

Invergordon Academy Newsletter, January 2007

Dancing to Success

S5 pupil Laura McPhee spent part of the Christmas holidays starring in the Royal Ballet School's production of Swan Lake. Laura has been travelling to London every four weeks or so in the run up to dancing the part of the Swan in this well known and very prestigious ballet. As well as performing at the company's own theatre, Laura has also danced in London's Royal Opera House.



In addition to performing, Laura also studies Higher Dance as part of her studies. In the future she would ideally like to follow a career either as a dancer or dance teacher. The commitment and dedication shown by Laura since she took up dancing at the age of three would certainly indicate that she has the determination to succeed.

Andrew Bids for Glory at National Championships



At the time of writing Andrew MacLeod of S3 is off in Glasgow competing in the Scottish National Indoor Tennis Championships. Although Andrew is only 14, he is competing at Under-18 level, which gives an indication of the potential of this excellent young player.

Andrew's next major target is the under-16 age group Scottish Indoor Championship which take place in a few weeks. We wish him the best of luck.

Spread the Word

Like many success stories, the school found out about Laura's and Andrew's successes by accident. We very much want to celebrate our pupils' successes both in and out the school. Please let any member of the Senior Management Team know of anything your son/daughter is involved in that you wish to share.

Staffing

The school is happy to welcome another three student teachers this term :

Alistair Mackay and Kirsty Munro join the P.E. department from Moray House in Edinburgh for 6 and 12 weeks, respectively. Alistair is a native of Tain and Kirsty hails from Dingwall - both are delighted to be placed near to home.



Kira Williamson is former pupil of the school and has joined the science department, specialising in Biology. Kira is studying at Stirling University. All have settled in very quickly and are making a positive contribution to the life of the school.

Another student teacher, Andrea Inkster, will be joining the Technical Department for six weeks from the 5th of February.

This is also the same date I start a new post, in Charleston Academy, Inverness. I would like to thank pupils, parents and staff for their support during my time here.

Teaching an Easy Life ? - read on

The following is an account written by Helen Bennie, a PE student who had a placement in the school before Christmas. Most staff would agree it describes a fairly typical day.

A Day in the Life of a P.E Teacher

Start day 8.30 - preparation for the days' lessons

Registration class 8.45

Period 1

3rd year movement program
register class, collect valuables and gather together required equipment before heading off over to the leisure centre fitness room
today's lesson, pupils are working on developing and putting into action individual fitness programs
it is soon time to head back to the school to get changed, return valuables and equipment

Period 2

This period was spent researching information online regarding Higher PE including the new NAB outline and assessment criteria for the course.

Time was also spent developing a prelim exam for the Higher course students and also equipment etc for the Higher class later today.

Morning Break

Period 3

1st year class
Register class, collect valuables and gather together equipment required for the lesson.
Organise pupils directing them to the assembly hall for a lesson on social dancing. Pupils are learning the Gay Gordons' and St Bernards Waltz with a very enthusiastic PE teacher leading them through demonstrations of the dance steps and calling out instructions as everyone



attempts to perform the dances gracefully. At the start of the lesson non participants are set up with work to be completed on the lesson they are observing (organised by the P.E teacher prior to the lesson). Then its back to the changing rooms, returning valuables and equipment

Period 4

Higher P.E class

Organise pupils into the resource base for a brief theory session prior to some practical work.

The theme of today's lesson is footwork in badminton and the lesson begins with a recap of previously learned points and observation of a model performance with the use of the digital projector and SMART board.

Then it is off to the leisure centre where pupils continue the lesson with the senior pupil classroom assistant running a warm-up session with the class.

Pupils then divide themselves up into their groups to deliver each other a lesson on footwork devised by themselves in a previous theory lesson. The lesson finishes and it's back over to the school.

Lunch

Today's lunch is a quick one before supervising and refereeing the senior interschool basketball competition in the school gym.

Period 5

Higher PE class

Organise pupils again into the resource base for the issuing of a homework task

Then pupils return to the leisure centre to continue their lesson on footwork.

This lesson, pupils are playing singles games focusing throughout the game on their footwork with a another pupil observing and giving the players feedback on their performance.

