



## JUST CHAMPION!

Many of our pupils have interesting or challenging hobbies which teachers and other pupils know nothing about.

Third year pupil, Lindsay [redacted], has been enjoying swimming most of her life. Her achievements in the sport are quite exceptional and this is reflected in her list of successes in 1994 so far. She has won fifteen gold medals, twelve silver, seven bronze, eleven pennants and no less than five trophies. On top of all this she has also set new speed records locally. Naturally she has to travel all over the country to compete and we wish

her well in the forthcoming Scottish Championships.

What is Linda's secret to success? Commitment to lots of practising - twice a day, several times a week.

We would like to hear more about pupils' hobbies and successes. We think Linda is one of the most successful, unless of course you know better??

If you would like to nominate anyone for a short feature like this, talk to your register teacher about it.

# DEM

About two years ago I wrote an article for Update on what was then called DSM. The following article repeats much of the information which was in the earlier article but for reasons which should become apparent as you read I am keen that everyone associated with Dyce Academy knows about DEM - the successor to DSM.

DEM - Devolved Educational Management - will be one of the biggest organisational changes to hit Scottish education for a number of years. The main principle behind DEM is to devolve decision-making to educational 'establishments' (primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and community education centres) by passing most of the financial and management responsibilities from the education authority (Grampian Regional Council) to the educational establishment. Heads of establishment will have the freedom to manage their resources so long as they stay within national and regional policies. This is not so at present as the education authority controls most of the expenditure in schools and has total control over the appointment of staff.

At present, most of the money spent in running Dyce Academy is managed by the Education Department of the Regional Council. I am told that I may have, for example, fifty teachers, six technicians, £40000 for teaching and learning materials, etc. In other areas I am not told what I have to spend at all, for example, telephone use, maintenance, heating, etc - Grampian Regional Council simply pays the bills. Money cannot be transferred from one 'budget head' to another. If, for example, Dyce Academy had a campaign to save on heating bills, Grampian Region Education would save money but it would not be given to Dyce Academy. Also, if we felt it might be helpful some year to spend more on school technicians and less on teaching and learning materials, we could not transfer money between these budget heads.

One of the biggest changes under DEM will be that we will have the freedom to manage our own budget. The school will be given a sum of money to spend each year based on such things as number of pupils and the size and nature of the building. We will then be able to spend the money in the

way we regard as most appropriate, provided we do not break any of the rules set down for us.

Government legislation insists that all secondary schools are involved in a DEM scheme by April 1996. Grampian's response has been to involve educational establishments in three phases. Four ASGs - Associated School Groups - became involved in phase one in April 1994. The Associated School Group is a secondary school, its associated nursery and primary schools and any community education centres or special schools in the catchment area.

A further six ASGs will become involved in April 1995 and all educational establishments by April 1996. Dyce Academy is to become involved in April 1995, along with our associated schools and the community education service in Dyce and Newmachar.

In general, the idea of having more control over the money spent in Dyce Academy is quite exciting. I expressed a number of concerns two years ago - these still stand :

- How will the education authority make sure that each school gets a fair budget allocation?
- Will the scheme be used as a way of cutting expenditure on education and then, when things go wrong, blaming us - the school - for not managing our budgets properly?
- How is the public accountability of education to be maintained? At present, Grampian Regional Council, whom we elect, controls education locally. Will this still happen or will schools become effectively independent, competing with each other for pupils to get more money rather than co-operating to produce good quality education throughout Grampian?
- There are certain advantages in being part of a big organisation rather than a small unit, for example, the buying power of a big organisation reduces the cost of goods and contracts and can cope with the inevitable peaks and troughs on

expenditure on such things as maintenance and vandalism.

- At a very basic level, in a community school like Dyce where the building is used jointly by secondary education and community education, how do we share out the costs of such things as heating, running a swimming pool, etc?

Dyce should be in a strong position to get the best out of DEM as I have been involved as a consultant to represent secondary school interests

on the Grampian DEM Project Team for almost a year now, and I am therefore developing a good understanding of how DEM could work.

