

DINGWALL ACADEMY NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2012



Calendar dates

School Christmas Concert Tuesday 11th December 7.30pm

Christmas Socials

Christmas socials take place on the following dates

S1/S2 Monday 17th December
S3/S4 Tuesday 18th December
S5/S6 Wednesday 19th December

Pupils who have not complied with the school uniform or behaviour code will not be able to purchase tickets. Pupils who may fall into this category have already been identified and notified.

UCAS references

Senior pupils applying for University or College through UCAS are reminded that applications should be completed by Friday 30th November.

ONLINE PAYMENT FOR SCHOOL MEALS – UPDATE

Parents are now able to pay online for school meals in Dingwall Academy.

Go to the Highland Council website – www.highland.gov.uk – and select the ‘PAY’ icon on the home page. Proceed to Online payments - to pay for school meals, select ‘All Other Payments’, then ‘Education’, then ‘School meals’. Complete the form with all information requested – all major credit and debit cards are accepted, except American Express and Diners.

Remember –

- You will need to have the **9 DIGIT** Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) for each pupil. If you do not know this number it is available from the school office.
- Allow 24 hours for the payment to reach the pupil’s account
- A separate payment must be made for each pupil
- All credit card transactions will incur a bank administration charge of 2%
- You are still able to pay into the pupil’s account by cash or cheque at the school if you prefer.

PLEASE NOTE – this advice note relates specifically to **Dingwall Academy** pupils. At present, the online payment facility is only available for a small number of schools. Parents will be notified directly by schools, as and when online payments become available for other schools. If you have children attending another school, please continue to make payments in your normal manner, unless or until you are notified that online payments can be made for that specific school.

Youth Voice Elections

Congratulations to the following pupils who have been elected to represent Dingwall Academy at the Highland Youth Voice: Arran Rex S3, Callum Ross S5 and Andrew Elliott S6.

Congratulations to all pupils who put themselves forward for election and also to those senior pupils who organised and managed the election process.

Spray Deodorants

Pupils are reminded that aerosol deodorants must not be used in school. The use of these sprays can cause serious distress to some pupils who suffer from asthma and other respiratory disorders. Roll-on deodorants are acceptable and any pupil found using an aerosol will have it confiscated.

School Buses

We have been working with D&E coaches to try and improve the school bus service. One concern is that pupils are not always able to travel on the same bus at the end of the school day. In the New Year all pupils will be issued with a new bus pass – this pass will be colour coded to indicate what bus pupils should be travelling on. Although bus passes were issued earlier in the year they have not been requested by drivers and this has led to some confusion. We are also aware that the behaviour of some pupils on buses is unacceptable – where this is found to be the case pupils will have bus passes removed.

Social Subjects visit to Scottish Parliament

A group of 23 Higher social subjects pupils participated in the annual Holyrood parliament trip on 7/8 November. Having travelled down in the morning the group visited the refurbished Scottish National Museum. They particularly relished the opportunity to view the Edinburgh skyline from the roof terrace. A performance of *42nd Street* at the Playhouse Theatre kept them entertained in the evening before they tapped off to bed in the SYHA Central hostel. There was time the following morning to take in some of the shops on offer in the city before visiting the Holyrood parliament building. The pupils engaged in a question answer session with MSPs Dave Thompson and Jamie Macgregor - the exchange became quite heated over the issue of devolution! They then observed a debate in the parliament chamber about the Scottish Government's drug action policies. Fortunately this was a topic which was very accessible so enhancing the pupils' overall experience. The group's conduct and behaviour throughout the trip was a credit to their parents and the school.

Meal an Naidheachd air Megan agus Ella

Congratulations to Megan Dale and Ella Scarr who have won through to the semi-finals of the BT National Gaelic Debating Competition. They beat Sir E. Scott School from Harris in the first round and then in a County / Caley style battle they knocked out Inverness Royal Academy in the second round. They will be up against Tain in the semi-final debating for the motion that the days of newspapers are over. If they get through to the final they will meet either Portree or The Nicolson Institute from Lewis.

Dingwall Academy have won the competition once before in 2006.

Siuthadaibh a chlann nighean!

Go for it girls!



Ri Chèile



Joanna MacDonald and Eilidh Campbell of S4 took part in the annual Scottish and Irish Gaelic speech-making contest Ri Chèile, which alternates between Ireland and Scotland. This year it was held in James Gillespie's High School, Edinburgh, where both girls gave a good account of themselves. In addition various social activities were laid on, including a visit to Edinburgh Castle with a Gaelic-speaking guide, where some children from Stonehouse Primary School, who are learning Gaelic, performed a pageant from the time of James IV. Joanna and Eilidh also visited the National Museum and were entertained at an evening cèilidh in the school.

Three fluent Gaelic speakers from S4, Ella Scarr, Eilidh Campbell and Joanna MacDonald, with Gaelic teacher Mrs. Drennan, were privileged to attend a fashion Master Class held recently in Inverness with world famous couturier, Sandra Murray. Sandra has designed outfits for many personalities, the latest being those for Julie Fowlis for the various premières of the film Brave in Inverness, England and America. Julie, who is herself an ex-pupil of Dingwall Academy, was able to be present on the day, adding to the excitement for the girls. The course was held as an innovative series of events organised by Comann na Gàidhlig to enable youngsters to experience a variety of activities through the medium of Gaelic.



