight into practicing. We tuned up and just kept practicing until our lunch time, and we had a chance to see all the other schools. It was amazing to see how many of them there actually were, it's an experience I know I will never forget. After lunch we went back up to practice until the 1st quartet competed.

The first quartet did really well, and in the end got 5th place out of 18 entries. The 2nd quartet, my quartet, kept practicing until it was our turn to compete, and did a final tune up before we went down to perform. In the end we came 9th out of 18 overall, and we were very happy about that. Overall it was an amazing experience and I can't wait to see how much our band will grow in the future.

Eilidh Macdonald, S2



CELTIC CONNECTIONS

Sir E Scott School Choir were delighted to be invited to perform at this year's Celtic Connections as part of Dìleab - Air a Chuan. This concert was a chance for pupils throughout the Western Isles to

showcase their culture and heritage through music, dance and song. Bad weather meant that the choir had to travel down to Glasgow on a chartered flight and we were grateful to Loganair for their help.

After some retail therapy, rehearsals began for the event. We spent a long day in the Glasgow School of Piping rehearsing our songs.

The concert was a huge success with the Sir E Scott pupils giving outstanding performances. All agreed it was an experience they would never forget. Their conduct and good behaviour was commented on and once again they were a credit to their school, community and families.



DÌLEAB AIR A'CHUAN – CELTIC CONNECTIONS 2020

A group of 70 young people, teaching staff, tutors and support staff left our islands on Wednesday 15th January, courtesy of Loganair, to perform at a special event at Celtic Connection. Dìleab Air A'Chuan gave the young people from Sir E Scott, Castlebay, Sgoil Lionaclet and The Nicolson Institute the opportunity to showcase their many talents on the 2020 theme Scotland's Coasts & Waters, along with some wonderful performances of their previous work on Dìleab 2018

The evening was undoubtedly a phenomenal experience for all the young people involved and an experience they will never forget. Each performance was very professionally delivered and it was clear that a lot of hard work and commitment had gone in to preparing for the event.

Reflecting on the SES group's performance, as individuals and collectively, they certainly did us proud. They have shown a huge amount of perseverance and commitment to their performances during 2019, at local and national Mod, at Dìleab 2019 and now at Celtic Connections 2020. We are extremely fortunate to have Iain MacIver, Gaelic Instructor working with our young people in preparing them to such a high level of performance, along with local musicians such as Willie Campbell, Rhona & Neil Johnstone. An additional performance on Saturday morning in the Merchant City by the choir involving the giant puppet sea goddess Storm meant that the pupils were kept busy right up the very last minute before they headed back home after a very eventful and exciting week.

Friday night's performance at Celtic Connections will certainly be one of my special memories that I will recall in my role as HT of SES School. I felt so very privileged to be there, to be part of the event and to feel so very proud of our young people.

Thank you to Iain and Mairi MacIver for taking on the responsibility of looking after the SES group during this trip.

Finally, thank you to Mr Chisholm, Director of Education and the

Multimedia team who made it all possible for our young people to perform on a professional level at Celtic Connections. A tremendous amount of work went into planning and organising Dìleab Air A'Chuan at Celtic Connections. The Dìleab project and its ongoing focus is certainly allowing our young people to research, learn and celebrate much about our culture, heritage and language.

Mealadh naidheachd air an òigridh a ghabh pàirt: Catherine MacDonald, Lauren MacInnes, Hamish Scott, Sarah Helfrich, Lola Sands, Emma Passmore, Anna Macleod, Mairi Anna Binns, Emma MacSween, Isla Scott, Eilidh MacDonald, Elli-Ceit Johnson, Fiona Langley, Isobel Craig, Jessica Mackay, Bella Maclean and Grace MacLeod.



The Dìleab project is a major project which started in 2018 and is taken part by all schools in the Western Isles to provide pupils with a deeper appreciation of the culture and heritage of their islands.

Following the concert in Stornoway Sports Centre, the same group of senior choir members and P7 junior choir members, along with singers and musicians from Uist and Lewis went to perform at Celtic Connections as part of the Dìleab project. On Wednesday 15th January, we were supposed to get the ferry and bus to Glasgow from Tarbert but due to the bad forecast and ferry cancellations, Loganair put on a special flight to make sure that we were able to get to Celtic Connections. That night, we also found out that we had been asked to sing for the puppet 'Storm' which was made out of recycled materials and risen out of the Clyde. On Thursday, we had a day of rehearsals with the band and Willie Campbell to make sure we were all

prepared for our big concert and we got our Dìleab t-shirts to wear on stage. The next day, we went to the Royal Concert Hall where we were performing and spent the morning doing sound checks and more rehearsals with the cameras before our big show. After the concert was finished, we went into another room and had a meet and greet with John Swinney, DFM and other guests that were invited. The next day, we went to meet Storm and sang in front of her and then made our way back home. Overall it was a once in a lifetime opportunity and we all had such an amazing time and enjoyed it very much. We cannot wait to see what the Dìleab project will bring next.

Lauren MacInnes S6





SES pupils singing with others (My time not yet has Come) at the Ferry terminal exhibition of Iolaire work by Malcolm Maclean and attended by John Swinney DFM/MSP and many others.



FIRE SKILLS COURSE



A mixed group of S3-S5 SES pupils embarked on the 10-week Fire Skills course at the end of January.

This course is being delivered by the Scottish Fire Service, along with support from Mairi Maciver, Community Learning Development. This course



aims to build pupils knowledge, skills, confidence and self-esteem. Pictured Tarbert's youngest fire crew fully kitted out in their PPE.

THEATRE GU LEOR

Bha torr spors aig sgoilearan air AS1 agus AS2 an-diugh nuair a thadhail Lana bho Theatre Gu Leor oirnn airson Buth-obrach a dheanamh tro mheadhan na Gaidhlig a dheanamh comhla riutha.

