

Peterhead Academy Newsletter



21st December 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been another fast paced term where pupils have been working hard in their subjects. Seniors are feeling the pressure as January exams are looming and so it is good that they will have some time to relax during the Christmas break. On behalf of the school, I thank you as parents/carers for ensuring that your child has good attendance and that they are keeping up to date with their classwork. We continue as a school to focus on improving exam results and this has always to be priority number one. Staff do, however, offer a wide range of other opportunities and you will see from the news items below that there are a number of clubs and activities that pupils can take part in. On behalf of the staff at Peterhead Academy, we wish you a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Achievements/Events:

ROV Challenge:



Our new team of Blue Toon Rovers are busy building their ROV for this session's competition. They will use the experience gained by the group from last year and we wish them all the best in 2016's event.

Career Ready Launch Event:



We have a number of senior pupils involved in Career Ready. Pupils attended a Launch Event earlier in the term at the Beach Ballroom.

It is a UK wide charity that links schools and colleges with employers, helping to prepare young people for the world of work. Pupils are provided with a mentor and are given a work placement during the summer term.

We had great success last year with Calum Christie winning an award for best student.

Active Schools:



Our Active Schools Coordinator had a busy year last session and she plans to continue to build on successes and work with our PE staff as well as Community Learning and Development. Pupils will be working towards their Sports Leader award and others will be taking part in Y-Dance. Active Schools also arrange for sports men and women to attend the school to inspire youngsters and encourage them to make healthy choices.

Swimming:

Caitlin Davies, Briony Rollo and Mark Campbell had great success in November's ND Grand Prix in Inverness. They achieved an array of personal bests and Mark came home with a silver for the 50 m breast stroke and Caitlin achieving a third place in the finals of the freestyle event.

Caitlin then attended the Scottish National Short Course 2015 in Edinburgh where she was chosen to represent the City of Aberdeen Swim Team. The team won the 200m Free relay claiming a new Scottish Junior Record.

The work and dedication to reach top level swimming is immense and so a huge well done to Caitlin, Briony and Mark this term.



Charity Committee:

Sadly, one of our S6 pupils, Emma Sim, passed away after a lengthy illness. Staff and pupils were devastated by the news and their hearts went out to Emma's friends and family. The Charity Prefect Committee decided to raise money in aid of the Brain Tumour Charity. They held a quiz night which made over £1500 and had a day where pupils could wear Emma's favourite colours of blue or green. Pupils continued to donate and a staggering £3310.15 has been raised. Well done to all who helped to organise for this worthy cause.

We also raised funds for Save the Children on Friday 18th December by taking part in Wear a Christmas Jumper Day. An impressive £510.55 was made.



Thorpe Molloy Art Competition:



A huge well done to David Buchan from 1st year who won a Certificate of Excellence award at this year's Thorpe Molloy art competition. David had to submit a piece of artwork depicting his future aspirations, which is to become a geography teacher! His work is currently on display until mid January in the foyer of the A&E wing at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, along with the winners from the other Aberdeenshire and city schools.

Children's University:



From next term, the academy and a number of our cluster primary schools will be participating in Children's University. This is a scheme that recognises pupils' efforts and achievements in learning activities done outwith school time. Pupils record, in a special Passport to Learning, the learning time they do at a range of activities, for example school clubs, local organisations and places of interest.

Every time pupils take part in a learning experience at a validated learning destination, they earn credits leading to a graduation ceremony at Aberdeen University in June 2016. It is **not** about preparing young people for university; it is about giving all children, no matter their academic ability, the chance to develop skills and broaden their horizons. More information to parents of S1 pupils will follow next term.

Christmas Bake Off:

The annual Teachers versus Pupils Christmas Bake Off saw the pupils yet again clinch the honours. Despite some dedicated decorating skills from Depute Head Mr Morrison and Art teacher Miss Grant the skills of the pupils outperformed the teachers to win the spoils yet again.

Also on display were a selection of pantomime themed cupcakes and an impressive display of Snow White themed cupcakes from Social Subjects teacher, Mrs McNeil, won the competition. Guests were also treated to a selection of Christmas songs from the school choir.



Trip to the Cake and Bake Show :



Members of the Peterhead Academy Baking Club recently visited the Cake and Bake Show in Edinburgh. They were fortunate to meet with several of the Great British Bake Off stars including finalist Ian who took the time to sign their books and answer their questions. His top tip for the young bakers was “Go For It”. On display at the show were many wonderful cake creations - all themed around children’s stories – which is sure to give the bakers some inspiration for their forthcoming bakes.

