

# Newsletter October 2012



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Rector

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## Rector's Message

How quickly this term has flown past, already this is the first issue of the parents' newsletter for session 2012-13. I hope you find the articles interesting and informative. Our thanks are due to Mr Darby, Ms Stewart and Miss Milne who collate and edit your newsletter.

A special welcome to the parents of our S1. You should have recently received your child's 'settling in' report. Parent surveys show that any information additional to the formal reports during the year is very much valued. I hope you found these reports useful.

The school has shown a very positive trend in SQA exam results in recent years. In 2012 we have again showed advances in most areas that are recorded. A full summary of the results were contained in a recent issue of the Blairgowrie Advertiser and a copy of this is on our website. S4 reached record levels of achievement this year. In S4 93% of pupils gained at least 5 Standard Grades, and for 33% of pupils these were at Credit level. This maintained the increases in attainment that we have seen in past few years.

The S5 results show that 47% of the S4 group of pupils in 2011, went on to achieve at least 1 Higher in S5, and 23% achieved 3 or more Highers in 2012. These are the best results ever at these levels, beating last year's record figures.

In S6, 51% of pupils from that cohort of pupils from S4, went on to achieve at least 1 Higher. For the first time we can say that more than half of all pupils in Blairgowrie High School go on to achieve at Higher level.

These figures are pre-appeal and we expect all the attainment figures to rise slightly once the appeals process has been completed.

These results are the reward for the hard work that our students put in throughout the year, supported by our parents, and taught by our staff. We aim to bring out the very best in these, our pupils and your children. I would ask that you continue to set the very highest of standards for your children, as we do in Blairgowrie High School, so that they may gain the most from their school career.

At this time last year I reported the building work that had started in August 2011. We are grateful to Morrison's Construction who have completed the work on time and allowed the school to take full advantage of the new facilities offered by this investment.

The successful Parent Council AGM on 19 September allowed those parents present to view the new building for themselves.

As ever, should you find that you have a query during the session, then please contact your child's guidance teacher at your earliest convenience either with information that would be helpful to us about your child, or with your concern so that we can respond.

Schools are busy places and all teachers have timetabled classes. It is therefore always best to phone and either leave a message, or make an appointment. We cannot guarantee that you will be able to see the guidance teacher you require without doing so.

Please note that pupils have been issued with a study planner. This has a space where you as parent should sign every week. This should help you become part of the routine of homework. In consultation with our seniors, these are not issued to S5 or S6.

Between us we can make this another, even more successful year for our school and our students.

## Parent Council

Blairgowrie High School Parent Council will be holding a raffle at TESCO on Saturday 20 October and will be running a charity shop in Alyth between Monday 12 and Friday 16 November. Any donations to the raffle prizes and donations of goods to the charity shop would be gratefully received. For further information contact [j.rutherford725@btinternet.com](mailto:j.rutherford725@btinternet.com)

## P7 Information Evening

There will be an information evening for P7 pupils and their parents on **Thursday 25 October 2012, starting at 7pm**. This is an opportunity for P7 parents to tour the school and view pupils work.

## Services to Support You and Your Children

An information evening will be held on **Tuesday 30 October 2012 from 4 - 6 pm in the school assembly hall**.

This event will give parents and carers an opportunity to meet some of the health and support service professionals who work in the school's catchment area and to find out what support is available to help you and your child. e.g Drugs and alcohol support services, School Health, Young Carers etc.

Parents are invited to drop in at any time between 4 - 6 pm to tour the stalls, to talk to the professionals or pick up relevant leaflets and contact details, should there ever be a need to seek specialised support in the future.

For more information contact Mrs L Bryce, Depute Head Teacher (Pupil Support)

## Circle-Cycle

...is a new enterprise business we have set up as part of our Enterprise and Employability Course. We are recycling CD's, DVDs and computer games in the school. If you would like to donate CDS, DVDs and games, please contact any one of us listed below. We will only take as high as age 15 DVDs and Games.

