



Diary Dates

Mon 4 Jan 2016 Return to school. Yeargroup Assemblies this week— "Resolutions" theme

Mon 11 Jan Tutor time quiz on Human Rights this week, House Points available. S5/6 Prelim week

Tues 12 Jan Parent Council Meeting at 6.30pm

Mon 18 Jan House Assemblies this week—Burns theme. Friends of Kirkcaldy High School Meeting at 7pm

Tues 19 Jan KHS Primary "Roadshow" - Valley at 5.30 and Fair Isle at 6.45pm

Wed 20 Jan Disability Sport Fife Football over lunchtime

Mon 25 Jan Yeargroup Assemblies this week—"Lessons form Auschwitz" theme. Burns Supper after school

Tues 26 Jan KHS Primary "Roadshow" - Torbain at 5.30 and Capshard at 6.45pm

Wed 27 Jan Boozebusters training for peer educators

Fri 29 Jan S2 Reports issued
Mon 1 Feb S3 Parent/Carer Evening

Tues 2 Feb Boozebusters sessions for S2 pupils. Dunninger Country Park meeting

Wed 3 Feb Beveridge Assembly—celebrating achievement and LGBT rights focus

Thurs 4 Feb Oswald Assembly. Intermediate Maths Challenge. Fife Festival of Music (also Fri 5)

Mon 8 Feb Carlyle Assembly

Tues 9 Feb Adam Smith Assembly. Social Studies trip to London. DTP and Meningitis vaccinations

Wed 10 Feb Inset Training Day for teachers

Thurs 11 and Fri 12 Feb Mid term holidays

Mon 15 Feb Yeargroup Assemblies—Sport Relief theme. S5/6 Reports issued

Wed 17 Feb Learning Fair for S2 pupils and parents and carers

Wed 24 Feb Disability Sport Fife Football over lunchtime

Thurs 25 Feb S2 Parent and Carer Evening

Mon 29 Feb House Assemblies this week—"Growth Mindset" theme. S2 personalisation and choice process

Tues 8 Mar S4 Parent and Carer Evening. Parent Council

Fri 11 Mar FoKHS Ceilidh

Mon 14 Mar Yeargroup Assemblies this week—"Learner Journeys" theme

Mon 21 Mar House Assemblies this week—Easter theme (with Ken Froude)

Thurs 24 Mar Dress Down Day. End of term.

The Rector writes ...

Welcome to our Christmas edition newsletter. As ever, I'm sure you'll be impressed by our young people's recent achievements. We've had another busy term with many highlights. We recently had the school photographs, and I must say that Mrs Aitken (Senior Depute) and myself were exceptionally proud to be pictured (below) with the Prefects looking so magnificent. They are such excellent ambassadors for the school and are a credit to their families. Thank you so much for your ongoing support – it matters a great deal to our success.

The S4 prelims went well, and have been good practice for the real exams next May. As always, for some, the results will be a "wake up call", a chance to start knuckling down to the hard work and study regime required to do well. Our staff are absolutely committed to their pupils and offer an extensive range of additional lunchtime and after school study sessions. These are detailed in the timetable available on our website and on "Twitter". I must thank the teachers. If your son/daughter is in S4-6, please encourage them to take up this excellent offer. In the New Year we will be collating details of the "Saturday School" sessions we will run from January to April, and we'll also have additional sessions during the Easter Holidays. From now on it's about practice, revision, study and putting in the additional hours. The prelims for S5/6 take place in the week beginning 11 January 2016.

You may be aware that there is a now a Fife wide agreement about the future timetabling of all schools to ensure the best delivery of "Curriculum for Excellence" courses and to promote good partnership working - for example for work placements or College courses. Schools have been asked to get together in

their local area to plan collaboratively.

In June 2014, we moved from a 30 period to a 35 period week and this has been seen as a positive move – we do not propose to change this. However, we do plan to make slight adjustments to the school day from next August in order to help with partnership and joint working. I will be in touch in the New Year as part of a consultation process.

Earlier this month it was a pleasure to welcome David Torrance, the MSP for Kirkcaldy, to the school. Mr Torrance met with various groups of young people, stayed for lunch and visited classes. The main themes we covered were; exam results (especially "closing the gap" between the most and least deprived young people), positive destinations for school leavers and health and wellbeing. There were class visits to English and Modern Studies and at lunchtime, the Learning Council quizzed their MSP on local matters such as services for young people in Kirkcaldy. In the afternoon, Mr Torrance visited an Engineering Science class, which was of particular interest as engineering is his vocation.