One of the early government papers on DEM stressed that the aim of the scheme was 'to raise the standards of learning and teaching in schools'. I am not really convinced that it will do this. It is, however, going to happen whether we like it or not and I would like to think that Dyce is in a particularly strong position to make the best of the situation and, if possible, to take advantage of any possible benefits.

*M Taylor*

## **DRUGS MISUSE AND THE YOUNG**

**What are drugs?**

**Why does anyone take drugs?**

**What are the signs of drug-taking?**

**What are the dangers?**

These were some of the questions which were considered during a drugs information evening which was held recently for parents of Dyce Academy pupils and its associated schools. The evening was organised as a follow-up to European Drugs Prevention Week and was attended by a large group of parents and teachers from the academy, from Dyce, Fintray and Newmachar

primaries, from Dyce Nursery and from Cordyce and Carden schools. Two presentations were given covering different aspects of drugs misuse; the first by Dougal Bennett of Grampian Police and the second by Graham Cronkshaw of Health Promotions. Both presentations were most interesting and informative and were very well-received.

For these parents who were unable to attend the evening there are several leaflets which are available in school and which can be picked up by pupils from the Guidance office.

**BRENDA URQUHART**

# CARETAKERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Readers of Update will be aware of Dyce Academy's involvement in an international environmental conference in June.

The success of this was noted in the minutes of the GRC Education Committee on Wednesday 4 October, as follows :

"The Chairman referred to the 8th Annual Conference of Caretakers of the Environment held in Aberdeen from 13 - 18 June 1994 which had been organised by Dyce Academy. The Committee agreed to congratulate all those involved in the organisation of the conference and

to convey their thanks to Dyce Academy."

The 'tidying-up' after the conference is still going on - balancing the books, writing a report and producing a video of the conference. This is all going well. Laurence Young, Principal Teacher (Drama), has now completed his editing of the 16 hours of video which was taken during the conference and produced an excellent 40-minute video. This will be distributed to everyone involved in the conference along with the written report in the fairly near future.

# COMMUNICATION

The English Department are now offering a variety of Scotvec modules to fifth and sixth years, one of which, Communication, is presently being tackled by approximately forty pupils.

Spread over twelve weeks, the module is designed to extend pupils' communication skills, encouraging them to be more confident in the world of work.

