

James Gillespie's High School



Newsletter

Message from the Head Teacher

October 2005

We are very lucky in Gillespie's to have a wonderfully supportive School Board and PTA and a Trust which works tirelessly for us. As you will read below there are vacancies on the School Board. May I urge you to take an interest in the work of the Board and even to put yourself forward as a candidate. This year we have 16 interested S5 and S6 students which is a remarkable achievement. The Board is invaluable, your contribution encouraged.

We are currently trying very hard to improve attitude and motivation in the school. There are areas where a bit of complacency has led to unfulfilled potential in our learners. Please support us in improving punctuality, attendance and the wearing of appropriate clothing. It is absolutely essential that students turn up on time, with equipment and appropriately dressed for learning.

Individuality is celebrated but a socially responsible attitude to

work and "play" is essential if we are to address our core purpose—LEARNING.

Please work with us to set standards, maintain high expectations and to develop good habits.



Mr. A. Wallace

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Special points of interest:

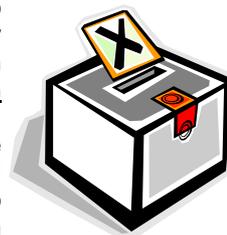
- *Take part in the running of the school—participate in the School Board Elections (this page)*
- *Work by our Senior Muslim boys is being presented around Scotland. Read more about this exciting development on page 2*
- *Five of our students have been very successful in poetry competitions—see page 3*
- *More news about former students—page 5*
- *Important updates about Cashless Catering are to be found on page 7*
- *Read all about our sporting successes on page 8*

School Board Elections

Tension mounts in the run up to the School Board Elections. Parents have been encouraged to join the School Board and participate in the running of the school. From the school we have sent out several Nomination Packs containing the forms for election. These forms are returned to the City of Edinburgh's School Board Unit and at the time of going to press we are waiting to hear if sufficient candidates have been nominated to precipitate an election.

If we have sufficient candidates for an election Ballot Papers will be sent to all electors (our parent body) by **post** on **Tuesday, 25th October 2005**. Voters must return these to the **school** by 15:00hr on **Monday, 7th November**. Candidate statements will be issued to coincide with the issue of the ballot papers.

A formal count of votes will take place in the School Library, starting at 16:00hr. Candidates may witness the count.



The results of the count will be posted in the school immediately after the count. Parents will be informed of the result of the ballot in the next Newsletter following voting.

The School Board Clerk will inform all successful

Senior Muslim Boys Lead the Way

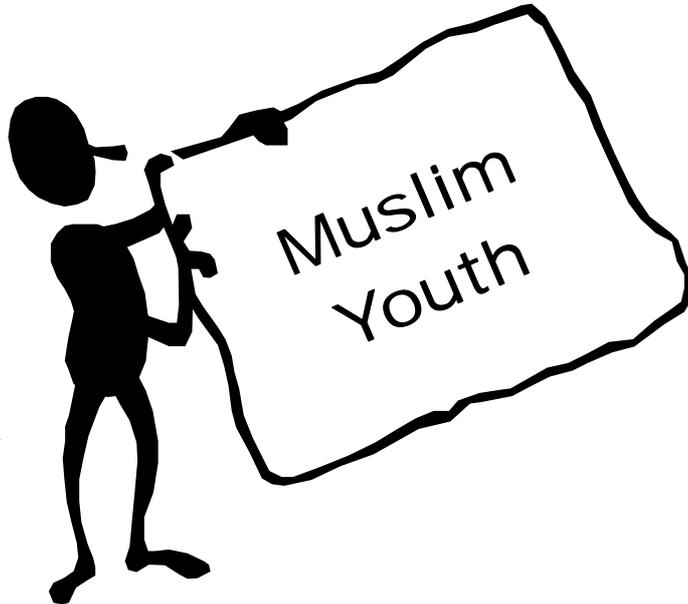
For the past two terms a Group of senior Muslim boys have been meeting regularly for an hour a week with staff from the English as an Additional Language Service and the Black Community Development Project.

The purpose of this group work has been to enable the boys to:

- speak positively about their own religion and culture
- discuss issues of importance to them in their school and personal lives
- inform staff on how the School can best meet the needs of minority ethnic students.

Ami Islam, Firaz Ahmad and Ammar Saleem, who are all now in S6, were part of this group and were chosen by the group members to give a presentation at the HMIE

Launch of their Race Equality Guidelines in Edinburgh's Sheraton Hotel



in March. They were so successful that they were asked to repeat the performance at a National Conference in Stirling University in June, and when they gave a special per-

formance for Mr Wallace he decided they should do the presentation again for Senior Management and Support Staff at the start of term in August. They have also been invited to do yet another such presentation to an audience of around 50 people at the EAL Service on the afternoon of Friday, 7th Oct.

