

Ellon Academy Newsletter

Summer 2013



Brought to you by **Pressgang**
Editor: **Jono McDermott, 5M1**



Are We Getting A New School?

Yes We Are!

Last week school staff and guests marked a milestone in the development of the new Ellon Academy Community Campus. The event was marked by the contribution by Primary 5 representatives from each of the local primary schools. These pupils will form the new intake when the school opens in August 2015. The Rector, Mr McKay, marked the occasion with the following speech.....

“Honoured guests, councillors, colleagues, ladies and gentleman and pupils from the Ellon cluster schools, welcome to our ceremony which marks the official start of the building of the new Ellon Academy Community Campus.

I was appointed to the post of Rector at Ellon Academy six years ago and during that time the question I am most asked by; parents, pupils and staff is “when is the new school being built?” I am delighted that Patrick Collins and his wife Maria are both here today as they both are not only huge supporters of the school, but six years ago Patrick was the chair of the then, School Board and he made it his mission to get us a new school. Well Paddy, today is the day. I will never forget the phone call from Alex Salmond one afternoon after we got the go ahead – he said “Tim that’ll keep that man of yours happy!”

Over the past two years, I have been extremely fortunate to be at the very heart of the design process of the new community campus and I am confident that the wide ranging consultation across Aberdeenshire, Scotland and beyond will ensure that the building, teaching areas and community facilities will meet the needs of both young and ‘the more mature’ for many years to come. I would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people today. There is no doubt in my mind that the project would not have been as successful as it has been without the support of; our local councillors, the strong leadership of our Director of Education, Learning and Leisure, Maria Walker, the hard work of our Aberdeenshire Council Architect and Design team and of course our dedicated sponsor, Wilf Weir.

Ellon Academy Community Campus

Perhaps most importantly, I would like to thank the young people who have contributed to this project. This has been done through such activities as the 'river of words' project co-ordinated through the English Faculty where words will be etched into the swimming pool glass viewing area.

The 'hand to hand' project which will form part of the stonework at the school and community entrances and the Art department who have worked closely with our artist in residence, Mary Bourne, to ensure many cultural and geographical features from our local community are incorporated into the design of the new building. In addition whole school consultation exercises with our pupils on **really sensitive educational issues such as..... school toilets** has brought comments such as "gads" and "do we really need toilets in the school? or when reviewing costs, "do we really need to waste money on loo paper?"

Finally, as we move forward today and the design process transfers from the drawing board into bricks and mortar, I would have to say, I am indebted to you all and extremely proud to be standing here before you as part of Aberdeenshire Council, the Education Learning and Leisure Service and Rector of Ellon Academy. Thank-you for your support! "



Wider Achievement Programme

S1 Camp

Every year WAP - the Wider Achievement Programme - offers first and second year pupils a very different learning experience. I was lucky enough to be one of fifty-one pupils attending First Year Camp as part of WAP. On the Tuesday morning, everyone gathered in Room 101, before loading the tents, our belongings and finally ourselves on to the buses. Once everything was ready, we set out for the Badaguish Outdoor Centre. We sang our way to Aberlour where we stopped at the park to have lunch and enjoy the sunshine; Mr McClarence impressed us by making it to the top of the climbing frame but, to everyone's amusement, he tumbled off the balance beam!

At Badaguish, we set up the marquee, stored our things, then headed to the Cairngorm Mountain Ranger Centre. There we met John, one of the centre volunteers, who showed us how to keep safe in the Scottish hills. This was extremely important as, in this year alone, thirteen people have already lost their lives in the Cairngorms. John gave us a tour of the centre and explained in detail the important work they do. We saw the centre's radio room where rescues are planned and coordinated; we saw equipment ranging from ice axes to crampons and avalanche probes; we sat in the rescue vehicles and learned how difficult it was to stretcher a casualty off the mountain manoeuvring it indoors and out complete with 'casualty'.

Once back at the campsite, Mr Cruickshank demonstrated how to erect a tent. We worked in groups of three to set them up; it was a lot harder than it looked. Nevertheless, everyone had a tent up before we sat down to dinner. Afterwards, we had some free time to explore the campsite and found the rope rings that spanned a small burn running through the site. Those who failed to swing safely across plunged into the freezing cold water:- and I was one of those people! Although cold for some time after, it was good fun. Later on we all took part in potted sports, before turning in for the night.

