



# *Bucksburn Academy*

## *School Newsletter*

### *March 2017*

#### **Bucksburn Academy Win 2017 Schools Biodiversity Award**

We recently found out that we have won the North East Scotland Schools Biodiversity Award. We were nominated for the breadth of work we have done with our students in this area, such as the number of people in the school community who have gained John Muir awards, joint environmental projects in the local area and further afield with a number of partners and the international projects on promoting sustainability we have been involved in.

Ms Shanley and some students will be attending the North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership Conference to take part in the day and receive this award.

#### **Stavanger Visit**



In February a group of 16 students and 2 staff took part in a 4 day study visit to a partner school, St Olav's in Stavanger, Norway. During a packed programme they were able to find out more about how Science is delivered at the school, approaches to enabling people in Norway to live a more sustainable lifestyle and to continue to share Scottish and Norwegian culture and lifestyles. This visit followed a similar visit earlier in the session where we welcomed the group from St Olav's to Bucksburn Academy.

#### **P7 Transition Visit**

On 28 February we were delighted to welcome all the P7 students from our ASG Primary Schools for their first transition day. During a very busy day the students were involved in activities to support the development of skills they will need for successful learning at Bucksburn Academy in S1.

It was a chance for them to meet their future classmates, staff at the school and current Bucksburn students who acted as buddies during the day and led some of the activities.

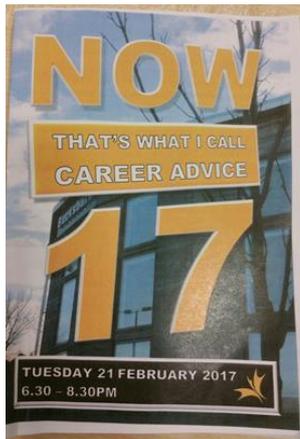
The day was followed by a very successful P7 Parents' Event including a student led tour of the school and visit to a number of classrooms where teachers were on hand to talk about the S1 curriculum in their subject.



#### **Auld Hoose Debate at Robert Gordon's College**

The Debate Club are preparing for a competition with students from across Aberdeen schools in Robert Gordon's college on 22 April. This fun competition is designed to be accessible for novices and we will be presenting three teams of S1, S2 and S3 students who can prepare for the motion of 'This House would ban nuclear weapons' and also have two more debates on the day. The club runs on Tuesday lunchtimes and the members decide on new motions each week, the most recent being 'This House would ban violent video games' which caused some serious contention! New members welcome.

## Now That's What I Call Careers Advice 17



The Parent Council continues to be very active in supporting the school and they recently organised a very successful Now That's What I Call Careers Advice event which saw over 200 students and parents find out more about a number of careers, future pathways and further education options. They booked up to hear a number of excellent presentations from our partners, such as Aker Solutions on apprenticeships, RGU on thinking about university, NESCOL on college options and volunteering, The STEM Ambassadors on careers in Science, Technologies, Engineering and Maths, John Clark on what skills and qualities employers are looking for, ACC HR Department on Interview Skills and Skills Development Scotland on using the My World of Work website to help think about future options.

## More Wing Swimming Success

Twenty three swimmers from the Wing represented the school at the Mary Duncan Swimming Gala for children with additional support needs. Everyone put a big effort into their races with some of our senior swimmers qualifying for the national SDS championships. Our medal haul included 23 gold medals, 13 silver medals and 8 bronze medals – an amazing achievement. Now onto the final at Tollcross in Glasgow in May!

## Mrs Duncan's Class Swim The Channel

ASN 4 go swimming on a Friday afternoon. The class decided that to challenge themselves the staff and students would attempt to swim the equivalent of the English Channel. This would mean the class would need to swim 1408 lengths of the pool! The students really embraced this challenge and pushed themselves every week. The staff tried their best to keep up! It took 9 weeks to complete the swim, an incredible achievement. As soon as the Channel was swum the students wanted to keep going so the class then decided to swim Loch Ness! This will be another 1460 lengths. ASN 4 are more than halfway through the second challenge and will easily complete the swim before the Easter holidays. This has been an amazing effort, especially as the class had a few non swimmers at the beginning of the year, one of whom swam 40 lengths one afternoon.

