



Welcome to
Dyce Academy



Dyce Academy Newsletter

Session 2023—2024

Term 2

Welcome to the Christmas edition of our newsletter. We started this term by getting the residential trips organised for our Activities Week next May, and then we had the visit from the school photographer. We had a range of inter-house activities taking place, including netball and badminton and we have rounded the term off with a variety of Christmas concerts and a pupil and staff Ceilidh.

As a staff team, through our in-service and collegiate activities we have overtaken a series of lesson observations looking at our class routines and our lesson structure and we have engaged in moderation work with colleagues to ensure we have rigour in our planning for learning and teaching in the BGE. We have had a focus on our new systems for tracking and monitoring of pupil progress and been reviewing the interventions we have put in place to support our learners. Our Pedagogy Groups have been working away on piloting new approaches and establishing practice within their own classes, all of which will be showcased for all staff later in the year. We have heard a lot from our pupils, through pupil voice surveys and pupil voice focus groups, to gather their views on our progress with some of our improvement activities and they have given us some really helpful feedback which will support our next steps as a school. Last week we had a team of 7 colleagues from across Aberdeen City Council, conduct a Quality Improvement Visit to review our progress, observe our practice and hear from groups of staff and pupils about the work we have been undertaking. This has proved a really supportive process which again has fed in to our next steps on our improvement journey.

December also marked the end of my first year here as Head Teacher at Dyce Academy, my 'Schooliversary' as one pupil called it. The time has passed so quickly and I feel incredibly lucky and proud to be working for and with the young people of Dyce and the wider school community, and I look forward to what the future holds for us all. Wishing you all a very merry Christmas when it comes and all the best for 2024!

Christmas Card Competition

Many thanks go to all pupils who handed in their Christmas/Winter Card Designs. There was a wide range of ideas and materials used to very good effect. The judging is in and...

CONGRATULATIONS GO TO Overall Winner - Freya Ross S3



Runners Up Giselle Hanekom S3, Milly Fawns S2, Bethan Frost S1, Cheyenne Akram S1





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S2 Build your Future Competition

18 S2s took part in the Build Your Future Competition, run by a consortium of construction companies from North East Scotland. The S2s were split into two teams and competed against other teams from Aboyne, Mintlaw, Ellon & Peterhead. Each team had 3 tasks to complete, prepared by one of 3 construction companies, and a time limit of 20 minutes for each task:

Leiths - Who Would You Employ and Why?

Ledingham Chalmers - Council & Contractor Legal Dispute

Balfour Beatty - Building New Futures

The S2s who took part in the competition, have to be commended for their teamwork and communication skills. They also demonstrated excellent problem-solving skills when faced with complex issues that mirrored real-life construction dilemmas.



Unfortunately, Dyce Academy lost out to teams from Ellon & Aboyne to go forward to the finals in January. However, the S2s had a great time working together with good humour and team spirit. They

also learned that construction careers are far more varied and interesting than they initially thought. Thanks again for allowing the S2s to take part in this excellent experience.

S1 Lifestars

Our Lifestars group have had a busy term attending a number of activities across Aberdeen City. In November they took part in Sportshall Athletics which is an indoor programme of adapted athletics activities which is fully inclusive. Events include Speed Bounce, Javelin, Shuttle Runs, Target Throw, Standing Long Jump, Hi-Stepper, Seated Chest Push and with additional Relays at the end. This event will give us the opportunity to work on communication/teamwork and confidence whilst helping to develop a sense of pride and belonging to Dyce Academy.

Lifestars cont. Then in December they took part in a Boccia competition. The group are looking forward to more exciting opportunities next term. A huge thank you to Mrs Taylor and our Senior Ambassadors Cameron and Stewart for all their hard work supporting the group



National Modern Studies

On Friday 8th December, we were delighted to welcome local MSP Jackie Dunbar and councillor Alexander McLellan to one of our National Modern Studies classes to answer questions from students on local and national issues, discuss their roles in our Scottish democracy, and talk about how we all have a role to play in taking part and sharing our views. The visit was organised by two members of the class – Morgan H and Carla D – who got in touch with Jackie's office to ask if she could come and visit, and they independently coordinated all of practicalities of the day. We are excited to continue organising visits like this in the future!





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Faculty of Enterprise & ICT Update

As always we have been very busy within the faculty. We would like to share with you some of the things we have been up to or will be up to after Christmas.

Kit Kat Challenge

Once again our S1 pupils came up with very innovative Marketing Campaigns for their given countries. This year we not only had slogans; but some pupils created songs for their adverts! Some new suggested flavours for 2023 were Pink Lemonade, Lado and Saffron and Nacho Cheese!



Amazing Animations

Our S2 pupils' animations were superb this year. We were all very impressed with the standard of work on display and we all enjoyed our movie sessions where the pupils showcased their work. There are definitely some Steven Spielberg's and Sofia Coppola's in the making!

