

# Welcome to



## Dyce Academy Newsletter

Session 2023—2024

Term 1

Welcome to the first edition of our school newsletter for session 2023-24. Term 1 may be one of the shorter terms of the school year, but it has still been a busy one here at Dyce.

**Staffing updates:** We opened the new term by welcoming in some **new colleagues** to the staff team. Within the Science Faculty Mr Begg joined us into Biology and Chemistry, and Miss Cossette in Biology. In Social Subjects Mr Hamilton joined us in RMPS and Mr Ranken in History. In PE, we welcomed Miss Fraser into the team and in Art and Design, Miss Crimmon. All of our new colleagues have settled in really well to the school, and have quickly established themselves with both staff and pupils. Sadly, we will be saying some **goodbyes** at this end of this term as both Mr Mackenzie and Mr MacDonald in the Science team head down south to take up new posts in Edinburgh and Angus respectively. We wish both of our colleagues all the very best of luck with their new endeavours and we are really gratefully for all of their hard work during their time here at Dyce.

**School expectations:** Another key feature that marked the start of the new term was the re-launch of our school expectations; **Ready, Respectful, Safe**. Between February and May work was done with staff, pupils, and our Parent Council, to establish what Ready, Respectful and Safe means to them and looks like in the school context. We then had a group of staff and pupils work together to design our new posters which are now on display in class-

rooms and around the school.



A launch assembly was held for staff on the August In-service and then for pupils once they returned and these shared expectations are now embedded in our everyday practice.

**School Improvement Plan:** Our **School Improvement Plan** is now well underway with focus areas including, improved learning and teaching, leadership at all levels, consistent tracking and monitoring, increased pupil voice and wellbeing awareness. The full Self Evaluation and Improvement Planning document can be found on our school website and regular updates will be provided to our Parent Council as we progress through the year.

**Activities Days:** Work is also underway to plan for the **S1-3 Activities Days** which will take place in May. Once again we will have some residential opportunities with priority given to S3 pupils as it will be their final year of Activities. We will also have some day trips and in school activities for all other pupils. Our Activities Days are a key part of our wider curriculum offer and encourage skills development, confidence and relationship building, and the opportunity for our pupils to have some new and exciting experiences. Detailed information will follow to all S1-3 parents/carers after the October break.

From all of the team here at Dyce Academy, we wish you all the very best for the forthcoming holiday period and we look forward to seeing you all again in the new term.

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**Term 2 dates for your diary**

Monday 30 October	Start of Term 2
Monday 6 November	School Photograph Day
Friday 17 November	Staff Inservice Day - School closed for pupils
Fri 24 November	S1 Reports issued to parents
Monday 27 - Wednesday 29 Nov	Flu Immunisations
Monday 11 December	S3 reports issued to parents
Thursday 14 December	Expressive Art Xmas Concert
Wednesday 20 December	ACMS Xmas Concert
Thursday 21 December	S4,5,6 Reports issued to parents
Friday 22 December	End of Term 2

**This issue will be focussing on what our pupils have been doing both in school and out of school. We have a wide range of activities that pupils are signed up to and excelling at. We also have an ever increasing number of Pupil Leaders in school which is great to see. We are so proud of all our pupils, well done and keep up the hard work!**

**Senior Pupil Leadership Team.**

In June a group of S5 and 6 pupils put themselves forward to be Ambassadors within the Senior Pupil Leadership Team. The Ambassadors first task was to put together an assembly to introduce themselves to the whole school and tell everyone about their individual projects which they would be working towards. This week the assemblies took place with the Communities and Enterprise speaking about the Ghost Tour which will take place after the holidays and the Helpful Hampers scheduled for Christmas. The Eco Group spoke about their aims of reducing waste within the school and everyone thinking smarter about energy use in the school. The Health and Wellbeing group detailed the activities for people to join and the Pupil Support Ambassadors highlighted the Breakfast Club and the Dyce charity LifeStars. Finally, the Transitions Ambassadors spoke about working with Mr Hose, Miss Callan and the Guidance Team to ensure the transition periods from S2 into S3; S4 into S5 and then P7 into S1 be an informative one from a group of senior pupils that have recently gone through that process. Term 1 is done, and their collaboration, communication, creativity and leadership has been a success. In the next issue, they'll tell you how they're getting on with each of their projects



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### Ski Racing

Over sixty, under 8 to Under 18 ski racers from across Scotland attended Aberdeen Snow Sports Centre for the Robert Gordon's College School Ski Race Championships supported by [Alpine Performance Racing](#). 2 of our pupils competed on the day - Stewart Robertson S5 and Elliot Hall S6, entered individually for Scottish school ski competition to compete in an individual slalom. Stewart was extremely helpful on the day setting up with the organisers and was commended for his efforts. Elliot is now RGC Ski Race Championship – fastest racer



on the day and 1<sup>st</sup> in his age group. Huge congratulations!

### Young Ambassadors

It was great to see our S4 Young Sports Ambassadors, Ashleigh Milne and Finlay Robinson, training our new S3 Young Sports Ambassadors this term at Pittodrie Stadium on Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023 training. We would like to introduce them Mukaddes Kahraman and Hamilton Stewart. Well done everyone! We are looking forward to see what you guys do with your new roles.