And it's back to the school again to change.

Period 6

Junior Sports Leader Awards class

Register and organise pupils ensuring that the different classes know where they are to go and collect the valuables.

Pupils (or sports leaders) are working in the gym developing and delivering a circuits session to their peers. Pupils must organise with the assistance of the teacher the equipment they require for this session.

At the end of the lesson pupils evaluate their own performance with feedback given by the teacher.

Return all equipment to the appropriate places.

Back to the changing rooms and return valuables.

It's the end of the school day but it doesn't finish there:

Routine daily paperwork must be completed and then it's after school trampoline club from 3.30-4.30!!!

Is this the life for me? - definitely!!

H Bennie, PE student

Picking Up and Dropping Off Pupils

A large number of pupils are given lifts to and from school. All parents and carers are reminded that in the interests of safety please **do not** bring vehicles into the school grounds.

What Did You Do This Weekend?



If you were in the Air Training Corps you could have been flying, taking part in sports events, camping or even shooting.

I am currently a Cadet Sergeant at 379 (County of Ross) Squadron, Alness.

Since being in Cadets I have taken part in loads of activities and met lots of new people, and made friends with people from different schools

in our area, the Highlands and Scotland. The cadets are a uniformed organisation, and after getting uniform you are expected to wear it and look after it.

The best thing for me about Cadets is getting the chance to go flying. I have been flying twice in a powered glider. When up in the air to a height of about 3,000 feet the pilot gives you control of the plane and he teaches you how to fly it. I have also been powered flying four times in a Grob Tutor, this is the same type of aircraft all pilots in the Royal Air Force (RAF) train on for the first time. It's much better than gliding as the pilot gives you the option of doing aerobatics and also taking control of the aircraft. You have to be kitted out in a flying suit, gloves, helmet, life jacket, parachute and get a sick bag! If you want to fly for nothing the cadets offer that chance.

What else do we do? Well on a normal Cadet night we could be doing sports. Twice a month we have sports night where we do football, basketball, handball, hockey and lots of other sport activities. If you're really into sport you could be taking part in cadet competitions. I have represented Highland Wing at athletics and swimming.

In the Cadets there is also the opportunity to go .22 No 8 Rifle shooting.

There is also the option of going on camps with the Cadets. Last year I went to the Easter Camp in Yorkshire.

I had a great time. I got to go flying, do rifle practice, sports, visit York, motivational outreach, and tours around an RAF station, as well as meet cadets from other wings.

Our squadron also goes slot car racing every few

months, do night exercises, drill, aircraft recognition and many other activities.

So if you're bored on a Tuesday or Thursday night and at weekends and would like something to do, then come along. The Air Training Corps is open to anyone aged



13-18 years old. **So why not join?** Your nearest Squadron is recruiting now and is based at ATC Hut, Unit 8F, Teaninich Industrial Estate, Alness and meet twice a week on a Tuesday and Thursday evening between 7.30pm and 9.30pm. Take up the challenge and become an Air Cadet.

For more details come to our squadron (379 County of Ross) or alternatively contact Headquarters Highland Wing, Air Training Corps, Inverness by telephone on 01463 229724 and ask to speak to Squadron Leader Spence.

By Cadet Sergeant Pippa Dobson

Work Experience

The school played host to two work experience pupils over the last few weeks. Kimberley Ross and Megan Watson and are S4 pupils at Dingwall Academy and came to Invergordon to sample the working life of a School Sports' Co-ordinator (Megan) and a P.E. teacher (Kimberley). Their own school recommended that they come here in order to get a warm, friendly welcome. Both spent a week in the school and confirm that this is the case.



Our own current S3 will have the opportunity to have a work experience placement in May this year.

School Dress

Thank you for your continued support of school dress code. Visitors to the school often comment on the smart turnout of Invergordon Academy pupils. Please remember that denim does not form part of dress code.

Suitable school dress should be black and white, with the school logo visible. Pupil Council meetings have highlighted the support for school dress amongst our pupils, as well as giving pupils the chance to make a few suggested changes, which are being fully considered.

