

Auchenharvie  
Academy



Christmas Newsletter  
December 2018



# Auchenharvie News



## December 2018

On behalf of all of my teaching and non-teaching staff I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Your continued support this year has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated by all of our staff. As we juggle the daily life of a very busy school we continue to make every effort to ensure that your child's education, both in and out of class, is the best it possibly can be.

Please find below some important information and a snapshot of some of the activities that have been taking place in our school recently. For further information on what is happening at school follow us on Twitter @Auchenharvie. Thank you.

Calum Johnston, Head Teacher.

### Family Learning

#### Parents in Partnership

After the success of our second Parents in Partnership 6 week programme, our parent group were really keen to continue with their engagement both in their own learning and the school community. We had an exciting literacy based second term of this project running for 6 weeks through November and December. The

parents learned about the importance of literacy across the curriculum in the Broad General Education at Auchenharvie as well as experiencing literacy skills in our Senior Phase. Six of our parents achieved their National 5 Literacy qualification. Well done! Parents also received sessions from North Ayrshire Foodbank, Adult Services Team and Citizenship sessions delivered by our Family Learning worker. Our group also worked with our Learning and Teaching working group and pupils to look at what an Auchenharvie pupil looks like. Our group are now looking forward to a Numeracy focused term 3 in the New Year.



#### Barista

Four parents from our PIP programme are undertaking Barista training in school on a Friday afternoon. The parents are enjoying learning new skills and working with a group of our senior pupils. The group put their skills to the test and attended the Primary 7 open night in November offering parents and carers a taste of Barista coffees, tea and hot chocolate.

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## Online Safety Evening

In October the Family Learning Team organised an Online and Community Safety information evening for all parents/carers of S1-S3 pupils and also primary 7 cluster families. Those who attended the evening received valuable information from the cluster Family Learning Team about how to stay safe online and what apps to avoid. PC Orr also offered families information about Community Safety. Domino's pizza kindly donated pizzas for the event which was a huge hit amongst the pupils. We look forward to working with Domino's again at our next event.



## Volunteering

Our year 2 PIP parents are currently working with Ayrshire College to achieve an accreditation award on Volunteering. Our parents are very keen to give back to the school and the local community. This programme runs until April 2019. Parents volunteered at the Sponsored Walk and will be seeking more opportunities in the New Year to work with the school and the local community. In addition to this, parents are

updating their CV's allowing them to explore new job prospects.

## Successes

We have seen great successes from within this group one parent is studying a 3 year MEd Course on Autism at Strathclyde University, another is studying Childcare at Ayrshire College and a third working as a Classroom Assistant.

## Seniors' Aspirations Weekend

The aim of this weekend is to take the pupils out of their comfort zones through physical and mental challenges that will build on their self-confidence. This year's trip took place in October with lots of dry weather which allowed us to take part in some rock climbing, abseiling, gorge walking and orienteering round the castle grounds.

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Friday night saw group challenges focusing on communication skills and team work. On Saturday we split into two groups for some rock climbing at Whiting Bay and gorge walking at Sannox. After some food and warming up we all went for a night walk that involved orienteering through the forest with head torches looking for flags.

Before we got on the ferry on Sunday the group split up into teams of 6 taking part in one final orienteering challenge around Brodick Castle grounds.

Overall it was another very successful trip giving the pupils a chance to challenge themselves in a different setting from the classroom and realising that having a plan, patience, perseverance and asking for assistance will help them overcome any challenge they face in the coming years. Thanks again to the Arran Outdoor staff for another fantastic weekend.



## Drama Department

Rehearsals are underway for Aladdin (oh yes they are!). Our club members are working tirelessly to bring you laughs and Panto magic. We invite you to old Peking to meet Widow Twanky and her mischievous son. See us at The Christmas Concert on Wednesday 19th December 2018.

## **National 5 Drama Prelim**

Our National 5 Drama candidates had their first taste of presenting for an assessor on Thursday 6th December when they performed extracts from their final exams texts; 'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie', 'Same' and 'Tally's Blood'. This was a huge accomplishment and we are very proud of them all.



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## **Theatre Trip**

The Drama department were joined by staff and pupils from English and RMPS on a visit to the Beacon Arts Centre in Greenock on Thursday 13th December. They were part of the audience watching a radio recording of "It's A Wonderful Life." This enhanced their understanding of drama performances and a festive time was had by all.

