

Newsletter January 2013



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Heading

Unusually our newsletter has been held over from December till now.

Blairgowrie High School was the subject of an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in the last week of November. It is eight years since the inspectors last completed a full inspection and 6 years since their last follow-up visit. Their report to parents will be available sometime this term.

The Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) has clearly been a focus for the school over the past few years. In the light of changing national advice we have been reviewing our curriculum to ensure that we can best provide for our pupils, securing the maximum benefit for them in terms of the entitlements and experiences that they should receive under the CfE.

The school sent a letter home to all parents on 18 January, outlining for parents the main changes as they will affect their child. Please contact the school if you have not received this yet. An information evening will be held before the end of session for parents to hear from the management of the school these changes in detail.

We had a number of memorable events at the end of last term. Most important for our pupils was the Christmas dance, which was one of the most enjoyable and successful dances I have attended. 182 pupils enjoyed a great evening and were a credit to the school and their families. The

Christmas Concert was also a great event with many of our pupils showing off their musical talents, supported by our parents, staff and friends. The senior citizens tea dance was hugely enjoyed by our senior citizens. So much so that we already have several requests for tickets for next year's event.

In each of these events our seniors played a major part in the organisation and management. Thank you to them and congratulations on providing these festive activities as well as the Children in Need day of course. Thank you also to our staff who gave up their free time to assist, supervise and lead in these events, without which they could not possible take place.

Our staffing situation continues to change and we said farewell at the end of term to both Mrs Sharp (Modern Studies) and Mr Maxwell (Art), who both retired. Mrs Sharp had served over 22 years in the school and Mr Maxwell more than 26 years. We send them every best wish for a long and happy retirement.

A replacement for Mrs Sharp has already been appointed and Miss Martin will take up her position in the school on Monday, 28 January. Mr Maxwell's post has been advertised and will be filled after interview at the earliest opportunity.

Mrs Sinclair (Geography), Mrs McCabe (Biology) and Mrs Martin (English) will shortly be going off on maternity leave and we wish them well.

I wish you all a prosperous and successful 2013.

Where do attainments targets come from? We have had a few queries from parents recently about the origin of the targets that appear in their child's reports. In the case of S2 and S3 pupils, these targets are based on their performance in the CAT tests that they sat at the beginning of S1. For S4, S5 and S6, targets are sourced from SQA and are based on prior attainment in exams. It should be stressed that both CAT and SQA-derived targets are used by the school to set *minimum* expectations, and that, very often, we expect pupils to exceed these targets. When a pupil's performance is exceeding his or her target, this will be reflected in a higher 'on track' grade, reported alongside the target.

Supported Study

Every department in school is committed to ensuring pupils have every possible opportunity to reach their potential.

There is a full programme of supported study at lunchtimes and after school. Some departments welcome pupils at specific times, while others expect pupils to make individual arrangements when they would like extra help. Study support timetables are displayed around the school. Please encourage your children to take advantage of the support that is available to them.

Fundraising

The Fundraising team have been extremely busy over the past term. We organised our annual Children In Need event where Pudsey Bear visited the school as well as finding time to visit Coupar Angus Primary and Newhill Primary. Pupils were given the opportunity to 'Pose with Pudsey' and have their picture taken. Tayside Contracts provided some delicious biscuits and cakes for staff and pupils and there was a staff v pupils football match which the pupils won 4-0. We also had our annual non-uniform day and this year S6 pupils decided to dress up as Superheroes. A week long Generation Game took place with thanks to all staff who agreed to take part - Mrs Haggart won after a very long version of the Conveyor Belt game including several cuddly toys and subject related items! Thanks also to those S6 boys who 'volunteered' to have their legs waxed! The final total was just over £1400 so thank you to everyone for your support once again.



Senior "superheroes" presenting a cheque for £1400

Karate Success

Recently I entered the British National Karate competition in Cheshire. There were 138 entrants and I competed in the 12-15 age group. I came home with a bronze medal.

Winning a medal did not just happen by accident. I planned to win, by doing my very best and through being conscientious in my weekly training at my club in Coupar Angus. I'll be entering the Scottish Championship in the spring.

I'm always trying to recruit my friends to join the karate club. Karate gives you a strong body and mind and self-control and most importantly it is great fun!

Fraser Birnie (S2)

Contact Details

Please remember to keep us up to date with your address, your mobile phone number and your email address so that we can keep you up to date with your child's progress!