On the theme of "STEM" (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), Miss Higham, the "UK STEM Teacher of the Year" has just returned from her all expenses paid trip the CERN Nuclear Centre in Switzerland. This was her prize for the award she won earlier this year. We've also just hosted a talk on engineering apprenticeships. Securing a pathway to employment, be it in technical or other fields, has become a major focus of the school.

But we are about so much more. For example, I'm really looking forward to our production of "Wizard of Oz" in June - ticket details will be available in the new year.

Speaking of new years ... very best wishes to you and all your family. Merry Christmas and good luck for 2016.

Allan.

Christmas Cheer at ASDA



The string ensemble received lots of really nice comments from Asda shoppers for their annual performance at the switching on of the Christmas Lights at ASDA .

On a bitterly cold and wet afternoon customers said that there was a fantastic atmosphere and festive spirit which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Supported by Musical Director Mr.Adamson, and accompanist Mr.Britain, the pupils drawn from S2 to S6 also played at our recent Christmas Concert. In a busy schedule, engagements for next term include the Burns Supper and then two classes in the Fife Festival of Music.



Primary Open Evening Smash Hit

Our recent showcase evening was a real success with over 200 families visiting the school to see classes in action and meet staff and young people.

After an introductory talk from the Rector, Mrs Aitken (Senior Depute Rector and S1 Yearhead) organised the parents and carers of next session's new First Year intake into groups to tour the school. As part of the evaluation, a great many parents commented on the quality of the school's facilities, the commitment of the staff and the interesting lessons being delivered as part of "Curriculum for Excellence".

Once again this year, the explosive Science experiments were a highlight—as were the Classics dress up sessions and cookery demonstrations. Mrs Aitken thanked the Prefects who were excellent hosts and guides, again giving great service to the school. Very many of our seniors are well on track to achieve a Gold, Silver or Bronze Saltire Volunteering Award.



Support @KDYFoodbank

Once again the pupils in the Personal Development class have organised a collection in support of the Kirkcaldy Foodbank. They have worked hard to organise advertising, distributing of collection boxes, collecting the donations, and will pack everything up ready for distribution. The donations are mounting up and of course this could not happen without the support of our pupils, staff and the wider community.

Thank you if you or your son or daughter has already donated but there is still plenty of time to send your child off to school. With your help, we can make a difference in making the festive season a little easier and happier for people in our community.

Toiletries, toys and children's clothes are also appreciated.

Children In Need 2015

Many thanks to all parents/carers and young people for helping us support "Children In Need" again this year.

Our dress down day raised £850 for this excellent cause.



"STEM" Focus on Employment Skills

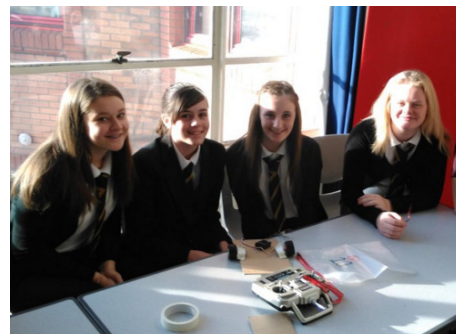
Oil and Gas Explored



On Monday 7 December, a group of S 4 - 6 pupils were treated to an illustrated talk about apprenticeship opportunities in the oil

and gas sector. Kiti Kelemen of OPITO, a global recruitment and training agency, visited the school to explain the various trades, working conditions and the recruitment process for Modern Apprentices offshore.

Pupils learned of the many varied career paths available and what to expect from the aptitude tests and interviews which entrants undergo. Several young people have said that they intend to make an application on leaving school.



A major highlight from earlier this term was our S2 "Speedy STEM" challenge, held in the Hall with partners; Fife College, the Construction Industry Training Board and the Hydrogen Office at Methil. Pupils worked in teams to design and build robots, parachutes, wind turbines and compressed air jet engines - specifically with a problem to solve.

It was an excellent experience which boosted creativity and cooperation. In line with our "Young Workforce" strategy, this will also have benefitted our young people's employability and knowledge of potential careers in science, technology and engineering.



National Club XL Success for KHS



The Kirkcaldy High School Prince's Trust "Club XL" promotes wider achievement and community involvement, and this month saw the school's club being recognised at the annual Scottish Prince's Trust Awards in Edinburgh.

Three boys were shortlisted as finalists in the "Community Impact" section for their work supporting elderly members of the Torbain Church lunch club.

The boys were shortlisted in the final three in Scotland, and we are proud of their achievement. They had an excellent afternoon at the Assembly Rooms in George Street where they mixed with a range of TV and music stars.