## **Remembrance Parade**

In November, many of our pupils participated in both local and national services of Remembrance. Many of our pupils attended services in Saltcoats and Stevenston whilst some pupils represented local organisations in the national service in London. Well done to all involved.



## **Social Subjects & RMPS Faculty**

Throughout the session, there have been a range of activities taking place in Social Subjects and RMPS faculty.

Senior Modern Studies pupils, were invited to attend a meeting with the Provost of North Ayrshire Council, Ian Clarkson and North Ayrshire Council Leader, Joe Cullinane, to discuss their ideas surrounding tackling poverty in North Ayrshire. This was a great opportunity for pupils to share their ideas and opinions on some of the key concerns within the local area.

In October this year, Travel & Tourism pupils welcomed a representative from Visit Arran to the school; to learn more about the work carried out by the organisation within the tourism industry. This is relevant to learning taking place in class, where pupils learn how to deal effectively with customer enquiries regarding tourism and excursions in Scotland.

In November 2018, National 5 and Higher Modern Studies pupils welcomed, Patricia Gibson MP, representative for North Ayrshire and Arran to the school to discuss her role both in the



consistency and in the parliament. Pupils reflected on this experience positively, commenting on how useful, interesting, informative and enjoyable the meeting was. We look forward to welcoming other representatives, as well as a return visit from Patricia, in the future.

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Recently, National Geography pupils walked to Saltcoats town centre to carry out field work for their assignments.

On Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> December, Higher RMPS pupils attended an Ethics Conference to support learning in the course.

On Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, senior Modern Studies pupils were given a tour of HMP Greenock and had the opportunity to interview a Prison Officer, which can be used to enhance their assignments and learning towards the Higher Crime and the Law unit. Pupils reflected very positively on this experience and were keen to share what they had learned as well as their opinions on the Scottish Prison Service. We look forward to a return visit in March when the remainder of the senior class will attend.



Senior pupils across the faculty will participate in a Rewards Trip to Edinburgh on 20<sup>th</sup> of December. In the morning, pupils will visit a range of educational sites, related to the subjects they are studying, including Edinburgh Castle, the Edinburgh Mosque and the Scottish Parliament. In the afternoon, pupils will spend some time at Edinburgh's famous Christmas Markets.

## Prelims

We would like to remind you that prelim examinations will take place from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019 (inclusive). Details of our prelim timetable have been given to pupils and are also available on our school website. Like you we wish all of our pupils the best of luck with their upcoming examinations and hope that you will support us in ensuring that appropriate amounts of study are undertaken during the holidays.

## Curriculum Review Group

Thanks to everyone who was involved in our Curriculum Review Group which took place in November. A number of decisions about our curriculum for 2019/2020 were taken and this information is being shared through our curriculum information sessions. Perhaps the most significant change will be to the S4 experience, S4 pupils will study 7 subjects, each at 4 periods and will no longer be timetabled with pupils in S5/6. One other key decision of note is that pupils in S1, S2 and S3 will change timetable in early May whilst pupils in S4/5 will change following their exams in early June.

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## Options Interviews

As we prepare for an early change of timetable in May 2019, we have already begun the process of gathering pupil options. We are really keen to maximise parental involvement in this important process and will be flexible in doing so. Invites to options interviews will be sent in due course. Please contact your child's Pastoral Care Teacher if you would like to arrange a more convenient time.

## Pupil Equity Fund Consultation

The Scottish Government have recently confirmed that the Pupil Equity Fund for schools will continue until at least the end of the current Scottish parliament. This is very welcome news at Auchenharvie and we look forward to continuing with the benefits that these finances bring to our school community. In January 2019 a consultation will begin on how best our school community think we should use these funds. Please look out for your invite to attend focus groups and complete surveys/questionnaires as appropriate.

## Last Day of Term

Finally, a reminder that school closes at 2.30pm on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018 and reopens at 8.45am on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The last day of term will involve our annual 'talent show' where pupils will have the opportunity to show yet again that Auchenharvie has talent. I have asked all class teachers to ensure that all classes continue to undertake productive coursework from S1-6 until close of school on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Once again, we hope you have a fantastic festive break and I look forward to working with you in the New Year as we continue to make our school a great place to learn and work.

Happy Holidays,

Calum Johnston  
Head Teacher

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## Future Newsletters

If you are happy to receive future newsletters via email instead of by post, and you haven't already notified us of your email address, please complete the tear-off slip below and return it to the main school office.

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I am happy to receive future newsletters via email.

Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Reg Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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