S1 and S2 Gaelic Medium pupils had a great time this afternoon when Lana from Theatre Gu Leor came to the school to run a drama workshop with them.



CROSSROADS FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT 2020

A brilliant competition for all of the 40 pupils from SES and Leverhulme who were participating in this annual competition. Pictured the Winners (Green bibs) and Runners up with Lisa Macdonald, Crossroads who presented the prizes. Player of the tournament was awarded to Christopher Eadie who was amazing as Goalkeeper for his team, the Giants. Thanks to all the parents and friends who came along to cheer on the teams and Crossroads for donating the trophies and the tasty refreshments. Sgoinnell!!



GAELIC SONG WRITING COURSE

This year, a couple of us on sixth year chose to take a course in Contemporary Gaelic Song Writing and Production with Mr MacIver as one of our subject choices. We both found this to be a very rewarding experience and a good choice! Throughout the year we learnt about the roots of traditional Scottish music, the connections in music and language between Scottish, Irish and French cultures, the revival of Scottish folk music, important milestones in the development of the Gaelic language and the different styles of Gaelic music. We both found this very interesting and spent time writing and researching about these topics. After looking at different styles of Gaelic music, we both compiled radio programmes on some of the songs we had enjoyed listening to. Later on in the course, we individually recorded a cover of one of our favourite traditional Gaelic songs, and added instruments as well as voice recordings. One aspect of the course that we both enjoyed was the technology side of recording, as it helped us develop new skills. At the end of the year, we wrote our own poems in Gaelic and, with help from Mr MacIver, turned these into our own songs, which we have just finished recording. Writing and recording our own songs was a great experience and we both had a lot of fun doing it!

We would definitely recommend the course to other pupils in the school, particularly on sixth year, as it really built our confidence in our musical abilities, let us explore our own language and culture, and be creative in a different way. We would like to thank Mr MacIver for giving us this unique opportunity and for working with us throughout the year. Catherine Macdonald, S6

FUNDRAISING EVENT – DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE



At a recent Developing the Young Workforce visit to Essence of Harris, owner Jamie McGowan asked the pupils to work in groups and gave each group £10 to turn into a profitable enterprise. Two pupils, Neil Morrison and Alice Campbell used Shrove Tuesday for their fundraiser. Between them they made 200 pancakes which sold out during morning internal, while managing to raise £180 for Crossroads Harris. Well done Neil and Alice!

As you can see from the photos, pupils and staff really appreciated their efforts!

WORLD BOOK DAY CHALLENGE

Abbie Lightbody and Ruth Macleod won the World Book Day Secondary Challenge of "who was reading the book" organised by the National 4 English class. They were the only pair to get all the answers correct and even guessed Lizzy from the Canteen reading a cook book! They won a very cute teddy bear and a book token! Well done Abbie and Ruthie!



SCOTTISH APPRENTICESHIP WEEK – CAREERS CONVENTION

A Career Convention took place in the school as part of Scottish Apprenticeship Week. Many thanks to all the delegates from the various businesses and organisations that were represented. There were lots of inspiring and informative discussions/displays taking place throughout the afternoon.



To celebrate Scottish Apprenticeship Week, companies that operate in the local area and other organizations such as QinetiQ, the Fire Brigade and Skills Development Scotland came in to inform us about their apprenticeship schemes and what they offer to Secondary School pupils. Some of the businesses brought in equipment to showcase the work they do, for example BBC Alba brought in camera equipment and the Scottish Salmon Company brought in salmon. This workshop was very beneficial to the pupils as it allowed them to see the different opportunities that are available in the local community and that apprenticeships are a very effective way into the world of work.



SES CEILIDH BAND

This group meet on a Friday after school and are supported by Mr MacIver. Pictured from left to right are; Isla Scott, Mariannna Binns, Anna Macleod and Natalie Maclean.

MAIRIANNA BINNS – CLÀRSACH PLAYING EVENTS

Mairianna won the Intermediate Solo competition at the Inverness Music Festival on Saturday 29th February. She also won the Junior Strings competition for S1-3 and was a Junior Young Musician of the Year Finalist at Lews Castle on Saturday 7th March. Mairi Anna's clarsach teacher is Mairi Macleod from MCM Music and Jane Hepburn MacMillan takes her for fiddle.



REV. JARDINE'S TRIP TO ZIMBABWE

The Rev. Jardine came in to speak to S1-3 about his recent trip to Zimbabwe. He visited different schools across the different states in the country. Some were very poor with no stationary or printers or even electricity, some had some electricity and maybe one or two computers and then some that had more facilities. He also spoke to us about the way of life over there and told us about his trip with the head teacher of a school he was visiting. They were transporting cows and on the road they were on were often hijacked by thieves. He was out there to do missionary work from helping to build roofs on schools and taking sermons in the local churches. We really enjoyed the talk and found it very interesting.



SCOTLAND LOVES LANGUAGES WEEK

As part of Scotland Loves Languages Week, Rachael Campbell S5, Michelle Reid S6 and Rachel Campbell S6 went down to the Primary department and Sgoil-Àraich and read Gaelic children's books to the different classes there. This included both English Medium and Gaelic Medium classes. This gave us the opportunity to go into the primary department and engage with the pupils there and get a chance to use our Gaelic language in a classroom environment. We really enjoyed the experience and hope the pupils in the Sgoil-Àraich and Primary did too



SPRING CONCERT

Congratulations to all pupils and staff, including tutors, involved in the excellent Spring Concert that took place on Tuesday 3rd 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 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 as well as the S4 Administration and IT pupils who worked alongside the Music department. The sum of £415 was raised which will go towards helping the Music Department purchase an electric piano.