In January we are supporting 2 cancer charities. Scott Fairnington in S1 is going to get his head shaved, should he receive enough sponsorship for Cancer Research UK, and the Music department are holding a Practice-a-thon in aid of Clic, which is a charity we have supported for several years. Pupils are coming in to practice for their SQA exams for a minimum of 3 lunchtimes a week for the last 3 weeks in January. We have Clic Sargent collection boxes in many classrooms which we hope will be filled in the next 3 weeks to add to the total.

The next big event will be Red Nose Day on Friday 15th March so look out for some 'Monster' Activities and we're sure you will all have ideas of how to 'Do Something Funny for Money'!



Louise and Chloe on the Tay Bridge

"We thought it would be a great idea to raise some money for Children in Need so on 4th November we walked over the Tay Bridge... in our pyjamas. We thought it was thoroughly good fun, even though we did get some funny looks from passers-by! We managed to raise £280 and can't wait to do it again, next year!"

Chloe Gruneberg-Mackenzie and Louise Aitken (S3)

Fire Fighting

Every Wednesday, for three weeks, two groups of the Duke of Edinburgh class would go to the Blairgowrie fire station to see what it's like to be a fire fighter.

We all learned lots of different things about the safety of fire and what it was like to be a fire-fighter. On the first day the fire fighters introduced themselves to us then showed us some video clips of dangers in the home. We then got into our uniforms and went around the back of the fire station. There, we were shown all of the equipment that was in the fire engine - it's a lot - and learned how to put on a fire suit. We then did the hose drill which meant we had to roll out a hose then roll it back up as quickly as possible.

On the second day we watched a video which showed how easy it is for a fire to start. We then used the hose to put out a fire in the back, which was so much fun, and we also put a gas mask on that was blacked out over the eye slot. With this on we had to try to go and hit a crate and we couldn't see anything. It was really hard and we had to put one hand up and down in front and the other hand over our head and one leg in front of us to see if there was any objects we would hit or fall over. It was so funny watching everyone stumbling round.

On the third day we all rolled out 3 hoses and joined them together. Then we went into teams and had to race each other to see what team was quickest with the hose drill. Paul Scott, Ryan Beedie and Stefan Brown won the team race. At the end of the day we got certificates for completing the fire fighting course.

We learned all about fire, like how easy fires can start, and all the different dangers in our homes and everyone had fun as well.

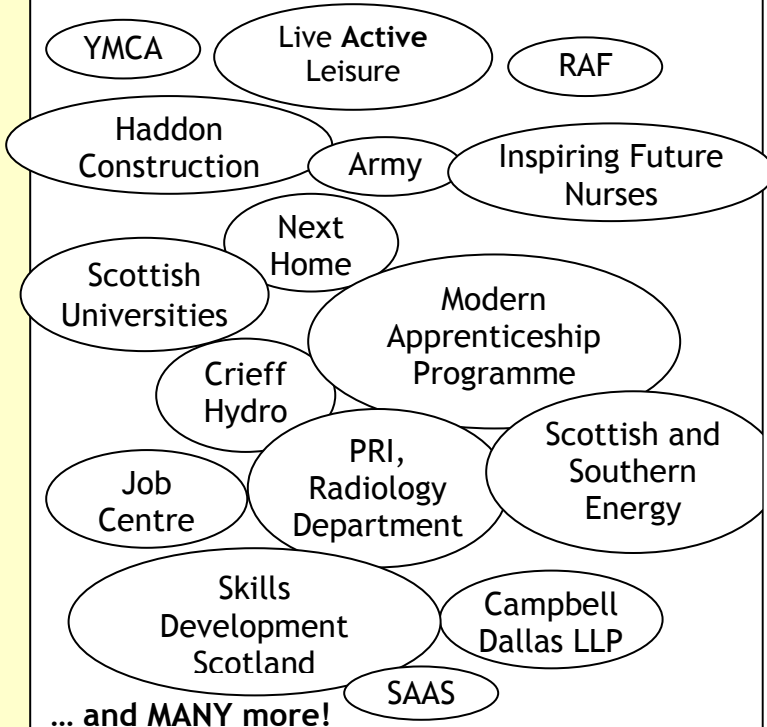
Alyssa Brown (S2)

Careers Event

Building on the success of a similar event last year that

was attended by hundreds of young people and their families, Perth and Kinross Council in partnership with Skills Development Scotland are planning another Careers Fair. It will be held on **Monday 11 February 2013 in Dewars Centre Perth from 4.00 - 8.30 pm.**

Employers and training providers found this event very positive last year and are keen for a central event to be held again. Employers who have attended this event in the past include:



Jades Moon

"This project started with a £50 investment, which was

made up of £10 of my own money, £20 from my mum and dad and a further £20 from my grandma and grandpa. To expand the £50, so could I go on and do further projects, I purchased 250 bouncy balls to sell. (When the bouncy balls arrived there were actually 309!) I made posters and got the posters up in clubs and around school.

