

Diary Dates

Mon 23 Oct Year assemblies all week with the Imam and representatives of Kirkcaldy Mosque

Tues 24 Oct Shakespeare Schools Festival workshop, Languages trip to Dundee Contemporary Arts, FoKHS Meeting

Wed 25 Oct "Blood Brothers" Theatre Trip to Dunfermline

Thurs 26 Oct P7 Open Evening (all welcome to tour school)

Mon 30 Oct S1 assembly with Gideons International, also S1 Road Safety Drama Show pm

Tues 31 Oct S3-S6 Employability/Careers Fair

Wed 1 Nov S2 Learning Fair

Fri 3 Nov FoKHS Fundraising Race Night, SQA Star Awards Final, Edinburgh (Miss Diamond)

Mon 6 Nov Barclays Life Skills sessions for "Money Week"

Tues 7 Nov House assemblies this week with "Remembrance" theme, Senior UK Maths Challenge, visit of Nathan Sparling (Campaigns Director of HIV Scotland)

Wed 8 Nov STEM learning event for girls in KHS Hall

Thurs 9 Nov Modern Apprenticeship Fair at Ingliston, S6 Christmas Fayre fund raiser in Hall, Rotary Club Quiz for S6

Sun 12 Nov Wreath laying at Kirkcaldy War Memorial 11am

Mon 13 Nov KHS LGBT Group presenting at "Respectme" Conference in Glasgow, S5 "Safe Drive" Roadshow in Glenrothes

Tues 14 Nov KHS performing "Much Ad About Nothing" at the Byre Theatre as part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival

Wed 15 Nov "Speedy STEM" event in KHS, S1 Parent/Carer Evening

Fri 17 Nov Staff Training Day (school closed for pupils)

Tues 21 Nov National 5 Maths & English Parent/Carer Evening

Fri 24 Nov Investment 2020 event at Standard Life, Edinburgh, "Quadcopter" Competition at Raytheon, Glenrothes

Tues 28 Nov House assemblies this week (Book Week Scotland), Parent Council meeting for all on the theme of online safety

Thurs 30 Nov "Book Week" visit of crime writer Doug Johnstone

Mon 4 Dec S2 assembly with the Teenage Cancer Trust

Tues 5 Dec S5/6 Parent/Carer Evening

Wed 6 Dec Dundee Science Centre in school working with S4

Sat/Sun 9 and 10 Dec Premier League football trip to Huddersfield and Manchester United

Mon 11 Dec Year assemblies this week, with school orchestra and soloists performing

Thurs 14 Dec Christmas Concert

Fri 15 Dec S1 Trip to panto, Aladdin at Adam Smith Theatre

Tues 19 Dec House assemblies this week with Ken Froude, school chaplain

Wed 20 Dec Christmas Disco/Party

Fri 22 Dec Dress down day, staff talent show and early close for holidays. Merry Christmas!

Mon 8 Jan 2018 School returns. Happy New Year!

The Rector Writes ...

Welcome to the first of our termly newsletters for session 2017-2018. We've had a real whirlwind term with a good number of successes ... as you'll see from the stories and reports included here.

You'll also see that there is a brief report of the recent Annual General Meeting of the KHS Parent Council. It was particularly heartening to welcome new members. We really do rely on your interest and support to always be an effective school. At the meeting, we discussed the recent SQA exam results and had a focus on future improvement planning.

You can find detailed information on our website: www.fifedirect.org.uk/kirkcaldyhs. Please look out for our Standards and Quality Report (SQR) as well as the Improvement Plan for the session ahead. You will also find a simplified version of our plan on the back page of this Newsletter.

As always, we strive to be responsive to your needs. With that in mind, please try to take a little time (probably no more than 5 minutes) to complete the Fife Council "Parentwise" survey online here; www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ParentW2017. This will help us to continue to do our very best.

Many thanks, and best wishes.

The First Week Back

A feature of any new session is to reflect on the SQA exam results. We had some cause for satisfaction, with rising trends in most indicators.

As we know, every individual's best is inevitably different, and it's always hard to single out individual students. However, we did have that group of six young people who could not have achieved any more, they scored straight "A" Grades; Cameron Bowie, Shannon Houston, Rebecca Meekison, Kiara Montgomery, Kitty Pham and Mollie Turner. This is an exceptional achievement ... special congratulations go to them. They were awarded Achiever's Ties at assembly.

