
❖ Kincorth Academy Eagle News ❖

December 2005

Children in Need

A total of £977 was raised for Children in Need. This was achieved through S5 pupils bag-packing at Sainsbury's as part of a PSE Citizenship Day, a whole-school Dress-as-you-Please day, sales of a special tuck shop, a raffle and a guess-the-teacher competition, plus some sponsorships.

Shoebox Appeal

Shoebboxes this year are going to Kosovo. They are being organised and delivered through KAFKAH, a local charity created by an Aberdeen teacher. We can be guaranteed that the boxes are going to children who are in desperate need. Once again our S2 pupils have responded magnificently to our appeal, and we have also had donations from staff and pupils in other year groups who wished to support this cause. Well done to all those who have participated.

The Big Sing

Pupils in the Senior Choir took part in the Big Sing on Friday 9 December. We helped to break a Guinness World Record for the biggest "Simultaneous Sing-Along" in the world, and joined 500,000 other singers all over Britain. The song "Lean on me" was sung in the Royal Albert Hall in London by Joss Stone, Lemar and local school pupils. We were able to sing along via a live internet link.

There aren't many people who can say they have broken a Guinness World Record, but we can, and the school will receive a certificate to prove it!

Spectroscopy Day

A group of S6 pupils attended a spectroscopy day at Aberdeen University. The event included a series of lectures about a range of spectroscopic techniques. They found out how nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy can help to identify the exact structure of molecules, and infra red spectroscopy can identify the functional groups within each molecule. The pupils also learned about the different types of mass spectrometry, from electron impact to ICP, and how with the use of plasma at the same temperature as the surface of the Sun, compounds can be broken down to gain information about what they are made from. Pupils were also shown a range of specialised equipment used to demonstrate these spectroscopic techniques. This was an extremely valuable day.

Awards Cards

In the last Eagle News I explained about the introduction of a scheme of Awards Cards for S1/2 pupils. Pupils present these cards to teachers each lesson, and a stamp is given for good work and behaviour. Pupils start off with Bronze cards, and can work through Silver, Gold and Platinum. The new scheme is proving popular and is showing signs of being highly successfully.

Already a significant number of pupils have progressed to Silver cards, and they will receive a Certificate acknowledging their efforts so far, and a small tangible reward. Pupils working their way to the higher awards have the potential to receive Diplomas of Excellence at the Annual Awards Ceremony.



Aberdeen Speaks! Debating Project

On Friday 12 December 12 S1 pupils from class 1GB travelled to Marischal College to take part in the Finals Day of the Aberdeen Speaks! Debating Project. This was a follow-up to an earlier debating workshop held at Summerhill Education Centre, where pupils had learned all the skills required to take part in a debate.

After researching and practising debates at school, six pupils from class 1GB were chosen to make up the two Kincorth Academy teams who would compete in the Finals Day. Six other pupils who had shown a high level of enthusiasm and hard work were also invited as supporters. Every pupil was heavily involved in preparing the team's speeches, on some very challenging topics!

On the big day itself, each team had to compete against teams from seven other Aberdeen schools in a series of three preliminary debates. Each team from Kincorth won their first debate, and narrowly lost the remaining two after a valiant effort. Unfortunately we did not make it into the Grand Final, which took place between teams from Oldmachar and Aberdeen Grammar School, with the prize going to the Grammar.

Both Kincorth Academy teams performed extremely well in all their debates and can be proud of themselves for the high level of commitment and effort they showed. The day was a great experience for all involved and everyone enjoyed what turned into a quite heated competition.

Hopefully this will be just the beginning for Kincorth Academy in debating at this level! Teams were:-

Kincorth A: Zoe Smith, Kristina Melvin, Grant Ross

Kincorth B: Emma Davidson, Kayleigh Slack, Andrew Cross

Supporters: Connor Anderson, Laura Davidson, Joanne Hogan, Mairi Kennedy, Chris Porteous, Lauren Runcie

Thanks to Mr Howden for organising the teams, and to Miss Alba for her support.

Christmas Concert

This year's concert took place on Monday 19th December in the South St Nicholas Church. There were items from solo senior pupils, rock bands, instrumentalists, and the staff/senior choir. As usual the quality of talent was outstanding, and everyone enjoyed the evening in a relaxed atmosphere. The perfect preparation for the Christmas holidays!

Notification of absence

A reminder that we encourage parents to contact the school by phone on the first day of an absence. It is particularly helpful if you can indicate how long the absence will be for.

As usual, a note provided to the Register Teacher on return from absence allows us to ensure that all absences are accounted for, with the correct explanations. Thank you

Estimate Exams

S4 pupils have now completed their Estimate Exams, and will have started to receive feedback from teachers. S4 reports will go home to parents early in the New Year. This is a time for pupils to reflect on their progress. The estimate exams have given them an experience of the standard of exam, and the exam conditions, which they will face in May. It will also provide a measure of progress, and pupils can gauge whether they are working to their full potential and achieving the grades they should be. Teachers will be analysing results very carefully and setting pupils clear targets for performance in the SQA exams.

