

# Portlethen Academy

2012 Christmas Issue

17th December 2012

## A word from the Head Teacher

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It seems that no time at all has passed since we returned from the summer holidays, yet so many fantastic things have taken place in The Academy throughout the session.

These activities range from subject focused ones through to interdisciplinary work to the achievements of groups and individuals whether in dance, sport, music or other activities.

This newsletter gives you a flavour of the activities that have taken place this session and showcases the efforts of pupils and staff who have worked

together so effectively, for example, to produce this Newsletter.

Underpinning all of the achievements of our young people has been a focus on raising attainment so that they can be successful and compete in the job, training or further education market when they leave school. Our staff continue to work hard to prepare the new courses for the Curriculum for Excellence Senior Phase; they are placing an emphasis on delivering the best courses possible for our young people.

In conclusion, may I wish

you and your family an enjoyable festive period and look forward to celebrating more success in 2013.



Neil Morrison

## The International Dimension

In June, the school was presented with a national etwinning award, for the project 'ETC The Finale'.

This project also won the Hungarian cooperative learning award.

In the autumn we were awarded The International School Award; we have now been given this award three times. This award reflects all the work that goes on across the school: school trips, penpals, and the many activities associated with etwinning and Comenius.

The staff involved with this work include Mrs Hill, Mrs Scott, Ms Matheson, Mr Cowie, Ms Bone, Mr Findlay (who is now in Hong Kong), Mr Rinchey, Ms Roberts, Mrs Baxter, Mrs Sorrie, Ms Dickson and Ms Scotland.

The ISA was awarded for work done over the previous 12 months. The work done has to include a huge range of activities to qualify - guidelines are strict and we have to show that as many depart-

ments as possible are involved; and all ages and stages

Last, but not least, just after the October Holidays we received news that we were the runners up in a prestigious International Award called Link2Learn awarded by HSBC. On 16 November, Ms Scotland and Miss Dickson travelled to London to pick up the award and a cheque for £1,500 at the presentation ceremony. Ms Scotland gave a presentation on behalf of Mr Morrison. Her

presentation was about the school's work and the importance of having international links. She stressed the importance of schools having an international perspective to make them aware of the global economy. Interestingly, Professor Diamond of The



University of Aberdeen

## Expressive Art

The Art, Drama and Music subjects are now working altogether in a new Expressive Arts Faculty. Mrs Alison Sorrie, Principal Teacher of Faculty (Acting) said 'Our aim is to not only raise attainment but to lead all pupils into a richer creative experience

The Expressive Arts Faculty are delighted to announce that they will be working from a brand new script 'Drawing Blood' by playwright and director Anne Ross Muir as part of our Drama syllabus. The play looks at the early life of a North East painter – James McBey. This is very exciting news indeed for our school

to be the first in Scotland presenting this as part of the new CfE Curriculum

S4 Standard Grade Drama pupils enjoyed a marvellous two-hour *Blood Brothers* Workshop prior to attending a matinee performance of the show. Professional actor Danny Taylor (Our Sammy), led an active, informative and entertaining session. Our pupils were enthralled by his craft and he was equally impressed by the calibre of our young people. He ended with a Q&A session which was a valuable and insightful end to this very worthwhile experience.

Over seventy pupils from S1-6 were involved in our recent Christmas Concert which show-cased a range of the Academy's musical talents. The audience participation, always an enjoyable part of any concert, was well received. The programme cover was designed by Bryony Kemp 2D - a Thorpe Molloy Exhibition finalist. Festive mince pies were enjoyed by the audience as they viewed the creative talents of the Portlethen Academy art students in the BIG ART EXHIBITION in the foyer.

## Comenius

Recently, as part of the Comenius "Trools" projects a group of nine Sixth year student enjoyed a week's stay in Bordeaux accompanied with Ms Scotland and Mrs Baxter. The project, that has been running for a number of years now, maintains a focus on international communication between students from Scotland, France and Austria.

The group attended the French student's school alongside the Austrian students where they embraced the

culture and were immersed in the native language. Portlethen students were welcomed into their everyday

**"[The project] maintains a focus on international communication between students from Scotland, France and Austria"**

school routine — our students even found themselves famous as they featured in the local newspaper!

Our sixth year pupils are now eagerly awaiting the re-union of the tri-nations on Scottish soil in May this year.