Also, a warm welcome was extended to the new staff who have joined us; Miss Kerr - CDT, Mr Spink - Modern Languages, Miss Duff - Physics, Mr Fairley - Mathematics, Miss Shepherd - Geography and Ms Birrell - Pupil Support Assistant. We also gave best wishes to Gillian Easson (Pupil Support Officer) who is now on maternity leave after the birth of her son, Logan.

Week 2 Highlights

In the second week of term we held House Assemblies, with Adam Smith on Tuesday, Oswald on Wednesday and Carlyle on Thursday. These were to welcome the new S1 and introduce our House Leaders and Captains.

On the Monday, English pupils had a great day out at the Edinburgh International Book Festival and on Wednesday, our Sports Ambassadors enjoyed an excellent training experience at St Andrews University. Our Sports Leaders, which is a different group, also helped out (afternoon and evening) at the Templehall Family Fun Afternoon.

On Tuesday, our S5/6 students had a special PSE input on employability and future pathways, with a focus on securing and sustaining a positive destination after school; college, an apprenticeship, university place or a job.

To assist us to build this culture across the school, we now have a group of seniors trained by staff from "Skills Development Scotland". They are our "My World of Work" ambassadors for KHS. It's a peer mentoring role (see page 4).

On the Friday, we welcomed a delegation of 12 teachers from across Europe. Mr Young (Depute Head) had put together a rich programme for our guests, who were keen to know more about Scottish education. KHS has been identified as an example of one of the schools with much to share as "good practice". Thanks to all the staff who welcomed our European colleagues and to the Prefects (shown below) who showed them around.

Also, it was great to welcome back a former pupil, Mohsin Muhammed. Mohsin is now a fourth year medical student at Glasgow University and he is also an entrepreneur. He gave a very interesting talk about post-school learning with our Higher Biology and Personal Development students. We are grateful to Mohsin for a thought provoking presentation.



KHS Prefect Team 2017-2018. The team has made a very good start to the session.

Third Week Headlines

Week beginning 28 August was another busy one, with yeargroup assemblies all week. For all years, we emphasised road safety. Our pupils travel to and from school along busy routes and we are ever conscious of the danger factor, especially along Dunnikier Way, Hendry Road and Whyteman's Brae. Please do reinforce this message at home.

On Tuesday, there was a special lunch at Kirkcaldy Rotary Club with awards for S6 Prefects Kyle Dick and Chloe McGlashan. Kyle and Chloe were part of the "RYLA" leadership programme, based in the Cairngorms, during the summer holiday and gave an excellent presentation to the Club. It was also a "Friends of KHS" meeting that evening. We are always so grateful for the support received.



Kyle Dick and Chloe McGlashan RYLA Leadership Awards

Wednesday saw an English Department trip to Jupiter Artland near Edinburgh (see insert, right), whilst our Higher Geography pupils took part in hydrology workshop sessions supported by St Andrews University.

After school that day, we had a group of fifteen S5/6 students across at the University of Edinburgh Law School for the first session of their mock trial competition.

This takes place over the coming months with the final held in the High Court. Thanks to Miss Ashby for her support of our young people. Let's hope we can emulate last session's success, when we were declared the winners of the Eve Crowe Trophy, beating off competition from state and private schools from all over the East of Scotland.

The week ended with a visit from Katie Rafferty, Director of "RespectMe", which is Scotland's

main anti-bullying service and is supported by the Scottish Government.

You will perhaps know that KHS was commended in the Scottish Parliament as a school which is effectively tackling prejudice based bullying and discrimination, especially in relation to sexual orientation.

Katie met our LGBT student group and discussed "school ethos" with our Learning Council at lunchtime. "RespectMe" has now asked KHS to give a presentation at a national conference on bullying and discrimination which will be held in Glasgow on 13 November.

Week Beginning 4 September

Our new outdoor cafe/kiosk started operating during this week. There is varied menu and we have placed several picnic benches in a sheltered corner of the playground. The tills accept cash or the prepaid "Myfife" card and this has had a positive impact on the queues in our main dining room.