The next morning, the early risers were lucky enough to watch twelve little ducklings scamper around the tents! After breakfast, everyone set off on a busy day of activities. We took to Loch Morlich on rafted-canoes, enjoyed archery and did our bit for conservation: planting new trees for The Cairngorm Mountain Ranger Centre or removing non-native trees at the Creag Meagaidh Reserve. Those travelling to the conservation activity on Mr Cruickshank's minibus were treated to his Funky Tunes!

After dinner, our evening activity this time was a scavenger hunt, which proved great fun. Before bed we toasted marshmallows and bananas on the barbecue.

After a late rise on Thursday, we packed up our tents and prepared to leave. First we made sure we conducted a full campsite tidy, leaving behind only footprints and taking only memories. On the way home, we stopped off at the park in Aberlour again and Mr Holding challenged the pupils to a game of rounders against the teachers! Sadly, the teachers won. But on Friday, we dried out the tents in the Deer Park and played lots more rounders. This time the pupils won!

Ask any of the pupils who attended First Year Camp this year and they will tell you it was an amazing experience and they would definitely do it again!



By Caitlin Walburn, 1K2

Let's hear it for Mrs Murdoch

Educational Supporter of the Year

Massive “Congratulations!” to our fantastic Librarian, Mrs Murdoch, who won the *Educational Supporter of the Year 2013 Award* at the *Scottish Education Awards* in June!

Mrs Murdoch, along with Rector, Mr McKay, and sixth year pupils, Jodie Joyce, Jono McDermott and Lauren Kyle, travelled to the Hilton Hotel in Glasgow, where they enjoyed a fantastic event and superb entertainment from well-known faces, including Ashley & Pudsey from *Britain's Got Talent*, and the ever-popular *Singing Kettle*.

The awards ceremony itself unfolded in spectacular fashion, with all from Ellon Academy crying out in sheer delight when Mrs Murdoch was announced as the winner. This award recognises Mrs Murdoch's outstanding work and the crucial role she plays in the life of the school.



At Ellon Academy, we are, of course, very grateful for Mrs Murdoch's outstanding work, not only in the Library, but throughout the entire school. This accolade reinforces the excellent contribution she makes. It affirms what we've always known: in Mrs Murdoch we have one in a million!

By Jono McDermott, 6M

S4 Work Experience

Work experience is a big part of S4 and Ellon Academy is one of very few schools in Aberdeenshire that gives pupils this type of opportunity. Pupils across S4 get the chance to have a closer look at potential career choices allowing them to make informed decisions about what they might want to do or study when they leave school. For my work experience, I decided to go to Methlick's Glenythan Vets, as I have always been keen to work with animals. However, I have to admit that when the day came, my excitement was also tinged with nerves and anxiety at having to work somewhere where I did not know anyone. Throughout the week, I was involved in a wide range of veterinary practice including operations! I went out to farms to deal with horses, cows and even goats. These daunting visits did not faze me though, as I was determined to help the vets and make a good impression. Veterinary practice does expose you to sad parts of life, but then there are always happy stories to balance the mood. At the end of my work experience, I have a greater appreciation of what it is like to work in a veterinary practice and feel it is something I could do, though I may yet change my mind!

A few weeks after my work experience visit, I was offered a 'Saturday' job at Glenythan Vets and this proves that if you work hard and show people how committed you are, you can be rewarded! Work experience is truly a brilliant opportunity for young people.

By Leona Anderson,
4M2

More on S4 Work Experience

Mrs Ewen, Work experience Co-ordinator worked closely with our Guidance Team and Aberdeenshire Council's Work Experience Unit to ensure that all but 28 of our new S4 pupils had a week's work experience from 27th May – 31st May inclusive. The pupils who did not go out on a work experience placement undertook our own in house work experience the "Boardroom Challenge" set by two local businesses, *The Chocolate Bar* and *Skin Deep Music School*. The 28 pupils who worked on the set tasks for 3 days and then presented their ideas to the two businesses, all worked very hard and came up with impressive ideas. Laura from the *Chocolate Bar* and Jane from *Skin Deep* were highly impressed with the final presentations.



We encourage pupils to do as much work experience as they can in their own time. If you are willing to have our pupils do a couple of hours of volunteer work experience in your business after school or at weekends or holiday times, please contact Mrs Hall on 01358 720715.