## Pupils Get Ready to Vote for the Local Council Elections

Bucksburn students who will be eligible to vote in the May 4 local council elections have been finding out more about why it matters, who they could vote for and how to cast their votes. Students were told about the elections in their PSE classes and also had the chance to attend a drop-in session run by the Senior Leaders and staff who were able to answer any questions students had about the elections. To be eligible to vote pupils must be registered by April 17 ; register by going to [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).



## Music Department Update



This term, members of the Trad. Band, who perform traditional Scottish music, have had the opportunity to work alongside a Music and Communities student from Aberdeen University to develop their performance skills. The group are looking forward to performing as part of the upcoming S3 Performance Evening on 28 March. The Performance Evening is a chance for S3 Music classes to take to the stage, as friends and family are invited to come and listen to some of the performances the classes have put together throughout the year.



### Date for the Diary

All music groups are currently busy rehearsing, working towards a performance at the annual Summer concert which is to be held on Thursday 15 June this session.

### Music Instructor Staffing Update

We are pleased to announce that we have appointed a replacement for our brass instructor, Mr Dowall, who left to start a new post closer to home in Dundee earlier this term. Mr Alexander Gregory will hopefully be starting with us after the Easter break. Until then, wind band will continue to run as normal on Tuesdays.

## Drama Oscar Night 2017



This year's Oscar Night was a fantastic celebration of student achievement in the Drama Department. Lewis Cameron, Lee Davidson and Lewis Poole had written a short murder mystery play which was performed by the Drama Club. A selection of classroom work was also presented, including Mask work, improvisation and iMovie trailers. S5 students performed their Higher Drama exam piece and a great selection of music from S3 students competed the full range of entertainment for the evening. The support team was made up of students

running front of house and backstage providing a full range of skills.

The students were very proud of all they achieved and decided that the money raised on the evening will be going to Alzheimer Scotland and Bucksburn Fundraisers.

## S2 Enterprise

Over the course of the year our S2 Enterprise students have been working very hard to set up and run a business - designing, making and selling the following products: Special Occasion Cards, Gift Bags, Gift Tags and Water Bottles with the house colour system.

The students have had stalls at various locations during the year and have sold their products at Parents' Evenings, the Christmas Fair and Aker Solutions (our business link). I am delighted to say that so far this year they have managed to raise almost £300 (a fantastic amount of money) and this money will be donated to 2 local charities which will be chosen by the pupils at the end of the course.

If you wish to purchase a water bottle they can be obtained from the Business Education Department for £3.50.

## Youth Achievement Awards

On 15 March, the S4 Youth Achievement Award Silver group visited Brimmond Primary School to run a raft building challenge for the Primary 7 pupils to take part in.

The visit to Brimmond was part of the YAA class's fourth and final challenge in fourth year. Each challenge consists of around 15+ hours of work, which all leads up to a final event. The first challenge was making and presenting a PowerPoint to the then P7s (now S1s) on their transition day. The second challenge was a Macmillan Coffee Morning which was held in the YAA classroom and was attended by the teachers and other members of staff. The third challenge was making and presenting a collection of different PowerPoints (about Bullying, Smoking, Drugs & Alcohol) to some of the S2 pupils.

The raft building challenge involved three groups that built their own rafts and then raced them to see which raft was the best. Once the race was done, the Primary 7 pupils and some members of Brimmond staff wrote about what things about the challenge they enjoyed the most, and if there was anything about it that they would change.



## Celebration Evening 2017

Last year we held our annual awards ceremony at Aker Solutions (one of our business partners) for the first time. We refreshed the ceremony and renamed it our Celebration Evening. This year we will hold this event at Aker Solutions on **Wednesday 7 June** at 7.30pm. This is earlier than in previous years as we hope that more of our leavers will be able to attend. This event will again be led by our students and will celebrate their successes and achievements. More information will follow closer to the event.