In their presentation they spoke of ways in which the school supported them well, and ways in which it could improve its understanding and support. They also spoke of the significance of their religion and culture to them, and the conflicts and difficulties

they experienced in their school and everyday lives. Audiences have spoken of being 'entertained, enlightened, moved and humbled' by the experience, and they are in demand for further presentations!

Dress Code

In support of questions from parents at the recent S1 Parents' Evening, the school has ordered a number of JGHS sweatshirts in a variety of sizes. They are maroon with the school's unicorn logo in gold. A sample can be seen in the school's main foyer. For further information please contact Mr. Merriman.

As you will be aware we try very hard in JGHS to allow a degree of individuality in our dress code. However, we are also of the view that students must be appropriately

dressed for learning. This means that we do not wish students to wear clothes that are over-revealing, offensive to others in terms of slogans, linked to sporting colours or in contravention of basic Health and Safety procedures e.g. certain types of piercings.



Those deemed to violate these standards will be issued with a white t-shirt for the day or asked to go home to change.

We ask you to support us in implementing standards of dress that motivate young people to take responsibility for their learning and to recognise the needs of others.

LOST PROPERTY

EVERY MONDAY, AS OF MONDAY 3RD OCTOBER, THE LOST PROPERTY WILL BE ON DISPLAY FROM 3.30 - 3.50 AT THE RECEPTION FOYER.

PUPILS CAN LOOK FOR THEIR LOST ITEMS AT THIS TIME.

AT THE END OF EVERY MONTH, ALL UNCLAIMED ITEMS WILL BE GIVEN TO CHARITY.

LOST PROPERTY WILL NO LONGER BE IN THE MEDICAL ROOM.

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MIRRORS

Intelligent pieces of glass,
they hang on walls, in bathrooms, on doors.
They live in handbags, cars,
warm cocoons of jewellery boxes.
Watching and observing,
then presenting their findings
in pictures of light.

Whether they lie in shards
covered in blood,
or stand in delicately embossed frames
of the finest gold,
they will always tell the truth.

Sukey Ho

A PRINCE PICKS UP THE PHONE

I caught you in the queue, surprised
Face pale as the moon that smoked in the corner
Of the coal shed sky, tatty with wisps of cloud,
Yet you had eyes
That seemed to promise hot chocolate and
Hearth rugs. A cottage, glowing in the snow.
You smiled as you told a lie, the
Lines of your lips curving in idle joy.

I found you again, swaying in a tilting tub,
Careening from one side to another in a dance of fear.
And you grabbed my shoulder with hands tight as
talons,
The birds outside sweeping silently onto a ledge,
Spreading the news in voices with a burr,
They whispered to me down phone lines,
Silver and hopeful in the cold
Glasgow night.

Jacob Burns

THE KITCHEN

The glasses just want to spend all day indoors,
cooped up in the dark. The plates loiter
by the sink, scaring bowls, unwashed. Then
they are hastily cleaned and sent home to their cupboard.

The fridge sees how much drink he can take,
Freezer pigs out on pizza and ice cream.
The oven watches the upstart microwave, waiting
for a mistake, hoping for a breakdown.

The pot has been accused of racism after some
comments about the kettle. The toaster and the grill
get into fights with any bottles they can find.
And the blender and the cutlery are doing time inside.

Douglas Calder

THE PIANO

Once it was a panther. Crouched
behind sofas, poised to spring,
they soothed it in shawls
of song on ivory teeth. Once
it was a celebrity, scarred
by stars and curlicues etched deep in its skin.
And lamps were burning jewels perched
one on either side, in dusky prominence.
In those days it basked
in its sleekness. It was a pool
in the depth of night.

The twilight faded .It sits
under the weight of a hundred years. Burnishing
skin, weathered at edges
worn out with life. Still, it displays the keys,
nicotine now, the last remains.
Ancient elephants, anonymous plains.
Manuscripts. Souls tied up in notes and entwined
with chords, they decline
in fraying brown piles. The lid
is raised, a forgotten touch.

No lamps, no stars.
Small fingers summon an elderly tune.

