

Keith Grammar School

Celebration of Success

Term 2 Newsletter Session 2023-2024

Head Teachers Welcome

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope this newsletter finds you well.

Its hard to believe we are coming to the end of term already and getting ready for another Christmas holiday, where has the time gone!

Term 1 and 2 have been extremely busy for everyone in the Keith Grammar community. It has been incredible to come back to school following my period of absence, where I have received so many kind wishes which has been very positively received; there is no place like Keith Grammar!

I would like to take the opportunity to sincerely thank Mr Johnson and Mr Duffy for stepping in and working between both Keith Grammar School and Buckie High School during my time off. I know staff at KGS welcomed their leadership throughout the time and benefitted from the advice and support both were able to provide. I would also like to thank Mrs Main, Mr Pirie, Mr Martin and Ms Raffan for their hard work too. They have been brilliant and their support is, as always, greatly appreciated.

As we move toward a new calendar year and Term 3, our Senior Phase pupils in S4-S6 will be gearing up for their prelim examinations starting on Monday 15th January 2024. Timetables have been issued and the final arrangements are coming together to ensure they run as smoothly as possible. It is always tricky to balance the festivities of the Christmas period with their studies, but we hope our Seniors will be working hard in readiness, while enjoying all that the season has to offer.

I'd like to thank all the staff, partners and community at KGS who are committed to supporting our young people to do and be their best. Everyone works tirelessly to ensure our young people are getting a great experience both in and out of the classroom and their efforts make the world of difference.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a restful holiday with plenty of opportunities to spend time with family and friends. May I also extend to you and your families a very Merry Christmas and my best wishes for the year ahead.

Alan Bruce
Head Teacher

Ambition
Excellence
Respect
Success



Dates for your diary

School reopens

Monday 08th January

S4-S6 Prelim Exams

Monday 15th January

P7 Transition Parent Event

Tuesday 16th January

S3 Parents Evening

Tuesday 23rd January

S4-S6 Progress Report

Thursday 08th February

Mid Term Holiday

Friday 09th February

Monday 12th February

S4-S6 Parents Evening

Thursday 15th February

Tuesday 20th February

Dates for your diary continued inside

Contact us

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Dates for your diary

Continued

S2 Progress Reports

Wednesday 28th February

S3 Progress Report

Wednesday 13th March

S4-S6 Progress Report

Wednesday 27th March

Term Ends

Thursday 28th March

KGS Staffing Updates

After the Christmas break we are delighted to welcome Mr Angus Lawson to the Acting Principal Teacher of Music post. Mr Lawson will take over for Mrs. Anna Birch while she is off on maternity leave. We look forward to Mr Lawson joining the KGS team. Miss Hailey Currie has taken over the 2 day Guidance post. Miss Currie has come to us from Forres Academy and we are pleased she is settling in so well.

In October we were joined by Mrs Jean Wilson in the English department. A very experienced teacher, we hope Mrs Wilson enjoys teaching at KGS. Lastly, in October we also said a fond farewell to Ruth Clarihew from our Technician team. Ruth worked at KGS for many years and we will miss her greatly, but we hope she enjoys a well-earned break in her retirement.

KGS Young Ambassadors

Our KGS Young Ambassadors, Kirsty and Ellen (pictured opposite) are seen here enjoying the Young Ambassadors' Annual Conference in Inverness.

Thanks to Amanda for supporting, and just to say watch this space for exciting plans coming your way for 2023-24.



GoMTB Course

A group of Keith Grammar pupils had a 6-week GoMTB course, which included 2 ramp sessions and an endurance bike ride on the hottest day of the month, concluding with a day out at Glenlivet bike trails.

They all improved their bike skills and gained their level 1 and 2 GoMTB award! What an incredible achievement.

Their instructor commented they were a really enthusiastic group and more often than not were working outside of their comfort zone, but by the end of the program, they were amazing to watch on the bikes.

Well done, Mrs Ralfs and the Learning Outdoors class. Looks like great fun as well as hard work.



Hot Chocolate Friday

Hot Chocolate Friday is back!

For the last two terms we have been celebrating the efforts of our young people who go over and above here at KGS. Staff nominate pupils for their hard work, helping others, or for a kind deed. All who attend receive their certificate in recognition of why they are nominated and more importantly the hot chocolate complete with squirty cream, marshmallows and chocolate biscuits as well.

Every week there are lots of nominations and we certainly enjoy hearing about each pupils success, as well as their plans for the weekend. Well done everyone who has attended Hot Chocolate Friday over term 1 and 2. We are sure there will be plenty more nominations next term too.



Moray Young Citizen of the Year Awards

Well done to Caitlin McKerrall, Lucy Main and Lucy Mark for achieving Moray Young Citizen of the Year individual awards for their commitment to extra-curricular activities in and out of school.

This is a great honour and we are extremely proud that all three have had their contribution recognised, not only here at KGS but in Moray too!

Who knows what is next for these three, but you can be sure they will give any future endeavours the same incredible effort.