Ellon Academy Hosts the North East Business Week Lunch

We were asked to set up a business lunch here in Ellon Academy, on Tuesday 23rd April 2013, as part of a timetable of events for the *North East Business Week* running that week with the theme 'People Driving Growth'. The organisers: *Enterprise North East Trust*, *Federation of Small Businesses*, *Aberdeen Grampian Chamber of Commerce* and *Scottish Council for Development and Industry* asked *Aberdeenshire Council* to host an event focussing on how young people are preparing to move into the business world. Ellon Academy is a nationally recognised leader in this area so was chosen to host the lunch.

Guests were able to browse display stands manned by pupils and staff as well as listen to a presentation by our pupils on: "How schools prepare young people for work?" Then, we were delighted to welcome our keynote speakers Sir Moir Lockhead from *First Group* and Scott Wells from *BP* to deliver presentations on: "What businesses want from young people?" An optional tour of the school was available prior to this event for guests to see the school in action on a typical day. Many VIP guests attended including business leaders, politicians, Council officers and local college and university staff.

The school gained exceptionally positive feedback about our pupils and our how we prepare them for work in the evaluations submitted.

We are very grateful for the support of the Business community with our young people. Our next major events are the *Evening of Entertainment* on 27th September and our *Careers Convention* on 2nd October 2013. For further information, please contact Mrs Hall on 01358 720715.

Goodbye Mr Ritchie

“Once You’re Done, You’re Done!”

Ellon Academy has changed a lot over the past few decades. Most of us here, be it to learn or to teach, have not experienced the vast amount of these changes. However, forty years is a significant window over which to see most of these changes unfold. Many of the up and downgrades made over this time could be guessed at by most of us (moving buildings and the elimination of corporal punishment to name but a few) but the only staff member who has worked through them and is still here, is Mr Allan Ritchie. I recently interviewed our unforgettably unorthodox Head of Mathematics to reveal the extent of these changes, as well as the key points in Mr Ritchie’s career as a Mathematics teacher.

“So what changes to Ellon Academy have you experienced in your 40 year career?” I ask to start the interview. “Obviously a significant change was the move to a new building, and now we’re away to move buildings again. Also, I remember when there used to be a male and a female staff room. I have noticed a significant change to pupil dress: initially it was very smart, we had blazers and ties and the like; then it became more casual; and now it is much smarter again. Furthermore, away back when I started, there was detention and corporal punishment, now it’s moved away from that.

“Teaching is getting faster, faster and faster nowadays. The emphasis is now mainly placed on passing exams only, and I think it has significantly affected the quality of education. There are far more parents rushing to contact the school nowadays with concerns, and as soon as you see snow,” he adds with his signature humour, “we’re all sent home now. In the past we would have just put up with it!”

“One thing that has not changed is the pupils. They get a bad reputation. People nowadays will say, ‘Aren’t they awful, they’re terrible’ but it’s not true! There’re always challenging pupils, always have been since time immemorial, but as a whole, the pupils are just as nice, friendly and cooperative as they have always been. They are a real joy to work with.



Goodbye Mr Ritchie

“Finally, and this point is particularly important,” he stresses solemnly. “I remember the time when you could easily go to the canteen and buy a poke o’ chips. Now they winna sell you chips unless it’s an accompaniment to a specific meal!”

“What has been your most memorable experience at Ellon Academy?”

“My time working with the pupils,” Mr Ritchie replies, “and helping youngsters to reach their potential, both in Mathematics and their personal development.”

“What changes would you make to Ellon Academy?” I ask.

Quite clearly eager at the chance to air this point, Mr Ritchie immediately replies, “Well, firstly I would bring back the poke o’ chips in the canteen! I also feel I would close down the STA and create a better environment for the 6th years, as you can go in and they will be doing all manner of things, but very little studying. I would bring in more class teachers and reduce class sizes, which would provide more jobs for new teachers. I also think we need fewer supply teachers as there are a lot of them, and you wonder, there must be opportunities for permanent teachers.”

Moving on to his imminent leave, I ask if he has received any retirement presents.