**Football** We would like to congratulate Samuel Shayo in S3; He recently signed for Aberdeen U15 Football Team and has started training in September. He is loving it and trains 4 times a week with the club with games at the weekend - Great job Samuel, well done!

### Active Girls Committee

We'd like to introduce our newest member of the Active Girls Committee at Dyce Academy - Amber Milne - Congratulations! Amber will be actively encouraging other girls in school to increase their involvement and participation in activity and sport. She will be advertising all the sporting clubs available to pupils in the school and seeking pupil voice on new initiative that girls would love to be part of the PE Extra Curricular club timetable.



**Library News** It's been all go in the library this term with a range of activities for our S1 pupils - In English - Pupils have been becoming acquainted with the fiction section of the library and learned how we as staff can help them progress with their personal reading. As well as the 10-minute- read at the start of every English lesson, pupils are encouraged to read at home for at least 15 minutes a day, it all adds up. They have been encouraged to make suggestions for books they would like to see in the library and some of these have already been ordered and are out on the shelves.

In Enterprise & ICT – Pupils came and worked in groups to research a country, it's culture and food. This research was then used back in the classroom where they are designing and marketing a new flavour of KitKat for the country they researched.

In Social Subjects –Ancient Civilisations Unit - Pupils came and were faced with 9 replica artefacts e.g. Viking drinking horn, Roman oil lamp, Egyptian ankh. They had to decide which civilisation it came from, what it was made of and what it was used for. A fun activity enjoyed by all.

In Modern Languages – European Day of Languages. Pupils undertook a short competition where they had to use books, maps, dictionaries and information cards to answer a series of questions about various aspects of European countries. A small prize was awarded to the winning group.

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### Library News (continued)

As for work with other year groups –

- A talk to the Adv. H. Drama pupils about researching for their dissertation.
- A talk on Effective Internet Research to all eight certificate classes in Enterprise & ICT.

And finally, October is Black History Month. There is a display in the library of information cards and books both fiction and non-fiction.

### Duke of Edinburgh

With the weather forecast looking a little dreich, the Duke of Edinburgh bronze qualifying expedition set out from Glen Tanar on the 16-17 September. The first two groups happily set off and then decided to make the journey a little more challenging by taking an early first turn which led them circuitously back to the start (it's all a learning experience!) Thankfully the rain stayed off and the groups navigated over hill and through forest to their campsite.



After setting up camp and cooking delicious evening meals. The groups all gathered round a big campfire to roast marshmallows, make smores and with a clear night having an amazing view of the stars.

The QR code links to a video of the expedition

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As the clear night brought lower temperatures the groups learned how sleeping in tents overnight in Scotland can get a bit chilly.

With the morning the groups awoke early, before packing up and ensuring they left no trace. The second day of the expedition had the groups starting with a big hill to climb



which they all overcame and with no further navigational issues, the groups worked together to complete their expeditions in great spirits



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### S3 John Muir Group

It's been a busy term for our S3 pupils. Through out the term the **S3 John Muir Group** have been working hard every Monday morning in partnership with Dyce in Bloom at the Community Garden. They have been weeding, replanting, digging, pruning etc. We hope you all have a chance to visit the garden and enjoy the fruits of our labour. We also



went to Balmedie Country Park to explore a coastal environment. This was with David one of Aberdeenshire Country Rangers. He spent the day teaching us all about the



plants, wildlife and fungi. We also had a little bit of history thrown in.

### S3 links with Dyce Primary

The S3 pupils have also been volunteering up at Dyce Primary Learning Den every Thursday morning where they have been reading to their buddies. They have also been planning and doing activities with their buddies! This is lots of fun for everyone and we're building strong and meaningful relationships.

### S4 Personal Development Award:

S4 PDA Group had a great opportunity to go to SRUC where they saw around The Small Animal Care Unit and then the main Campus of the college. Thank you to partners ENABLE for organising this.

### S1 Lifestars

The S1 Lifestars group is off to a flying start with games, activities and fun. Thank you to our Senior Ambassadors who are planning and delivering Lifestars this year.



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ACMS has had a busy and exciting autumn term, full of highlights. We began the term with a visit to Town

House, where we performed in collaboration with the Aberdeen City Music Service for the Education and Children's Services Committee Meeting. We enjoyed running two specialist weekends: the first with guests from Gordonstoun school, and the second with around 30 budding string players from the local area, as part of a larger project to introduce local musicians to ACMS and how we work. We also put considerable effort into a week of video filming about life as an ACMS pupil, which we look forward to being edited and then released later this year.



We were thrilled to have a visit from Cammy Barnes, who performed to us here in our very own school. Cammy and his band gave up time from their busy tour schedule to perform to our pupils, answer questions, and inspire them with stories about his own days as a pupil at ACMS. It was touching to see how excited he was to show his bandmates around his old school and introduce them to his old tutors.



Most recently, we enjoyed taking a trip out to see cast members from Scottish Opera performing famous opera arias at The Lemon Tree.



On Wednesday we held our End of Term concert in school. It was great to have so many friends and family in the audience to celebrate the talent we had on show. It was a fantastic evening with outstanding performance for all the pupils. We are very proud of all that our pupils have achieved this term, and we look forward to continuing their musical journey in the winter term. Thank you, as always, to all of our parents and carers for their unflinching support.