Pupil Achievements

Congratulations to Tom Hoffman S5 who competed in the recent Scottish Schools Fencing competition and achieved a 3rd place in Sabre and 1st place in Epee. This is a tremendous achievement and we wish Tom well with future events.

Cycling

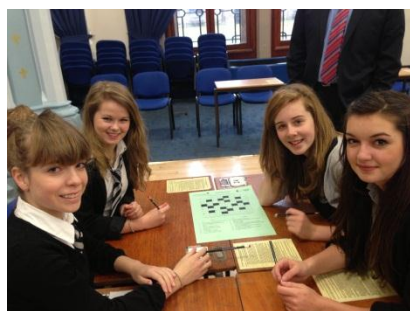
Congratulations to both Finn Graham & Callum Galloway who both came second in their respective categories in the (local) 3rd round of the Scottish Cycling- Dirt Crit series, recently held at the Wildcat Trails at Golspie.

The Mountain Bike after school group continues to be run - check out the information at Room 8 - Mr Graham, or see Ryan Fearne - S6.

E Twinning in Art

Congratulations to pupils working in Art who have been awarded the European Quality Label for the excellence of the work in the eTwinning project "Granny's Gifts". This means that the work of the pupils has been recognised at the highest European level. The project will be displayed in a special area on the European Portal at www.etwinning.net.

Enterprising Maths Competition



On the 15th November Eilidh Seaton, Jill Tolmie, Ruth Foster and Kirstin Dilley travelled to the University of Glasgow to take part in the Scottish Enterprising Maths Competition. The day was split into five rounds, including practical rounds, actuarial maths and a team relay. It was really good fun and the girls met other pupils from schools across the country. Overall we finished a very respectable 34th nationally (out of 60), and rewarded ourselves with some time shopping and dinner at TGI Fridays!

The Royal Horticultural Society's "It's Your Neighbourhood" Award:

The Dingwall Academy Gardening Group, DiGGers are proud to have been presented with this award. The scheme aims to encourage groups make their environment greener and cleaner. They are also looking for community participation, environmental responsibility and gardening achievements.

We were judged as "Developing" - the third of five levels. An assessor visited the school garden to see the crops we have been growing and hear about various activities. These included the Summer Garden Party we held for primary school pupils, meals we have grown and cooked ourselves, building "bug hotels" and feeding birds in the Winter. We now hope to work towards the next level, "Thriving" which also involves volunteers helping regularly from the wider community. If any parents or carers are interested in helping out in the garden on a regular basis, please contact the office and ask to speak to Miss Swallow who runs the club.

The winners for the DiGGers Potato Competition were also announced recently. The plant that produced the most potatoes was number 19, adopted by Ryan Murray from 2B2. It was a clear winner producing 1380g of potatoes! The person who guessed the correct plant was Finlay Campbell from 2W2 who won a £20 voucher. We would like to thank Frank Nicol's Garden Centre for hosting the competition. £61 was raised for the Highland Hospice – thanks to all those who took part.

The Giving Machine

The Parent Council would like to encourage parents to sign up to the Giving Machine. This is a way in which people can help raise funds for the school without cost to themselves so that all our pupils will benefit. With Christmas coming up and people no doubt buying goods on line, all you do is "Join as a Giver" for Dingwall Academy via <http://www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk>. and then go on to Amazon etc as normal and make your purchase. There are a lot of other companies signed up to the scheme too, eg. Tesco, Asda, B&Q to name but three. For more details of companies involved please see TheGivingMachine website as per the link above.

Community News

Community Council News

Dingwall is arranging a day of celebration in connection with the switch on of their Christmas Lights. This will take place on Saturday 1 December, starting at 1000 with a Christmas street market which will run until about 1500. There will be entertainment on the stage in front of the Town Hall during the afternoon, leading to a torchlight procession (bring your own torch, or light sabres should be on sale during the day), led by pipers and Santa's sleigh pulled by reindeer. The Academy and Primary choirs will be taking part, along with other local artists, and the lights will be officially switched on at about 7.00pm.

The day is sure to be busy with Ross County hosting Inverness Caledonian Thistle in the Scottish Cup earlier in the day. Please come along and join in the fun and support your local community.

Dingwall Evangelical Church

The Hub in Hill Street, Dingwall which is run by the Evangelical Church is open on Friday afternoons from 2pm until 4pm for pupils from Dingwall Academy as a place where they can meet with their friends and relax, play a game of pool or air hockey or simply listen to music. There is a café setting where crisps, drinks, sweets etc are available along with tea, coffee or hot chocolate. Young folk are free to come and go as they please and if they want to sit about and do little or nothing that is fine as well. The organisers hope to build the facility around what the young people themselves want. Please encourage your children to come along any Friday.