There really is no need for any young people to be leaving the school over lunchtime, especially if it is in pursuit of junk food! By using the online "top up" system parents/carers can be sure that their son or daughter's dinner money is spent on a nutritious meal. Details available at: www.fifedirect.org.uk/schoolpayments

On the Monday afternoon, Mrs Davidson organised a work experience trip to the Kwik Fit Training Academy at Broxburn and this was very helpful for those involved.

In the evening, Mr I'Anson took a supporters' bus to Hampden for the Scotland v Malta World Cup Qualifier.

That Tuesday was a training day for our Sports Ambassadors at Perth Concert Hall. Well done to Mollie Turner (S5), one of our Ambassadors. Mollie organised a collection unwanted sports equipment and clothing for distribution



Visit of Katie Rafferty, Director of "RespectMe" - Tackling Bullying

to less well-off families.

After school on the Wednesday our LGBT Support Group took part in a Fife wide meeting of equali-

Artland Trip Triggers the Imagination

The Temple of Apollo. In Memory. Weeping Girls. Just a few of the exciting and thought provoking sculptures pupils discovered on their trip to Jupiter Artland on Wednesday 30 August.

After a longer than expected journey, during which the S3 and S6 pupils were among the first people to use the Queensferry Crossing, we arrived at the beautiful grounds of Jupiter Artland, near Edinburgh.

Pupils were introduced to Peter Liversedge's 'Jupiter Proposals' in which he imagines a group of people from Jupiter, called the Jovians, coming to live in Jupiter Artland. As they were guided around the grounds, pupils were asked to imagine that the sculptures were the remnants of Jovian society. This led to an interesting workshop in the afternoon, during which pupils wrote about their ideas.

Pupils definitely felt their imaginations stirred by their visit, with a few deciding to join the school's Creative Writing club so that they can continue to write about their experience.



ties groups at Queen Anne High School. On the Thursday night, Mr Farquharson (PT Guidance) led a special Parent/Carer evening for S5/6 considering a University application in the next few months. This went very well.

On Friday 8 Sept, we had Morgan Faulds and Cara Hayes (both S3) as guest speakers at the Fife Children's Services Conference in Glenrothes. The girls talked about the impact of "adverse childhood experiences" in front of 400 education, social work and health professionals. Other speakers included the former Governor of Polmont Young

Offenders Institution. Morgan and Cara are currently the East of Scotland Procurator Fiscal's Public Speaking Champions.

They greatly impressed the audience with their take on a really important issue. We are very proud of them.

We also posted out our tracking report for S4 that day, hoping that it would be a spur for those who need it. Fourth Year is a big step up, with SQA exams next May. Also, Miss Diamond (Yearhead) included a letter with the Tracking Report. It reminded parents/carers of the ongoing importance of internal assessment in ensuring success in the National Qualifications.

Miss Diamond also gave details of our special Parent/Carer evening on Tuesday 21 November. There will be a particular focus on what is required to succeed at National 5 level with inputs from Mrs Hamilton (Head of Maths) and Mrs Hume (Head of English).

Week 5 Report

This week (beginning 11 September) was Maths Week Scotland. As well as in-class activities we had a "Growth Mindset" in Maths parent/carer evening for S1 on the Wednesday. This was very well attended "family learning" event.

Well done Mrs Hamilton (Principal Teacher) and her team for their excellent work in promoting numeracy as a vital life skill. It is well understood that many Scots have a poor attitude to Maths. We need to change this to prosper as part of a hi-tech global economy.

On the following night the Maths Department organised a number based "Treasure Hunt" around Kirkcaldy. This was fantastic fun. Congratulations to the Science staff who made up the winning team and thanks to the parents/carers who joined us.

Also that week, our Drama Department really enjoyed their trip to the Adam Smith Theatre to take in the National Theatre Live performance of "Yerma" which featured an award winning performance by Billie Piper.

During the day on Thursday, our S4 Modern Studies pupils were shown around Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court, which was a great learning experience. An S5/6 group had visited the previous week. We have quite a few young people who are interested in a career in law.

