

Kincorth Academy Eagle News

December 2008

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School News

This term has been full of the usual work for pupils but has also included many activities which go on beyond the classroom, such as our exchange with our partner school in Gomel, which you can read about later.

In sports, our under-14 football team has reached the 4th round of the Scottish Cup beating the Nicholson Institute in Stornoway 6-2. The under-13 team remain unbeaten in the B league while the under-15 team continues to do well locally although it has been knocked out of the cup.

Last month, a group of girls in S1 – S3 had success by being placed first in the regional championships for gymnastics.

We look forward to next term when the highlights should include the launching of our school radio station.

May I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Grahame Whyte
Head Teacher

Adverse Weather

Please remember that in cases of severe weather you should call

0870 054 1999

followed by the PIN code for Kincorth Academy **011070**

Anti-bullying Policy

by Scott Milne S6

Throughout 2008, a small group of prefects has been involved in work on an anti-bullying policy for use within Aberdeen City schools. We first held an anti-bullying workshop at Charleston Primary School in April and continued work with these pupils when they moved up to Kincorth Academy in August. Similar workshops were then also held at Hazlehead Academy.

The reason we have been doing this work is that we have been asked to help write a pupil friendly anti-bullying policy that will be jointly presented to Aberdeen City Council by us pupils and teachers, who have been writing their own anti-bullying policy.

As part of our work we were invited to make a presentation to an anti-bullying conference, sponsored by Childline, at Elphinstone Hall. We made a short presentation and then “unveiled” our draft policy, which comes in the form of a leaflet. Our work was very well received by all who attended the conference and we gave interviews to Northsound Radio, Original FM and BBC Radio Scotland.

Over the coming months our draft policy/leaflet will be distributed to all Aberdeen City schools as part of a citywide consultation and then we will present our policy to Aberdeen City Council alongside staff, and we believe this approach has never been done before.

Gomel Exchange

By Ewen Somers S4

I first got involved with the Gomel project in 2006 when some of my friends were hosting students who had come over to Aberdeen on a visit. They were a great bunch and we had some really good times including a concert at the Cowdray Hall and a ceilidh at Goals.

I was lucky enough to be included in the group who then went to Gomel in 2007 and had a brilliant time. I stayed with the family of one of the pupils and had such an enjoyable experience that I was really looking forward to hosting a student when they came to visit us this year. I knew that there would be no trouble with communication as they all speak perfect English.

All the host students went to the airport to greet our guests. Fourteen year old Nikitta came to stay with us and we hit it off right away. I took him to a Halloween party on his first night and he kept taking photos of the Trick or Treaters who came to the door as Halloween was a new experience for him.

We were given a tour of old Aberdeen on the Saturday morning and went to the cinema to see James Bond at night. On the Sunday, everyone came to mine and we had a party and really all got to know each other before they started at Kincorth Academy on the Monday.

The week passed in a flash because we were so busy, visiting the Town

House, bonfire night and on the Thursday evening we held a joint concert at South St. Nicholas Church hall. The Gomel students amazed everyone with their grasp of English. One of the girls stood on stage and recited "My Heart is in The Highlands" by Robert Burns. A lot of Scottish kids would struggle with that!

We went bowling on the Friday night and ended the week with another party at one of the host students' houses.

It seemed like no time at all before we were bidding everyone an emotional goodbye at the airport on the Sunday morning.

All the students became like members of the family in such a short time and my parents have already received an e-mail from Nikitta's parents thanking them for looking after him so well.

I would encourage everyone to get involved in the School 71 project as it is a really rewarding experience.

Gomel 2009 and 2010

We are already planning for a group of pupils from Kincorth Academy to visit Belarus in September 2009 and hope to host a further group from Gomel in October 2010.

The school would like to encourage parents of pupils, particularly those currently in S1 – S3, to consider acting as hosts in 2010.

Further information will be available in the future, including the experiences of parents who have hosted.

