

Stromness Academy

Newsletter June 2016



Dear Parent/Carer

Another year has flown by and there has been lots going on in Stromness Academy.

Over the time there has been many changes to the building, most recently the upgrading of the toilet facilities in the main foyer. As well as changes to the fabric of the school there have been changes to staffing and the curriculum.

Notably we wish Mr Jim Lawson a very long and happy retirement. Jim is retiring after almost 28 years as Principal Teacher within the school and in his stead Mr Neil Blance moves from Chemistry to Physics. Whilst a permanent Chemistry appointment is made Mr Paul Barber will be the Acting PT Chemistry. Also leaving us this summer are Mr Andrew Crichton and Miss Deborah Ondet who after successful completion of their probationary year of teaching are taking up permanent appointments in Peterhead and Fraserburgh respectively. I would like to thank Mr David Martin, who is returning to Dundee, and Miss Rachel Angus, who leaves us for Paris, for their contribution to the school over the last year. I am delighted to say that a few weeks ago we were joined by Miss Catriona McCulloch who completes the staffing in the English department.

For the first time, pupils have been entered for National qualifications at all levels as CfE Advanced Higher has been available. Also pupils in S2 are spending more of their class time in their practical set, X, Y or Z and less time as M, R and T. This maintains the mixing of pupils which is something that is greatly valued and also ensures that key curriculum areas are taught in similar size groupings.

The SQA examination results are published on the 9th August and should pupils or parents be concerned about their results in the first instance they should contact the school. It is still not too late to sign up to mySQA to receive results by email or text message. This year SQA will begin sending them out at 8am, which for many young people is considerably earlier than the post arrives.

As usual there will be a reduced staffing in the office over the summer period so please leave a message on the answer phone and we will return your call as soon as possible.

In Mrs Taylor's absence I would like to wish all our staff and pupils an enjoyable summer.

Babette Hegarty
Acting Head teacher

New Session

- *School reopens to pupils
Tuesday 23rd August 2016*
- *This is Their Moment—9th
September 2016*

Tour of the School

In late May we were again pleased to welcome our new 'S1' pupils to Stromness Academy for a two day transition experience. On the first day pupils from Stromness, Dounby, Stenness, Evie and Firth took part in a familiarisation day. Pupils had a tour of the school, they enjoyed a visit to our school library and they also joined our other pupils for lunch in the dining room. On the second day, pupils followed a typical S1 timetable, attending a range of different lessons across the school.

Pupils left Stromness Academy at the end of the day on the buses that they will be using when they join us in August. During these Primary Transition days, some of our new S6 pupils supported our new S1 pupils, both in classes and with getting around the school. Their enthusiasm and their hard work was valued by the staff involved and we look forward to lots more opportunities for tapping into their many skills over the course of the year.



Youth and Philanthropy Initiative



Judges and charity representatives at the final

This year for the first time, S3 pupils at the Academy participated in the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) scheme, an active citizenship programme that raises awareness amongst young people about philanthropy and their local community. YPI Scotland is all about creativity and passion, leaving the four walls of the classroom behind, and supporting the issues young people care most about. Pupils were all very enthusiastic about the challenge.

The pupils formed teams and researched local charities which covered a variety of social issues in the community. They then presented their information at class level to compete for a place in the school final which was held on the 1st June in front of a large

audience consisting of pupils from S1 – S3, teaching staff, representatives from the finalists' charities Also in attendance were Calum McSween and Lynsey Cumming, the regional and national co-ordinators from YPI. Guest judges including Neil Kermode and Janette Park, along with Brian Cromarty and Laura Leonard from VAO attended the final. They had the difficult task of judging the very professional presentations given by our finalists.



The girls representing MS Orkney being 'grilled' by the judges

The charities represented were:

Friends of the Neuro Ward (ARI) - presented by Josh Clare, Olivia Dowie and Mhairi Linklater

MS Orkney - presented by Erin Harcus, Erika Hutchison, Jenny McElroy and Eilidh Warnock

Advocacy Orkney - presented by Mia Bentley, Jenna Groundwater, Sam Hunter and Hana Swinney



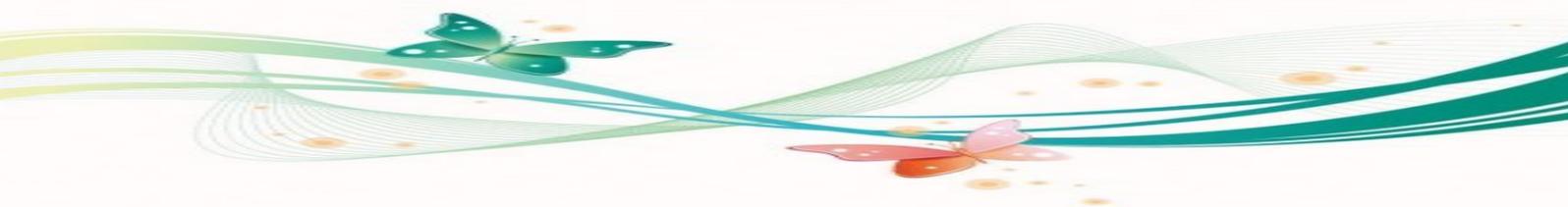
Eilidh and Erin presenting for MS Orkney

The group judged to have the best presentation overall (covering a variety of criteria) was awarded £3000 for their chosen charity.