At the end of the day we had a

parent/carer evening for our "First Chances" candidates. As you will likely know, this is an excellent wider access programme with St Andrews University. It's an opportunity for working class kids with no family tradition of Higher Education to experience university. On the Friday, we posted home a



Family Learning on "Growth Mindset"

"tracking" report for all S5/6 students. As with the S4, this will be very helpful information. It will help our young people understand what needs to be done to keep "on track" for success in the SQA exams in 2018 and gives parents/carers a chance to engage in learning. It will be an indication of who needs to work that bit harder to cope with the step up to "Higher".

Also that Friday, representatives from the Fire Service were in school to talk about "Gary's Appeal". Maybe you saw the story on the front cover of the Fife Free Press? Gary Dall is a local firefighter who has a very rare type of blood cancer and Kirkcaldy Fire Station crew held a public donor registration event for the Anthony Nolan Trust at the Station last Saturday. A fair number of our

young people have signed up as bone marrow donors. Best wishes to Gary Dall.

Week Beginning 18 September

We had Yeargroup Assemblies during this week with an input from the School Nurse Team, explaining about the services they offer, including our sexual health drop-in, pregnancy testing and contraception service which runs every Friday.

They also reiterated the official advice about head lice. We've had a couple of cases reported recently and the official response is to use lots of conditioner and a tight comb to "wet comb" hair if lice are present. Pharmacists can also prescribe a special shampoo for free, but this is not usually required. Please do be alert rather than alarmed, but also remember that head lice are quite easily transmitted in a close community like a school.

Our S5/6 pupils also had a focus on The Science of Learning and how important it is to space out their learning frequently in terms of revisiting it at home and also making a big effort to optimise their results in the assignment internal assessment element of their courses.

On Tuesday evening, it was the Annual General Meeting of our Parent Council. Chairman Derek Dunsire welcomed several new members and it was a very positive meeting. Mr Allan was able to share the good news about the SQA exam results and Mrs Aitken went over our Improvement Plan from a parent's perspective.

We also had inputs from Mr Dick (Teacher Representative) and an update from Jay Elder and Isla Wright (Head Boy and Girl), who explained their roles and talked about recent developments in school, such as our involvement with "Respectme", Scotland's anti-bullying charity.

The next Parent Council meeting will be an information session for you on "Internet Safety", especially issues such as online grooming, "sexting", sharing images and the use of social media, including "Snapchat" and other apps which can sometimes be used inappropriately or in unsafe ways. This will take place in our Library on Tuesday 28 November and we hope that many of you will come along ... the Parent Council thought that this was a bit of a "hot topic". You will receive a formal invitation soon.

On the Wednesday, our S4 Modern Studies pupils had a very informative talk in school from

Lesley Laird, the new MP for Kirkcaldy. S6 pupils with a university place in their sights attended the "UCAS" Convention, which took place at the Rothes Halls, Glenrothes, in the afternoon.

On the Thursday evening, the Rector was honoured to be the guest speaker at the Annual General Meeting of the "Clued Up" Project. This is an excellent support for the school which mainly works with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and especially those affected by drug and substance abuse. This agency is based at the east end of the High Street opposite the harbour and offers counselling and group-work in KHS. Mr Allan spoke about the impact of poverty on learning and the important work which groups such as "Clued Up" do.

The week closed with a group of female Business students attending the "Future Assets" Conference at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. This was all about empowering young women and the main speaker was First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

The Penultimate Week of Term

This week saw our Advanced Higher geography students away at a fieldwork camp in Perthshire.

We also had our outdoor education "team building" trips for all S1. These were an outstanding success. Mrs Aitken came back to school still buzzing on the Wednesday after joining the Adam Smith group at Fordell Firs Scout Centre near Dunfermline.



Work Shadowing at Robertson's Coffee Shop

All those who took part did so in the right spirit ... they gave it a go, looked out for each other and learned from mistakes. Well done to them. Check out the photos on "Twitter".

As well as this experience, it was our "Employability Week" for S3. This was a terrific event which involved many employers and other local partners helping us to link our young people to the world of work more effectively (see photo).

Many thanks to those who were part of it; The Cottage Family Centre, Kirkcaldy Galleries, The Sign Company, Pay Wizard, The Spiral Weave, Chapel Level Care Home, Sainsburys, Bank of Scotland, Robertson's Coffee Shop, Dunning Golf Club, Fife College, Bright Green Hydrogen (Methyl), ASDA, Michael Woods Leisure Centre, Fife Council Apprenticeship Centre, the RAF and the British Army.