Kincorth Academy Parent Council

As indicated in the previous issue of Eagle News, more questions from the Parent council event on 23 September will be answered by Mr Whyte

- Q** Can places on vocational courses in S3 be better allocated to pupils?
A The school is in discussion with Aberdeen College already about places for 2009-2010. There may well be a limit to places on college courses for Kincorth Academy pupils and we will work towards establishing a clear rationale for allocating pupils
- Q** Could parents be better informed about events such as photographs and parents' evenings via the web rather than depending on a slip to be delivered by pupils?
A I intend to develop the website much more and eventually get rid of the need to depend on pupils to pass information to parents. Groupcall will also be used this year to remind parents of the dates for parents' evenings.
- Q** Will Advanced Higher be available in 2009-2010?
A Advanced Higher courses will be on offer in some subjects. Which courses are viable and how many teaching periods can be devoted to Advanced Higher courses will be dependent on pupil numbers.
- Q** Could pupils have computers that work throughout the year?
A In January, 37 new computers will be installed in the school. That is equivalent to about 15% of our computers
- Q** There are lots of days off. Could you schedule in-service days to take place on strike days to cut down on this?
A Unfortunately, in-service days are planned in conjunction with Aberdeenshire Council and organised months in advance to allow training providers etc, to be booked. The reality of a strike is that, by its very nature, it is designed to have an effect by causing disruption.

Civic Reception

On Tuesday 18 November the 10-year business partnership between Kincorth Academy and Petrofac was recognised at a Civic Reception in the Town House, hosted by the Lord Provost.

Kincorth Academy's partnership was recognised as being not only one of Scotland's first but a model of best practice. There are now over 155 business partnerships in Aberdeen's schools.

Sponsored Walk

Thank you to all parents and friends who sponsored the pupils to walk along the old Deeside Railway line on Friday 3 October.

To date the total raised stands at over £7300.00, although we are still chasing the final few pupils who have money to contribute.

Pupils will be consulted, through the School Council, as to what the money should be spent on.

Linking with Primaries

For 2009 we are making changes to many of the arrangements we have for supporting pupils moving from our associated primary schools to Kincorth Academy.

All primary 7 pupils have been invited to the Academy for a series of four Science lessons. Half of the pupils have already enjoyed this experience, while the other half is scheduled to join us in January.

During the first week of December, parents of pupils in P7 were invited to tour the school during the day. 95 parents took advantage of this opportunity to see the facilities and visit classrooms. These visits went a long way to dispel the belief, among many in our community, that the school is anything less than well-ordered and productive.

All P7 pupils and their parents will be invited to an Information Evening on Tuesday 20 January to learn more about being at secondary school, the transfer process and the support that is available to pupils during this exciting time.

One major change to our formation of class groupings for next session is that pupils will be taught in classes of no more than 20 for all subjects across the curriculum. This arrangement aims to allow teachers to know, support and advise pupils more effectively.

It is also planned that next year's S1 pupils will be presented for their first SQA examinations at the end of S3 as part of Kincorth Academy's drive to improve ambition and attainment.

Dates for Your Diary

Monday 5 January 2009
Return from Christmas holidays

Tuesday 20 January
Information Evening for P7 pupils and their parents

Wednesday 21 January
Information Evening for S4 pupils and their parents about S5 choices

Thursday 29 January
S4 Parents' Evening

Tuesday 3 February
Information Evening for S2 pupils and their parents about S3 choices

Tuesday 10 February
S2 Parents' Evening

Thursday 12 February
S5/S6 Prelim Examinations begin

Monday 16 February
Mid-term holiday

Tuesday 17 February
In-service day. Pupil holiday.

Thursday 5 March
Information Evening for S5 pupils and their parents about S6 choices

Wednesday 11 March
S3 Parents' Evening

Friday 3 April
School closes for Spring Holiday at 3.15pm

Tuesday 21 April
In-service day. Pupil holiday

Wednesday 22 April
Pupils return after Spring holiday.