

Welcome to the festive edition of the Dyce Academy School Newsletter. As you can see from the size of this edition, we have had another busy term with lots of different activities and events taking place across the school.

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Upcoming Dates

Monday 05 January	Beginning of Term 3
Monday 12 January	S5/6 Estimate Diet Starts
Monday 09 February	Mid Term Holiday
Tuesday 10 February	In-Service Day
Wednesday 11 February	In-Service Day
Thursday 12 February	S2 Parents' Evening
Thursday 24 February	S4 Parents' Evening
Monday 02 March	S5/6 Parents' Evening
Friday 13 March	ACMS March Concert
Thursday 26 March	ACMS Concert
Monday 30 March	Beginning of Easter Holiday
Monday 13 April	Beginning of Term 4



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Welcome from Miss Arthur

Welcome to the festive edition of the Dyce Academy School Newsletter.

We started the term by welcoming Mrs Nicola Stuart our new Depute Head Teacher. Mrs Stuart has taken on the role of S5/6 Year Head as well as SQA co-ordinator, tracking and monitoring, ICT and Professional Development lead across the school. An experienced Depute Head, she has spent the term getting to know our staff and pupil teams and has also been reaching out to many parents and carers. Having hit the ground running, Mrs Stuart has got off to a great start and has really thrown herself in to life here at Dyce Academy.

This has been a big term for our Senior Phase learners as they have been carrying out various pieces of assessment and formal coursework, whilst also working hard to prepare for their Estimate Exams. Our S4 learners participated in their Estimate Exams over the last week of November and the first week of December and for our S5 and S6 learners this will take place the second and third weeks of the new term. Staff around the school have been sharing online resources and offering various lunchtime help sessions to support with preparation and we have also had an input from a company called Elevate which you will hear about in more detail later in this edition.

In our assembly programme this term we have focused once again on our school values and expectations as we sought to get the term off to a good start, and we have continued to follow up on uniform expectations throughout the term. We have had inputs on topics such as the SQA and our Indicative Choice processes, and we have had a real focus on Rights Awareness as part of our Rights Respecting Schools journey and on Positive Relationships, peer on peer behaviour and the importance of kindness to one another. We round off our term with House Assembly presentations led by our Guidance team.

We have also got our P7 Transition process underway this term, with various individual parent meetings taking place, as well as planning for a joint activity day which will be held next year in advance of our official link days. Early next session we will be inviting all of our P7 parents and carers to join us at the school for the first official information evening to set out the journey that lies ahead as we look to prepare our new pupils for the move to secondary school.



Prize winners receive recognition for their entries to our Christmas Card competition from Miss Arthur, Head Teacher and Mr Gartland, PT Faculty Expressive Arts

Read more on Page 8

As a staff team, our development time this term has focused on various aspects of our learning and teaching practice, as well as keeping abreast of national changes that are afoot in education. We have been in the initial stages of our curriculum review, and collectively we have been working to establish a Promoting Positive Relationships strategy which we hope to launch for the start of next session.

With lots more pupil-based activities to read about through the remainder of this newsletter, all that is left for me to say, is that I hope you all have a safe, healthy and happy festive period and I wish you all the very best for the new year ahead!

Miss Arthur



New Outdoor Classroom Takes Shape

During this term, work has started on a new learning space at the front of our school building, next to the raised beds and the orchard.

This exciting venture has grown from pupil ideas through their Eco Audit and lessons on Learning for Sustainability and the design for this space has been influenced by the work of S2 pupils.

We are grateful to Guy Philips from Highland Heritage Woodwork who has been working to realise the designs for this seating area which will be used as an outdoor teaching space.

During the construction of this space, pupils are involved in setting out and securing ground pins and constructing the timber components which are locally sourced and sustainable. The variety of bench designs will allow up to 30 pupils at a time working together outdoors.

This work supports us as we continue to make improvements to school grounds and working with the local community.

Through the work of our Sustainability Group, we look forward to making further changes to aid learning based on pupil ideas, create biodiversity in our local area and improve the overall aesthetics of the outdoor space.



Eco Group

Remembrance Day



On Tuesday the 11th of November, we went to the local war memorial in our role as Equalities Ambassadors for our school. The War Memorial is located in Dyce and alongside Miss Arthur, we represented our school community to pay our respects to those who fought and died during conflicts.