Aspire North

Some of our aspirational S4s, have been working with Alex and Ann from Aspire North. This is a new partnership for KGS and selected pupils in S4, who had expressed an interest in higher education post school. They have signed up to a programme that will support them and their parents/carers to make informed decisions about their university career. Pupils engaged well with lots of exciting activities including planning university and college visits.



KGS Library Update

World Photography Day

The Library and Art department ran a competition as part of World Photography Day inviting pupils and staff to take a photo on the theme of Water.

There were lots of incredible entries, making for some tough decisions for the judges.

The winning pupil entry (pictured on the left) was taken by Abigail Shand (S4). The winning staff photo (right) was taken by Jane Green. Incredible pictures from our budding photographers.



Roald Dahl Day

To celebrate Roald Dahl Day the library linked with English to run an S1 year group Roald Dahl quiz. There were five rounds of questions for the pupils to answer in teams with the top scoring team overall winning the quiz!

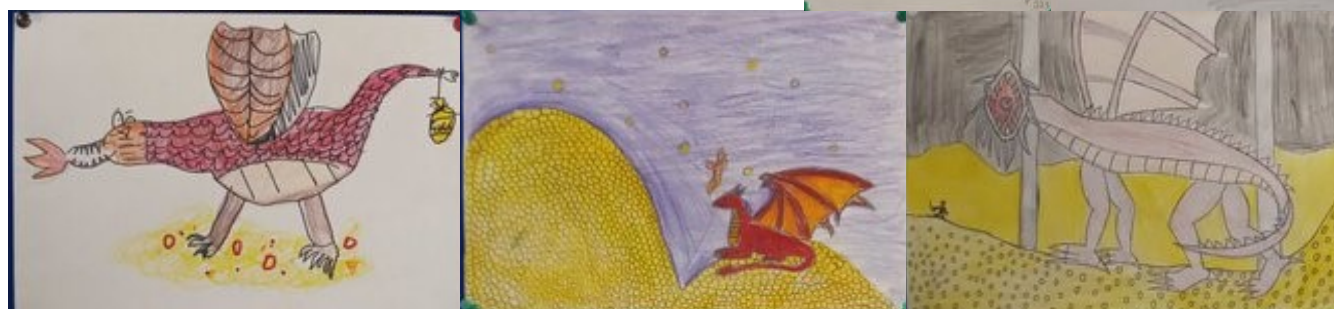
The ASN library class also enjoyed a Roald Dahl themed visit to the library, including making an origami fantastic Mr Fox!

Hobbit Day

To celebrate Hobbit Day, the library ran three hobbit themed competitions for pupils and staff to take part in, with a quiz, riddles and drawing a dragon competition. Each competition was inspired by different sections of the Hobbit by JRR Tolkien.

The winning entrants were all invited to the library to celebrate their success with a second breakfast, something hobbits are known to enjoy! The photo on the left shows the winning draw a dragon competition entries.

The artwork is incredibly detailed and these dragons look pretty ferocious!



Wellbeing Hub

Our new Wellbeing Base is now open to pupils and staff. The base provides a safe space and member of staff to support pupils who need to reset, or just need some time out so that they can get back to class. In the future we are hoping to run wellbeing course for pupils and staff and run lunchtime activities.



Blue Light Festival

We get such a buzz when we hear of our young people giving back to the community through volunteering activities. Jakub attended The Blue Light Festival in Findochty as, in between his rugby commitments and other studies beyond school, he is a Police Scottish Youth Volunteer.

Such activities are excellent for developing confidence and lots of other life and employability skills in young people.

Well done, Jakub!

Enterprising Maths Competition

On the 23rd of September Kirsty Simmers (S4), Fynn Chapman (S4), Alfie Rogers (S3) and Euan Stables (S3) took part in the Enterprising Maths competition held at Elgin Academy.

It was a team competition consisting of a day of tackling fiendishly difficult maths problems under time pressure in various different rounds, culminating in the relay round.

The KGS team had a good time and we placed 4th overall. Well done all!



Music Achievements

A huge congratulations to both Lucy Bender (S5) and Ben Kidd (S6) on their recent success in their Grade 5 Violin Practical.

Both are pictured above with their certificates from The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.

Their commitment and passion for their instruments has been deservedly rewarded with this prestigious recognition.

We are extremely proud of both pupils - well done Lucy and Ben!



BGE Christmas Dance

Celebration of Success



Senior Christmas Dance



Rural Skills Representatives

Keith Grammar Rural Skills representatives, Kate and Alistair, were invited to be the guest speakers at the Keith NFU annual Christmas meeting at the Ugie Hotel. After being well fed, they, along with Mrs Jex were asked questions and engaged in some great discussions about the Rural Skills course.

Kate and Alistair had a busy day, as earlier, they were representing Grange Community King Memorial Hall at our charities fayre. These two young people, along with others such as Eirin McFarlane, work hard to improve the lives of those in their rural community.

They are a credit to their local community - well done!