I soon raised enough money to start my next project: a dual candle and tea-light holder with a red or white candle and a red or white tea-light included. This project did not start out well so I took a risk and decided I would run two projects at the same time and went out and bought "Keep Calm and Carry On" mugs. They were in four colours; Red, Blue, Pink and Jade. The mugs sold well so I went out and bought more. (I currently have a limited stock of red mugs, as all the others have sold out really quickly!) While that product went fast I discovered another type of candle holder; a red or clear glass heart shaped tea-light holders. The company is now on Facebook and has its own website. I am currently having a sale on the website and every product is reduced. Do you have any special occasions coming up, why not have a look?

For more information about my company or products have a look at my website:

www.jadesmoon.weebly.com,

or email me at jadesmoon@aol.co.uk

or add me as friend and talk to me through my Facebook page.

Jade Rolfe (S4)

Our Great Expectations

On Friday the 7th December we went on a trip to the cinema to see the film adaption of the classic Dickens novel 'Great Expectations'. The film was dramatic and captured the sense of excitement portrayed in the original novel. Helena Bonham Carter played the eccentric Miss Havisham and Pip was played by "War Horse's" Jeremy Irvine. It was great to have a nice day out with friends and we would all like to say thank you to the teachers in the English department who organised the trip for us.



Some of the 60 S2 pupils who went to see 'Great Expectations' with the English Department

Film Review of 'Great Expectations'

In the film adaption of the classic Charles Dickens' novel the sense of excitement is captured thoroughly through the characters, setting and the general plot.

When young orphan Pip is taken by his uncle to play at the house of Miss Havisham he falls for the young beautiful Estella in spite of her treating him coldly. We then see him growing up and aspiring to be a wealthy young gentlemen so as to be worthy of her. One day when he is working at the blacksmith, with his brother in law Joe, he receives a curious visit from London lawyer called Jagger who says that Pip has a secret benefactor. He travels to London and takes an exciting journey only to realise it doesn't matter who he is and where he comes from its just what is inside that matters.

Miss Havisham- played by Helena Bonham Carter- is played particularly well. She plays the jilted bride with such ease and airiness. "War Horse's" Jeremy Irvine plays the main character Pip. His scruffy appearance in the film helped me appreciate the hard times endured by the poor in the country. The camera work in the graveyard scene was used to give a dramatic effect; I thought this was done successfully. The camera crew used close ups to portray a fierce, reckless man with an agenda when shooting Magwitch.

I would recommend this film but I do urge you to read the novel first so that the film is understandable.

Alana Campbell (S2)

'The Cone Gatherers' Theatre Trip

On Thursday 8th November 2012 a group of thirty-five S5 Higher pupils made their way to Perth Theatre despite the chill in the night air. What could have possibly possessed us to traipse through the cold on a wintry school night? Well, recently we had been studying 'The Cone-Gatherers', a novel about good versus evil set against the backdrop of World War Two. It follows the corrosive relationship between the characters, Calum, one of the cone-gatherers, and John Duror, the brooding gamekeeper. The classic novel by Scottish author Robin Jenkins had been adapted and was being taken to the stage by Aberdeen Performing Arts (APA) and we were intrigued to see how this would be done?

Once everyone had been accounted for, we made our way into the theatre and took our seats. From the start I was impressed by the way the actors, Ben Winger and Rodney Matthew, portrayed the brothers, Calum and Neil. They seemed to have their characters' personalities down to a T, and set against the subtle lights of the stage backdrop, their performance was enhanced.

However, I felt that the story line had been too drastically changed from that of the novel, losing the exploration of the main theme: the eternal struggle between good and evil. However, this fault might only have been picked up by a Higher English class who had spent a good few weeks analysing the text. For those who didn't know the novel in such depth the play would definitely have made for an entertaining night out - especially Duror's last few lines!

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the class, to thank Mrs Martin for organising the theatre trip.

Briana Freed Smith (S5)

Comida Sana en la Clase de Español

(Healthy Eating in the Spanish Class)

In Spanish we have been learning about how to live a healthy life. We learnt what we should and shouldn't eat and how sport and no stress helps. I like this topic as we got to work in groups and converse with each other. We practiced by doing "speed chatting" where we had to talk to someone for one minute then move on to the next person. In the week before Christmas we all brought in some Spanish food and had a sort of "tapas" lunch.