Miss Arthur read out a speech of remembrance and then we all observed the two-minute silence. Back at the school, the bell rang to mark the start and end of the two minute silence.

Back at the memorial, we read out poems including 'In Flanders fields' by John McCrae before we placed down a poppy wreath to mark remembrance on behalf of our school community.

Equalities Ambassadors





Term 2 Updates from Aberdeen City Music School

It has been a lively and memorable term at ACMS with pupils throwing themselves into myriad musical adventures.

Several of our young players took part in the Scottish Young Musician senior heats and did themselves proud. Our singers enjoyed another inspiring visit to Scottish Opera where they worked with coaches, répétiteurs, and even took part in a Q and A with celebrated opera singer Elizabeth McCormack. Quite a few pupils have also been deep in preparation for music college auditions.



A particular highlight this term was our trip to His Majesty's Theatre, where we saw the grand opera, *La Bohème*.

For many pupils, this was their first grand opera, and it certainly left its mark!



ACMS Performances

There has been no shortage of performance opportunities this term, with recital appearances at both St Andrew's Cathedral and the Cowdray Hall, some requested at short notice and met with great enthusiasm!

Daily informal concerts in the department continue to be one of the most joyful parts of school life, giving pupils frequent chances to share their work and support one another. Alongside this, there has been steady progress in personal development, theoretical understanding, and performance practice across the board.

Christmas at the Beach Ballroom

At the end of term, we performed at the Beach Ballroom Christmas performances alongside our own end of term celebrations. These occasions always bring a lovely sense of community and give pupils the chance to enjoy the results of all their hard work.



Keeping Up to Date: The ACMS Shout

If you would like to keep up to date with the work and progress of pupils within ACMS, please visit our weekly newsletter: The ACMS Shout:

<https://sites.google.com/ab-ed.org/theacmsshout/home>



Thank You

As ever, we are hugely grateful to Katie Arthur and the team at Dyce Academy, our brilliant Boarding House staff, the dedicated ACMS tutors and staff, and our incredibly supportive parent body. Their encouragement and care make everything we do possible.

Mr Kyle



Fright Night!



This year, Dyce Academy's Communities and Enterprise Ambassador group hosted our annual Halloween Fright Night!

On the 30th of October, after weeks of hard preparation, our very own Nuclear Nightmare came to life.

Fright Night is a fundraising opportunity for the school hosted by senior pupils with anyone from S1-S3 can attend. This year we had 88 attendees!

£176 was raised through ticket sales, which was put towards the school's Christmas Helpful Hampers initiative. Through running these events annually, we are helping to support our local community throughout the festive season by supplying food and resources to those in need.

Communities and Enterprise Ambassadors

Robertson's Construction

Throughout this term, a group of second and third year pupils have been working on a project to create a new playpark for Dyce.

Through this project, pupils have made site visits and researched innovative play areas across the world to support them as they came up with their designs which they have constructed foam models.

This project is supported by Robertson's Construction and we are grateful to David Kindness in guiding pupils through this project.

Basketball House Competition

At the end of Term 1, our Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors and PE staff hosted our Basketball Interhouse Competition.

During the competitive week, pupils worked together in teams as they competed to gain points for their houses.

Points were awarded for attendance, number of baskets scored and placing points. The winners received ten points, second place received five points, third place received three points and fourth place received one point.

Congratulations to Ramsay house for the highest score!

House	Points	Placing
Brimmond	58	2nd
Corby	14	4th
Kirkhill	29	3rd
Ramsay	62	1st

An important aspect of competitive sport is good sportsperson-ship and effective teamworking. Through this competition, pupils that demonstrated these qualities gained extra points for their house. Well done to all competitors!

Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors

Helpful Hampers

The Community and Enterprise Ambassadors would like to thank everyone who donated to this year's Helpful Hampers appeal.

The Ambassadors were helped this year by Alice Hadden in S2 who helped design a poster and Christmas cards.

The Helpful Hampers will be delivered to families across our community at the end of Term 2, in time for Christmas.

