

Newsletter June 2012



Gordon Miller	Rector
Lynn Bryce	Depute Rector (Pupil Support and Tay House)
Ranjit Fernandez	Acting Depute Rector (Pupil Support and Tay House)
John Devine	Depute Rector (Curriculum and Stormont House)
Lesley Hill	Depute Rector (Curriculum and Glenisla House)
Kieran Sherry	Business Development Manager
email us:	headteacher@blairgowrie.pkc.sch.uk
online at:	https://wikis.glowscotland.org.uk/0001660/Blairgowrie_High_School

Rector's Message

Over the session the long awaited upgrading and extension to parts of the school have been completed, and will be ready for full use on our return from the summer holidays in August.

The work has resulted in the complete renovation of the ground floor of the 'new' building. This has provided first class accommodation for the Support for Learning and Guidance departments. A new social area for pupils with a catering outlet and new toilet facilities has been in use since the start of this term.

The new building provides new office accommodation, a staffroom, two technical rooms, two general classrooms and a wood preparation room. Parents and visitors will notice a new main entrance which will be used for the first time at this year's prizegiving.

The vacated offices will be converted to music practice rooms. The RME department will be brought in to the main building from the huts and there will be some other minor alterations to the rooming of some teachers. Added to the previous new bus bay and upgraded kitchens this has been a tremendous boost to the school.

Morrison's Construction were fulsome in their praise of the conduct of our pupils reporting that they had a incident free period of work at Blairgowrie High School. Our pupils also excelled over the session in representing the school in the range of sporting and cultural events, trips and visits that we provide over the year. Most recently at our two Activities Days. Well done to them. To the staff who have gone out of their way by providing the effort in their own time to provide these opportunities – a huge thank you. This is at the heart of Curriculum for Excellence and allows our pupils to develop both personally and socially.

This session we have lost five teachers. Mr. Walker, Principal Teacher (PT) of the Support for Learning (SfL) department was recently appointed to Perth and Kinross Council as a councillor for the Carse of Gowrie ward. Ms. Irvine left us for an extended career break at the start of session, and recently tendered her resignation from the English department, having found permanent employment in England. We had two teachers transferred from the school - from the Modern Languages department Madame Moullier went to Perth High School and more recently Mrs. Watt of the Chemistry department went to Perth Grammar. Our thanks and best wishes go with them in their new careers.

We had one retirement this session – Mr. Howie of the History department. We wish him well for a long and happy retirement and thank Mr. Howie for many years of service.

During the session we welcomed Mrs. Pirie who was appointed internally to the post of PT SfL, Ms. Sinclair and Mrs. Elliot to the Geography department and Mr. Fernandez as PT of Business Studies.

Our two probationers have successfully completed their year and we wish them well for the future – Mr. McCleary (English) and Ms. Traghman (Art). We hope to welcome two probationer teachers in August, in Mathematics and in English. Presently three full-time replacements are being sought for the Home Economics, Art and Support for Learning departments.

Good luck to all our students for August when the results arrive. For parents and staff alike, I wish you all a relaxing holiday at home or abroad, and look forward to working with you again in 2012-13.



Applying to University?

Filling in the UCAS application is time-consuming and challenging but it is extremely important to sell yourself well to ensure that you are accepted to the courses and universities that you want as the demand for places is high. From my personal experience there are a few important things to consider.

Firstly, make sure you do thorough research by getting prospectuses for all the universities you are interested in and take time to look through the courses as there are many that you may not have thought of. Compare courses at different universities as they may be quite different even if they sound the same. Go to lots of open days and be prepared with lots of questions to ask the lecturers and students. There are vast differences between the facilities and how well the universities sell themselves to prospective students. Be open to different ideas; I have applied to a course I had never thought of after seeing a very eye-catching stand with enthusiastic staff and pupils at an open day. Try to organise work experience in your chosen field as it can totally change your mind about your career choices.

The personal statement is one of the most important parts of your application. You should make it interesting, unique and relevant to your subject and start it early to ensure you write it really well to give universities a good impression of you. Show knowledge and enthusiasm for your subject, emphasise your strengths and include hobbies, interests and jobs to illustrate your qualities and skills. Keep in mind the strict criteria about the length of your statement as getting everything you want in whilst keeping to the limits proved difficult for me! Make sure you are aware of the school and UCAS deadlines and keep in contact with your guidance teacher to make sure you're doing everything you should be and that they have all the information they need to complete your reference.

Finally, don't leave everything until the last minute as getting yourself and your guidance teacher stressed out isn't going to make your application any better.

Deanna Smith (S6)

The Guidance team will start working with senior pupils on their university applications in August. The school's deadline for applications is November.

Business Dynamics - The Money Programme

On Friday 8 June Mr C Campbell from Business Dynamics spent the day with the S3 Business Management classes. He gave a presentation on "Your Money", which included quizzes and a range of interesting activities, done in groups, from Budgeting to Personal Finances. The activities were challenging but enjoyable.