Connor Shand, Dominic McKinney, Chris Wilkie, Matthew Gow (S4)



## Double Yellow Lines

Parents are requested not to stop on the double yellow lines outside school when dropping their children off, or picking them up. Stopping here poses a clear safety risk to our pupils. The police and traffic wardens will be patrolling outside the school to ensure the area is kept clear. Thank you.

## Changes of Staff

**Mr Gordon Leslie** - After 20 years at Blairgowrie High school, Mr Leslie is retiring from teaching through ill health. He has been a valued member of the Technical department and has seen many changes in education during that time from 'O' grades to Standard grades and the now new National Courses. He will be missed by his colleagues and pupils but I am sure will be enjoying a well earned retirement. Best wishes from all at Blairgowrie.

**Mr Gordon Walker** - Gordon was a valued member of Blairgowrie High School staff for 7 years, during which time he undertook the role of PT Support for Learning. Gordon retired in May this year, after being elected as an SNP councillor. Gordon will be sorely missed but we all wish him well in his next adventure.

**Mrs Elaine Burke** - Elaine Burke's second spell in the English Department ended at the summer. Elaine was here for two years in the late 1990s and returned in 2007. During her time with us she co-produced a production of "A Christmas Carol" and organised our Activities Days. Last session we were grateful for her service as acting P.T. in her department. We wish her well in her new position at Breadalbane Academy.

**New Staff**- At the start of term Mr McAvoy joined the Support for Learning department, Ms Tringham permanently joined Art and Miss Grant joined HE. We are expecting the imminent arrival of Ms Smith to Art, Mr Wilkinson to Physics, Mr Egan to Maths and Mrs Rutherford to English - there will be a lot of new faces in the school next term!

## Birnam Hill - Duke of Edinburgh

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 15 S2 pupils set off in 2 groups up the rocky paths of Birnam Hill. At the start everyone thought it was going to be an easy walk but their minds were changed after 20 long minutes. We struggled walking up hill through streams and mud but enjoyed our time. The views along the way of the country side, a stunning water fall beside the path and the final view from the summit was awesome. Coming down was steep, boggy and slippery which caused many of us to fall and get our shoes stuck in mud. After our 3 hours of great effort we all made it back safely to the bus but feeling like we never wanted to do it again. However the next day we were already asking "When are we getting to go out again?"  
Alyssa Brown (S2)



Community Link Worker, Ross Marshall with the S2 Duke of Edinburgh group.

## Musical Notes!

### Last Term...

The Music Department rounded off the last school term with three spectacular performances of **Grease** the musical. Featuring songs from the film and stage versions, such as Summer Nights, Greased Lightnin' and We Go Together, the audience was blown away by the cast from the first ring of the Rydell High bell to the last 'a wop bam boom'.

The department would like to say a huge thank you to all members of staff, parents and helpers who made the show possible, and they hope to see you all again next year for their next production, **Hairspray!**

### Coming Up...

**Christmas Concert** - A chance for Blairgowrie High School to showcase its musical talent through a variety of performances from the choir, orchestra and bands with a bit of audience participation.

**Summer show: Hairspray!** - Baltimore 1962 - a teenage girl aims for tv stardom as a dancer but has to battle against prejudice because of her size and overcome racial segregation. A must-

*"I started to learn to play the clarinet in primary school. When I came to high school I continued lessons and joined the school and Tayside wind bands. We perform a concert in aid of Childline every year as well as lots of concerts in school. I have enjoyed music in school from S1 and I am now taking two music courses. I joined the school choir who perform concerts in school and in the community, singing show tunes and "pop" tunes.*

*"With the music department I have been on two theatre trips to London and am planning to go on another. This is a great experience and for me a good opportunity to see professional theatre productions - something that I am interested in. My favourite was "The Woman in Black" - the stage version - which used only 2 actors to create a dark and chilling production.*

*"During my time at BHS I have performed in six school shows (once as a talking clock!) which has been a great confidence boost - I would recommend it to anyone. The feeling of getting a huge round of applause from the audience after months of rehearsal and overcoming my nerves to get on stage is incredible! If you don't want to act you can work backstage or paint scenery."*

Charlie Wake (S6)

*A curtain call for the cast of Grease*





## Jampionships

The "World Jampionship" is a competition based in Blairgowrie with the aim of promoting local produce and finding the world's best jam. Over the summer the school played host to the first Jampionships Cooking challenge. Three hundred pupils took up the challenge and 40 finalists entered the cook off on Friday 17th August. The students had one hour to prepare and present their dishes.