Communities and Enterprise Ambassadors



Elevate Exam Skills

In advance of pupils sitting Estimate exams this session, senior pupils engaged in 'Ace Your Exam' workshops hosted by Elevate. These workshops are designed to support pupils in developing their exam technique and achieving their potential in exams.

Through these workshops, pupils developed key exam skills such as;

- Techniques for managing time and stress
- High value exam preparation tasks
- Fixing mistakes to ensure constant improvement
- Time allocation during exam preparation

Through pupil voice, 98% of pupils questioned said that they would recommend this session to other pupils sitting exams, and that they feel better equipped to prepare for their upcoming exam diets.

PT PEF

Life Stars

Our new S1 Lifestars group attended their first out of school experience on 12th November where 12 young people attended Sportshall Athletics at Aberdeen Sports Village where they all tired to challenge themselves and worked on our shared goals of communication, teamwork, leadership, trust and pride.

As a thank you to our Lifestars Ambassadors, they were given free Mainstand tickets for the Aberdeen v St. Mirren game on Wednesday 3rd December.

It was an exciting match with 6 goals in total! Although it ended as 3-3 we enjoyed all of the excitement.

Thank you for the tickets!

ASFL Department

Eco Group and Eco Ambassadors Update

This term, the Eco Group and Eco Ambassadors have continued their work towards achieving the school's third Green Eco Schools Flag.

Through this, pupils have worked on projects such as seed bomb gift sets and the spring bulb mug gift sets (in partnership with the Business and Enterprise Faculty). These were sold during the Christmas Fayre at the Christmas Concert at the end of term. Funds raised from this will be put towards new school planters, with our partnership work with the local Dyce Men's shed supporting us to source wood to build these for the school.

Alongside this work, the Eco Ambassadors are continuing to work with the Dyce in Bloom gardening club on creating a leaflet to advertise and recruit more members.

In addition to this, the Eco Ambassadors are working on a rota for all pupils to be involved in helping the school to recycle more efficiently, using the bins that the Eco Group purchased from previous fundraising.

Another busy term for pupils involved in the Eco Group and Eco Ambassadors!

Eco Group





Practical Cake Craft: Christmas Cakes

Senior pupils that undertake the Practical Cake Craft course develop a wide variety of practical skills including; piping, crimping, stencilling, modelling, and cutting. Pupils research and plan cake designs before putting their skills into practice.

As you will see from the photos, the Senior Cake Craft class has truly outdone themselves this year, producing a stunning array of festive themed Christmas cakes.

Each creation showcases impressive skill, creativity, and holiday spirit! From intricate designs to beautifully executed finishes, the students' hard work and dedication are on full display:



Technologies Faculty

Science Faculty

Aberdeen Select Trials Successes

We are delighted to share that S5 pupils, Evita, Lily & Evie were successful in gaining a place on the Aberdeen City Senior Select Girls Team after they attended trials in September.

In addition to this, we are equally delighted to share that Hamilton in S5 was also successful in gaining a place on the reserves after trialling over two days for the Aberdeen City Senior Select Boys Team.

We look forward to supporting all pupils in their endeavours and hearing how they get on. Congratulations!

Health and Wellbeing Faculty

Senior Physics Lecture



The Advanced Higher Physics class attended a lecture on 'Exploring the Dark Side of the Universe' by Professor Martin Hendry.

Professor Martin Hendry (University of Glasgow and LIGO Scientific Collaboration), is a leading figure in gravitational astrophysics and cosmology and his pioneering work with the global LIGO Scientific Collaboration led to the first detection of gravitational waves in 2015, a discovery awarded the 2017 Nobel Prize in Physics!

Through this lecture, pupils were guided through 14 billion years of cosmic history, exploring how gravitational waves (ripples in the fabric of space-time) are helping scientists to uncover the dark side of the universe.



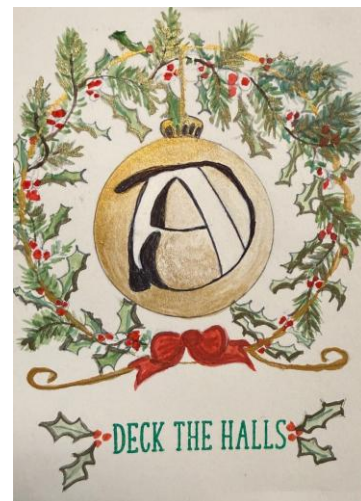
Christmas Card Competition

In the lead up to the festive period, we had many entries to the Art Department Christmas card competition. This competition is set as a design homework lesson to pupils in S1-3 and open to all pupils across our school.

