

### Diary Dates

**Mon 9 Jan 2017** School returns, S4 Reports issued this week

**Wed 11 Jan** S5/6 prelim exams begin

**Sat 14 Jan** English Premier League football trip

**Mon 16 Jan** "Respect for Learning" focus week

**Tues 17 Jan** Primary School Engagement Evenings—Valley and Fair Isle

**Wed 18 Jan** S5/6 Prelims end, Disability Sport Fife football at KHS

**Thurs 19 Jan** English Dept trip to see "The Woman in Black" in Glasgow, Friends of Kirkcaldy High School meeting at 7pm

**Mon 23 Jan** Yeargroup Assemblies this week on the theme of the Holocaust memorial, led by Ashley Davidson and Josh Binnington, who recently visited Auschwitz

**Tues 24 Jan** Visit by renowned author in Scots, Matthew Fitt, S4 Course Choice afternoon, Primary School Engagement Evenings—Torbain and Capshard

**Wed 25 Jan** KHS Burns supper after school

**Tues 31 Jan** House Assemblies this week with LGBT Awareness theme (drama input), visit from Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP (Minister for FE, HE and Science), Parent Council Meeting at 6.30pm, Literacy and Growth Mindset Focus Parent and Carer Evening

**Thurs 2 Feb** Intermediate UK Maths Challenge

**Fri 3 Feb** S2 Reports issued

**Mon 6 Feb** S4 Prelim exams this week

**Wed 8 Feb** S5/6 Reports issued, Rotary Interact Club planting with Greener Kirkcaldy in Beveridge Park

**Mon 13 Feb** Scottish Themed Learning Week, Senior Phase "Destinations Fair" afternoon and evening

**Wed 15 Feb** In-Service Training Day for staff

**Thurs 16 and Fri 17 Feb** Mid-term holidays

**Mon 20 Feb** Yeargroup Assemblies this week with input from Scottish Association for Mental Health

**Wed 22 Feb** Disability Sport Fife football, S2 "Learning Fair" afternoon and evening.

### The Rector Writes ...

**C**an you believe it's almost Christmas? Me neither. As always, it's a time to look over one's shoulder and I have to say that 2016 has been a great year for our school. We've seen excellent successes on so many fronts. I'm reluctant to recount any here because I'm bound to miss some of the most significant. However, in terms of team successes, national finalist places in the "Our Europe" film making competition, the Scottish Public Speaking Championships, the "Enterprising Maths" Competition and the Scottish Education Awards spring to mind. Going one better and winning the Go4SET National "STEM" Competition and the East of Scotland Mock Trials finals is also well worth a mention.

As well as set piece events, so many of our young people have done so much to be proud of; exceeding their own expectations in ways which matter to them personally.

Equally important has been progress with our school's aims, be it our LGBT+ Group breaking down prejudice or our extended partnership working with local employers to help our young people be well prepared for the job market. You'll find that this newsletter will report on all of these things ... and more. Do have a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2017.

*Allan.*

### Week 1 (beginning 24 October)

Our yeargroup assemblies on return had a twin focus; involvement in school sport and "respect for learning". Young people were reminded of the benefits which successful learning brings in life and also reminded of the specifics which promote the best learning; being prepared, settling quickly at the start of lessons, concentrating in class and following teacher instructions without reminder.

Also that first week, it was a pleasure to once again welcome the well-known author in Scots, Matthew Fitt, who has been doing some excellent work with young people to boost their confidence in using their own tongue to express themselves. Matthew was joined by a representative from Education Scotland, which supports "Scots House".

We also held a very successful "Open Evening" for potential intake pupils and their families for August 2017. It was very busy and well received. Thanks to all the staff and young people, especially the Prefects, who supported the event. In January, we'll be holding further parent/carer engagement evenings in Capshard, Fair Isle, Torbain and Valley, with special inputs from S1 and S6 pupils. Any prospective entrant from another school is asked to contact us on 01592 583405.