## Active Schools and PE department

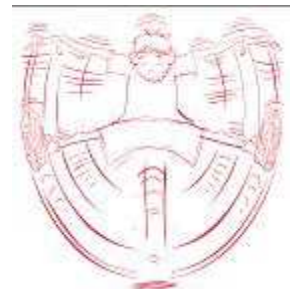
Term 2 has seen the continuation of the lunchtime Zumba and Boxing clubs. We are now starting to see regular faces every week, which is great! Carina Bristow-Fakas (Zumba instructor) and Andy Craig (boxing instructor) come regularly and bring their expertise to the school every week. Carina even takes song requests! The classes are open to all pupils and staff in the academy and these sessions count towards a point on your "Fit For Girls" card. 10 points mean you receive a free t-shirt. Classes are FREE to Portlethen Academy Sports Association (PASA) members.

Also running in the Academy is the "Level 2 - Community Sports Leaders Award." This is a leadership qualification which involves a minimum of ten hours of independent leading in the community and regular practice at leading activity sessions during curricular time. There are 8 enthusiastic Sports Leaders this year hoping to gain their CSL qualification by the summer. This term they are keeping busy running lessons for Primary 1 pupils at Fishermoss Primary School.

The Interhouse events and clubs

have been well supported, look out for the next activities and competitions.

If you would like any more information on these or any other Active Schools activity, please contact Erica Jones – [Erica.jones@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Erica.jones@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)



## Football Update

Under 13's:

The first year team had a strong start to the season, advancing into the quarter finals of both local cup competitions and qualifying for the top division. Since October the team have progressed into the semi final of the Green Final trophy by virtue of a strong win over Albyn. They will meet Hazlehead in the semi final who recently knocked the team out of the NE of Scotland Trophy 7-6 after extra time at the quarter final stage.

Under 15's:

Last session's double cup winners had a slow start to the season, losing narrowly in their opening three games before they finally won a difficult fixture in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Scottish Shield away to Peterhead. The National competition is now the team's only hope of success this season. They recently advanced into the 4<sup>th</sup> round after beating Charleston Academy from Inverness 7-2 at home. A trip to Fife to play Buckhaven or Kirkcaldy High School in the next round awaits the Under 15s team.

Seniors:

Portlethen entered a senior football team in the local and national competitions for the first time in several years, this session. Despite starting strongly, winning their opening three games convincingly, three successive narrow defeats in cup competitions have ended their season.



## Art meets Politics in the Geography Department!



For two days in November, the Geography Department was involved in a project called "Power Politics" run by the Living Earth Foundation. It uses art to raise awareness about environmental issues. A group of S1 Geography pupils and two S6 pupils from the Art Department joined forces with visiting artist Martin Ayres to produce learning resources for school children in Port Harcourt, the "oil capital" of Nigeria. They came to Portlethen because, just like Port Harcourt, the oil industry has had a big impact. The group were asked to show the pupils in Nigeria what Portlethen is like.

Martin Ayres leads the arts company "Caged Beastie" ([www.cagedbeastie.com](http://www.cagedbeastie.com))

Claire Needler is from the Living Earth Foundation. ([www.livingearth.org.uk](http://www.livingearth.org.uk))

## Movember

Recently, teachers in the school – namely Dr. Main and Dr. Hill – participated in the Movember initiative. This scheme aims to raise money for men's health charities by encouraging the participants to grow their moustaches out, with varying degrees of hilarity.

Dr. Main has been doing Movember for two years now and has personal reasons for growing his "Mo". He raised just shy of £300, an admirable achievement! Dr. Main said he enjoyed growing the moustache but his wife was not fond of it, apart from its unappealing appearance, it was itchy.

Dr. Hill, on the other hand, grew his

as part of a group, who made approximately £3000! However, he too found that his wife was not a fan and also said it was itchy.

Worldwide, the charity has made over £77 million: all of its profits were given to men's health charities.



## MycroTyco

Teams of business management students grouped together in their classes and came up with business ideas they could use to make money. The money raised will be given to the organisation 'Wild Hearts'. This organisation gives loans to entrepreneurs in deprived countries who cannot afford to develop their business ideas. This gives these people the opportunity to get their business up and running before returning their loan. Each group came up with different ways to make money. One group held a guess the bear's birthday competition and sold milkshakes whilst another set up a carwash and sold Christmas trees.



