

Our Ref: PM / NT
June 2015

Dear Parent / Carer

As the session draws to a close, I would like to keep you up to date with school news. As ever, the past few months have been really busy ones for the school.

SQA

This year's SQA examinations are now at an end. We wish all the pupils involved the very best as they await results. I am happy to report that our Chief Invigilator, Alex Laird was very impressed with the behaviour and commitment of our pupils this year.

The SQA results will be delivered by first class mail on **Tuesday, 4th August 2015**. In addition to this, if pupils have registered with "MySQA" by **Tuesday, 7th July 2015**, results will also be sent by e-mail or text on **Tuesday, 4th August 2015**. To activate the account please log-on at **www.mysqa.info**

Pupils who wish a change of course in the light of results can attend a re-coursing interview with Ms Hume on **Tuesday, 11th August 2015** from **10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.** or **Wednesday, 12th August 2015** from **9:30 pm – 3.30 p.m.** Interview times can be arranged by telephoning the school office from **Tuesday, 5th August 2015**. It would be beneficial if pupils were able to be seen on these dates to allow for a smooth start to the school session. Please note that the Appeals system has been replaced by a Results Service, detail of which has been shared with parents / carers.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Please can I make a big plea to parents / carers who will be buying school clothes over the holidays? I appeal to you as parents to support us by purchasing, **plain** black tops, **plain** formal trousers (**NOT** cargo trousers, black jeans or tracksuit bottoms) and skirts and black school shoes, rather than casual footwear. We genuinely believe that the wearing of school uniform impacts on the success of youngsters and the ethos of the school and we rely heavily on parental support.

Please note that the replacement cost of a school tie is now **£6**.

Our partners in the provision of uniform are Thompsons / Intersport.

They can be contacted on 556 3463 or on **www.interkit.co.uk** . Premises are at 53 Elm Row, Edinburgh.

AWARDS CEREMONY

It was such a pleasure to celebrate pupil attainment and achievements at the recent annual Awards' Ceremony. The range of talent and the extent of pupil success, both academic and extra-mural was tremendous. Congratulations to all those involved and special congratulations to this year's Dux Bella Baillie. Special thanks to Stephen Patterson, Managing Director of Hamilton and Inches who presented prizes and delivered an address.

RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

I never cease to be amazed by the range of talent in the school and the breadth and depth of achievements. I have appended the extra-mural awards from the Awards Ceremony to the end of this newsletter to outline the range of pupil successes which I'm proud to share on the pupils' behalf.

S6 / S1

We enjoyed celebrating with this year's S6 at their recent Prom which was a fantastic evening. As they head off for the next stage in their lives, we wish them well, and as always, we will miss them.

I would like to say a huge thank you to this year's Pupil Senior Leadership Team:

Chris McColm, Lilidh Aveyard, Hugh Brown, Leo Gibb-James, Iona Hamilton and Alex Lauder who have been excellent office bearers. They have offered time and support to the work of the school and we are very grateful.

Last week we welcomed our incoming S1 to the school. They joined us for a Cluster Sports' Afternoon and for a further two days where they followed their August timetable, met staff and found their way around the school. We look forward to the youngsters joining us in August.

NEW S6 PUPIL SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Head Boy	Murray Watson
Head Girl	Bella Baillie
Depute Head Boys	Daniel Haquin David Morley
Depute Head Girls	Robyn Canning Lauren Quinn

Congratulations on their appointment.

SUSPENDED TIMETABLE

I am really pleased that we have been able to offer a Suspended Timetable this session. Many thanks to Mr MacKenzie for co-ordinating the massive under taking. There seem to be lots of exciting trips and experiences on offer as well as our in school programme. I hope our pupils enjoy taking part and gain a lot from the experience.

ECO SCHOOLS NEWS

We had an exercise bike in the library in the weeks before exam leave - this was the Cycle 2 Kenya challenge, an inter-House competition to see who could cycle furthest and tweet their distance, ideally reaching our link school 7,700 km away! Abercorn pupils won with 548.15km and won a dress down day on Friday June 19th.

WRITING SUCCESSES

I'm pleased to announce that Rory Martin was highly commended in the Scottish Schools' Young Writer of the Year competition. Rory was in the top six, gaining a highly commended recommendation for his articulate and witty piece on the hot cross bun!