### Week 2 Highlights

On Tuesday 1 November, all S5 pupils attended the Safe Drive, Stay Alive Roadshow in Glenrothes. They met families affected by careless driving, some having been bereaved. Many of our pupils were deeply moved and all came away with much to consider.

On the Wednesday, our Engineering Science students enjoyed a work placement visit to FMC Technologies in Dunfermline. That evening was the Quiz for all the Kirkcaldy secondary schools, sponsored by Kirkcaldy Rotary Club. After a very closely fought contest, KHS came out on top. It went down to the wire, with Balwearie coming a very close second only 1 point behind. Very well done to our winning team of Catherine Doherty, Lachlan Duncan, David Smith, Rebecca McIntosh, Sohaib Mahmood and Nathan Jenkins (see photo on page 4).

We also had a Science Trip to "Bright Green Hydrogen" based at the Energy Park in Methil in order to take part in the "Hydrogen Challenge" which focused on renewable energy.

On the Thursday evening, our Christmas Fayre drew a very good crowd. We had over 20 traders offering a fantastic range of candles, cosmetics, gifts and jewellery. We also had a bake sale, raffles and other treats. The impressive sum of over £900 was raised and proceeds from the night go to subsidise our S6 Prom and Yearbook. On behalf of our seniors, many thanks to Mr I'Anson and Mrs Hardie for the excellent support they gave this event.

As the Fayre was in full swing, over in Edinburgh, our



**East of Scotland Mock Trial Winners at the Signet Library**

team of S5/6 Modern Studies pupils were scooping the top prize and the Eve Crowe Trophy in a very prestigious legal competition supported by the law faculties of Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities, and held at the Signet Library in Parliament Square, off the High Street. The KHS team, up against other, mainly private, fee-paying, schools from Edinburgh and the Lothians, took part in a mock trial. They had been working very hard on their case for several weeks beforehand and fully deserve to have done so well. It's a magnificent success. Thanks to Miss Ashby and Mrs Meek for their part in it. Above all, congratulations to; Osama Aslam, Alisha O'Callaghan, Ashley Davidson, Jay Elder, Jennifer Thomson and Isla Wright ... the sharpest young legal brains in the East of Scotland!

On Friday 4 November, we had an English Department trip to Holyrood to take part in the "Language in Parliament" event there. It was very stimulating and a bit different.

The visit started with a tour of the building, including some of the original artwork displayed there. Pupils learnt about some of the jobs within the parliament and



**At the Scottish Parliament**

entered the debating chamber. Following this, they took part in 3 workshops led by parliament staff. Through these sessions they developed their skills in editing, speech writing and studied the language used in legislation. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience and felt that it helped develop their skills for school, life and work.

**Week 3 Report**

This was Fife Business Week and school representatives attended an employer event at the Dean Park Hotel on the Monday morning. We are continuing to extend our business engagement model to provide a greater range of work related skills for our learners. Well done to Miss McIntosh and Miss Nessel, our employability team leaders for their excellent work in this field.

On the Monday, the Rector presented Dynamic Youth Awards to the S1 pupils who took part in our enhanced transition programme as they stepped up from primary before the summer. Many thanks to Sonia McCathie of Fife Council Community Learning and Development for her excellent support of this programme.

On Tuesday through to Thursday our House Assemblies had a fo-



**Logan Thomson S1, Poppy Scotland**

cus on Remembrance with senior students Lachlan Duncan and Cameron Lafferty delivering poignant monologues which were an echo of the brief lives of some of the 105 former KHS pupils who died in the Great War. We also showed a Poppy Scotland video clip about that organisation's support for Stuart Proud-

foot, a former pupil who was badly hurt on active service in Iraq. Stuart's nephew, Logan Thomson (S1), also spoke about his fundraising for Poppy Scotland. This reached over £1200 - very well done Logan.

Also, on the Tuesday, two S6 students, Josh Binnington and Ashley Davidson, headed to Poland as part of the "Lessons from Auschwitz" programme, organised by the Holocaust Memorial Trust. Josh and Ashley visited the Nazi death camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau. They found it a very moving experience and in January they will lead at assemblies here, sharing their memories and photographs and emphasising the importance of cooperation and respect for difference in contrast to the conflict and hate of extreme regimes.