All our pupils had an employer talk in school and a visit to a local workplace as well as other career pathway related experiences in and out of classes. Thanks to Miss Nessel and Mrs Davidson for their excellent organisation of this complex event.

Roman Invasion of KHS

Little did the S3 Latin class expect that they would be doing a different kind of "target setting" in their Tuesday afternoon lesson in early September.

Totally out of the blue, two "Roman soldiers", fully armed and equipped, burst into the lesson looking for recruits to join their ranks. Some pupils were brave enough to volunteer. Others were forced at sword-point, to undergo the initial training, which involved handling weapons and practising quick-step marching.

The highlight of this lesson for many pupils was to see an authentic display of archery, with exact replica arrows being fired into a straw target by the Roman Sagittarius, or archer. Some pupils had a shot too. Most almost hit the target, with one, Aidan Grubb, actually getting a bulls-eye, with such force that the arrow pierced right through to the other side!

Thanks to Douglas Eckhart and his archer Sean from "Real Roman Tours" for giving us a rigorous, but enjoyable, taste of Roman army life!



We also had assemblies. The main speaker was Ken Froude, the school chaplain. Ken gave a thought provoking address using the tale of "Snow White" to illustrate human frailty and the importance of self-belief.

On the Wednesday evening, our



KHS "My World of Work" Ambassadors with Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

Drama students largely enjoyed their trip to the Adam Smith Theatre to see "A Streetcar Named Desire" by Tennessee Williams. This was after their rehearsals for the upcoming Shakespeare Schools Festival performance of "Much Ado About Nothing" this November at the Byre Theatre in St Andrews.

On the Friday we had our friends from St Andrews University in school giving presentations to our S4 and S5 pupils on the "REACH" programme. This involves support and guidance throughout the university application process, aiming to give pupils the tools, know-how and confidence to stretch themselves and succeed in higher education. The project provides advice regarding school subject choices and a variety of events and workshops to learn more about higher education. Many thanks to Mrs Hunter for organising this.

The other big story of that week was our appearance on "Reporting Scotland" on Tuesday evening. We hosted BBC Education Correspondent Jamie McIvor for the afternoon and were the main part of his report about homophobic bullying. Stonewall Scotland have produced survey findings which show that homophobia, although in decline, remains a big issue across Scotland.

In KHS, with our proactive approach to equality issues and an effective LGBT student support group, we are in a better place. We were identified by Stonewall Scotland as leading best practice nationally.

KHS is regarded as a safe and supportive community for young people, regardless of sexual orientation. We are very proud of the young people who contributed. They are happy to be themselves, and are right to expect fair and equal treatment and respect.

The Final Week of Term

There was no let up to a busy term, with the school photographs for S1, S3 and S6 on the Monday. If you wish to take up the offer, please ensure that your orders are returned by Friday 27 October.

We also shared that, over the coming months, all S2 pupils will be given an appointment with a

Skills Development Scotland Careers Adviser.

This is to help in developing career management skills as well as offering careers information, advice and guidance to all pupils. Young people will have the chance to discuss their upcoming subject choices.

All parents/carers of S2 are also offered the opportunity to attend this appointment too. Please let us know if you would like to attend with your son/daughter by contacting:

Julie.Lautredou@sds.co.uk and Julie will get back in touch to arrange a suitable time and date.

We'll be holding our "Learning Fair" earlier than usual this session. This is to allow S2 to start thinking about "pathways". It will be held on Wednesday 1 November. Please stand by for a letter of invitation.

On the Tuesday evening, it was S3 Parent/Carer Evening. Following comments from the Parent Council, we have changed the format, with teachers in classrooms rather than in the Hall, Library etc. It seemed to be easier to manage and gave more privacy. Thanks for your feedback, the change appears to have worked very well.

Wednesday was the Oswald Assembly with our school chaplain



Our Macmillan Coffee Morning Raised £214

and then a "sign up" session for the S6 considering a university application this year through "UCAS". There was also a "First Chances" tutoring session after school with St Andrews University.

On the Thursday, our Personal Development students organised a staff coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support and this was a great success, raising £214.