From entries to the Robert Lewis Stevenson Creative Writing Competition, Leo Robertson-Walker was 'Highly Commended' and won £35 for his story and Alexander Fraser was in the top 5 stories submitted. One of the judges was really complimentary about both stories.

SCOTTISH SCHOOLS WATER POLO

Both our S1 – S3 and Open Portobello High School Water Polo Teams won Silver medals at the Scottish Schools Competition. The Open team lost out for the gold medal when the final game was decided on penalties. There was really positive feedback that the players were a credit to the school.



PARENT / CARER COMMUNICATION

Please could parents / carers inform us immediately when there are any changes made to telephone numbers, mobile numbers, addresses, emergency contacts and doctors? **It is important we have up-to-date contact in case of emergencies.** Please inform the school by e-mail or letter. Pupil Data forms have been issued to all pupils – please ensure that these are returned to us for our records.

We have an email bank of parent / carer contacts that we use regularly to pass on information and to share news of the school. Please allow us to add your contact to this bank by providing an email address by completing the form which was enclosed with the Pupil ScotXed form issued recently.

ABSENCE CALL

Please continue to contact us by 8:15 a.m. on the morning of a pupil absence. The telephone line set aside for this is **657 9057**. This number has a 24 hour answering machine. Punctuality of pupils is really important to us, please emphasise the importance of this at home.

PARKING

Please could parents / carers refrain from parking illegally outside the school (in the bus bay and zig-zag areas). We have had problems recently with buses returning our pupils from the Jack Kane Centre being unable to park close to the school. There have also been a number of complaints from parents / carers who are worried about pupil safety due to cars blocking the view and stopping youngsters from crossing the road safely. The police and parking wardens have been alerted to the difficulties by parents / carers and are keeping a close eye on the situation.

CHARITY FUNDRAISING

I am delighted to report that the S6, under the expert stewardship of Mrs Williamson and Ms Ford, the school has raised close to **£5,000** this year for charitable causes. We had lots of fun as a school on the way to this total and recognise how important our charities' fund raising work is, in terms of developing good citizenship. Some of the charities who benefitted from our fund raising are:

Comic Relief
Poppy Scotland
Mary's Meals
Jeans for Genes
Amnesty International

British Heart Foundation
Cancer Research
Marie Curie
Muir Maxwell Trust
Make a Wish Foundation

PARENT COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Parent Council has met regularly this year and offered great support to the school. There will be a meeting of the Portobello Parent Forum on **Tuesday, 1st September 2015**. All parents / carers are welcome to the Annual General Meeting in the school library at 7 p.m. This meeting will be followed by a Parent Council Meeting from 8pm-9pm. It would be appreciated if you could join us.

PARENT COUNCIL FUND RAISING FOR PUPIL RESOURCES

This year has seen some tremendous fund raising through regular raffles, our School Lottery, our Cabaret Night and our Annual Fashion Show. Many thousands of pounds have been raised and some great resources have been bought for our pupils including musical keyboards, comic books, graphic novels, scientific equipment, technology accessories, heart rate monitors and running club kit amongst other resources. The school is really grateful for this tremendous financial support.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

The P.E. department, other colleagues, a number of senior students and parents / carers have helped support our sporting extra-curricular programme this session and I'm so grateful for the many hours they have devoted to this. Thanks especially to parents who support our teams. If you are keen to and able to support us in this way next session, please let us know by contacting our new Active Schools' Co-ordinator Paddy Dearlove or Mrs Inkster (PE).

HAIRDRESSING

Two of our pupils who study hairdressing were in the final four in a Hairdressing competition at Castlebrae's Vocational Night event.

Abbie Miller achieved 2nd prize and Amy Millar came 4th in the final. Both these girls have gained apprenticeships in city salons, Abbie at Charlie Miller and Amy at Live Laugh Love.

The judges were Charlie Miller from Charlie Miller, Colin McAndrew from Medusa Hair Salons, Natalie Watson and Danielle Clark from Evolution 10 and Hannah Sutherland from Medusa hair salon.