Liam Lindsay (16), pictured centre, enjoyed the lunch club experience so much he has now decided to pursue a career in elderly care. He said, "I got so much confidence from working with the older people that it made me realise that caring is a profession I'd like to work in."

Grant Napier, Liam and Aaron Bruce are pictured at the awards with their "Community Impact" certificate of achievement. Earlier in the year, a different group of younger KHS Prince's Trust pupils went to Wimbledon after winning a Fife wide competition.



KHS is an RAF "Platinum Partner"

Squadron Leader George Morris visited Kirkcaldy High School last week to present the school with the prestigious Royal Air Force Platinum Partner Award. This award is one of only a hundred to be presented by the RAF to the schools and colleges across the UK which have provided top quality candidates to the RAF over the last five years.

As platinum partners Kirkcaldy High School will benefit from all of the new initiatives provided by the RAF recruitment team including station visits, career presentations and table top exercises organised by the RAF in schools. One of the most popular challenges is team building exercise based on a disaster relief situation.

Rector Derek Allan said that the school was proud to be so closely associated with the RAF and praised its education programme. Last week all S1 and S2 were treated to an excellent engineering skills workshop delivered jointly by the RAF and BAE Systems. Squadron Leader Morris praised the school for its work preparing applicants so well for the RAF's tough selection process. He explained that the service has a recruitment drive in all areas, ranging from pilots to technicians and chefs.



Squadron Leader Morris is pictured presenting the award to S6 students Rhianon Cross and William Rae. Our other picture shows staff taking part in one of the RAF's fun engineering workshops last month—the S2 pupils in the audience also enjoyed the fun!

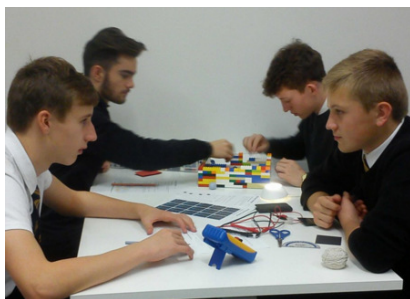
KHS Photo Gallery



Advanced Higher Biology Fieldwork at Kindrogan Outdoor Centre, Perthshire



S3 Netball Team after recent win v Beath HS



Taking part in the "Energise" Event at the National Museum



Joe Lafferty with FM Nicola Sturgeon receiving his Brave@heart Award at Edinburgh Castle



Minions supporting "Children In Need", November 2015



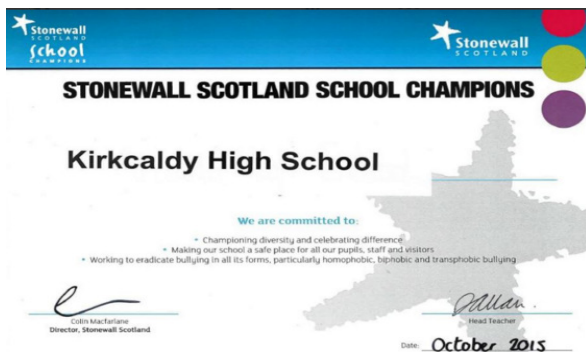
Halloween Fancy Dress Party, October 2015

Our Visit to STV Studios, Glasgow



On 27 November, Mrs Hume and some of her Higher English pupils went to visit the STV studios in Glasgow. While there, we learned about all the programmes that STV produce and direct, as well as the areas of the country that they broadcast to.

We met news presenter John MacKay and asked questions about his life in journalism and how he deals with problems within the studio while presenting. We were able to sit in the broadcast booth and watch a news segment being broadcast on live television. We learned a great deal about the behind the scenes working of TV news studios and received important advice on how to prepare for careers in this area. By Lachlan Duncan, S5.



KHS LGBT+ Group Champions Equal Rights

The newly established KHS Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-sexual support group is meeting weekly to raise awareness of equality and rights issues across the school and to discuss LGBT+ matters in the context of wider society. The group meets at lunchtimes on a Monday in the LRC and is proud that the school has been admitted to the Stonewall "Champions" programme.

Miss Higham Scoops Top UK "STEM" Award

A Kirkcaldy High School Principal Teacher has won the final of the Annual STEMNET Awards 2015 in the Most Dedicated Teacher in the UK category, presented at the House of Lords in London. Helen Higham, a Biology teacher and Principal Teacher of "STEM", received the STEMNET STEM Teacher award for her efforts to inspire youngsters to participate in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths).