## Parent/Carer Digital Learning Survey 2016/17



We are hopeful that the use of Digital Learning and Mobile Technologies will allow your children to learn in different ways. In doing so, making learning deeper, more engaging, motivating and enjoyable for them. As we continue to develop new and innovative ways of using digital learning technologies at Bucksburn Academy we would like to capture the view of parents/carers on this topic. The survey can be found at the following address or by scanning the QR code: <https://goo.gl/4x28P1>

## Bucksburn Academy Book Club

The Student Book Club recently participated in 'The Scottish Teenage Book Prize' organised by the Scottish Book Trust. We read the three shortlisted books 'Black Cairn Point' by Claire McFall, 'Silver Skin' by Joan Lennon and 'The Last Soldier' by Keith Gray. Some students also created movie trailers and comic strips based on their top pick. In the end, it was a difficult decision to make but 'Black Cairn Point' was voted the 2017 winner.

We are now busy deciding on our final two books to read during the summer term. If you have any suggestions or would like to join the book club, we meet Monday lunchtime in the library.

## Football Update



The U13s finished their season recently ending up with an impressive record of played 12, won 8, lost 4. All the students did very well in representing the school in a positive manner and are looking forward to improving next season.

Meanwhile our U15 team made it to the final of the Gerrard Cup. They were beaten by a very strong Hazlehead Academy team but played well, showed great team spirit and scored the goal of the game.

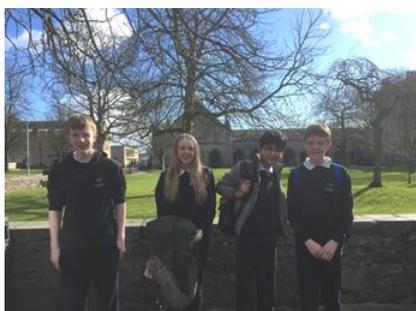


Our Senior team have also made it to the final of the Presidents Cup where they will take on Cults Academy on 28 March. Good luck to them and well done on reaching the final.

Finally, football continues to thrive in the Wing, thanks to Mr Davidson's coaching and they will be playing a local derby against a Dyce Academy team, also on 28 March.

Thanks to all the staff, volunteers and senior pupils who have given up their time this season to support all of our football teams across the school and provide these opportunities to our pupils.

## UK Maths Challenge



Adi and Dylan (S1) and Hannah and Baillie (S2) represented the school at the regional final for the UK Maths Trust Team Challenge. They worked together on a selection of group challenges and were placed fourth overall out of the 15 schools that took part. Students work with a teacher from a different school and we were delighted to receive some glowing feedback on how our group performed and represented their school.

## S1 Parents Back to School Maths Event

This term saw the Maths department run their first ever Back to School Maths event for parents of S1 pupils. Parents had a very hands-on experience to find out about how Maths is delivered in S1, to gain an understanding of the Maths curriculum in S1 and how they can support their children in developing their Maths skills. Parent evaluations of the event were very positive and we hope to continue to run this event in the future based on the great feedback.



## Wing Open Afternoon

Towards the end of term we held another successful Open Afternoon where parents and carers of our Wing students were invited to the school to shadow their children in their classes. This is a great way of sharing the learning our students experience with their parents and carers, build relationships with home and school and allow parents to network with each other. Also invited this time were the students and parents who will be joining us after the Summer holidays.

## ASN 6 Looking After the Environment



As part of their National 2 units, Environmental Issues and Looking After Animals, ASN 6 class did a litter pick along the Old Deeside Railway Line from Duthie Park to South Anderson Drive.

The students worked very hard and did a fantastic job, collecting six full bags of litter. Well done!

## Work Experience

The Wing had a very successful work experience week from 6 - 10 March. We had students on a variety of placements including working in retail, transport, building, childcare, motor vehicles and hairdressing. The students learned a lot about themselves and the world of work whilst on their placements. To help give Senior students who stayed in school during the week a taster of the world of work, we ran a bookshop and café and organised a number of other tasks such as cleaning the minibuses, window cleaning and sewing. We had a special assembly in celebration of our work experience where each student was awarded a personalised certificate. Many thanks to all our staff in what was a very busy but rewarding week and to the external work placements and the Work Experience Unit for their continued support.