North East Schools Cross Country:

Peterhead Academy are the current holders of the secondary shield. With 2 races already completed this series so far it is looking like Ellon Academy may give us a run for our money this year.

The next race takes place on Saturday 23rd January 2016 at Catto Park - we are hoping for a good turn out from our pupils.

The race is open to pupils in all year groups and registration will take place at 10am at Catto Park.



Christmas Pupil/Staff Panto:

Many thanks to all who took part in the pupil/staff Panto, Cinders on Friday 18th December. Not only did it show staff team spirit, it also allowed many of us to work with pupils outwith the normal classroom setting. It was open to all at lunchtime and then S1s and S2s had a period out of class to attend a performance. It was a light hearted way to end the term and those involved enjoyed the experience. A special thanks to Mrs Adam who directed the show and kept calm when I stated the day before that I still hadn’t memorised my lines.



Poetry Competition :

Well done to Kimberley Gray who entered two poems at a poetry evening held at Better Read in Ellon. She was the only Peterhead pupil to attend and received a Commended for her poem, 'Blood on Snow' and Highly Commended for her one titled 'Change'. She now plans to enter more poetry competitions in future. Well done!

Farewell to Mr Strachan :

Mr Strachan was not only a pupil of Peterhead Academy but has been a loyal and much respected member of staff for the past 41 years and 2 months. After such service, he well deserves a long and happy retirement. Mr Strachan started his teaching career in the Maths department in 1974 and then into History shortly after. In 1980, he became Principal Teacher of Guidance where he has supported pupils in the most dedicated fashion ever since.

He has some fantastic memories including ski trips to Italy, Switzerland and St Moritz, heading up the Prefects' Charity through the 80s and 90s, being taken on a helicopter flight over the North East, seeing one of our pupils, Lawrie Philips win the Scottish Schools' Golf Championship, managing the legendary First Eleven football team 2003-4, an epic yacht trip to Stonehaven, the Belgian football trip, Rock Challenge trips to York and Grimsby and Activities trips to Edinburgh, Old Trafford and Alton Towers. As you can see, Mr Strachan's commitment to the school has been so much more than simply being in the classroom.

He says he has worked with the finest of colleagues and has loved being part of the lives of the best pupils anywhere. We wish him all the very best in his retirement. He will be sorely missed.

Information:

SQA Website

Past paper and exemplar questions are available on the SQA website which will be extremely useful for pupil in our Senior Phase in order to practice for the January exams. There are also a large number of help clubs that pupils can attend at lunch time and after school where they can receive further help in preparation for their exams. Please encourage them to attend in order to prepare them for the next few months ahead.

Attainment

Linked closely to attainment is attendance. Statistics show that our attendance is up on the same time last year and we continue to give the message that the number one priority at school is studying for subjects. If attendance dips below 85%, then taking part in all wider curricular activities are put on hold until absences improve. This allows for pupils to concentrate on their subjects and not spend time on the additional aspect of the curriculum.

Dates for your Diary:

Monday 11th January: Option Booklets available S2-S5

Wednesday 13th January: Final UCAS deadline

Monday 18th to Friday 29th January: S4/5/6 Exam diet

Monday 25th + Tuesday 26th January : S3 vaccinations

Thursday 28th January: S2 Parents' Evening + Information Evening 4.30-7pm

Wednesday 3rd February: Senior Phase Information Evening 7pm

Friday 12th to Wednesday 17th February: Mid Term Break

Thursday 18th February: S3 Parents' Evening 4.30-7pm

Wednesday 2nd March: S4/5/6 reports issued

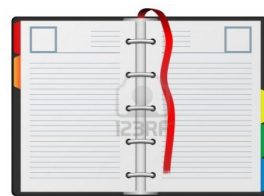
Wednesday 23rd March: S2 reports issued

Friday 25th March: Good Friday - Holiday

Monday 30th March: S3 reports issued

Tuesday 29th March: Senior Prizegiving

Monday 4th April: start of Easter break



Further information can be accessed: www.peterheadacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk

On behalf of the Peterhead Academy staff, I wish to thank you for your continued support of the school and hope that you have a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Yours faithfully

Shona Sellers
Head Teacher