The awards were presented in six categories by BBC presenter Steph McGovern and STEMNET's CEO Kirsten Bodley to winners from across the UK, and the Science and Technology Facilities Council presented the winners with an exclusive visit to CERN. Winners flew to Geneva in December, where they had the opportunity to see cutting edge science in action, as well as meet with top physicists and engineers from across the world renowned facility.

Miss Higham is Kirkcaldy High School's STEM co-ordinator and runs the school's STEM Club. She leads the school's annual employability event with more 25 STEM Ambassadors and makes a priority of helping to break down stereotypes and promote positive role models for girls in STEM.

"This award is really the accumulation of a lot of work by a lot of people," said Miss Higham at the ceremony. "Fife has massive STEM based career progression. We are lucky that there are so many opportunities for our pupils to develop towards positive destinations in STEM subjects so it's really up to us to try and make sure the pupils are leaving school with the skills they need to succeed in these jobs." Commenting, Roger Mullin MP said: "Helen's efforts to encourage interest and participation in STEM subjects amongst young people in my constituency have been extraordinary".



KHS Eco School Latest Green News

Throughout this term we have been considering ways to improve our school's Eco-friendliness, and we have placed our ideas into 3 categories; Litter, School Grounds and Reducing Waste. From this, we have created an action plan that we will carry out over the next few years with the hope of achieving a Green Flag for our school. To help us figure out our aims, we had a visitor from Kinghorn Ecology Centre to talk to us about what we could do to make ourselves Eco-friendly. We also thought of activities and ways to encourage all years to join in.

This term we have also been selling Fairtrade products at evening events to raise funds for the changes we wish to make, and for other events around the school, namely the Kirkcaldy Food Bank. We are also using these Fairtrade products to make Christmas hampers that will be made to order to be picked up in December.

UNICEF "Rights Respecting School" Latest



Our pupils have been working hard to move forward our involvement and progress in extending our commitment to the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. Mr Marshall has established a Steering Group made up of pupils from different year groups and backgrounds. The S6 Learning Council teamed up with the Steering Group during Tutor Class visits the first week back after the October break to explain to their peers the Articles which make up the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These were then discussed by all 48 Tutor Groups and the most 'chosen' Articles have been short listed by each of the House Forums.

Our school will base our own charter around these short listed Articles – a truly consultative and democratic approach to a school charter which will promote: inclusion, democracy, fairness and empathy

through charitable work locally, nationally and internationally.

KHS Christmas Concert 2015



KHS Sports Leaders led the fun at the recent Templehall Family Day held at Fair Isle Primary School. Tiegan Clark was a particularly big hit as the Gingerbread Man!

Our annual Christmas Concert was a real hit again, and was held on the evening of 9 December. We had various vocal and instrumental performances including songs from "Wizard of Oz", which will be our musical show next June. Our wind band and string ensemble played separate selections of Christmas tunes.

Individual highlights were solo vocal performances from Megan Smith and Louise Wallace, and Chris Mack with a bagpipe medley. The show ended with an audience singalong medley of Winter Wonderland and Jingle Bells ... what else?

As a final rehearsal, some of our musicians entertained the Torbain Church lunch club members, who were on a visit to the school that day.



Respect and Remembrance—Lest We Forget



On Sunday 8 November, KHS was part of the Kirkcaldy Armistice Parade. William Rae and Louise Wallace laid a wreath at the town War Memorial and we had pupils singing songs of the Great War at the Adam Smith Theatre. Remembrance continued to be in our minds, and hearts, for the remainder of the week with special assemblies, a wreath laying at our own school memorial and a 2 minute silence across the school on Wednesday 11 November.



We were joined by Private Hutchison and Private Hogg of the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Thanks to William Rae, Calum Hughes and Ross Glancy for the moving monologues they delivered at assemblies. Louise Wallace and Dr Murray sang a beautiful duet - a heartbreaking version of "The Green Fields of France" by Eric Bogle, and Chris Mack played the haunting lament, "Flo'ers o' the Forest", on bagpipes. Thanks to all. Details, including some video clips, are available on Twitter @KirkcaldyHigh.

KHS Celebrates Book Week Scotland

In November, Scots author and poet, Matthew Fitt, visited an S2 English class. He spent time reading from his books 'The Eejits' and 'Billionaire Bairn', Scots versions of 'The Twits' and 'Billionaire Boy'. Scott Kirk volunteered to take the part of Mrs Eejit and ended up a wee bit drookit for his efforts! Matthew also asked pupils about their knowledge of the Scots language and was impressed by their response.



Pupils had the opportunity to ask him about his career and future projects.