On the Thursday night, Mr Young and Mr Allan met with the parents/carers of the young people in S5 who are undertaking a course of 5 Higher exams to make sure that all possible supports are in place. We have a mentoring programme supported by "Friends of Kirkcaldy High School" and a special study space adjacent to the library. Chloe Newton (S6), who achieved 5 Highers earlier this session was able to offer some terrific advice. We had an excellent turnout, thanks to parents/carers who attended.

For all those taking exams, from January we will be laying on "Saturday School" and we will also be operating study sessions over the Easter Holidays. This is in addition to the lunchtime and after school study support programme has been shared by email and on Twitter.

**Week 4 Notes**

The week started with all Second Year pupils involved in a "Speedy STEM" Challenge Day in our Hall supported by the Hydrogen Office of Methil, Fife College and the RAF. The focus was on renewable energy and designing engineering solutions to energy problems - including building a boat with wind powered paddles.

On the Tuesday, our "Enterprising Maths" team represented Fife in the Scottish finals held at the Glasgow Science Centre. Well done to Dominika Kaliszuk Valente, John Hamilton, Gaby Ward and Michael Panarella, who competed

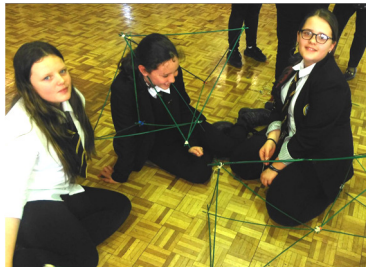
so well, bringing back a lovely crystal trophy. Thanks also to Miss Grubb for her excellent support. It was also our S1 Parent/Carer Evening on Tuesday and it was really good to see such a healthy attendance on the night.

On Wednesday we had special assemblies for all yeargroups on the theme of facial disfigurement - many thanks to the "Changing Faces" Charity and speaker Lorna Telford, who handled a very difficult subject very well. Our young people were very attentive and will now be better prepared to deal with disfigurement or people who appear different in a sensitive and fair way.



**Scottish Finals of Enterprising Maths**

The Rotary Club Young Musician Competition was held at Balwearie High School on the Wednesday



**S2 Speedy STEM in the Hall**

night - very well done to vocalist Aimee Lindsay (S4), who competed well against older musicians. Many thanks to Mr Britain for his support.

The Friday was our spotty themed dress down day in support of Children in Need with various fund raising events. It was good fun and raised well over £700. Also, our U13 footballers had an excellent result away to Portlethen Academy in the Scottish Shield, winning 5-0. (see photo on page 3). Very well done to them and good luck in the next round.

**Week 5 News**

This was Book Week Scotland with pupils promoting the value of reading at assemblies. Well done to all of them, they were very good communicators.

Many were especially impressed by Sam Aslam (S5),

who spoke with great passion about the power of books. Sam is also a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Staff shared their latest reading with pupils by using a poster on their classroom door to show their current book.

We also had a visit by children's author Danny Weston on the Wednesday and an "opening lines" quiz running all week.

On Monday 21 Nov all S5/6 were taken off their usual timetable to work on employability skills, based on statements of what they can do. For example, preparing a CV or conducting themselves appropriately in a job interview.

Then, on the Tuesday, we had a meeting with a good range of local employers to look at ways of extending our ability to get our leavers "job ready". We discussed work experience, careers talks, mentoring, mock interviews and sponsorship opportunities.

Please check Twitter @KHS\_Futures for the latest employability bulletin with local vacancies. Something to think about for the future, or, in some cases, to act upon right now.

The Wednesday evening was another parent/carer engagement - this time for S4 National 5 Maths candidates. Mrs Hamilton (Principal Teacher of Maths) and Miss Grubb (Teacher) led a session on this important qualification and gave advice about supporting young people to achieve their very best in maths/numeracy.

Thanks to all who contributed, especially Cameron Lafferty (S6), who spoke very well. It was also a chance for parents/carers to acquire past papers. We find that lots of exam practice from now until May is the best way to enhance chances. We have also adjusted the S4 timetable slightly between now and the SQA exams in order to maximise opportunities for success.