“Well I don’t know what plans people might have as I’m not leaving ‘til summer. But there are a number of people who have given me gifts. I received a mug with “Hello Alan” written on it, as well as pictures of Fiona Bruce and Angela Merkel. I also got two butteries. An S5 boy admitted to it, and when asked why – I do like butteries but it’s a strange gift – he responded: “Well you always say that if we’re doing good work then we’re on a roll!” I also got numerous wrapped boxes of man sized tissues from one of my classes. Recently I also received a full colours tie along with a medal at sports day, watched the last Aberdeen game of the season from the director’s box and was given numerous boxes of chocolates, plus some malt whisky!”

“What do you plan to do after you leave?”

“I intend to spend a lot more time in music,” he tells me. “Recently at a local church I’ve taken up the position of organist, choir leader and musical director. So the time off should give me much more time to practise. Playing the organ is far harder than the piano! The piano only has one keyboard, as well as only having three foot pedals compared to the organ’s thirty. Also, you have to read three lines of music at once and be able to cope with two or three manuals. I plan on doing a lot of charity work also. I’m part of a recently formed group called “Two Plus One” - maybe because there are two females and myself; or two instrumentalists and one vocalist - who plan to visit old people’s homes (who I feel are often neglected nowadays) and play music for them. I also plan to help young homeless people and those newly out of prison who require support. You’ll notice I haven’t mentioned going back to the classroom as I feel, once you’re done, you’re done. However, it’s going to be very difficult when I come to the last week of teaching classes, although I look forward to my plans, which are challenges I’m going to enjoy, because they are so different.”

By Sean Duthie, 6K

Sports Day

Apparently this year, Sports Day was done a little differently than in previous years. However, as an S1 pupil, it was my first Sports Day at the Academy so I wasn't too sure of what to expect. In the morning there were many events going on for those who had qualified for them. Morning races included the 800metres run, along with field sports in shot putt, long jump and javelin. The main events got underway after an early lunch when the whole school headed down to Deer Park.

The Opening Ceremony featured a contemporary dance to *Read All About It, Part III*, by the Ellon Academy Dance Company and seemed to set the tone for a great afternoon. Field and track events followed at a fast pace while non participating pupils cheered on friends as they battled for House points. Amid the scenes of frantic endeavour, pupils queued to have their face painted in aid of World Challenge, stepped up to 'beat the goalie', tested their strength with the Army in pulling a Land Rover or took advantage of the burger stall manned by a very colourfully attired Mr Winterbottom.



Numerous fund raising stalls were set up a little further from the events and included giant Jenga, an enormous Twister and a space hopper race set out in lanes. Close by, Mr Campins demonstrated Taekwondo while the Church stall catered for those requiring tea and light refreshments.

When the dust finally settled and the medals were handed out, Cheyne House emerged victorious with grand total of 564 points – a mere ten points ahead of McDonald in second. Sports Day was rounded off by another fine performance, this time a cheerleading number by the EA Jetz.

By Caitlin Walburn, 2K2



Overall Sports Results 2013

1 st	Cheyne	564
2 nd	McDonald	554
3 rd	Keith	533
4 th	Sinclair	516
5 th	Forbes	376

More Pictures From Sports Day

Police Cadets helped supervise new games – pupils enjoyed giant Jenga



**Royal Signals Army Reserve Unit,
Aberdeen helping the school**



(Now recruiting . Phone 01224 705 304)

**Aberdeen Football Club Junior
Team coaches speak to pupils**



Prizegiving...

Ellon Academy hosted two prizegiving ceremonies in June, one for the Junior School and one for the Senior School to celebrate pupils' successes. Ex pupil Grant Campbell gave a powerful speech about his personal journey and triumph as a pupil of Ellon Academy with Asperger Syndrome who now has a 2:1 degree from University of Aberdeen. Awards were presented by Grant for academic success, effort, volunteer work, Citizenship, Enterprise and many more categories. Ex Head Boy Andrew Strachan and ex Head Girl Molly Lyall gave impressive and emotional speeches about their views of Ellon Academy. Mr McKay delivered a rousing speech about all the incredible work Ellon Academy pupils and staff have done throughout the year and their amazing achievements.

A huge amount of organisation goes into these events so a massive thank you goes to Miss Anderson, PT Geography, who organised and co-ordinated both events.