HEALTH DAY

Ms Sharp and the Health Promotion Group organised and delivered the recent S3 Health Day which was well received by the pupils. There were a range of events run by staff and outside specialists including Jammin, Fitness, Tai Chi, Ultimate Frisbee, Army training, Zumba, Football, Silent Disco, Self-defence and CPR training. These activities were supported with sessions on MVP work, healthy cooking, book craft, mental and sexual health and disability awareness. It was a very successful day.

1:1 iPad PROGRAMME

We are really encouraged by the development of the use of technology to support good learning and teaching. We now have year groups from S3 to S6 equipped with iPads to support their learning and our practice in this field continues to grow. We know from visitors to the school that our work in this field is considered to be sector-leading.

PUPILS – iPad CHARGERS

There have been a number of iPad charger cables that have been broken in the past. It would appear that this has happened in some cases as a result of the cable being wound around the plug when in school bags. To prevent further damage to the cables, pupils should **NOT** bring chargers into school. Instead, iPADS should come into school in the morning **FULLY CHARGED**.

NEW SCHOOL

The New School developments have been featured in the press recently with the ‘topping out’ ceremony having taken place. The building work is progressing apace and there is real excitement at the thought of our move in 2016. We are still on schedule to move in mid-June next year, although this date may shift to August at the latest.

NEW FORTH ROAD BRIDGE

On Thursday 28th May Mrs. Whittington’s 2CD1 class enjoyed an excellent visit to the site of the new Forth Road Bridge.

The Forth Replacement Crossing, officially named the Queensferry Crossing, is the largest engineering project to take place in Scotland in a generation. It provides a vivid demonstration of engineering and its related disciplines. The site of the new bridge is unique – nowhere else in the world can you see 3 iconic bridges spanning 3 centuries of construction.

The class were treated to a presentation about the construction of the new bridge. After the presentation the class tried their hand at building their own bridge. By working as a team with a self-appointed Project Manager they successfully completed an impressive structure which stood 2 metres tall and 10 metres long. To finish the day off they walked to the centre of the existing Forth Road Bridge where they were able to take in the wonder of all 3 Forth crossings up close.

2CD1 also made their mark on the Forth Bridges web site where you can see a photograph of their day out - go to <http://www.forth-bridges.co.uk/queensferry-crossing/frame-the-bridge/frame-the-bridge-mosaic.html> and enter “Portobello” into the search box.

Well done to the class - we may just have found some budding engineers in our midst.



SCHOOL GROUNDS SATURDAY SURGERY

Parents and community members helped one Saturday in April in a spring clean of our biodiversity garden. The garden, accessible from the east side of the school, beside the CDT department, is a fenced area containing flowerbeds, a bird feeder, grassland and stone and log piles. Pupils in the Eco Team maintain the garden as part of their responsibilities.

This event, running now for the 4th year, saw volunteers maintaining the paths and fence, weeding and planting and importantly, being rewarded with hot drinks and bacon/vegetarian rolls!

ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW

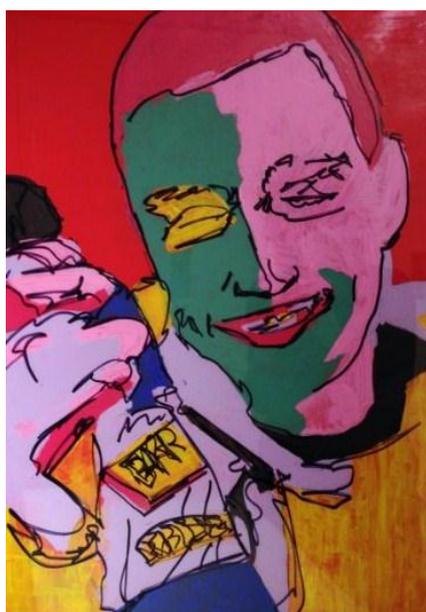
Many of our pupils from the Food and Textile Technology department headed with staff to enjoy a day at the Royal Highland Show last Friday. The weather was kind to them and they had a really packed and entertaining day.

THE SPIRIT OF PAOLOZZI

One of our senior Art and Design pupils, Fred Kerr was highly commended for a self-portrait in the Spirit of Paolozzi City of Edinburgh Art and Design competition.