It's All in the Game!

As always; the presentations at the end of the S3 Business Management Computer Games Designs Challenge were great to watch. All the teams a great deal of effort into their games and presentations. This is one of my favourite events throughout the year and I want to thank Miss MacDonald and the class for allowing me to come and watch. Mrs Jessamine

Fright Night

Well done to our Enterprise and Community Ambassadors along with their S5 and S6 friends for setting up and creating a very scary and creepy environment for this year's Fright Night. Thanks also to the staff who participated in the experience. It was great fun and we are looking forward to and planning Halloween 2024 already!



In February our S4 National 5 Business Management pupils will present their business ideas to a team from Emerson led by Fiona Butters. Each group is vying to be crowned – Most Entrepreneurial Team 2023-2024 Session. We wish them all bon chance.

Helpful Hampers

Mrs Dawson and Mrs Jessamine would like to say 'thank you' to all the staff and pupils who have helped us with the Helpful Hampers Drive this year. And of course, a great big thank you to the pupils' parents and Dyce staff who donated goods to us. We couldn't do it without you.

This year our S3 Administration and IT pupils created the posters to help launch this year's appeal.

These lovely colourful and informative posters can be viewed on both the school walls and on year group classroom posts.

Our school Ambassador groups, alongside the NPA Business and ICT, pupils helped to inform pupils and staff about this year's appeal, collect in donations and package up hampers.



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Expressive Arts Faculty

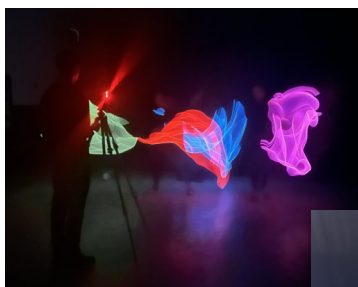
S2 took part again in the TTM Recruitment competition where young people are asked to visually communicate their 'Future Aspirations'. The work can be viewed in the TTM Recruitment Gallery space and will soon be in a public gallery in town.



This term has been a busy one for the music department between visiting musicians, concert preparations, fundraising and spreading Christmas cheer. In the first week of term, all of S1 were invited to watch an interactive performance by the Scottish Ensemble who brought their "In Sync" tour to Dyce Academy.



A group of S4-6 Photography pupils had the opportunity to attend an interactive photography workshop with Scottish photographer David Gil-



liver. Gilliver creates Light Paintings and Miniature Photography. During the workshop, pupils learned first-hand from the photographer how to create Light Paintings and produced their own images. This hands-on experience has built on pupils' photography toolkit which will greatly benefit them on their route through NPA and Higher Photography.



NPA Photography Student Jessica Findlay S4, was one of 12 winners of the Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group, 'Art of Renewable Energy' photography competition. This was the first year that the competition was opened up to school age pupils as well as professionals and amateurs. The competition winners were announced during a lunch event at Aberdeen Art Gallery where they were presented with a framed version of their original image. Jessica's photograph is now proudly placed in the ARGE 2024 Calendar.



At the start of December, Mrs Dawson and Mrs Kirkwood took both



choirs along with the guitar and ukulele players across to Asda to raise some money for the department and perform festive tunes for the Dyce community. During one period they raised a cracking £116! Thursday 14th December saw the return of the Expressive Arts Christmas Concert which involved 65 talented pupils performing to a sold-out audience. For many pupils, this was their first time performing in a school concert. Everyone did a fantastic job! There were a variety of stalls selling festive goodies at the start of the evening and these were hosted by the Art Department, S4-5 Personal Development Groups and Parent Council. To end the term, the music department will be providing some entertainment for the House Christmas Assemblies. Well done to all involved in musical activities this term – thanks for your hard work! Thanks also to all those staff and parents who continue to support us and our pupils.



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The Dyce Academy Youth Theatre (DAYT) got straight to work at the start of the year planning their next showcase after the huge

success of their 2023 Showcase. The pupil leadership team has worked with the group through auditions and are now looking at what our 2024 Showcase will look like. This year's theme is Movie Musicals/Musical Movies.

The DAYT Showcase is scheduled to take place in June 2024 TBC. Tickets for the Showcase will go on sale in May and will be available from the school office (Price TBC).

Dyce Academy Youth Theatre pupils made a recent appearance with their rendition of 'Time Warp' in this year's Christmas Concert. This dance was led and choreographed completely by the junior pupils who were involved.

If any pupil would like to join DAYT, they rehearse after school on Wednesdays in Drama until 4pm and are always welcoming new members. Just speak to any of the Drama or Music staff.