**Danny Weston Book Signing**



On the Thursday morning our History students had a rare treat when Fraser Brown, an expert researcher into World War One and formerly of the Black watch Museum in Perth gave an illustrated talk.



**The cast of "Three" working with the National Theatre of Scotland**

That evening, Erin Kyles and Umar Mohammed represented the school at the Auld Kirk, picking up the Mary Leishman Award, worth £500, from Provost Jim Leishman.

The award is given to support young people's engagement in music and the performing arts and this sum will go towards our participation in the National Theatre of Scotland "Connections" event next year.

Our drama students will be staging a performance at the Royal Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh next March ... quite an opportunity for our budding actors and actresses. Many thanks to the Provost, his continued support of Fife's youth is greatly appreciated.

For all senior phase students (S4-6) there is now an increasingly strong focus on preparing for the exams. With that in mind we'll share details of our prelim exams (January for S5/6 and February for S4) soon. Our Saturday School revision programme (from January to March) will also be issued shortly. Details of our lunchtime and after school study support classes are currently published daily on "Twitter" and there are posters up around the school.

We also had House Assemblies (from Tuesday to Thursday) at which we welcomed Marie Penman representing Refuge Fife. This is a locally based charity which supports refugees; those who have settled in Fife and those who are in temporary camps across Europe and the Middle East. Jan McColl is one of the volunteers and she was lined up to deliver the assemblies. Unfortunately, she is currently

stranded in Greece, sleeping in a truck on a mercy mission.

Mrs Penman delivered a sometimes quite shocking presentation highlighting the struggles faced by Syrian refugees. Our young people are being asked to donate items of clothing which they no longer need to help these kids keep warm this winter. Once again, before Christmas, Jan McColl and her team will be travelling by truck overland to a camp in Thessaloniki, Greece. All donations of clothing suitable for children of all ages will be gratefully accepted. Bags have begun to come in already.

Our Rotary Interact Club handed a cheque for £180 to Refuge Fife after completing a sponsored walk recently. Very well done to them.

On the Tuesday afternoon, Kingdom FM visited school to record a "Beat the Boss" quiz session for the Euan Notman lunchtime show. You can perhaps understand Mr Allan's apprehension when he was invited to pit his wits against team KHS, the Kirkcaldy Schools' quiz champions 2016. The show went out all the following week. Let's just say it was very close!

Then, on the Thursday afternoon, it was a pleasure for KHS to host a netball tournament for teams from our associated primaries: Capshard, Fair Isle, Torbain and Val-



**Achievement Focus: Arkwright Engineering Scholarship 2016. David Moir (S5)**

On Friday 11 November, at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre, at a highly prestigious presentation ceremony, David Moir was presented with an Arkwright Engineering Scholarship. Very well done David!

This means industry mentoring, sponsorship and financial support to help David pursue his dream to become an engineer. David intends to apply to Heriot-Watt University next session with that aim in mind.

Well done also to our CDT team under Mr Morrice, which has an excellent track record of supporting budding Arkwright Scholars. For several years now, KHS has had the highest number of awards for any state school in Scotland. David is pictured with sponsor Scott Kennedy of Lloyd's Register at the event in Edinburgh.



**Interact Club Cheque for Refuge Fife**

The week ended with our first Christmas engagement. Our school orchestra played carols at the switch on of the ASDA Christmas lights in the afternoon.

That evening, our "First Chances" group of young people who are being mentored by undergraduates at St Andrews University had an evening class session in St Andrews. Many thanks to Mrs Hunter, coordinator.

**Week 6 Headlines**

Week beginning 28 November was a Personal Learning Planning week for all of our S4 pupils, who had discussions with teachers about targets and about what they need to do next to do their very best in the SQA qualifications in May 2017. Full reports will be posted home in the New Year. S5/6 also received their latest On Track report on the Tuesday in advance of the following week's parent/carer evening.