Julia Rampen

Congratulations to five senior students who have had poems published in the magazine The Rialto. The poems by Sukey Ho, Julia Rampen, Douglas Calder, Anthony Moles (S5) and Jacob Burns (S6) are reproduced below. Julia deserves special recognition: not only did she win second prize (£50) in The Rialto's young poets competition for her poem 'The Piano', but she also won one of the 15 prizes in the Poetry Society's Young Poets of the Year Award. She will go to London to a special reception and, later in the year, take part in a week long creative writing programme run by the Arvon Foundation and tutored by professional poets.

THE COMPLEX

This corridor stretches long and wide;
I keep it clean and bare, the way they like it.

I gaze at the large, silver doors,
labelled "Authorised Persons Only" and "Keep Out".

These yellow and black signs are the only colour
and they think that will draw our attention to them,
but remember the time I sneaked in
to the biggest door, the most forbidden.

I once again face that same portal; I fear
that I will be seen, my head darts.

I always wish I could understand the machines,
their smooth blackness dominating the walls,

and I always wish I could ask the grey man
in his tank full of green liquid,

his oily bald head and huge eyes,
why he was here and why he never went home.

Anthony Moles



Auditions



FOR

The National Children's Choir of Great Britain

Any child aged 9 - 15 years who loves to sing and is able to sing one piece of music of your choice from memory we would love to hear from you. The auditions will take place during October and November 2005 in

**EDINBURGH • BERWICK UPON TWEED • NEWCASTLE •
YORK • BIRMINGHAM • IPSWICH • KENT
WINCHESTER • LONDON • TAUNTON • PORTHCAWL •**

An application form can be downloaded from our website:

www.nationalchildrenschoir.com

or

Telephone: **01962 773488**

or

Email: sally.newman1@btinternet.com

or

Write to: **PO BOX 116, ALRESFORD, HANTS. SO24 0YN**

Boys Choir *Training Choir *Main Choir *Girls Chamber Choir

Residential courses held EASTER / SUMMER 2006

Prom Albert Hall 2000

Tour Australia / New Zealand 2004

Prom Birmingham Symphony Hall 2004

Festival Ireland 2005

We are waiting to hear from YOU!

National Children's Choir of Great Britain • Registered Charity Number: 1093292

Website: www.nationalchildrenschoir.com

Music Department News

Carol Concert Rehearsals

Rehearsals for all bands and orchestras are as follows:

Senior Wind Band	Mondays	3.35 - 4.45pm	Hall
Senior Jazz Band	Wednesdays	lunchtimes	B3
Flute Ensemble	Every 2nd Tuesday	3.35 - 4.30pm	B1
Junior Wind Band	Wednesdays	3.35 - 4.30pm	Hall
Guitar Ensemble	Wednesdays	3.35 - 4.30pm	B3
Clarsach Ensemble	Wednesdays	3.35 - 4.30pm	B17
String Orchestra	Fridays	12.00 - 1.30pm	Hall
Percussion Ensemble	Lunchtimes weekly		Bridge Room
Pipe band	One weekly rehearsal outside school		

(see Mrs O'Brien for more details)

Carol Concert

Usher Hall 19th December

Tickets have now gone on sale through the box office at the Usher Hall.

Please contact 0131 228 1155 or book through their website: www.usherhall.co.uk

Students who receive lessons in school are obliged, as part of their instrumental contract, to participate in an instrumental group once they reach the appropriate standard of playing. Students who have learned an instrument out of school are very welcome to join a group and therefore take part in the Carol Concert - new S1 students are especially welcome.

Please see Mrs. O'Brien who will advise whether an appropriate standard of playing to join a group has been achieved.

Remember: performing as part of a large group in a concert is a great experience!

Choirs

Absolutely everyone can join any of our choirs! No previous singing or musical experience is necessary - come along and join us for the Carol Concert in the Usher Hall.

Senior Vocal Group	Mondays	lunchtime	B2
(for S4 - S6 students who specialise or particularly enjoy singing!)			
S1 Choir	Mondays	lunchtime	B1
S2/3 Choir	Tuesdays	3.35 - 4.30pm	B2
Senior Choir	Thursdays	3.35 - 4.30pm	B1

(open to all S4 - S6, regardless of experience)

Additional Choir Rehearsals

We will be running extra rehearsals **every Wednesday lunchtime** for S2/3 students and senior students who cannot manage, under any circumstance due to other commitments, the full rehearsals on Tuesday (S2/3) and Thursday (senior) after school.

Pipe Band

We are always on the lookout for enthusiastic students eager to learn the bagpipes or pipe-drumming!

Any students interested in joining up, please see Mrs. O'Brien at the earliest opportunity.