**net
zero**
Aberdeen

Congratulations Finlay Robinson:

Earlier this year Finlay was interviewed and delighted to be given the position of Aberdeen City Youth Climate Change Vice President. His

role is to represent pupils' voices at Aberdeen City Council committees and working groups, and at climate change events throughout the year. In addition, the group will be planning and actioning their own ideas to combat climate change at schools across Aberdeen. The Climate Emergency is something Finlay is really passionate about and

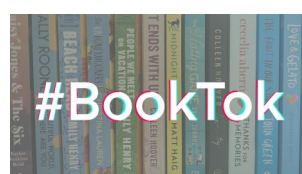


through this role he would like to raise awareness and help make a real difference. <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/news/cults-academy-pupil-named-youth-climate-change-president>

Faculty of Languages

The English and Languages staff are working hard this year on populating our new Faculty website. We will share resources, useful links, and pupil work on the website. I would like to encourage you all to have a look at the site as we will be using it more and more. So far you will be able to access some useful work and resources to support Literacy learning and see samples of pupil work in the form of Firework poetry – they have produced some beautiful stuff! You can access the English and Languages Faculty website by using this link [Faculty of E&ML \(google.com\)](https://www.dyceacademy.org.uk/faculty-of-e&ml) It would be great to have some parental feedback about the site and what else you would like to see on it – there is an email address on the front page with the contact details.

During December our Advanced Higher and Higher English pupils were invited to attend fully funded workshops to improve their writing skills. The workshop was run by the Royal Literary Fund and allowed pupils the opportunity to engage with academic level coursework. I am sure they all learned a great deal and we were pleased to have them visit the school. Thanks go to Mrs Duncan for organising the event.



All our S1s are nicely settled into the faculty and making good progress with coursework. This session our S1 pupils have been working with Mrs Yeoman in the library to develop their

Reading skills and improve their Literacy – some young people will be producing BookToks in the new year to promote books they have enjoyed reading.

N5 French and Spanish writing (job application) – students are really getting the hang of this part of the course. There are also students who are on the right road and who need to just keep working at it.

You are ALL capable of doing well so stick at it. Don't forget that Mr Lozano and Mr McCurdy run a drop-in session on Thursday lunchtime for any student who wants help or extra practise in this area.



School Website: [dyceacademy.aberdeenschools.org.uk](https://www.dyceacademy.aberdeenschools.org.uk)

Contact us: dyceacademy@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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Congratulations to our Ukrainian pupils who are making great progress with the English for Speakers of Other Languages courses (ESOL).



Some pupils have already successfully completed assessments. This will allow them to obtain an ESOL qualification in 2024. Keep up the good work. Thanks to parents/guardians who have been encouraging the pupils. We really appreciate your support in helping pupils make a success of their courses.



Well done to all S1 and S2 pupils for studying hard for their recent end of unit assessments in French and Spanish.

Many pupils passed and there were also lots of high marks. At this rate, you will all be fluent in no time! Keep up the good work. Some of the simple study techniques we used, for example, writing vocabulary items on small coloured cards and practising with a partner, really paid off. Remember that you can study other subjects with cards and practise with a partner as well. A genuine thanks to all parents and guardians for encouraging the pupils to prepare thoroughly. Your continued support and encouragement are a very valuable component in pupil success.

Working with our partners

22 S4-S6 pupils took part in a talk about construction careers with Morrison Construction on Thursday 14th of December. Managing Director, Mike Bruce, and Senior Design Manager, Mike Duncan explained about the wide range of careers



Morrison Construction

in construction. They touched on the traditional site-based roles such as labourers, joiners and electricians, as well as more office-based roles such as quantity surveyors and engineers.

Mr Mike Bruce also talked through their prestigious projects such as Aberdeen FC's Cormack Park training ground or Greyhope Primary School. He also offered the opportunity to apply for work experience with the company to get firsthand experience of what a job in construction looks like. Many of the pupils have put their names forward and are working on applying for the work placements.

And finally... Our Expressive Arts Faculty put on a fantas-



tic showcase last week with a number of first time performers. It really was great to see everyone up on stage having a great time. Our ACMS students put on another great show this week with a mix of classical, jazz and festive pieces.

A huge thanks and congratulations to all those that have taken part in our end of term concerts over the last two weeks. All of this would not be possible without the incredible support of all the staff giving up their time and helping all our performers.

Term 3 Dates for your Diary

Monday 8 Jan 2024	Start of term
Thursday 18 Jan 2024	Start of Senior Phase prelims
Friday 2 Feb 2024	End of Senior Phase Prelims
Tuesday 6 Feb	S2 Parent Evening (In-person)
Monday 12 Feb—Wed 15 Feb (inc)	Mid-term holiday
Thursday 15 Feb	S2 Course Information Evening (In person)
Wednesday 21 Feb	S4 Parent Evening (In person)
Tuesday 27 Feb	S5/6 Parent Evening (In person)
Monday 4 March	S5/6 Information Evening (in person)
Wed 6 March	S1 Parent Evening (in person)
Tuesday 26 March	S4/5/6 reports issued
Wed 27 March	Expressive Arts Spring concert
Thursday 28 March	End of term

School Website: dyceacademy.aberdeen.sch.uk

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