In the afternoon, all S1 were given a safety talk by firefighters from Fire and Rescue, based at Kirkcaldy Fire Station. This was timed to convey a safety message in the run up to Bonfire Night.

Also that evening, Mr I'Anson and Mr English took a bus load to Hampden, for Scotland v Slovakia.

The term ended with a dress down day in aid of the Fife Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (FRASAC), a local charity selected by our Charities Committee.

The group also organised a sponsored walk for S6 in the afternoon. They walked up Johnny's Loan and around Dunnikier Park in aid of Kirkcaldy Foodbank.

Before that, we had Skills Development Scotland staff in school to continue the training programme for our S6 "My World of Work" Ambassadors.

These are the peer mentors who visit primaries and junior classes to promote work skills and help younger kids begin to understand career pathways etc (photo left).

That day held an "Active Girls" event for S2, with dance, various exercise activities and even a taster session for Australian Rules Football! You can see some photos on Twitter.

There was also much hilarity in the Hall that final morning as we held our Maths Department murder trial! All our S1 pupils had been cracking clues all term and a specially selected jury today came to the conclusion that Mr Cromb was responsible for the "murder" of Mrs Aitken (Senior Depute Head). It was a bit like "CSI" ... But all in good fun with lots of puzzles and active learning.

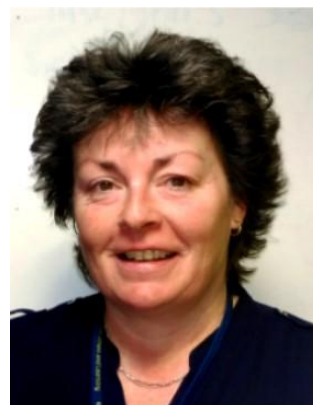
Many thanks to those who completed a paper version of the "Parentwise" survey at the S3 Parent/Carer Evening that week. We really value your views and we kindly ask all parents carers to take a little time (probably no more than 5 minutes) to complete the Life Cycle survey online; www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ParentW2017

It is so important to receive feedback and your responses/comments go straight to the Council for consideration. Please try to find that 5 minutes.

Finally, we were delighted to learn that our very own Audrey Diamond (Depute Rector), has been shortlisted for the SQA "Star Awards".

Miss Diamond is a terrific asset to the school and is clearly valued by the national qualifications agency also.

She works long hours to support the exam system, mainly at weekends, and we wish Miss Diamond well at the finals ceremony to be held at the Assembly Rooms in George Street, Edinburgh on Friday 3 November.



Miss Diamond: National SQA "STAR" Awards 2017

KHS IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES 2017-18

We have identified 3 main areas of focus. These are **Attainment** (in exams and wider achievement), **Equity** (with emphasis on learners affected by poverty, adverse experiences or from disadvantaged backgrounds) and **Employability** (linking ever more effectively to the "world of work").

ATTAINMENT We will:

- Use benchmarks and performance tracking to assess/moderate learning
- Introduce standardised assessments for S3 and adapt N5 and Higher assessments to reflect recent changes
- Differentiate learning to improve equity
- Use Growth Mindset feedback to strengthen learner resilience
- Use cooperative learning consistently and often
- Further extend use of "Show My Homework" in a consistent way
- Develop a "Study Buddy" network, with a focus on Growth Mindset

EQUITY We will:

- Improve attendance: Family Engagement Worker to provide support to individual learners. Catch up programmes for learners to help bridge gaps
- Reduce exclusion: Mentoring programme, de-escalation strategies
- Improve Literacy and Numeracy: PT Equity in Literacy and Numeracy to lead programmes of interventions
- Introduce a group based reading programme
- Improve Health and Well Being: PT Equity to organise leadership opportunities eg outward bound programme
- Improve mental health with nurture interventions for groups of learners
- Improve Positive Destinations – introduce alternative employability pathways and work experience

EMPLOYABILITY We will:

- Ensure that "I Can" statements are used in all departments to link learning to careers
- Use profiles to track progress in skills for work development
- Deliver S3 Career Management Skills course
- Develop work placements to be arranged and delivered to target groups
- Continue to develop the Foundation Apprenticeship programmes, in particular software development for the session ahead.