Paul Scott and Dee Jay Tolmie (S2)

The S2 Spanish class enjoying a tapas lunch.



Here's some Spanish vocab. Can you use it to help you match the sentences in English and Spanish below?

Healthy life.... *la vida sana*

Junk food *la comida basura*

Bad habit *un vicio*

Sweeties *las chokolatinas*

5 a day *cinco al dia*

No comemos nunca la comida basura.

For desert we eat fruit.

Odio la grasa

I hate fatty food.

Para postre como fruta.

I love ice-cream.

Como mis cinco al día.

I eat my five a day.

Me encanta el helado.

We never eat junk food.

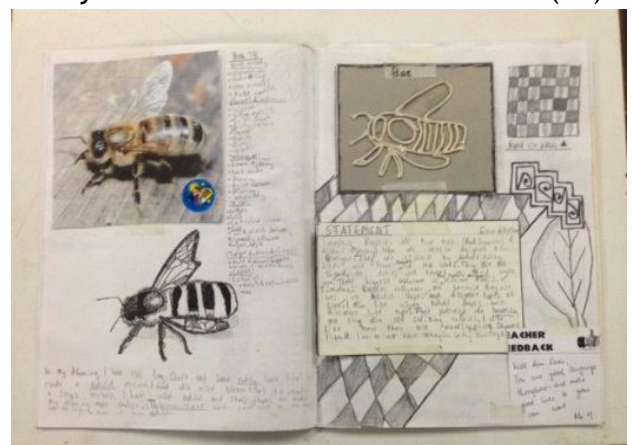
The Gallery is back, featuring some examples of pupil work from the Art department...



This sheet follows on from my recent corrective drawing work and is deliberately sketchy and loose. I completed this within 1 week and have been looking at natural forms which I intend to develop into pattern designs for fabric furnishings and interiors.

Louise Tanner (S6)

On these pages I have used ink and pencil to create different effects I have found on a bee. I have used a variety of lines to create a natural effect. I have also used some repeat patterns around the images to show possible developments. I have also annotated most of my drawings to say what types of line I have used and what effects they have created. Euan Patterson (S2)



What's Coming Up....

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Date	Event
School Terms and In-Service Days	
Mon 7 January	First Day of Spring Term
Wed 20 February	In-Service Day
Thur 21 and Fri 22 February	Mid Term Holiday
Thur 7 March	School Fashion Show
Fri 29 March	Last Day of Spring Term
Mon 15 April	In-Service Day
Tuesday 16 April	First Day of Summer Term

Date	Event
Reports, Parents' Evenings and Exams	
Mon 21 January	S3 Reports Issued
Thur 24 January	S3 Parents' Evening
Week Beginning 28 January	S4 Common Assessment
Mon 4 to Fri 15 February	Senior Prelim Exams
Week Beginning 11 February	S1 Common Assessment
Fri 8 March	S1 Reports Issued
Thur 14 March	S1 Parents' Evening

School Closures due to Winter Weather

Closure before the beginning of the school day

In the event of a poor forecast the night before and severe conditions at the time, a decision may be taken early on a school day to close the school to all pupils. It is also possible that a decision may be taken to open the school only partially i.e. for those pupils who live locally, but not for those on school transport.

Closure during a school day

In the event of weather forecast or conditions worsening significantly during a school day, a decision may be taken to send pupils home early. In many cases this is because the bus companies have contacted the school to inform us that they need to transport pupils to rural locations. Pupils, who travel to school by bus, will be sent home first, then, if necessary, pupils who live locally will also be sent home.

If it is unlikely that there will be someone at home during the school day, you are advised to organise care arrangements during periods of severe weather.

Course Choice

S3: Mon 21 January - Fri 8 February

S4 and S5: Mon 18 February - Fri 8 March

This term our pupils will make provisional choices regarding the courses and qualifications they would want to pursue in the following school year. Pupils will be issued with Course Choice booklets and Option forms to take home for discussion with family as well as having an interview and advice from their guidance teacher in school.

Pupils in the senior school will have the opportunity to select a vocational/ interest option from a range of practical contexts and wider opportunities where young people can develop a breadth of skills. This can be a work experience placement or school based course taken to support pupils to develop personal skills or interests outside their academic curriculum.

Any decisions about school closures will be communicated via:

- **Radio Tay:** Frequency AM 1161 kHz FM 102.8 MHz
- **Tay Connect:** 08700 500232 then option 4
- **Perth & Kinross Website:** www.pkc.gov.uk

If your child is sent home during the day you will be contacted by group call.