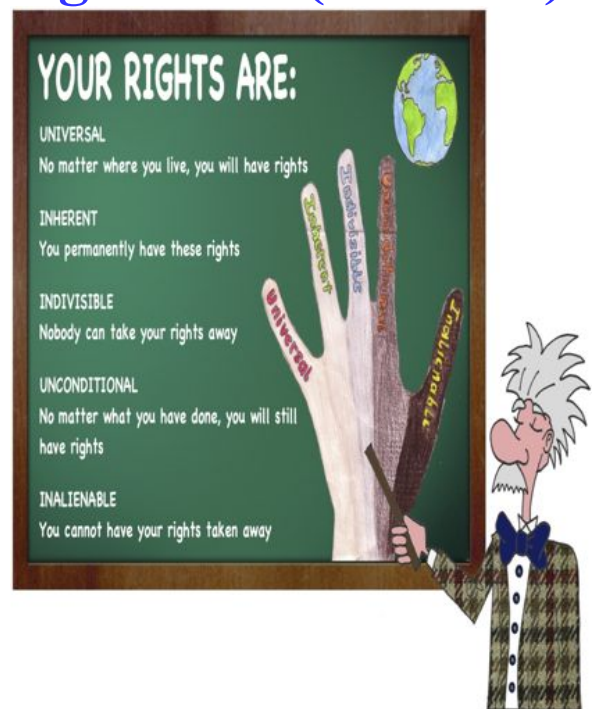


United Nations Rights Respecting School (UNRRS)

As part of our efforts to ensure that we remain a 'Rights Respecting School' a group of senior and junior pupils launched a poster competition to explain what exactly is meant by '*your rights are inalienable, universal, unconditional, inherent and indivisible*'. The group had an excellent response with over seventy submissions accepted. It was so popular that the UNRRS Committee couldn't choose an overall winner and, as such, two excellent entries from Callum Loughhead and Leanne Houston were combined to produce the final poster.

The finalised design has now been shown to all year groups at Assemblies and Callum and Leanne were presented with their prizes at their Assembly last week.

The poster has now been copied and laminated for all classrooms. Janitorial staff will put them up for the start of the new term.



Make Your Voice Heard!

Ellon Academy encourages our all pupils to be involved in real and active participation in decision making in school and the local communities. In order to achieve this, a number of **pupil elections** have taken place to select representatives for the “pupil voice” groups. Any pupil can raise issues or present ideas via these groups to the Senior Management Team (SMT) in Ellon Academy or the Community Councils of the various local communities our pupils live in. Pupils should make full use of their right to be heard.

Every register class in school has voted recently for their **Class Representatives**. These meet as a team with the DHT linked to their year group to represent their year group’s views and ideas. These are discussed at SMT meetings.

Next came the real elections for the **young people’s representatives on the Ellon and Foveran Community Councils**. There was an official count for these. Ross Purdie and Aquib Pervais will represent Ellon and Daniel Hook and Brian Simpson will represent Foveran. They will take young people’s views to their local councils. PT Humanities Mr Morrison has worked hard to bring these authentic elections to Ellon Academy.

Last week, every year group listened to candidates giving speeches at their assemblies for their **Senate Representatives** and elections have taken place. There are 2 Senate Representatives for each year group who will join the Head Boy, Head Girl and DHT Mrs Hall to form the 2013 - 2014 Pupil Senate. This group has its own budget and discusses all the matters brought from each year group.

In addition to the above, staff and S6 pupils have voted for the new **Head Boy, Head Girl** and the **Executive Team** members after they delivered a speech in front of their peers. The top 9 were interviewed for the jobs by a panel of five. All the candidates were excellent and the results were very close. Katie Stein is the new Head Girl, Sean Duthie is the new Head Boy and Ross Purdie, Rachel Morrison, Kirsty Fraser, Anna Wright, Stuart Gill, Sarah Dobbie and Luke Thorley are the new Deputy Head Prefects. This team will manage a team of 80 Prefects and link with Depute Rector Mrs Hall and Head of S6 Team PSE Miss Tomlinson to organise various events throughout the year.

Modern Languages Continental Cafe

A Host of VIP guests mingled with staff and pupils at our recent Modern Languages Continental café. German and French “fine pieces” baked by our Languages staff were served by French and German speaking pupils, giving them a real life, foreign language work experience. Chief Executive of Aberdeenshire Council, Colin McKenzie was amongst the guests who were impressed at this event.