Pathway Event

Recently Keith Grammar School welcomed 14 employers to the school for the Careers Fair. Pupils from all years, including some pupils from the local primary schools, got the chance to come along and engage with the employers to find out about the huge variety of careers available in a range of sectors across Moray and the surrounding areas.

Employers said that the young people engaged very positively, and had lots of great questions.

There was also a parents pathway information evening for S3-6 parents to come and learn, from guest speakers, about potential pathways options available to their young people. The evening saw inputs from Advanced Higher English & Maths students, UHI Moray, DYW Moray, SDS, NHS Grampian, SAAS and Chivas Brothers.

DYW Moray and Keith Grammar School would like to thank all the young people, parents and employers for your engagement and support with these sessions.



Piping Power

Doesn't Gracie look amazing in her No 1s after performing for 9 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth in honour of the new Lieutenant Colonel?

Gracie Reid (S4) played several of Scottish numbers to a wide audience. What a prestigious event and a great privilege to have the opportunity to play. Gracie is a credit to her cadet company, her family and KGS, most of all, herself. We are so proud of her achievement and the plane behind her looks pretty cool too!





ASN Coffee Morning

An affa fine cuppa was had by us at fly time courtesy of the ASN department, who hosted their annual coffee morning and sale of work.

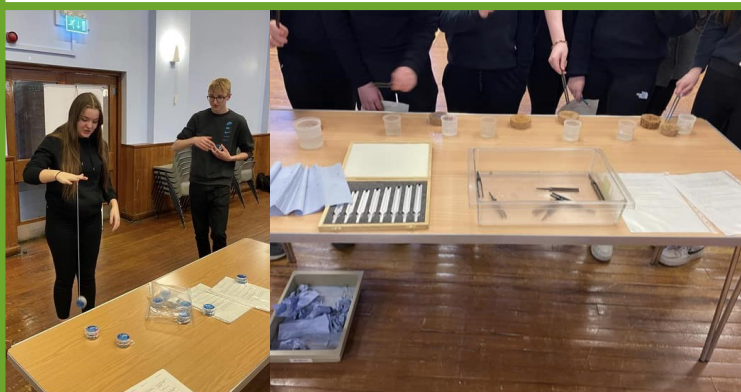
What an absolute treat was laid on by the team. We were thoroughly spoiled with all of the Christmas themed cakes and shortbread. The sale of work was popular for those last minute cards and gifts. It was fantastic to see so many families come along to share in a festive cuppa and a blether.

Well done to all involved and thanks to families, staff and pupils who attended.



Rugby Success

Megan Riach, in S6, captained Garioch RFC to victory in a 29-24 win over Dumfries Saints in the U18 Girls' Shield final. She led by example, putting in a terrific performance scoring 3 tries. This is an incredible achievement winning a national competition at the Hive Stadium in Edinburgh. Megan is pictured above with the winning shield. Well done Megan!



Science Fair

Opposite are some pictures from the recent science subject choice fair. Our senior pupils were on hand to showcase chemistry, physics, biology, forensics, engineering and practical electronics.

A huge thank you to our science department and our senior pupils.



Active Schools Update continued

by Beth Wallace S5

In the last few terms active schools have contributed to not only the school but also the wider community and have done a whopping 195 hours of volunteering. This volunteering includes lead coaching, assistant coaching and shadowing.

Some of our newer young leaders who have worked extremely hard and contributed a lot in the last two terms include Seth, Edith and Meg Malcolm, Aimee McCrae, Phoebe Winton, Phoebe George and Ethan Milne. Along with them are our more experienced young leaders who have been shadowed these last terms, these include Ross Dalgarno, Abbie McWilliam and Leah McWilliam.

New sessions which have been delivered in the last few months by our young leaders include running club. In addition, a few of our young leaders went back to visit their old primary schools where they delivered after schools sports session in order to bring sports to the rural areas. Thanks to Rachael Fraser (football at Rothiemay), Lucy Main and Maisie Richardson (mixed games at Botriphnie). Keith Primary has also benefited from ex-pupils delivering sessions there, Georgina Lelej (netball), Leah McWilliam (fun games), Abbie McWilliam (hockey) and Lauren Innes (junior jog) + ex-KGS pupil Hannah Innes who is still working alongside Active Schools has been doing some sessions at St Thomas this term.

Young leaders have taken part in a first aid course which allowed them to learn basic first aid skills and what to do in event of an emergency.

Kit for All has also been a big part of young leaders recently and we have gathered over 100 items of donated sports clothing. This includes 50 + of which were donated by local parents through either of community clothing drives or our drop in sessions at Keith Sports and Community Centre.

We have had more hoodies been awarded this term with five grey hoodies for 10 hours of volunteering awarded to Aimee McCrae, Seth Malcolm, Phoebe Winton, Phoebe George and Ethan Milne. As well as a purple hoodie for Lucy Main for 35 hours volunteering and her first aid qualification.

With such a busy year, we are all looking forward to seeing what 2024 brings!