Meanwhile, our S3 students were all given the opportunity of a work experience placement during the week, 13-17 March. Every student took advantage of this and took part. We have already received very positive feedback from students and employers and there has been positive engagement across the year group. Our students had placements with Human Resources, Physiotherapy, Dentistry, Primary Schools, Libraries, Universities, Charities and Local Businesses, to name just a few. The students will now work on their S3 Profile giving them the chance to reflect on the benefits this experience gave them.

## French Word Wizard Semi Final

Bucksburn Academy was represented at the semi-final of the SCILT World Wizard spelling competition by Scott Manson in S1. The event was held at the University of Aberdeen and contestants had to successfully spell as many words as possible in the foreign language in one minute.

Scott managed a very impressive 15 words and we are now waiting to find out if he has qualified for the National Final.



## House Tokens



The House Tokens initiative we have introduced this session has been generating a lot of interest and competition. At the end of each week every praise postcard that is issued is converted into a House token which is added to the House containers in the foyer. The Senior Management Team also carry a supply of tokens that they are able to hand out to students they see exemplifying the school's vision and values out of class time and at break and lunch time. At the end of the term these will be counted up and will contribute to the House Cup which is awarded at the Celebration ceremony at the end of term.

## Staffing Update

As many of you will know Mr Dixon, one of Depute Head Teachers, will be leaving us at the end of this term to take up a new post at The Gordon Schools, Huntly. We wish him all the best in his new job. I am delighted to say we have appointed Mr Thom Sherrington as his replacement. Mr Sherrington comes to us from Hazlehead Academy and will start with us on 24 April. This will mean the following changes to Year Head responsibilities from that date:

Mr A Duncan	Year Head for S5/S6
Mr T Sherrington	Year Head for S3/S4
Mr T Simpson	Acting Year Head for S2
Mrs F Stephen	Acting Year Head for S1

Mr Ewing, Principal Teacher for Pupil Support, Ecosse House, will also be leaving us temporarily as he relocates to Canada for 23 months. However, I am pleased to say that Mrs Elaine Law will take over as Principal Teacher for Pupil Support for Ecosse from the start of the new term for the next 23 months. This means the following:

Mrs Z Birnie	PT Pupil Support – Caledonia
Mr F McLachlan	PT Pupil Support – Scotia
Ms M Shewan	PT Pupil Support – Alba
Mrs E Law	Acting PT Pupil Support – Ecosse

## Senior Phase Gear Up for Exams



Now is the time that our S4/5 & 6 students are completing their internal assessments, assignments and getting stuck into the revision. S4 and S5 recently had presentations from Tree of Knowledge to provide some extra motivation in the run up to exams and get them thinking about how to bring a growth mindset to the challenges they will face over the next couple of months. Many of our teachers offer drop in sessions for some last minute advice and support and all of our S4 students recently received a study pack with some advice on preparation and putting together a revision timetable.

We wish them all the best for the exams.

## Dates for Your Diary

ASN Wing New Pupil Transition Evening	Tuesday 28 March 2017
S4-6 Live Reports Issued	Wednesday 29 March 2017
Term Ends	Friday 31 March 2017
Term Begins	Tuesday 18 April 2017
May Day Holiday	Monday 1 May 2017
Inservice Day	Tuesday 2 May 2017
SQA Exams Begin	Tuesday 2 May 2017
Study Leave Begins	Wednesday 3 May 2017
S3 Live Reports Issued	Friday 5 May 2017
S1 Reports Issued	Friday 19 May 2017
S3 into S4 Induction	Monday 29 and Tuesday 30 May 2017
New Timetable Starts (New S2-S4)	Wednesday 31 May 2017
S5/6 Induction	Thursday 1 June and Friday 2 June 2017
SQA Exams End	Friday 2 June 2017
New Timetable Starts (S5/6)	Monday 5 June 2017
Awards Ceremony	Wednesday 7 June 2017
School Sports	Tuesday 13 June 2017
P7 Transition Days	Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 June 2017
P7 Parents' Evening	Wednesday 14 June 2017
Summer Concert	Thursday 15 June 2017
ASN Wing BBQ	Wednesday 21 June 2017
ASN Wing Awards Ceremony	Thursday 29 June 2017
Term Ends	Friday 30 June 2017