

James Gillespie's High School



Newsletter

Message from the Head Teacher

February 2006

The themes of Assemblies over the last few weeks have been targeted at encouraging students to take more responsibility. We have focused on "developing a beautiful mind" (based on Edward de Bono's thinking), being a "Friend of the School, Neighbourhood and Planet", consideration of those who are less fortunate than us through commemorating Robbie Burns and the need for the environmental

awareness through taking part in Eco Group Activities.

Learning remains our primary focus in Gillespie's and we are committed to developing deep learning as well as the strategic learning needed to succeed in subjects and to improve attainment.

Please help us to develop holistic learners with a social conscience and a desire to be good citizens. With strong

partnership between home and school we can make a difference.



Mr. A. Wallace

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Special points of interest:

- ♦ *Aids Awareness Programme at JGHS—see this page.*
- ♦ *Read all about the wonderful musical opportunities on offer from James Gillespie's High School.*
- ♦ *Like ABBA? Don't miss the concert, details on page 3.*
- ♦ *Be aware of the vaccination campaign coming soon for S3-6. See page 3.*
- ♦ *Ambitious targets set for WaterAid fundraising campaign. Details on page 3.*
- ♦ *Add the dates for forthcoming PTA events to your diary. Page 3.*
- ♦ *Know who's on the School Board? You do now—page 4.*
- ♦ *Parents, help us control absence by providing us with full information about your child's request to be out of school. Details on page 4.*

Aids Awareness at JGHS

During December the school raised the awareness of our students to the Aids epidemic and the plight of Aids sufferers.

As part of the awareness raising, our S1 students created their own Aids ribbon in the playground outside Bruntfield House. Each student is

holding a pink card and our first year students have recreated the classic ribbon shape.



Music Department News

Usher Hall Carol Concert

Once again, this was a wonderful evening's entertainment, with a wide variety of music and readings.

We are extremely fortunate with the musical talent and commitment of all the students performing, and also with all the staff who assisted with this concert.

Many thanks go to the students who delivered their readings with style and aplomb – no mean feat in front of an audience of over 1500!

Items on the night included: senior wind band, string orchestra, pipe band, flute ensemble, junior wind band, percussion ensemble, senior jazz band, guitar and clarsach ensembles and also senior choir, senior vocal group, S2/3 choir and the 280 strong P7/S1 choir.

In total, approx. 600 students were involved in this marvellous concert.

A special thank you must go to Miriam Davey in S6, who delivered the poignant soprano solo as the introduction and verse one of 'O Holy Night' with the senior choir.

Kay White in S1 also did a marvellous job of reading the introduction to 'Rejoice' for the combined P7/S1 choir. Well done.

Thanks also to the chamber vocal group who opened the concert with 'The Lamb' in darkness!

Thanks to: Jessica Conway and Lauren Mizen (sopranos), Astrid Brown and Julia Rampen (altos), Paul Grant and Graeme Clark (tenors) and Alex Saunders and Edwin Shek (basses).

We hope to see you all at our 'Spring Fling' concert on **Wednesday 29th March** which will be held in the school hall.

'Spring Fling' Instrumental Groups Rehearsals

We have now started these rehearsals as follows:

Senior Wind Band, Mon, 3.35pm Hall

Flute Ensemble, every 2nd Tue, 3.35pm B1

Junior Wind Band, Wed, 3.35pm Hall

Pipe Band, every 2nd Wed, 3.35pm B20

Senior Jazz Band, Wed, 1.15pm B2

Guitar/Clarsach Ensembles, Wed, 3.35pm B3 and B17

Percussion Ensemble, One lunchtime weekly

String Orchestra, Fri, 12.00pm Hall

Any student who receives private lessons on an instrument and would like to join any of our instrumental groups, please see Mrs. O'Brien for more information.

Senior Vocal Group

This group is for students who especially enjoy singing and specialise in this area, and is open to all S4 - S6 students.

These rehearsals will begin on Monday 23rd January at 1.15pm in B1, and will run weekly.