The categories were baked, savoury and desserts, for both junior and senior students. All the finalists' dishes were presented in the school's training restaurant, "Aspirations". Mackays, the world renowned Scottish Jam makers, sent along their Marketing Coordinator, Claire Smith as a judge and supplied the winners with goody bags; Elaine Cox, representing Scotland Food and Drink was also part of the judging team, along with Bernard Taylor, Head Chef from Lands of Loyal Hotel Alyth.

Trophies for the category winners, Ryan Aitchison, Chloe Bailey, Craig Walker and Jennifer Ramsey were presented by Eileen McBain representing Blairgowrie and East Perthshire Tourist Association. The four finalists were given the chance to demonstrate their winning dishes at this year's Dundee Flower and Food Festival - we are the first school to have had the honour of demonstrating. It was a wonderful experience for the pupils. The winners from each of the categories were given a VIP tour behind the scenes at the Festival and met the Fabulous Baker Brothers on the Sunday.

The judges hope they have found some great Chefs of the future!

*"The dish I made was venison olives, stuffed with blackcurrant sausage meat, served with garlic fried greens and herb roast potatoes.*

*"I tried to make my dish unique and present it in a way that looked different and would wow the judges. I came first overall because the blackcurrant jam complimented the venison and, according to the judges, "was a dish they couldn't stop eating!"*

*"After winning I got the chance to go to the Dundee Flower and Food Festival. There I met the Fabulous Baker brothers, which for me was the highlight of the competition. They were so down to earth and even offered me the chance to be their apprentice down in England! I feel a very lucky girl to have been offered this amazing opportunity and am very thankful to be part of the Hospitality course." Jennifer Ramsay (S6)*

The winners, presenting their dishes



## French Drama Competition

A group of 9 S1 Pupils took first prize, £100, when they performed a French play in Glasgow as part of the annual "Rencontres Théâtrales" Dramatic Competition organised by the Institut Français.



Pupils performing in Glasgow

Their play, a comic drama with a bloodcurdling ending was scripted and performed by First Years under the direction of Mrs Boylan. The group was praised by the Judges for their excellent level of language and pronunciation, combined with their ability to engage the audience.

The play follows the unhappy return to school after the long summer break of two French pupils who are made even more miserable by the prospect of starting the first day with the boring History Teacher, Monsieur Labataille. However, studying the French Revolution becomes almost bearable with a little imagination!!!!

## Swimming Gala

On Thursday 27 September the swimming team travelled to Perth for the P&K School's gala. Last year we were 4<sup>th</sup> overall and we were looking to improve on that. The start of the gala was delayed due to Crieff arriving late so the warm up was rather hurried. The freestyle relay was first up and all of our teams won medals. Next up were the individuals. Blairgowrie was successful with gold medals from Hannah Roberston (S2), Ross Campbell (S2), Aaron Todd (S4), Owain Rutherford (S5) and Andie Todd (S6). We also did well in the mixed relay, giving us an overall 2<sup>nd</sup> place behind Kinross - a great improvement from last year!  
Owain Rutherford (S5)

The day was very enjoyable and the cheering and support was great.  
Serena Stanhope (S2)

I enjoyed it very much and would love to do it again next year. Blairgowrie came second overall but we were very close to winning. I had curly fries on the bus on the way home! Ryan Aitchison (S2)

## Alton Towers Trip 2012

Having given UK theme parks a fair bit of criticism I decided to apply for a trip to Alton Towers with the school. The two major factors which influence how good the day will be; one, the British weather, and the other; are all the rides working on the day.