S5 and S6 Induction Days

On the 8th June all of S5 took part in visits to a wide variety of work places and educational establishments in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. This was to introduce them to some of the opportunities available post school. Guidance Teachers and Mrs O'Brien who organises the programme for this day, accompanied the S5 pupils. Feedback from staff, pupils and the venues visited was all very positive.

On the 7th and 8th June, all S6 took part in two induction days organised by Mrs Hall. On the 7th there was the "*Be All You Can Be*" day. Pupils worked in groups to do: team building and communication activities with the RAF; the importance of following instructions and trying new activities with Angela Urquhart, a local Zumba teacher; looking at prefect roles, committees and enrichment activities with Mrs O'Brien and Miss Tomlinson and listening to a very powerful motivational talk by Jamie Cuthbertson an ex army captain who was blinded in an explosion, yet has since done a marathon across the Gobi desert and trekked to the North Pole amongst other amazing achievements.



On the 8th June all S6 pupils worked with staff from the *Enterprise and Industry Committee*, 12 business representatives from a variety of local companies and services and last year's Executive Team at the Station Hotel, Ellon for the *Business Challenge Day*. All pupils worked in groups on various business related challenges to promote the importance of communication, team work and problem solving. The presentations for their ideas for new school businesses were of a very high standard. Thanks to BP, Dyce and Cranetek, Ellon for sponsoring this event.

Feedback from those involved in both days was very positive overall.

S1 Enterprise Classes

All S1 Enterprise classes did a fund raising sponsored marathon by linking with PE staff, in order to raise money for C.H.A.S. They raised an amazing £956. The photograph below shows S1 pupils handing over the cheque to C.H.A.S. workers.

Educational workers from C.H.A.S. gave workshops to all Enterprise classes to teach pupils about what it is really like to be a child or teenager with a serious illness and how money donated to their organisation is spent.



Sports Update

The History Boys!

Ellon Academy Senior Boys travelled to their North of Scotland Cup Final meeting with Nicholson Institute with the added burden of expectation weighing heavily upon them. For the last three years Ellon's Senior team have won this prestigious trophy – a feat no school has matched in the 76 years over which it has been contested. However, they need not have worried, the boys turned in a great performance demonstrating the same commitment, hard work, effort and team spirit as for every other game this season and thoroughly deserved their 4-1 win. As a consequence, they themselves become part of the unprecedented success that now sees Ellon Academy as the only four times winners of the North of Scotland Cup.



Badminton



As Badminton Club winds down for another session, the happy faces show how much fun we've had. We all look forward to next session and welcoming some new faces from across the years, especially the new S1s. Badminton club will run, in the Games Hall, after the summer holidays at the usual times which are:- Monday lunchtime, Tuesday 3:30-4:30 (no late transport) and Wednesday 2:50-4pm (late transport available). In addition, Sunday badminton club runs in Newburgh Public Hall every term-time Sunday from 4-6pm and costs £2 per session to cover the rent. Enjoy your summer and we'll start again on Monday 26th August.

Tina Kearney

News in brief!

It's the End of the World

What would happen if the world ended? That's what last year's 3rd years at Drama Club were asked at the beginning of the year. And by the time May came around, they had an answer, in the form of a devised performance, entitled *Never Go Back!*

Held in the Drama Studio on the 14th May and at Lunch on the 22nd, *Never Go Back* demonstrated a range of possible outcomes, including astronauts returning to a devastated Earth and prisoners in a high-security prison being the only survivors. Also included was some of the best make-up we've seen at Ellon Academy, courtesy of Antonia Cook of 3S2. Well done Third Year and the Drama Dept. for another fantastic show!

By Jono McDermott, 6M

The Woman in Black...

Tentatively looking behind our seats at every sound, we sit through two hair-on-end hours of theatre magic and enjoy ice cream at the interval. In compliment to our tedious study of Susan Hill's masterpiece for our exam, the Higher English pupils were offered this brilliant opportunity to watch the stage production of *The Woman in Black* at His Majesty's Theatre in Aberdeen. The set was great, the acting was flawless and the special effects were simply terrifying, resulting in one unforgettable evening for everyone!

By Jono McDermott, 6M

African Meal Night in aid of World Challenge

Ellon Academy's World Challenge Team has been working hard in the past few months raising money for a once in a lifetime trip to Tanzania to climb the legendry Mt Kilimanjaro. So far the team has completed many fundraising events and have many more to come! With the help of an extremely devoted group of teachers, many events have already helped to raise part of our funds; one of these events was an African meal night which took place on the 26th of April.