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On Friday 2 December, accompanied by Prefect representatives, the Rector attended the funeral of Councillor Kay Carrington, who represented the Kirkcaldy East Ward and was a very powerful community champion. Kay was also a great friend to KHS, she will be sadly missed and is a sore loss to the Fife political scene.

On the Saturday, our Interact Club were active again, when they assisted with bag packing at ASDA in support of Kirkcaldy Foodbank. As well collecting clothes for sending out to Thessaloniki, we are currently taking donations of non-perishable foodstuffs in support of Kirkcaldy Foodbank.

Thanks to those who brought along a donation when they attended our Christmas Concert recently.

**"Show My Homework"**

Please remember that SMHW" is our online resource to assist pupils and parents/carers to track, remember and even return their homework. Users can download

the app for your phone or tablet to receive notifications re homework due.

For anyone who is unable to do this, remember you can still access SMHW and see the whole school homework calendar.

There is a link on the KHS website. Please reassure your son/daughter that homework does not necessarily need to be returned electronically. Pupils can complete homework in jotters to hand back.

**Being On Time; Punctuality Matters**

Punctuality is an aspect of school life which employers frequently ask us about in reports on pupils they are considering employing.

To help our young people prepare for the job market, we have an emphasis on being on time and repeated lateness results in a "reflective exercise" undertaken during a lunchtime detention.

From the start of December, we have been making contact home via text message when a young person is late and make contact in person if the problem persists.



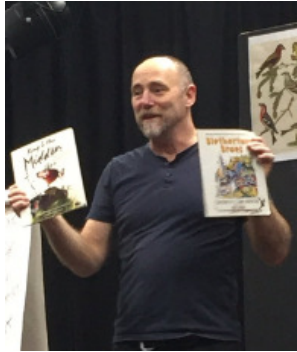
**KHS Under 13 Footballers, Scottish Shield Success**

## Week Beginning 5 December

On Tuesday 6 December, we welcomed well known crime author Craig Robertson, to talk about his work. Our English students found this of great interest.

It was our S5/6 Parent/Carer Evening on the Wednesday and it was great to see such a good turnout.

On the Thursday we hosted the "Scots Scriever" Hamish MacDonald, who has the national role of promoting Scots language, sponsored by the National Library of Scotland. As a school, we have a particular focus on the use of Scots and are looking forward to a return visit from Matthew Fitt in January. Matthew has been a great support and is best known for his Scots language translations of Tintin, Asterix the Gaul and Roald Dahl stories.



**Hamish MacDonald performing at KHS**

Coincidentally, in the evening, a good number of our S6 attended the Kirkcaldy Schools Ceilidh at the Dean Park Hotel - it was organised by young people from St Andrew's High School this year - and it was an excellent occasion, fair braw you might even say.

Our mentors, who are all "Friend of Kirkcaldy High School" had another session with S5 students on Friday 9 December. I must thank them for their excellent support of our young people.

## The Penultimate Week

During this week we launched our "Free Soup at Lunchtime" healthy eating initiative and had year group assemblies with a musical input. Monday it was our Inter-house "Bake-Off". Well done to all the staff who took part in front of a large crowd of pupils.

On Tuesday we had a trip to the Christmas Chemistry Lecture at St Andrews University. Then on

Wednesday we held our annual Christmas Concert. It was, as ever, a terrific occasion, with musical, dramatic and comical items.

The following evening was our Rotary Interact "Hi-5" Games Night when we welcomed young people from all the Kirkcaldy schools.

Then, on Friday, all our First Years and some from Second Year enjoyed their trip to the Adam Smith Theatre for the pantomime, Cinderella. Especially well done to Laurie Hunter (S2), who dances in the show.

## Follow Us on "Twitter" and the web

One of the best ways to keep in touch with what is happening at KHS is to follow us on "Twitter". With almost 2000 followers, our account is the most popular of any Fife school. As well as news and photos, Twitter can be very useful in cases of an emergency such as a school closure caused by bad weather. Please catch us @KirkcaldyHigh.