The bus journey down was 8 hours including stops. We arrived at the park at 8 in the morning. The park opens at 9 and the rides start at 10 so we had a little time to learn where the rides were and what ones we would go on first. I heard a lot of people talking about a ride called Nemesis, saying you need to do it and how it was one of the best. So that was my aim for the day; ride the Nemesis! There was a huge selection of rides; from riding the River Rapid to riding one of the coolest and fastest rides, Air. For this ride you were strapped in facing the ground so it actually felt like you were flying. The queues for most of the rides were over 30 minutes long but the ride was always worth the wait.

The 8 hour bus journey down and the one I was about to take home was definitely worth it. You have a laugh with the teachers and meet new people. If you get a chance to go on this trip, take it, because it is great fun, especially with a group of mates.  
Innes Simpson (S6)

## Jamie Andrew Visit

Jamie Andrew is a Scottish mountaineer who had his hands and feet amputated following a horrific accident in the French Alps. Miraculously, despite his disability, Jamie has carried on with his mountaineering career and has made some amazing ascents all over the world, raising many thousands of pounds for charity along the way. In September, Jamie came to speak to our senior pupils.

*"I thought that this talk was very inspiring, especially towards the end when Jamie talked about how he recovered from a traumatic event and got back into his everyday life. The thing that stood out the most for me was his ability to create achievable daily goals, fulfill them, and then create more difficult goals for the next day.*

*"He toned down the potentially more gruesome and upsetting parts of his story, but still told it in a way that it had the full effect. Also, his sense of humor and juggling act at the end kept everyone's attention and lightened up the mood.*

*"I thought that Jamie was a great role model for everyone, no matter what their situation. He gave a very composed narration of his story and was a good public speaker. The whole talk came together very nicely and he ended it well too. He was happy to talk to us afterwards and autograph our planners or his book for those of us who'd bought it."*  
Caitie Selwa (S6)



Jamie Andrew with some of the senior pupils who heard his presentation and met him afterwards

## What's Coming Up....

### Blairgowrie High School

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Date	Event
<b>School Terms and In-Service Days</b>	
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
Thur 13 December	Christmas Disco in aid of Cash for Kids
Thur 21 December	Christmas Concert
Fri 22 December	Last Day of Winter Term
Mon 7 January	First Day of Spring Term

Date	Event
<b>Reports, Parents' Evenings and Exams</b>	
Week Beginning 22 October	S2 Common Assessment
Mon 29 October	S5/6 Parents' Evening
Week Beginning 5 November	S4 Common Assessment
Wed 14 November	S2 Parents' Evening
Mon 19 to Fri 30 November	S3 Prelim Exams
Week Beginning 17 December	S2 Common Assessment
Wed 5 December	S4 Parents' Evening

## Clubs...

Club	Time	Place
Year Book (S6)	Mon Lunch	A2
French Drama	Mon Lunch	I10
Netball	Mon 3.40 pm	Games Hall
Cricket	Mon 5.00 pm	Games Hall
Fundraising Committee	Tue Lunch	A2
Eco Group	Tue Lunch	D8
Film Club	Tue Lunch	D4
Homework Club	Tue 3.40 pm	J1
Trampolining	Tue 3.40 pm	Games Hall
Badminton	Tue 3.40 pm	Games Hall
Dance	Tue 4.00 pm	School Hall

Club	Time	Place
Rugby	Tue 4.00 pm	JJ Coupar
BBC School News Report	Wed Lunch	LRC
Glee Choir	Wed Lunch	A2
Football (S1-3)	Wed Lunch	Playing Fields
Athletics Club	Wed 3.40	Playing Fields
Hockey	Wed 4.00 pm	Games Hall
Dance	Wed 4.00 pm	School Hall
Book Group	Thur Lunch	E6
Choir	Thur Lunch	A2
Science Club	Thur Lunch	D8
Mountain Bike	Thu 3.40 pm	Bike Shed

Club	Time	Place
Basketball	Thu 3.45 pm	Games Hall
Fitness for Games	Thu 4.00 pm	Games Hall
S1 Fitness	Fri Lunch	Games Hall
String Group	Fri Lunch	A2
Computing Club	Lunchtimes	I9
School Magazine	Lunchtimes and After School	LRC
Warhammer Chess Club		
Chill Out Club		
Girls Rugby	TBC	JJ Coupar