



THE JAMES GILLESPIE'S HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2012

Headteacher's report



I would like to thank all parents and carers for their support in ensuring that all our students carry appropriate materials to and from school and arrive for school on time. Good timekeeping habits will serve them well in later life.

Our new S1 have settled in well and are a credit to their families and their primary schools. All other

classes are settled and working towards their particular targets.

Exam results

I am delighted to report that our exam results continue to impress and are among the best in the country. In the current session all students are expected to work hard in order to ensure that they achieve their potential.

Absence from school

I would like to remind parents that you should phone us on the first morning of absence for every absent student. Failure to do so adds to our workload and increases the likelihood of us not making the all important call that could alert parents/carers that there may be a problem. The 'phones can be busy in the mornings but please persevere and someone will answer as soon as we can. Parents are strongly discouraged from taking students on holiday during term time. Students with low attendance invariably underachieve in examinations. Progress in Maths is significantly affected when children have low attendance.

Car parking and dropping off students

I would like to remind parents and carers that those who transport students to and from school should

not park anywhere near school entrances as this is dangerous and causes unnecessary congestion.

Thanks

I take this opportunity of thanking all parents and carers for your continuing support at James Gillespie's High School. By working together, our school will continue to go from strength to strength.

Donald J Macdonald (Headteacher)

One Edinburgh/Many cultures

A Primary/Secondary initiative to present our diverse multi-cultural city through the expressive arts. Each feeder Primary School and JGHS will display or perform a short cultural presentation using one of the expressive arts; music, drama, art and dance

The event will be held in James Gillespie's High School Hall at 1:30pm on Friday 23rd November 2012.

Miss Millar

Usher Hall Christmas Concert Tickets on sale!

Tickets have now gone on sale at the Usher Hall box office. Tickets are priced at £6/£8/£10. Support this wonderful tradition and help JGHS make magic once again in this wonderful venue.

Date of the concert: 18th of December.

Miss Millar

South Africa 2013

For the South Africa Project this year, we have organised a sub-group with the aim of collecting clothing for the children in the two high schools we are visiting. From previous experiences taking prom dresses and football tops, in addition to packs of school clothes, has been very well received.

We are asking for donations of any prom style dresses or football tops from ages 14 upwards. The clothes would preferably be in good condition. In terms of football tops, any team from any league or country would be suitable. There will be someone available in the school foyer to collect donations at Friday break times.

Miss McCartan

Enhanced Maths Opportunities

In James Gillespie's High School we offer many opportunities for pupils to engage in extra challenging and motivating mathematical activities.

Here is a list of some of them:

The United Kingdom Mathematical Trust (UKMT) Individual Maths Challenges:

These are lively, intriguing multiple choice question papers, which are designed to stimulate interest in maths in large numbers of pupils. We offer these to approximately 30% of all our year groups. The top 40% of pupils will receive a gold, silver or bronze certificate. The most successful participants at each level are invited to enter follow-on rounds which require full written answers. We usually have at least one or two pupils invited to these and last term we were very proud when Gordon Kumar, now in S3 won a silver medal in the Junior Maths Olympiad. Well done Gordon!

UKMT Team Challenges:

These promote mathematical dexterity, team working, and communication skills. They also give pupils the opportunity to compete against pupils from other schools in their region. The Senior Team Challenge is held in November and involves 2 pupils from S5 and 2 from S6. The Junior Challenge, in April is for S1 and S2 pupils. There is also an Edinburgh Entertaining Maths Challenge in June for S2 and S3 pupils. We have always done very well in this, with several wins and invitation to the National finals, which we have also won in the past.

UKMT Mentoring Schemes:

The UKMT mentoring schemes provide via email a series of challenging mathematical problems, requiring full written solutions, to stretch and inspire the most able and willing secondary school pupils. Participants are provided with a mentor who will be able to discuss the problems and other mathematical ideas, and read and return their solutions with helpful comments. This year 2 S6 pupils, Alistair Miller and Jonny Scott, have chosen to participate in this scheme. More details about any of the UKMT activities can be found at www.ukmt.org.uk.

Scottish Maths Challenge:

This is a problem solving competition for individual pupils. The aim is to promote mathematics as a source of interest and pleasurable achievement.

Problems are sent out twice a year and pupils do

them in their own time. In early summer winners of Gold, Silver and Bronze Certificates are announced in each section; the top winners are usually invited to a prize-giving ceremony and receive a much prized Mathematical Challenge mug. Marks are given for explanations of answers rather than for simply getting the correct answer. More details are available at www.wpr3.co.uk/MC/.

Maths Lunchtime Club:

Miss Trainor has been running a lunchtime club to help team members and other interested individuals to do as well as possible and also to simply have some fun!

Saturday Master-classes:

The Edinburgh Universities run a series of master-classes for S2 pupils. Each master-class runs for two and a half hours on a Saturday morning and, over the course of 7 weeks in October and November, aims to cover a wide range of accessible, fun and interesting mathematics. We are asked to offer up to 3 names of interested pupils but in fact we frequently send 5 or 6 pupils to these classes.

Study Support:

We also offer extra support and revision classes. Higher maths is on Tuesday after school in W15. Credit maths is on Monday and Wednesday lunchtimes in W10 and some senior pupils offer help to anyone who needs it in W9 on Mondays after school.

If anyone would like more information about any of the above activities, please do not hesitate to contact the maths department.
Mrs Seator

Assessment arrangements in SQA exams

The SQA and the City of Edinburgh Council have very clear policies on the eligibility of candidates for assessment arrangements.

The school has to meet the criteria of these policies by providing evidence of a recognised difficulty together with evidence that any assessment arrangement makes a significant difference to the grades achieved.