Senior Choir

As ever, this is open to all staff.

You are all more than welcome to attend these rehearsals which are after school every Thursday in B1.

We have always had support from staff, and it is an excellent opportunity to open your mouths and let off some steam!

Our two items are 'O Holy Night' and 'I Say A Little Prayer For You'.

Successful Former Students

Continuing to report on the success of our former students:

Bragela Homal gained a Batchelor of Arts (Merit Hon.) in Animation from the University of Wolverhampton

Kristen Short gained a Batchelor of Arts (2.1 Hon.) in 3 Dimensional Design and Fine Product in 2004 and a Batchelor of Arts (2.1 Hon.) in Logistics and Supply Chain Management in 2005, both from Northumbria University.

Dear Headteacher,

If yours was one of the schools that assisted us following our mailing in June, thank you very much indeed. If not, we would be very grateful if you would take a moment to read this.

The BBC Science department is making a second series of the positive parenting programme *Teen Angels*, which explores the relationship between parents and their teenagers, and aims to help navigate the highs and lows of adolescence.

Teen Angels aims to tackle the common problems of raising a teenager and help improve family life, communication and relationships, by offering families expert advice from clinical psychologists.

Would you be able to help us by spreading the word that the BBC is keen to hear from families who feel they might benefit from taking part? Perhaps our flyer could go in your next newsletter or on a notice board? Or with your consent would it be possible to get a letter to all teenage children in your school to take home for their parents? We can provide as many electronic or hard copies for distribution as appropriate.

We would like to stress that an initial chat by no means commits anyone to taking part in the series and that all conversations are held in strict confidence



TEEN ANGELS
TROUBLESOME TEENS?
PROBLEMATIC PARENTS?!?

PARENTS

Is your teenager difficult or defiant? Are you worried about his or her behaviour?

TEENAGERS

Are your parents controlling, clueless, or can't take you seriously?

Do you both feel the simplest task has turned into a battle of wills?

Following on from the success of *Little Angels*, BBC Science is making a second series of *Teen Angels*. We are looking for families with children aged 12 to 16 who would welcome the chance to improve their home lives, communication and relationships. Whether you are a parent or a teenager we would like to hear from you.

If you're interested in getting involved or finding out more about the programme:

Please give me a ring on the number below

There's **no commitment** at this stage and your call will be held in **complete confidence**.

CONTACT:

Jess : 0208 752 4026

or email : teenangels@bbc.co.uk



BBC Science, Room 4122, BBC White City , London W12 7TS

Cashless Catering—an update

A new cashless catering system will be introduced from the first day back after the October mid-term holiday, Tuesday, 25th October 2005. An introduction to the new system was given in our last Newsletter. This article will provide more operational details and answer some of the most frequently asked questions.

How does Cashless Catering work?

The school will provide students with smart cards. These act in the same way bank debit cards work. Provided you have sufficient funds available on the card you will be able to make purchases from the Dining Centre and pay for them by having your card swiped at the point of sale. Swiping will automatically deduct the cost of the purchases from the balance on your card. You will not be able to make purchases if you have no value on your card.

Value is uploaded onto the smart card by using one of the "Revaluation" (Reval) machines that will be installed in the school. You will insert your card into the machine then insert coins (£2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p only) to the value you wish to add to the card. Your new balance will be shown on the machine's screen before you remove your card.

Recipients of free school meals will have the value of the meal uploaded into their card each morning. This value will be deducted at the point of sale. If the allowance is not used this value will be deducted at the end of the day. The value of the free school meals will not accumulate. Students receiving free school meals can also add additional value to their cards using the Reval machines in the same way as other students. The system will distinguish between the free meal portion of the card's value and any value added by the student.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will I receive my card?

These will be distributed to you on the first day back after the October mid-term break.

What do I do if I lose my card?

You should report this to Reception which will be open during lunchtime (12:55-13:40hr) for this purpose. A temporary card will be issued to you on production of a deposit of £5 which will be returned to you when you return the temporary card.

Can I use cash in the Dining Centre?

Other than the very first day where we will accept both cash and smart cards only the smart cards will be used for payment.

How can I check the balance on my card?

If you insert your card into the Reval machine and ask for a balance it will be displayed on the machine's screen.

How do I load value onto my card?

The only way to add value to your card is by adding coins to the Reval machine. This machine does not accept notes. The school does not keep cash so we will not be able to provide change for the machine. The school will not be able to accept cheques for payment.

What if there is value on my card at the end of term?