Although it was non-uniform day we were asked to wear full school uniform, which showed respect to Mr Campbell. Most of the pupils turned up in immaculate school uniform and made a very good impression for Blairgowrie High!

For the final project each group had to organise their very own Gig! This task included, Budgeting, Marketing and personal finances, to complete the task successfully.

At the end of the day we all received certificates for taking part, and a little book of Money to help us in the future.

Rachel Tripney (S3)

London Trip

In May a group of 21 pupils travelled to London with the music department. We visited the Houses of Parliament, The BBC studios, two museums and Hamley's toy shop and Oxford Street where everyone enjoyed a bit of shopping, especially the seniors! In the evenings we went to see three West End shows: Mamma Mia, SHrek and Wicked. Wicked was definitely my favourite but I'm sure everyone would agree they were all FABULOUS!

All in all everyone had great time, especially when given the chance to try out some stage fighting at the stage combat workshop.

Bethanie Climie (S5)



Staff and pupils in the Blue Peter Studios

Olympic Torch

My mum and dad decided to nominate me to carry the Olympic torch because of my contribution to sports and my volunteering work in the community.

I play netball for Perth and Kinross at under 17s district level. I have been an in-pool helper twice a week for the last 2 years. Last year I helped to set up a disability sports group in Blairgowrie, trying to provide more opportunities for local kids who have disabilities.

I carried the Torch in New Scone on the 12th June. I was amazed by the support I received; many of my friends and family came to cheer me on and all members of the public who attended were fantastic, shouting support and asking for photographs. The people who organized the event were lovely and completely calmed all of the runners nerves. They also created a great atmosphere in the crowd by playing music and talking to the crowd.

Carrying the torch was an unforgettable experience. The fact that we were able to keep the torch and share it with all our friends and family is amazing!

Alison Scott (S5)



Sport

The Tayside Netball Challenge was held at Bells Sports Centre in Perth on Friday 8 June.

The junior team, which was low on numbers, tried hard and played well.

The seniors won two of their four games and came 3rd overall in Perth and Kinross.

Netball training next session will be held on Mondays from 3.40 to 4.40 for anyone interested.

In other sports, John McLaren (S2) and Morag Taylor (S4) have been selected to represent Tayside Schools in the shot-put and discus. Well Done!



the netball team in new strips, provided through a successful bid to the Big Lottery Fund.

Mini Mastercook

The final of Mini Mastercook 2012 took place on Mon 28th May. Initially, 150 pupils from S1 took part in a preliminary cook off from which 14 pupils were chosen to take part in the final.

It was named the 'Dine in with Me Challenge' (based around the TV show Come Dine with Me). Pupils had to come up with a main course for two people that showed off culinary flair in the kitchen whilst encouraging home cooking and the use of fresh local ingredients.

The Rotary Club of Blairgowrie kindly sponsored the event with specially printed aprons for all of the finalists and other local businesses including Kenneth Allan butchers (HW Irvines) and the Home Economics Gala Dinner fund also donated prizes for the event.

The event was judged by Mr Bill McNicoll (Executive Head Chef, Huntingtower Hotel, Portland Group) and Mrs Caroline Cruickshank (Tayside Contracts). The judges were very impressed by the high standard of skills displayed by such a young group of pupils and found the task of choosing a winner extremely difficult. They felt that all participants in the final were winners.

What the finalists made:

1st Place: Alex Patterson
Poached chicken & vegetables

2nd Place: Hannah Oosterhoorn
Sushi with tempura

3rd Place: Isobel Milford
Herby salmon & couscous parcels

Skills Prize: Alexander Watson
Chicken in mango chutney with rice & fried peppers

Hygiene and Safety Prize and Healthiest Dish:
Alanna Cameron
Chicken on skewers, tabbouleh parsley salad, hoummus b'tahini, zaatar



Prize winners with judge, Mr Bill McNicoll

Geography and Biology Field Trip to Glen Clova

The Geography department ran their annual field work trip to Glen Clova at the beginning of May. The aim of the trip was to study and reinforce work on physical geography, enquiry skills and land use management. This year the Biology department joined forces with Geography to do some cross-curricular work, helping the pupils to see the links between the two subjects.

More than 70 pupils braved the winds and rain - at least there were no midges this year! All had a great time and, as usual, lots of pupils made the mistake of wading in water higher than their wellies!

This is how one group described the day:



Happy dry group at the Rangers Talk- about to get wet!

"Before we got to Glen Clova, we stopped at Cullow market and gathered information about **U shaped valleys** and **corries**. We also stopped further up at Glenarm to look at an **esker**."

"We finally arrived at Glen Doll's rangers centre and our class headed to the icy cold river. We measured the speed of the river by timing how long a piece of apple took to travel between two points."

"We then went to the ranger's centre to find out what the ranger service is about and how they protect wildlife in the area."