Moray Firth Radio Awards 2007

You will remember that last year Invergordon Academy scooped the "best school" award in the annual Moray Firth Radio Awards. Nominations for the 2007 version of the awards are now being taken. The closing date for nominations is Monday 26th February.

Please look at the following website for more information :- www.mfr.co.uk.

Hairdressing Competition



Coming up to the end of the Christmas term some of our S4 and S5 pupils took part in a hairdressing competition at Inverness College. The aim of this competition was for the girls to design and put into practice a style suitable for a bride. The actual styling had to be completed within 45 minutes. This



was done on doll's hair not peoples hair!!!

Andrea Leat, Nicola Boddington, Eileen Robinson and Claire Morgan were representing Invergordon Academy. They were joined by other Vocational Pathways Hairdressing students from schools across Highland. Around 30 girls took part in the competition. All who took part had a really enjoyable day.

The students taking part attend college one day a week in order to follow a vocational course that schools are unable to offer.



As well as hairdressing, Invergordon Academy pupils are studying Construction Skills, Automotive Engineering, Robotics, Care, Childcare and Engineering. These courses are a great opportunity for some pupils to taste college life or pick up skills



particular to certain careers while still attending schools.

Eileen Robinson, S5 (and Hairdressing Student)

Preparation for Lessons

All pupils are reminded that they must arrive at class ready to learn. You are responsible for ensuring that you have the correct equipment and books for all classes. A number of pupils have developed the habit of turning up for classes without even a pencil.

Not being prepared for class disrupts the learning of others.

Please help us cut down on a disrupted start to lessons by ensuring your son or daughter has the correct books and equipment each day.

Internet Access

The school is very fortunate to benefit from a wide and extensive range of ICT. Pupils are regularly given access to computers and many use the internet for their studies, as well as for recreation. Like any other school, Invergordon Academy manages internet access so that pupils are unable to access unsuitable websites. This includes a site called BEBO, a site that enables anyone to create their own web page.

Unfortunately, users of this site can leave themselves vulnerable to people who misuse BEBO. There have been several instances of pupils in this school who have

been abused and bullied via BEBO. While we have decided not to allow pupils access to this site in school, we obviously cannot prevent its use out of school. We would, however, ask you to be very vigilant about how your son/daughter uses the internet at home and recommend that they do not use BEBO.

Dates For Your Diary

Please make a note of the dates that involve you or your child.

January

Wednesday 31st :- S3 parents' evening

February

Wednesday 7th :- S5/S6 prelims end

Thursday 8th :- In-Service day, school closed to pupils

Friday 9th , Monday 12th :- Holidays

Tuesday 13th :- S2 reports and option forms issued

Tuesday 20th :- S2 parents' evening

March

Friday 16th :- S5/S6 reports issued

Friday 30th :- school closes, 3.00 p.m.

April

Monday 16th :- In-Service day, school closed to pupils

Wednesday 25th :- Prize-giving

Friday 27th :- S4 study leave starts

May

Tuesday 1st :- SQA exams start

Friday 4th :- S5/S6 study leave starts

Monday 7th :- Holiday

Tuesday 8th :- Work experience for "old S3/new S4" starts

Friday 11th :- S1 reports issued

Monday 14th :- New timetables issued

Thursday 17th :- S1 parents' evening

Friday 18th :- Work experience for "old S3/new S4" ends

Monday 21st :- New timetable starts; Health Week for "old S3/new S4" starts

Thursday 24th :- Health Week for "old S3/new S4" ends

Friday 25th :- Sponsored Walk

June

Friday 1st :- Study leave ends for senior pupils

Monday 4th :- S5/S6 induction

Thursday 7th :- School Sports

Monday 18th to Friday 22nd :- Primary induction week

Wednesday 20th :- P7 parents' evening

Thursday 21st :- School disco

Friday 22nd :- S3 reports issued

Thursday 28th :- School closes at 12.00 noon

Please feel free to contact the school with any matter regarding you child's education.

Thank you for continuing to support the school in trying to provide your son/daughter with the best education possible.

Alistair Ferns (Deputy Headteacher)

Adverse Weather?

Phone **0870 054 6999**

then enter the code **041080**

or

www.winter.highlandschools.org.uk

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