The design brief sets out requirements relating to size and materials to consider, but it allows the pupils to express their own ideas and use their creativity. Pupils are encouraged to incorporate an aspect of the school, such as the logo or school colours.

Miss Arthur, Head Teacher, and Mr Gartland, PT Faculty, reviewed all entries, including digital animations, in order to award a winner, special awards, and runners up and we are delighted to share these with you.

All winners' cards were printed and sold through the School Eco Stall at the Expressive Arts Christmas concert and School Fayre at the end of term. Fayha's video entry has been on display on the screen in the school foyer.



Overall Winner:
Ellie Anderson, S1



Runner Up:
Lena Lubuarz, S2



Special Award (Video):
Fayha Rizwan, S3



Runner Up:
Eloise Ferguson, S4



Runner Up:
Bethan Frost, S3



Expressive Arts Faculty



School Christmas Concert

The Dyce Academy Music Department has had an exceptionally busy and rewarding term which concluded in our Christmas Concert on Thursday 11th December.

This was a fantastic evening filled with festive spirit and a celebration of the incredible talent and dedication within our school community, featuring a special guest performance from the Dyce Primary brass group. Thank you to all pupils that took part in the preparations and performances and to all family and friends that attended.



Expressive Arts Faculty

Community Singing

Members of our local community were treated to some festive cheer thanks to a group of our pupils performing in ASDA during the last week of term.



Their music was warmly received by shoppers, and we were delighted to receive generous donations which will go towards purchasing new classroom instruments.

Thank you to all pupils that were involved in these performances, and to everyone that donated.

Expressive Arts Faculty

Senior Pupils Share Their Piping Skills With Newmachar Primary Pupils

This term, we have been teaching pupils at Newmachar Primary School how to play the chanter as a part of our level 6 leadership qualification.

The course that we devised lasted 6 weeks and over that time we have shown the primary pupils musical features such as the bagpipe scale and also teaching festive tunes such as Jingle Bells!

We will next be going to teach primary pupils at Dyce School and hopefully inspire a new generation of bagpipers!

Taylor Dalrymple and Kai Hay





NESCOL Link Course

This term, S4 pupils that attend the NESCOL Link Course on Fridays have been very busy developing their skills in the professional kitchen.

To date, pupils have learned how to make bread, scones and doughnuts. They are very proud of their progress so far and are enjoying the challenge of learning in the professional catering environment.

Well done to Star Bakers: Noah Vance and Kenzie Lee Lowrie.

ASFL Department



NESCOL City Centre Campus Tour



In order for pupils to develop their experience further education and training opportunities at college, a group of S4 pupils visited NESCOL City Centre Campus.

Through this, pupils were taken through the application process, interviews tips, and what college life is like.

Pupils were also able to experience the facilities in the college, allowing them to familiarise themselves with the campus and application process ahead of applying for courses in December.

Pupils have shared that they enjoyed the experience and feel better equipped for applying for college. Thank you to our partners at NESCOL for hosting our visits!

PT PEF

The Environmental Cost of AI

Through Core RMPS classes, pupils have been working on a project to create products as 'investigative journalists'. Through this work, they are aiming to raise awareness and challenge people about the environmental cost of AI. As part of this, they had the opportunity to meet with and engage with journalists from the BBC and a work with an AI developer whom they will also present their work to.

One group of pupils, led by Finlay Robinson (6C) and Sapna Galhenage (6R), have produced a website which includes an AI assistant that has been designed to answer a set of questions and shows the user how much energy each search uses.

Check it out and have a go yourself using the link below or the QR code:

<https://sites.google.com/ab-ed.org/environmental-costs-of-ai/home>



Social Subjects Faculty



Football Results

The S1 boys football team have played several fixtures throughout this term, having successfully qualified for the Lifestars League '1' and the Green Final Trophy Semi Final.