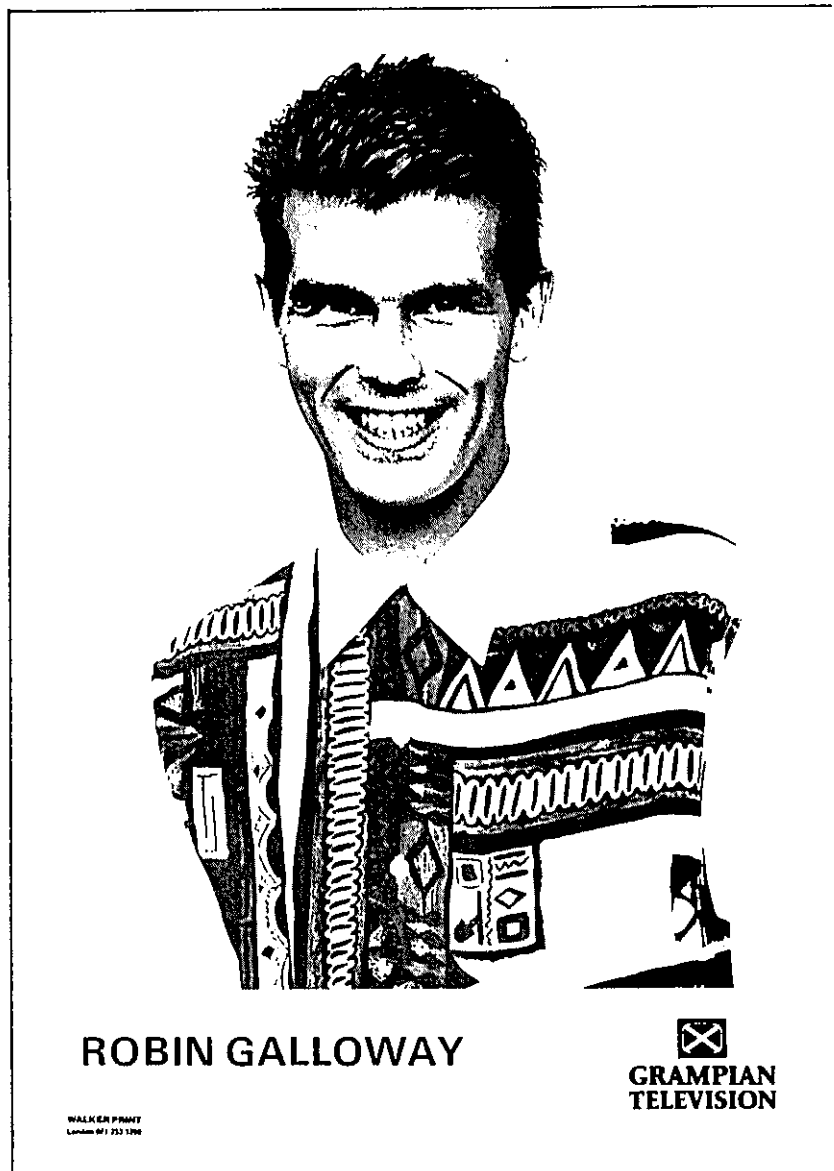
Each pupil has been interviewing and then writing a profile on a local personality of their choice. The interviewees have included a nurse, doctor, hairdresser, councillor, as well as more well-known faces such as Kennedy Thomson, Robin Galloway, Gary Stein and Willie Miller.

Everyone talked enthusiastically about their work and their lifestyles, making the pupils feel confident enough to ask a variety of questions .

Some of the answers were surprisingly revealing. A chief constable recalled a time when his car was stolen. Robin Galloway admitted that he had never sat an exam in his life. Willie Miller did not start playing football until he was eleven and confided that he enjoyed the practical jokes, inflicted on Pittodrie football players by each other.

The pupils have since moved on to controversial issues such as video nasties and arming the police, but already the English Department looks forward to hearing about next year's personalities.

JOYCE GILES



# CLARTY CLINTERTY!



In September all the S1 Social Subjects pupils took part in their first fieldwork activity since coming to Dyce Academy. As part of their 'Farming' unit the classes were setting out to find out all about Clinterty College, and especially the animals, machinery and crops which could be found there.

Unfortunately, the weather was not kind this year and care had to be taken to avoid the muddiest puddles - by some people anyway!

The three guides from the college - Iain, Duncan and Chris - were very helpful and full of interesting and useful information about everything connected with the college. There was also the opportunity to see many of the animals and where they lived, as well as the dairy, farm machinery and crops.

As usual the time flew by and after visiting the college building to wash hands (part of new health and safety regulations) everyone was glad to get back to the warmth of the Academy and lunch.

## To sum it up!

Most people in industry, commerce and everyday life tend to carry out simple calculations in their head many times every day. When you go shopping, you probably estimate how much your purchases are likely to cost before you pay your bill. During a journey you may estimate the distance you have travelled, how far you still have to go, when you think you might arrive at your destination and how much money you can afford to spend during your trip.

Technology is making a dramatic impact on our lives. In large stores and supermarkets itemised bills are produced without the need for long paper

and pencil calculations. Faced with a calculation, most people prefer to use a calculator rather than rely on an uncertainly remembered paper and pencil procedure learnt at school.

Scientific calculators can now be bought for a few pounds. Used properly, they can be a tremendous aid for numerical calculation and the further study of subjects such as mathematics, science and technology. Calculators increase the individual's powers of computation and widen the range of types of calculation possible; calculations can now be readily carried out on a hand-held machine that previously would have required a computer or the

expenditure of considerable time in written calculation. When the Scottish Exam Board decided that calculators could be used in all exams it followed that they became freely available in everyday class use.