During this event guests tried a variety of African foods such as African black bean soup. A raffle was also held with generous donations from people and local businesses. The African Meal Night was a lot of work but proved worth it. At the end of the night the challengers had added over £700 towards the fund!

Various other events and fundraisers have taken place including *Bags to School* and *Music Magpie*. These events are helping to make the world greener and also add more money to the World Challenge fund. A staff quiz was also held and with the help of generous teachers who were willing to take part, it raised another £53 for the World Challenge fund.

World Challengers would be happy if you could support any of their events and would be overjoyed if you could donate to our once in a life time opportunity.

**By Leona Anderson
4M2**

...and finally

Exams

Once you reach S5, you hit the Highers. They're not fun, and they're not easy, but they are important.

Having just completed my exams I know exactly what this is like. You walk into the exam hall, sit down, and glance across the desk. In Higher level exams time can be a serious issue, especially in subjects such as English or French where you can never be too sure just how long you are going to take. So you fill out the front sheet to save a few precious seconds: Location, Town, Forenames, Last Name. Frequently, despite having faced these forms before, I still manage to write my last name in the forenames box. I did it again recently when I filled out my English folio flyleaf. Most people have slightly more common sense than me though, and so perhaps this isn't an issue for them.

I wrote an article previously where I described the step from Standard Grade to Higher, and it is no less relevant now. The exams still come as a shock to the S5 system. At Higher level there is less time to devote to past-papers during class, due to the mountain of coursework to be covered. Therefore, the only real experience of sitting a Higher exam can be doing and marking past-papers of your own accord during study leave (and I'm often inclined to mark myself a bit too lightly). Despite being the same style of paper, it just doesn't quite compare.

I remember coming out of my last exam, Chemistry, feeling entirely spent. It seems weird I know. After all it's not as if exams consume any physical energy, it's just the pressure that does it. The hours spent studying, doing past papers, and actually sitting exams takes it out of you. Thankfully though I went out for dinner that night to recuperate. Jamie's Italian is a great way to forget about your worries!

The relief, however, ultimately outweighs the tiredness. The prospect of a more subdued sixth year lightens the heart and helps you stop worrying about what the marks that drop through your letter box in August are going to be. Be it As, Bs, Cs, Ds or no awards at the end of the day, finishing the Higher exams once and for all is an extremely satisfying feeling. But knowing you gave it your best shot makes you all the more ready to move on.

By Sean Duthie

Senior Prom 2013

Last year's S6 pupils joined with staff to celebrate their Prom night at the Meldrum House Hotel. A fantastic night was had by all. As you can see in this photograph, everyone was very glamorous!



Hannah's Hat-trick seals victory for Scotland!

As this month's newsletter goes to 'press' news has come through that is just too good to let pass unmentioned. In the last week of June Ellon Academy S6 pupil Hannah Stewart set off in great excitement at the thought of representing her country in football. It would seem though that Hannah grabbed her chance with both hands...

Scotland Women under-17s win tournament in Ukraine Friday, 28 June 2013

Women's Under-17 Development Mini Tournament
Scotland 3-2 Hungary
Friday 28 June 2013
Ternopil, Ukraine

Stewart 32', 40', 53'

Scotland have won a Women's Under-17 Development Mini Tournament in Ukraine after a hat-trick from Hannah Stewart secured a 3-2 win against Hungary.

Following yesterday's 5-1 win against Ukraine, the young Scots' second win today secured victory in the competition.

Stewart, who plays for Buchan, made her international debut in yesterday's win against Ukraine and followed it up with an outstanding display of finishing against Hungary.

All three goals were scored in similar fashion as she displayed composure to round the goalkeeper and slot home from close range.

Hannah helps RME Teacher Mr McLean train the current Ellon Academy S4-S6 Girls' Team. "Despite Hannah's success outwith school she was delighted to get involved with training alongside other girls last year," said Mr McLean. "It made no difference to Hannah whether the girls were S1 or S6, she demonstrated her willingness to train alongside them and helped them with training. Hannah has a terrific attitude towards her football and is a real role model for girls who want to aspire in their sporting adventures in Ellon Academy."

Congratulations on a fantastic achievement Hannah!