Unfortunately, due to the very high number of students sitting their final SQA Standard Grade and Higher performance exams in March, this is the only choir the music dept. can operate during this very busy term.

New members are always welcome.

JGHS Pipe Band

This band has progressed enormously during the last year, and we are always looking for new members.

Any student who has played the chanter at primary school, or indeed the pipes, (and there are a few of you lurking about) and would like to participate in this fabulous band, please see Mrs. O'Brien for details.

Congratulations!

Massive congratulations go to Andrew Gray in S2 who has been successful in gaining a place in the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland.

This is indeed an achievement as competition is tough - we wish Andrew all the best for his future pipe playing.

He will be joining Kirstie MacLeod in S5 in this band – Kirstie was also successful last year in gaining a place in

this prestigious band.

Music Performances

We were delighted that the senior jazz band and three of our clarsach players represented the school at the annual World Aids Day Conference on Thursday 1st December.

The students performed at St. John's Church at this event, and we have had many letters congratulating the students on their performances. Well done!

The senior jazz band also performed at the annual 'Lighting of the Tree' ceremony at Tollcross on Tuesday 6th December. Once again, the band 'did the school proud'.

They all deserve a special thank you as they organised this event entirely themselves – congratulations!

Music Trip to Belgium

June 2006

The next payment of £80 is due now for this trip.

This must be handed in to Mrs. O'Brien by Friday 10th February due to S5/6 study leave after the holiday week.

Music Study Support Clubs

This is now running every Monday and Tuesday from 3.35 – 4.35pm in the music department.

This is open to all S4 and S5 students sitting their **final** SQA performance exams in March. For most of the Higher students, this exam accounts for 50% of their overall Higher.

We strongly advise that certificate students attend these clubs in order to receive additional performance support, and we would very much welcome parental support in this matter.

Higher Music Performance Evening

Due to S5 study leave from 20th Feb. to 2nd March, we have had to cancel the Higher Performance evening.

Apologies to all Higher students.

Events and Happenings

Pupil Support for your Kids at Gillespie's

The first PTA Forum took place on 2nd February. It was a very successful session lead by Mr. Wallace and Mrs. Chetty where issues about pupil support were discussed, questions posed and comments on what is currently in practice were gratefully received. It was an ideal opportunity for dialogue between parents and school management.

ALSO FOR IN YOUR DIARY

Second Parents' Forum
Tuesday 28 March for our second Forum of the term. Theme to be confirmed soon. Watch this space!

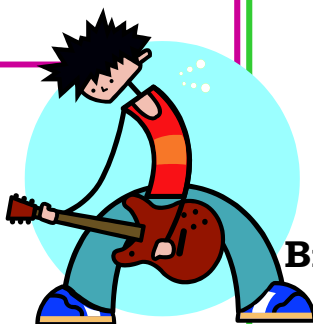
PTA Quiz Night

Friday 3 March - 19:00 - 21:00 in JGHS assembly Hall. Details to follow.

Graduation News

Jenny Avern graduated from Newcastle University in 2005 with a B.A. (Hons. 2.1) in Applied Communications with Management.

Congratulations to Jenny!



Looking For A Fun Night Out?

Then come to the

ABBAMANIA CONCERT

(one of the UK's top tribute bands)

In aid of

ZWELIBANZI HIGH SCHOOL

at

James Gillespie's High School

on

Thursday 16th March 2006

6:30 pm : Dinner will be served at a cost of
£5.00

8:00 pm : Abbamania concert

Ticket: £10 (JGHS Pupil: £7)

Tickets available from

Mr. Watson (PE Dept.)

from Wednesday 1st February

Bring your friends, mum, dad, gran and even grandad

Our Geography Junior School Students are contributing to a subscription-style fund raising on behalf of the international charity, WaterAid. Building on contributions raised last term, the students hope to raise over £2500 to help to improve water quality in Africa and are making small but regular payments every week until the end of February. S2 students have presented their project to all year group assemblies and have written to large companies involved in water supply to seek their financial support.