"Later we walked in the forest behind the river in the rain. We had our lunch under the forest (to try to keep dry!) before we did more experiments. We walked a bit further and found good spots to test the pH of the soil - one in the open and one under the trees. Finally we raced back on a long and tiring track with Emma and Gemma leading the way."

"When all the groups were back on the bus we set off along the very twisty road. One unpleasant thing did happen - Jordan vomitted all over himself and the seat. Angus who had been sitting next to him, moved near us and explained to everyone every detail - thanks!"

"We had a great day!"

Emma Brown, Karen Arnold and Jemima Jarvis (S2)



River speed and kick sampling in the River South Esk

Jemima; An Esker is a long winding ridge of sand and gravel. It was formed by rivers dumping down stones when it flowed on or in the glacier.



Karen; A corrie is a huge hole carved out of the side of a mountain. Ice does this by using abrasion and plucking.



Emma; A U shaped valley is a huge deep valley with steep sides. It used to be a V shaped valley formed by rivers before the ice eroded it deeper and deeper.

What does a good piece of writing look like in Modern Languages?

A high degree of accuracy and a rich variety of language is important at every level in order to gain the best possible grade. German has its own particular difficulties especially with regard to spelling and word order. The pupils worked together to put together the list of success criteria and examples in order to have a checklist to work to when doing any piece of writing.

- Range of tenses
- Range of vocabulary
- Range of opinions
- Well punctuated
- Accurate spelling
- Capital letters on nouns
- Relevant to topic
- Appropriate length to level
- High level of accuracy
- Structured use of paragraphs
- Control of grammar
- word order
 - verb as second idea
 - verb to end with conjunctions
 - time-manner-place

time
manner
place

Wir sind sehr früh mit dem Auto von zu Hause losgefahren

Hoffentlich fahren wir auch nächstes Jahr wieder Österreich.

present tense used in future

imperfect tense
opinion

Es war fantastisch.

imperfect tense
opinion

Das Hotel war super.

imperfect tense
opinion

Das Wetter war meistens gut.

perfect tense
opinion

Meine Familie und ich haben vierzehn wunderschöne Tage in Kitzbühel verbracht.

vocab
spelling (umlaut, ei, capital letter)

Glücklicherweise

Kitzbühel
spelling (umlaut, h, capital letter)

unternommen
good use of vocabulary

place
vocab
qualifier/
vocab
umlauts

Der Horn ist ein schöner Berg ganz in der Nähe.

word order - noun, verb as 2nd idea, verb to end with conjunctions

Das Wetter war meistens gut obwohl es an ein paar Tagen ein bisschen geregnet hat.

Rachel Hepburn,
Emily Falconer and
Hollv Beattie (S2)

Blairgowrie High School

Beeches Road
Blairgowrie
PH10 6PW

Phone:
(01250) 871200

Fax:
(01250) 876826

Please Remember:

It is important
that we are able
to keep in contact
with you.

What's Coming Up....

Date	Event
School Terms and In-Service Days	
Tue 26 June	Prizegiving at 7 pm
Wed 27 June	Last Day of Summer Term School closes at noon
Mon 13 and Tue 14 August	In-Service Days
Wed 15 August	Pupils return to school
Fri 5 October	Last Day of Autumn Term
Mon 22 October	First Day of Winter Term
Thur 15 and Fri 16 November	In-Service Days

Date	Event
Reports, Parents' Evenings and Exams	
Fri 24 August	S1 CAT Tests
Fri 31 August	School Photographer - S1 and S4 pupils
Week Beginning Mon 7 September	S1 Common Assessments
Week Beginning Mon 7 September	S3 Common Assessments
Fri 28 September	S1 Settling in Report
Mon 29 October	S5/6 Parents' Evening
Wed 14 November	S2 Parents' Evening

If any of your contact details change, please let the office or your child's register or guidance teacher

New Lunchtime Club

Starting after the summer holidays there will be a weekly Christian Union Group run in the school. The group will be run by Steven Goring, the Pastor of Blairgowrie Evangelical Church. Any pupils interested are welcome to come along, whether it be those who are Christians or simply who would like to find out a little more about the Christian Faith.

The Union will meet Tuesday lunchtimes, 1pm-1.40pm in D1 (Mr Nicholson's classroom). Pupils are encouraged to bring their lunch with them.

CAT Tests

Cognitive Abilities Tests or 'CATs' are used to assess pupils' learning to date. Alongside reports from primary, the information provided allows us to establish benchmarks against which future progress can be measured. Pupils will sit three tests during the day covering verbal (words), quantitative (number) and non-verbal (shape and space). Pupils are not expected to revise for these

Common Assessments

At various times in the year pupils in S1 to S4 have a week of tests across all of their subjects. This allows us to track pupils' progress. To reduce pressure, you can help your child to plan revision in advance of these common assessment weeks.