## XL Club

S4xl Club had another successful event selling handmade products at the Christmas Craft Creation Evening on 8th November. The club is continuing to sell an attractive range of 'Gift Ideas' to staff around the school. The pupils have produced cook books, cookies in a jar, photo frames, Xmas decorations, pot pourri, gift bags and cards for all occasions.



## Eco Day

Portlethen Academy hosted another successful Eco Day on 21<sup>st</sup> November with the theme of raising awareness of fair trade being a focus. S3 RMPs pupils organised activities and workshops for primary pupils to enjoy as part of the day. Activities included chocolate tasting, games and even a fair trade meditation session.

Pupils who work for the Fair Trade Shop in school also assisted. In the afternoon local councillors Carl Nelson and Alison Evison together with Alex Reid from Hydrasun took part in a panel discussion with senior students studying Modern Studies.



## Pantomime

It's that time of year again (oh yes it is!) when committed pupils and staff at Portlethen Academy are working enthusiastically to prepare for this year's Pantomime.

Over 100 pupils signed up to get involved on this year's production of Peter Pan. Groups have been meeting at lunchtimes to design and make scenery and costumes, dancers have been choreographing and learning routines, the technical

group, guided by an experienced 6<sup>th</sup> year pupil are working on lighting, sound & special effects, the talented cast have been rehearsing after school and a class of senior pupils in the Art Department have created costumes and props.

The show will take place on Monday 17<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm in the Academy. Tickets £5 or £3 concessions will be available from

the school library from the beginning of December. Everyone invited, so come along and join in the fun!



## S1 Shoebox Appeal

Once again, Portlethen Academy's S1 pupils, have come up trumps with 65 shoeboxes crammed with Xmas goodies for the Blythswood Charity. Well done S1s!



## Badminton

The badminton club is enjoying one of its most successful years. The club has attracted a wide range of new members who come along on Fridays after school to develop their playing skills, participate in the ladder league and play in competitions.

The ladder league has attracted one of its most competitive challenges in years: the top spot alternates between Glen Marsay S5, Jack Browning S2 and Andrew Duncan S1. The most successful girl, in fifth spot at the moment, is Rosie Craig S3. It is difficult to predict who will ultimately win the league as it is so tight this year (not too dissimilar to this season's SPL football league).

The club held its annual Christmas Doubles Tournament recently. A large number of pairs entered the tournament. It was a closely fought contest, but eventually Reagan Scott S5 and Andrew Duncan S1 came out on top as champions.



On the left is Reagan Scott and on the right is Andrew Duncan.

### Dates for your diaries

Monday 7 Jan	Start of term
Thursday 10 Jan	Supporting young people through exams. An evening looking at what parents can do to support their child.
Wed 14 Jan	Young Philanthropy Initiative Grand Final
Thurs 17 Jan	S3 Choice Information Evening
Monday 21 Jan	S2 Choice Information Evening
Mnd 28 Jan – Thu 7 Feb	S5/6 Prelims
Fri 8 - Mon 11Feb	Mid Term holiday
Tues 12 – Wed13 Feb	In Service days
Thurs 21 Feb	S5/6 Choice Information Evening
Friday 29 March	Last day of term

The full school calendar can be accessed on the school website  
<http://www.portlethenacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/>

### Road Safety

The dark winter months are always a dangerous time and we have briefed all our young people on safety in and around the school site and on their way to and from school. Lunchtimes can also be an issue with the sun low in the sky and glare reducing drivers vision. We ask that you reinforce these messages at home. When you are dropping off or picking up your child we ask that you be conscious of the risks. We also request that you don't enter the playground or staff car park, but should drop off pupils in Downies Road or Bruntland Road.

### Uniform

We see uniform as a key part of the ethos of Portlethen Academy as it helps set the tone for a workplace where we have high standards. The overwhelming majority of our pupils wear uniform and it is great to see them presenting a positive impression when we have visitors to the school or they visit elsewhere. A number of visitors from industry, the council and the public have commented on how great our pupils look. On a connected Health and Safety angle our role as a community facility makes the uniform all the more important. It allows us to quickly tell the difference between our pupils and visitors to the site. We ask that all pupils wear the uniform and we are grateful for the support of parents in this. The school uniform is

Boys - Black trousers, White shirt, Black knitwear, School tie, Black shoes

Girls - Black skirt or trousers, White blouse, Black knitwear, School tie, Black shoes