We would hope that parents will encourage students in this enterprise in order to reach and even exceed our target. If anyone would like to help with a direct payment, please contact any member of the Geography Department.

Thanks, S2 WaterAid Committee



Vaccinations

Just to inform you that the diphtheria, tetanus, polio vaccines will be given to S3, 4, 5 and 6 on Monday 20th March 2006. This will be done in the Assembly Hall and will take all morning and perhaps into the afternoon depending on the number of pupils attending. Forms will be issued to pupils nearer the time.

James Gillespie's High School

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JGHS Diary

Tuesday, 7th February 2006	School Board Meeting
Tuesday, 7th February 2006	PTA Meeting
Wednesday, 8th February 2006	S3 Parents' Consultation Evening
Friday, 10th February 2006	School Closes at 12:00 for mid-term holiday
Monday, 20th February 2006	Students and staff resume
Monday, 20th February 2006	Start of S5/6 Prelims (until 8th March)
Tuesday, 21st February 2006	JGHS Trust Meeting
Wednesday, 22nd February 2006	Higher Drama Performance Evening
Wednesday, 1st March 2006	S4/5 & S5/6 Course Choice Information Evening
Friday, 3rd March 2006	S2 reports issued
Tuesday, 7th March 2006	School Board Meeting
Tuesday, 7th March 2006	PTA Meeting
Thursday, 9th March 2006	S2 Parents' Evening (Practical Subjects)
Tuesday, 14th March 2006	S2 Parents' Evening (non-Practical Subjects)
Tuesday 21st March 2006	JGHS Trust Meeting
Friday, 24th March 2006	Diversecity
Saturday, 25th March 2006	Diversecity
Wednesday, 29th March 2006	Spring Fling
Friday, 31st March 2006	School Closes at 12:00 hr for Easter Holiday
Tuesday, 18th April 2006	Students and staff resume

News Roundup

PERMISSION TO BE OUT OF SCHOOL

If you need to be out of school for a medical or dental appointment, you must bring a letter from home stating **the time you need to leave** and the expected **time you will return to school** along with your **appointment card**. You must take these to the Welfare Assistant during registration.

Doctors appointments should be made for the end of the school day if possible and details of any follow up appointments should be on an appointment card.

Pupils requiring permission to be out of school for any other reason e.g. sports events, college, family reasons, etc. should take their request in writing to their guidance teacher.

Dance

The S1 dance group continues to meet on a Wednesday after school. Dancers are working hard on their hip hop routine for Diversecity.

L Halliday

Careers Opportunities 2006 for (S4/S5)

Employment, Training and Further Education Exhibition, Thurs-

day, 2nd March at the Corn Exchange.

We will be running a bus to take a group of interested students to this event. The bus will leave at 1.45 (pupils make their own way home).

See your Guidance/PSE tutor for further information or to give your name if you are interested in attending

E. O'Neill

PT Guidance

Lost Property

DON'T

Lost Property

Every Monday 15:35—15:50

At Reception Foyer

Very important to check this

Every 2 weeks it will go to charity if unclaimed

IT

If your name is on the item and it is handed in—it can be returned to you.

Mrs. Robertson—Welfare Assistant

School Board

The School Board of James Gillespies High School is currently:

Parents

- ➔ Richard Dietrich
- ➔ Roddy MacLeod
- ➔ Dinah Atkins
- ➔ Mark Kinghorn
- ➔ Nigel Goddard
- ➔ Arshad Mahmood

Staff

- ➔ Alex Wallace
- ➔ Tony Merriman
- ➔ Neil McCallum

Co-opted

- ➔ Zoe Hay
- ➔ Ruth Wylie
- ➔ Liam Young

The Board will meet on the following dates at 19:00 hr in the Head Teacher's office:

- ➔ 7th February 2006
- ➔ 7th March 2006
- ➔ 25th April 2006
- ➔ 30th May 2006
- ➔ 27th June 2006