Dyce Academy 3 - 3 Harlaw Academy
(Trophy Group Stage)

Dyce Academy 1 - 2 Bucksburn Academy
(League)

Dyce Academy 4 - 1 Northfield Academy
(League + Trophy Quarter Final)

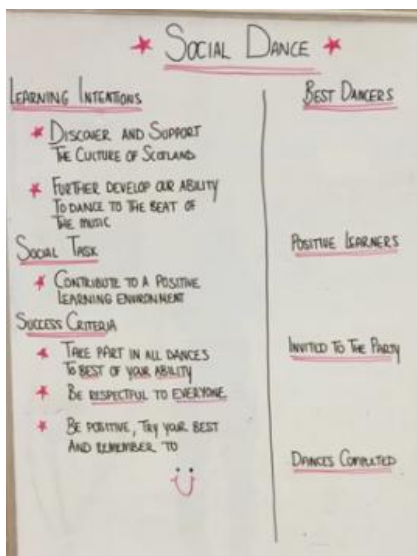
Rugby Fixtures

On Tuesday 02 December, four Dyce Academy pupils from S3 and S4 represented our school in a team consisting of pupils from Dyce Academy and Northfield Academy in the North Region Rugby 6s Finals event at Highland Rugby Club, Inverness.

The team progressed to the semi-final and played extremely well, however, narrowly losing to eventual winners, Stromness Academy.

Undeterred, the pupils continued to play extremely well, however, unfortunately lost to Culloden in the 3rd place play off.

Social Dancing in P. E. Lessons



Well done to all of our pupils who have worked very hard in their PE lessons during our block of Social Dancing! Developing experience with Social dancing supports pupils in future events whilst attending ceilidhs, dances and weddings. Through work, pupils develop their skills through the outcome:

"I practice, consolidate and refine my skills to improve my performance. I am developing and sustaining my level of Fitness", we are developing:

- Our self awareness and respect for others
- Rhythm and timing to the music
- Confidence when performing with others in pairs, groups and as a class
- Enthusiasm and interest in an important part of our Scottish Culture'

Pupils are presented with awards for Best Dancer, Positive Learner, Invite to the Party & Best Group Dance of the lesson. Well done everyone for your commitment and enthusiasm!

Health and Wellbeing Pupil of the Week

In the Health and Wellbeing faculty, we celebrate the hard work and progress of pupils through our "Pupil of the Week" awards.

Through this, pupil names are added to the board in the faculty.

For each pupil that receives this award, two merits are also awarded, as well as 5 house points to your House total alongside certificates are issued.

House Points Update



Health and Wellbeing Faculty



Upcoming Events in the Enterprise and ICT Faculty

Looking Forward to Spring Through S2 Enterprise Project

In the Enterprise and ICT faculty, 2P3 have started their Enterprise project by creating their Spring Bulb Buckets. These are currently on sale to staff and parents.



'Hackathon' Competition (February 2026)

The Enterprise and ICT faculty are also excited to announce that 5 of our Computing Science pupils will be participating in this year's Hackathon being held at the Hub in February 2026. Watch this space to hear how they progress!

Robotics Club Competition (February 2026)

Our school robotics club: "Slice and Dyce" are taking part in the 'Scrimmage' competition at Robert Gordon's University in February 2026.



Through this, they will be competing against clubs across the city and we are keeping everything crossed that they make it through to the next round where they will travel to Glasgow or Edinburgh to compete against schools across Scotland!

Aberdeen Youth Movement Pupil Voice

Pupil Voice is something that is really important to us here at Dyce Academy and this term, we welcomed our colleagues from Aberdeen Youth Movement into the school to carry out some pupil voice activities. This was centred around the current Aberdeen City Council budget proposals.

Pupils of all ages were eager to share their views and ensure that the voice of the Dyce pupil body would be well represented.



Easyfundraising



Through GroupCall, we recently shared information about 'EasyFundraising', which is an app that allows you to support Dyce Academy initiatives simply through your everyday online purchases.

In school, we have several initiatives to support pupils such as our 'Swap Shop' and 'Snack Box'.

By downloading and signing up, you can help to fund these projects, and others that rely entirely on donations and the incredible support of our Dyce community.

Thank You

PT PEF