His Art and Design teacher said of his work:

Fred uses bounds of restless energy in the pursuit of his interpretation of youth culture. His layers of complex colour combinations form instinctively as he works at his easel. Thanks to his careful study of Pop Art, Fauvism and Expressionistic works his appreciation of colour and its impact has led to a series of intensely colourful outcomes that simplify and imbue a sense of spirited youth. Much of the charm of this work is in watching its production, with his brush rushing to block areas of colour, testing their acidic or complimentary nature. He favours a spontaneous yet intuitive approach with a determined thread of movement running through his mark making showing his favour for layering and creating images of popular culture. His attention to art history and his enjoyment for referencing the fluid prints of Paolozzi, Richard Hamilton and Warhol make a bold statement for such a young artist. It's easy to sense the enthusiasm of the artist in this self-portrait, with energy captured in the placement of colour planes and a restless line to achieve his playful approach. Fred has gained a place at Art College where no doubt he will continue to splash some colour and extend his appreciation of culture.



STAFFING

The end of this session has seen a number of changes to the staffing profile.

I am very pleased to report that Ms A Fotheringham (Depute Head - Brunstane House) has been confirmed as Acting Head Teacher from 13 August 2015. The acting post should run until mid to late October 2015. The substantive Head Teacher post will be re-advertised on return from the summer break. I wish Ms Fotheringham well and feel confident that she will do a very good job and will enjoy good support from staff, pupils and parents / carers.

Mr K Walker will step into the post of Acting Depute Head Teacher and Head of Brunstane House for this period of time. Mr Knight (on secondment with us) has been appointed as Pupil Support Leader at Dalkeith High and Mrs Sarah Scott (Biology) will take on the role of Pupil Support Leader for Abercorn House

As always, it is sad for us to have to say goodbye to staff who have completed their probationary year with us very successfully. I wish Ms Rea (History) and Mr Lee (English) well for the future. Ms Hastings (PE) remains with us, working both at Portobello High and Boroughmuir High School.

Retirements, promotions and staff movement have led to recruitment for next session and I am pleased at the calibre of staff being offered permanent and temporary contracts. We have appointed the following staff:

Mr A McLaughlin has joined us as a History and Modern Studies teacher.

Ms E Jouve and Ms H Taylor have joined us as a Modern Languages teachers of French and Spanish.

Ms Richards and Mrs Chambers are joining Business Education as a full-time and part-time teacher respectively.

Ms Ellis has been appointed in Modern Studies to cover for Ms Banks' maternity leave.

We have four newly Qualified Teachers joining us for next session:

Chemistry	-	Ms K MacDonald
French	-	Ms E Howie
RME	-	Ms R Cavellini (who will cover Mrs Ford's maternity leave)
Art and Design	-	Ms K Hannah (who will cover a one year career break for Ms Gallacher)

The end of session will see further members of the teaching staff depart from Portobello High School:

Ms A O'Hagan (Learning Support Leader) has been appointed as Depute Head Teacher of St. Columba's RC High School in Dunfermline and will leave in September after many years at Portobello High. We wish her well with this new phase of her career.

Mr Muir (Chemistry) is retiring mid- August. I'd like to thank him for his many years of service to Portobello High and wish him well. Mrs Forrester, Mr Donegan and Ms Airlie are moving on to other teaching posts. Ms Robertson is returning to the West of Scotland and Mr Tuckley is returning to Chicago. Mrs Mathieson is leaving to pursue personal projects. We wish all our former colleagues well for the future.

Here is a quick reminder of key dates:-

Friday	26th June 2015	School will close at 12:15 for the summer holidays. Happy holidays!
Tuesday	4th August	SQA results will be delivered
Wednesday / Thursday	11th and 12th August	Re-coursing Interviews
Thursday/Friday	13th and 14th August	Staff In-service Days
Monday		Pupils return to school for 8:30 am

Should you have any pressing school concerns during the holidays, please contact the School Office in the first instance. There will be Senior Leadership cover during the holiday period, whom the office staff will contact as necessary.

I will step down from my post as Head Teacher of Portobello High School on 12th August. I'm taken aback at how quickly the nine and a half years Portobello have passed. It's been such a privilege to have worked with the school community. I will never forget this closing stage of my career. Thanks to all who have passed on their good wishes. I wish you, your families and the school continued success.

Finally, on behalf of all my colleagues can I thank you for your continued support throughout the session and wish you and your family a most enjoyable summer break.

Yours faithfully



P Macarthur
Head Teacher