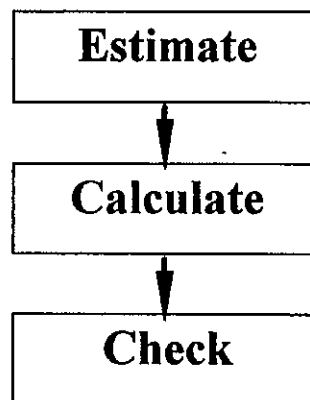
Recently, recommendations on the **proper use** of calculators were made in the *National Guidelines for Mathematics 5-14*. This session, we intend to devise a whole school policy on the use of the calculator across the curriculum that fits in with the recommendations made in the 5-14 Guidelines.

Some of the main features of these recommendations are described below.

Calculations may be done **mentally**, using **pencil and paper** or by **calculator**. Pupils will require the ability to decide which method, **mental**, **written** or using a **calculator**, is appropriate in particular circumstances. This does not imply that calculators can replace the need to learn the basic facts. Pupils need to have easy recall of single-digit number facts and sound understanding of place-value.

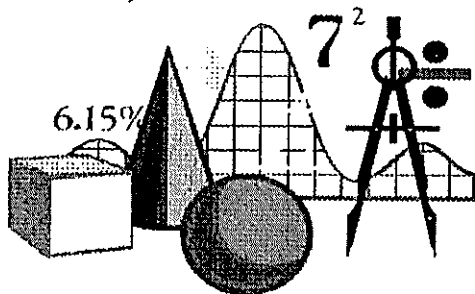
When a pupil decides to use a calculator, it is

necessary to **estimate** the answer first using mental methods. The **calculator** can then be used and the estimate utilised to **check** the answer.



When using a calculator, there is a risk of mis-keying. From the earliest stages of using a calculator, pupils should learn to repeat the calculation as a matter of course.

If pupils learn to tackle calculations sensibly making appropriate use of the calculator, they should be well equipped to meet the challenges of future study and everyday life.



## LUCKY NUMBER

The person who held the lucky Update number with the last edition was a member of staff.

She kindly declined the prize so this edition's lucky number is worth £20.

This number will be announced in the school daily bulletin a few days after the issue of Update.

The parent who writes to school enclosing the lucky back page will receive the £20 prize.

**Your lucky number is**

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## **COURT REPORT (BASKETBALL)**

The Basketball season has just got under way and Dyce is represented in all three leagues at Under 14, Under 16 and Under 18 level. We have around 30 enthusiastic players from S1 to S6 who train on Tuesdays at lunchtime or Thursdays after school.

The emphasis at Under 14 level is on participation rather than achieving good results, although everyone likes to win. The rules allow everyone in the pool of ten players to play at least 10 minutes in a 40-minute match. Our latest match at Oldmachar ended in an excellent 48 - 10 victory in which several players competed for the first time. Top scorers were Douglas Cumming, Ray Wilson and Ross Scaife but it was an excellent all-round performance.

Our Under 16 team started with a friendly match against our neighbours from Cordyce which ended in a draw. Basketball matches should be played until a winner is decided but as it was a friendly and two of our players guested (and scored 8 baskets!) for the opposition, it was felt best to leave the scores level!

The first competitive match at home to Torry proved an excellent contest and while the result was a little disappointing (30 - 42), a lot of credit can be taken by the players. Perhaps, if more of them had trained before this match, the result would have been more in our favour. Top scorers in this match were Stuart McCulloch, David Wells and Scott Carrison.

Our Under 18 team have yet to commence their league programme and it will be quite a challenge for them to compete after key departures from last season and a small pool of players. They are on the lookout for a new strip (shorts are uncomfortably tight!) and would welcome the offer of sponsorship from within or outwith the school community. Is there anyone out there who can help?

We would like to thank the school for releasing funds to purchase a scoreboard and other match equipment. Most of this money originates from the school shoppie and our thanks go to Mr Young and all customers for making it possible.

**TOM FERGUSON**