Professor Jeremy Smith from the University of Glasgow visited the English Department to talk to two S2 classes as part of Book Week Scotland. He showed them examples of how the English language has changed over the centuries, and how it is still changing. He was also able to adopt several different accents to illustrate some of his points.

The talk was fascinating and entertaining.



Languages Trip to St Andrews University

In the afternoon on Wednesday 18 November Miss Burke and a group of Higher French and Spanish pupils attended a "Meet and Mingle" event with Modern Languages students at the University of St Andrews. This also involved pupils studying languages from other schools in Fife.

Pupils participated in a "Speed Dating" style activity where they met the students briefly and asked them questions relating to university life, studying languages and careers with languages. After this there was a feedback session.

Our pupils found this a very interesting and worthwhile event and they enjoyed the experience of seeing what university is like, meeting the students and also the pupils from other schools.



"National" Biology Zoo Time



On the 26 November, some of the N5 senior pupils from Biology took part in the 'Save our Soils' workshop at Edinburgh Zoo.

We took part in four different workshops and had to work together to

find out which soils are suitable for different animals. Everyone really enjoyed the trip and the visit will help them as part of their coursework.

Fife College Roadshow

Many thanks to Brenda Heenan and her colleagues from Fife College who gave a very interesting illustrated talk to all pupils in S4-6 during the second last week of term. The College staff explained the vast range of opportunities for progression after school and gave information about how entry at National Certificate level can lead to HNC or HND in the College and degree entry at a range of partner universities.

KHS works closely with the College at present with young people attending 2 afternoons a week to study construction skills, hair and beauty or childcare. We intend to expand this next session with new courses in bakery and psychology becoming available.



Emily is our Arkwright Engineering Scholar 2015

We recently celebrated the success of Emily Cunningham (S5) in a national competitive scholarship scheme. The Arkwright Scholarships Trust administers one of the most prestigious scholarship schemes in the UK. Awarded through a rigorous selection process to the highest calibre young people, the Scholarship supports students through their Highers and encourages them to pursue engineering or related areas of design at university or through a high-quality apprenticeship, and to take up careers in the field.

They are supported by mentors from leading industrial companies in the engineering field. The Engineering Scholarships are sponsored by industry, universities, charitable trusts, trade associations, professional engineering institutions, the Armed Services and personal donors. Each scholar receives a £600 support grant and the scholar's school is awarded £400 to support the development of STEM (Science, Technology, Maths and Engineering) across the school.

In recent years, Kirkcaldy High School has often been the leading state school in Scotland in terms of awards. Mr Allan (Rector) said that he was immensely proud of Emily and thanked the school's Design and Engineering Dept for its excellent work in supporting technology in Kirkcaldy High School. "We have the best team around ... and they are growing the engineers of the future", he said. The Rector added that the uptake and success rate of Engineering Science subjects in the school was the highest in Fife and also thanked FMC Technologies, Dunfermline, for its ongoing sponsorship of the application costs associated with the scheme.



Emily is pictured with her parents at the presentation ceremony at the Institute of Engineering Technology in St Enoch Square, Glasgow.

"Nil by Mouth" - Tackling Sectarianism

Nil By Mouth are a registered charity who challenge sectarianism and encourage respect. On Friday 4th December Jamie, their education officer, came in to work with two S4 classes and tell them about the issues surrounding sectarianism within our society.

The session was interactive and engaged pupils in talking about personal attitudes, views and experiences while encouraging them to challenge sectarianism in their own lives and in wider society. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed this experience and were left with much to consider.

Meningitis Now Appeal

We recently hosted Steve Dayman, Executive Founder of Meningitis Now - a remarkable man who has raised over £20 million for meningitis research since the death of his infant son, Spencer, over 30 years ago.

Steve spoke to all S5/6 and we had chance to remember our own Gregor Smith, who died of the disease in 2013.

KHS Has raised almost £7000 for Meningitis Now over the past 2 years and will be fund raising again this year. A sponsored swim is planned for the spring.



Bringing History Alive

Higher History pupils got a rare treat earlier in the term when Fraser Brown, well known World War 1 researcher and historian, and latterly associated with the Black Watch Museum in Perth, visited the school to deliver an Illustrated talk.

Fraser spent the afternoon in KHS and spoke of the impact of the war on the home front in Fife and Angus before explaining the battle plan and tactics used at the battle of Loos, which took place in 1915.

Earlier this year, Fraser had made excellent use of the school's comprehensive archives when researching an academic paper on the impact of the Great War on young people and children across eastern Scotland. The school has records going back to the nineteenth century.