Our website is also a particularly useful resource. Here you will find detailed information about the way we work and how things are organised. Also, on our home page, there is a link to revision and study materials which will be invaluable for those undertaking SQA prelims and final exams over the coming months.

## Final Week of Term Roundup

During the final week we are holding House Assemblies (Tuesday to Thursday) and it will be a pleasure to welcome our school chaplain Ken Froude to lead our time for reflection at each of these.

We also have a couple of trips; the McManus Art Galleries in Dundee and the Edinburgh Continental Christmas Market.



**Team KHS: Kirkcaldy Schools Quiz Champions 2016**

It's our Christmas Disco on the Wednesday evening and school closes at 12.15pm on Friday 23 December. That day is a "Dress Down" day in support of Refuge Fife and we also have the traditional staff X Factor—always a bit of fun for the end of term.

We return after the holidays on Monday 9 January 2017.

## Consultation on our Vision, Values and Curriculum Rationale

Many thanks to all parents/carers who returned our questionnaire. It seems clear that our values are well understood and widely regarded as being a suitable expression of our purpose. We will continue to promote;

- RESPECT FOR SELF
- RESPECT FOR OTHERS
- RESPECT FOR LEARNING.

We have decided to rejig our "mission statement" to strengthen its emphasis on ambition and "growth mindset". It will now record that we aim to always be;

***"a happy, fair and supportive learning community which improves life chances through inspiring ambition, creativity, hard work and perseverance."***

## Our Mobile Phone Policy

We understand that most young people are likely to carry a mobile phone these days. As long as it is understood that the school cannot be held responsible for loss or damage, this is perfectly acceptable.

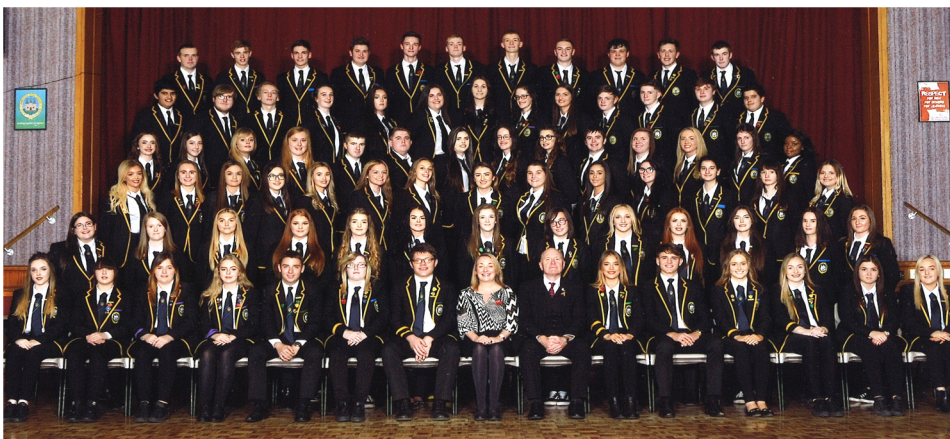
To ensure that mobiles do not disturb learning, they are banned from use or from being in sight during lessons unless the teacher asks that they be used for an educational purpose, for example to photograph a science experiment or a work produced in an art class. They may also be used to note homework eg via the "Show My Homework" app. Personal music and the use of earphones is banned during lessons and in the corridors for reasons of health and safety.

Please do not attempt to make direct contact with your son or daughter during lesson times. Should you have a strong need to be in touch, simply call the school and we will bring your son or daughter to the office to speak with you.

Should learning ever be disturbed by any young person's use of a mobile phone in class, it may be confiscated by the teacher. In some cases, when it is clear that a young person cannot use their phone responsibly, we will expect parental backing in having the phone kept at home. As always, thanks for your cooperation

## National Review of School Governance

We wish to invite all parents/carers to take part in a Scottish Government consultation about the ways in which schools are run and funded. At present, local authorities are responsible. However, the Government has published a paper which looks at different possible future models. One aim is close the "attainment gap" between schools in wealthier and less well off areas. You can access the governance review online and make a response at; <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/thegovernancereview>



**Kirkcaldy High School Prefect Team 2016-2017**