The funds added to the card are for the account of the catering company. The school does not have access to these funds so cannot return unused money. You are advised to run down the value of their account if you think you will not use the card in the future.

What if I did not get my photograph taken?

The photography sessions are past. The school does not yet have the facilities to create photographic cards so we will issue "temporary" cards which do not contain photographs until such times as we can issue photographic cards.

What else can the Cashless Catering card be used for?

At the end of August all students received information about Young Scot cards (except S1 students who received this information while still at their Primary Schools). Students were invited to apply for this card. Students who completed and returned the application form had their photographs taken to allow for the production of a Young Scot photograph. The Young Scot card is combined with the Cashless Catering card into one smart card showing the student's photograph. Students who did not complete the application form, missed the photography sessions or elected not to have a card with their photograph can be issued with a blank smart card for use with the cashless catering system on application.

The Young Scot initiative is an exciting scheme to encourage and sup-

port young people's involvement in decision making about the services that affect them. See box for details of the services that the Young Scot scheme offers.

Another important feature of the Young Scot Card is that it can provide voluntary proof of age. This will allow students to demonstrate they are young enough to get reduced fares on buses or old enough to be allowed to see certain films in cinemas.

In the future the card may be used for other services offered throughout the City of Edinburgh. As early as next year the card may be used in the City's Libraries in place of your existing library card. The City of Edinburgh hopes to extend the use of a single card to Edinburgh Leisure member-

ship, travel on Lothian Buses, inclusion in the CityCard scheme to provide discounts to Edinburgh residents and to allow for a reward scheme in schools.

Young Scot Card

Features:

- Great discounts with Edinburgh Leisure
- Over 380 discounts and special offers for shops and services in Edinburgh
- Over 1,800 discounts in Scotland
- Over 200,000 discounts across Europe
- Free 24 hour legal advice line
- A travel advice line
- Great opportunities to get involved
- Access to Edinburgh Young Scot portal,

www.edinburghyoungscot.org

James Gillespie's High School

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JGHS Diary

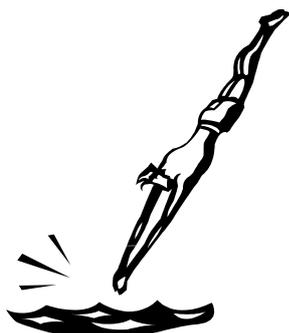
Monday, 10th October 2005
Monday, 10th October 2005
17th-24th October 2005
Tuesday, 25th October 2005
Thursday, 27th October 2005
Thursday 27th October 2005
Friday, 28th October 2005
Monday, 31st October 2005
Tuesday, 1st November 2005
Monday, 7th November 2005
Tuesday, 8th November 2005
Thursday, 10th November 2005
Monday, 14th November 2005
Friday, 18th November 2005
Thursday, 24th November 2005
Thursday, 24th November 2005
Monday, 28th November 2005
Friday, 2nd December 2005
Tuesday, 6th December 2005
Friday, 9th December 2005
Monday, 19th December 2005
Tuesday, 20th December 2005
Thursday, 22nd December 2005
Thursday, 23rd December 2004

S1 Challenge (1K4)
Start of S4 Students' Work Experience Week
Mid-term holiday
Pupils return to school at 08:30hr
S1 Challenge (1M1)
S1 Fancy Dress Party
S1 Settling-in reports issued
S1 Challenge (1M2)
School Board and PTA Meetings
S4 Consultation Evening
Senior school mathematics challenge
S1 Challenge (1M3)
S1 Challenge (1R1)
S5/6 Interim Reports issued
S1 Challenge (1R2)
S5/S6 Parents' Consultation Evening
S1 Challenge (1R3)
S3 Interim reports issued
School Board and PTA Meetings
S6 Drama Performance
End of Year Concert, Usher Hall, 19:30 hr
S1 & S2 Parties
School Closes 12:00hr
Start of Christmas Holidays

Sports News

Diving

Congratulations to Catherine Webber (2M4) on being selected to represent Scotland at an International Invitational competition in Lund, Sweden, from 2-7th November. We wish Catherine every success and good luck.



Football

Stuart Martin and Zac Shapero (1K4) have been selected for the Edinburgh Under 13 Development Squad. Our congratulations to both of them.

Congratulations too to Alan Campbell (2K3) and Liam Donnelly (2R2) on being selected for the Edinburgh Under 14 Development Squad.

Basketball

Well done to Callum Crofts and Daniel Anderson (1R3), Sam Airey (2R3) and Calum Harris (2M4) on being selected for the Edinburgh Under 14 Squad.