It is always the case that some people underperform. There is still time between now and the exams to make an impact on their learning and progress, and I would encourage parents to emphasise how important this time of year is for their children's future.

I am pleased to say that the invigilators had a pleasant experience and reported that behaviour during the exams was excellent.

Head Lice Awareness

As a health-promoting school we are conscious of the need to promote awareness of many aspects of well-being. As our children get older we may assume that there is no reason to check for head lice. The fact is that anyone can get head lice. The Scottish Executive has issued national guidance on detection and management of head lice, which is available on their website at www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/health/mgmf.pdf NHS Scotland have issued a leaflet entitled "Head Lice Information for Parents". This is available at www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk/services/pubs/pdf/headlice/pdf. If anyone has questions or concerns, please contact the School Nurse, Jill Rattray.

Gymnastics

At a recent Scottish 2-piece Gymnastics Competition, Kristie Reid was 1st overall and 4th in the team competition; Jemma Waldie was 4th overall and 3rd in the team event, and Justine Hayes was 3rd in the team event.

Football

Chris Taft and Jamie Ballantyne have been selected to represent Aberdeen Secondary Schools Senior Select in the Scottish Schools Senior National Trophy 2005/06

Ten Pin Bowling

Steven and Natasha Ross were invited to take part in the Irish Junior Ten Pin Bowling Open.

Pool

Michael Kelly has won the Scottish Masters Pool Competition and will represent Scotland in Bordeaux in February.

Activities Week

This year Activities Week is the week beginning 22 May 2006. Two foreign trips have already been organised, and pupils in S1,2,3 will receive information about home-based activities shortly after the Christmas holidays. There is a wide range of activities on offer at varying costs, and we have tried to plan a menu of packages to suit everyone. Pupils will be asked to pick their four preferences, and we will endeavour to give people their first choices. However, some activities can become full, and subsequent choices need to be allocated. There will be a deadline for submission of forms, and it is extremely important to hand things in on time since we have a great deal of work to do. Once choices have been allocated, pupils will then be able to start making instalments so that the costs can be spread over a number of months. This is an important event in the school year when we can all benefit from an experience which is different from the normal school week, and we expect all pupils to take part. I regret that every year some parents see this as an opportunity to take their children on holiday. Not only is this unsupportive of the school, but children absent for holidays will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

So let's look forward to a week which has been very enjoyable and successful in previous years!

Bullying

Like all schools we are very alert to relationship problems between pupils and take prompt action to sort out situations when they are drawn to our attention. A number of parents have written to me recently, happy with the support they and their children have received. Some comments are:- *"I have nothing but praise for the Guidance Team, they have dealt with our problems promptly". "The bullying stopped. I was very impressed with the way the teacher handled the situation and how she had kept me fully informed with everything."*

Inter House Competitions

I am very pleased to see these starting again. There had been a very enjoyable tug-o-war in June, and House Captains have organised inter-house quizzes for the last day of term. Each quiz will comprise a music, a sports, and a general knowledge section. Pupil Councils have also been discussing this development and have come up with some interesting ideas for competitions. There is a real interest among the pupils, and it is good to see senior pupils taking on leadership and organisational roles.

Sponsored Walk

The sum collected is now almost £10,000, a fantastic effort. Pupil Councils are still to arrive at final decisions on how to spend the money to improve the school, and some will go to local charities.

Link with School 71

The exchange visit by 8 students and 2 teachers in October went extremely well. A varied programme of activities, including a ceilidh and tour of the Town House was thoroughly enjoyed, and lasting friendships were made. Regular email correspondence is taking place, and we are now planning our reciprocal visit to Gomel next term

DHT appointment

Mrs Christine Murray has been appointed to the vacant Depute Head Teacher post. Mrs Murray is currently Acting DHT at Mackie Academy and will take up her post as early as possible in the New Year.

I am very grateful for the excellent work which Ms Furneaux has been doing as an Acting member of the Senior Management Team in the interim

Adverse weather conditions

We are coming to the time of year when we may experience extreme weather conditions which can have an impact on the school. **A leaflet describing the City's policy and procedures**, as well advice on what to do on such occasions, has already gone home. **Please remember to listen to Northsound or to use the school's information line. Parents phoning the school directly can hinder communication with the local authority or other agencies who need to be contacted. Thank you. To access the information line dial 08700541999 and enter pin number 011070.**

*A joyful Christmas and
a Happy New Year
from all the staff*

Dates for your diary

January

Thursday 5	New term starts
Monday 16	Parents' Evening Kirkhill
Tuesday 17	Parents' Evening Abbotswell
Wednesday 18	Parents' Evening Craighill
Thursday 26	S4 Parents' Evening

February

Monday 6	S2 Parents' Evening
Monday 13	S5/6 Estimates begin
Friday 17	In Service Day
Monday 20	Spring Holiday

March

Wednesday 8	S3 Parents' Evening
Friday 31	Term Ends

April

Wednesday 19	Summer Term starts
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