If you think your child may be eligible because of a specific learning difficulty or an additional support need please contact Mr Cockcroft, Support for Learning Leader.

Candidates who sat SQA exams in S4 with assessment arrangements will automatically be considered in S5 and S6.
Mrs Young

Àrd Sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig News from the Gaelic Department



Mairi MacPhail (S6) at the Ri Chèile competition delivering a speech about the school's trip to Connemara, Ireland in Summer 2012.

She was commended by the judges for her natural style and humour.

The Gaelic Department is very happy to welcome two new teachers to the school this year. Seonaidh Charity joins us on a permanent basis from Tìree High School and Roddy Neithercut joins us a probationer teacher. In the first term, they have already assisted in making massive strides with the delivery of a broad general education in Gàidhlig, working alongside Subject Leader Eòghan Stewart to expand our capability.

However, Gaelic activity is not restricted to Gàidhlig and Gaelic medium, every pupil in S1 and S2 is receiving a 6 lesson insert of Gaelic (Learners) during the session and this will allow us to run National 4/National 5 Gaelic learners for S3 from session 2013-14.

We also welcome two pupils to do Higher Gaelic (Learners), Izzy Flower who joins the school from Dunbar Grammar and Ellen Morton, who is a travelling pupil from Portobello. Both girls have made immense strides and we hope to emulate this model and offer Higher Gaelic (Learners) to pupils across the City of Edinburgh for session 2013-14, making James Gillespie's High School the true centre for Gaelic secondary education for the whole of Scotland's Capital City.

JGHS Gaelic Department has also been at the forefront of two major international events held recently in the school for minority languages; the Fòram Càinte – Ri Chèile debating competition hosted in the school library on European Day of Languages, which saw Gaelic speakers from Ireland and Scotland come together. Lola Stahl and Mairi MacPhail represented the School excellently; and also a visit

by 40 Catalan pupils who learned Gaelic through the medium of Catalan, this event was run in collaboration with the Spanish staff in the Modern Languages Faculty.

We would also like to highlight the great work done by Gillie MacKenzie who runs Graisg and the school Gaelic Choir. This is especially important to highlight in a month where once again pupils from James Gillespie's High School took the Royal National Mòd, held this year in Dunoon, by storm.

We also continue to run the shinty club (for English medium and Gaelic medium pupils alike) on Mondays as well as a study support club for GM pupils on Thursdays.

Suas leis a' Ghàidhlig!

Mr Stewart



This year we are very pleased to have 14 of our 4th Year pupils participating in the J.E.T. Programme.

J.E.T is an exciting opportunity for pupils to get an extended period of work experience while completing their Intermediate and Standard Grade courses. These pupils attend a weekly work placement on Fridays and also benefit from working towards an SQA Employability Award during school time.

Participating employers this year include Drum Riding for the Disabled, The Aquatic Centre, Dobie & Son, Pentland Powder Coating, Gingerbread After-School Care club, NHS Lothian and more. We also have pupils in placements for Sports Leadership Awards as well as City & Guilds Motor Vehicle Maintenance Awards.

Current 3rd Year pupils will be given the chance to apply for the 2013-2014 J.E.T. Programme in February/March.

Mr Warden

News from the Welfare Office

Immunisation dates:

Wednesday 6th February 2013

Diphtheria/tetanus/polio booster (S3 pupils and S4s who did not attend last year)

Wednesday 6th March 2013

HPV 3rd session (S2 pupils and any others who did not complete the course during previous year)

Medication

Parents of pupils carrying and self-administering any medication in school are required to complete and return, to the Welfare office, Form 5 which is available on the website or from the Welfare office.

Lost property

This is situated in the Welfare office (Bruntsfield House). In addition, on the last Friday of the month there is a lost property reclaim in the foyer (if available) at break time.

Ms Summers

RHIS Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate

Congratulations to the following S3 & S5 pupils, who have passed the RHIS examination in Elementary Food Hygiene:

S3

Forida Begum

Eva McLaren

Chloe Barron

Sameeha Iqbal

Amy Morrison

Rosa Tonks

Sophie Howden

Ryan Massey

Valerie Jimenez

Isla Pantou

Ellis Shand

Namra Rizwan

S5

Saba Shafiq

Rachel Paton

Willow Banks

Brandon Blair

Fiona Wort

Ruary Mitchell

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) The REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate, is ideal for anyone involved in catering including 'high risk' areas (e.g nurseries and care homes), food retailing, food processing and other activities where a sound knowledge of food hygiene is necessary.

Mrs Briggs

European Day of Languages



The European Day of Languages has been celebrated across Europe since 2001 and aims to highlight the importance of language learning as a tool for achieving greater cultural understanding and a key element in the rich cultural heritage of our continent. JGHS celebrated the event with a week of exciting activities across S1,2 and 3 including quizzes, poster making to promote language learning, T-shirt designing and writing songs and raps in some of the foreign languages taught here.

We are pleased to announce the winners of our various competitions:

S2 Eurovision Song Contest

1st Paddy Friend 2K2 and Jamie Clarkson 2K2

2nd Nicholas Skinner 2K2, Amir Mohammed 2M2 and Declan Hoyland 2R2

3rd Niall Schiefler Fancey 2R2, Michael Lynch 2R2 and Finlay Smith 2R2

S3 Poster Competition

1st Eva Moles-Howieson 3R2

2nd Harriet Phillips 3K1

3rd Caitlin Hayes 3K1

S3 T-Shirt Designing

1st Anna Greco 3K4

2nd Sezen Celik 3R4

3rd Amy Morrison 3M4

Mr O'Connor

COMPETITION

Name this newsletter . . .

. . . and be in with a chance to win £20!

Entry forms are available from the Library.
The closing date is Friday 30th November
2012. Good luck!