And the winners were... MS Orkney

A very well earned well done to all those who participated.

Eileen Thomson (History/RME)
YPI Lead Teacher



Battle of Jutland Commemorations



As part of the Battle of Jutland commemorations Stromness Academy hosted an exhibition on Thursday June 2nd.

Pupils from S1-S3 had been working in departments across the school on projects relating to the First World War over the previous few months, and these were brought together to form the exhibition in the main theatre when representatives from the community visited the school.



Hockey

Over the past five weeks four teams, two from Stromness Academy and two from Kirkwall Grammar School, have been competing in a Junior Mixed Hockey League which took place at Picky on Monday evenings. Over forty girls and boys played in some close, competitive matches where youngsters competed against players of similar ability, with the hope being that these players will then move on to participate in the adult, senior leagues organised by Orkney Hockey. Although games were played in a friendly spirit, with youngsters frequently filling in for other teams absent players, the standard of play improved throughout the weeks as did the competitive rivalry between teams.



This year Kirkwall Grammar's team 'Summer', with 17 points came out on top, being unbeaten in all six matches. Runner's up were Stromness Academy's team 'Winter', captained by James Adamson, with 13 points. The Junior Leagues now break for the summer holidays, resuming in August when players from both schools will join to create mixed teams of players from Stromness Academy and Kirkwall Grammar School. This will give our young hockey players the opportunity to get to know and work with pupils of different ages and from other schools in order to further develop their skills and understanding of the game – and also make a few new friends!

London Tate Modern Trip

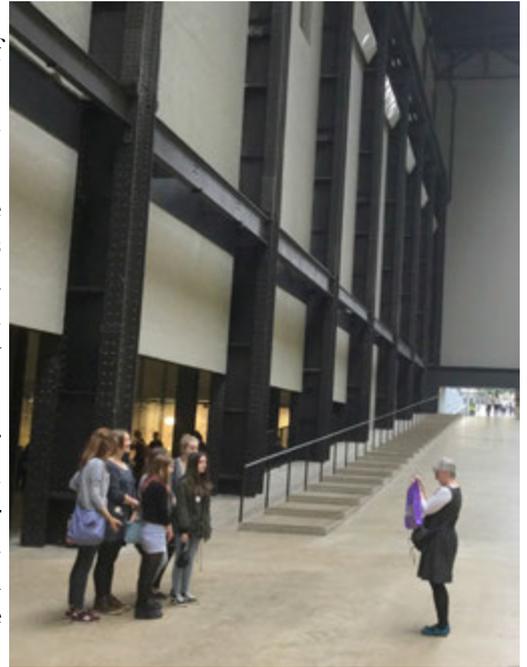
Recently, one of our Higher Art and Design pupils, Amber Todd (S5), was able to take up the opportunity of being part of a small group of Orkney school pupils to visit and attend the Plus Tate/Pier Arts Centre London Visit to the opening of the Tate Modern extension between 15-18 June.



The trip had been made possible through the Pier Arts Centre's partnership with Plus Tate. All travel from Orkney to London and accommodation was generously funded by Plus Tate and the Tate.

The group comprised of five senior pupils who had been nominated and selected from across Orkney's Junior High and Secondary schools. The trip was accompanied by Carol Dunbar from the Pier Arts Centre plus two art teachers.

In addition to visiting Tate Britain, Amber and the group also managed to visit the British Museum while in London, where she saw the beautiful Egyptian art and artefacts. This was particularly useful and relevant to Amber as she is working on a jewellery design brief with Egyptian art as her theme. Speaking to Amber on her return to school, she said that she had really enjoyed the trip and seeing the variety of contemporary and historical art.



Primary 7 Transition Sports

On 19th May Stromness Academy hosted the annual Transition Sports event, organised by Mark Berry and our Active Schools Coordinator Michael Swanney. All Primary 7 pupils from our associated primary schools were invited to take part in a variety of sporting activities, with the aim of helping to provide a smooth transition from primary to secondary education. Coaches from Orkney Rugby Club and Orkney Badminton Association worked with the youngsters, as did the school's PE staff, Young Ambassadors, Sports and Dance Leaders providing coached rugby, badminton and dance activities, an activity which developed pupil's movement and thinking and, to finish with, fun games of dodgeball. This is such a valuable experience for the youngsters as they begin to familiarise themselves with the layout of the school and with staff and other pupils in Stromness Academy, and they get to know each other in preparation for August 2016.



To compliment this piece of work our two S4 Young Ambassadors, Mia Bentley and Jerry Kaluzinski, visited Stromness, Evie, Firth, Stenness and Dounby Primary School to deliver transition assemblies and a question and answer session with the P7 pupils. This was particularly successful as most of the P7 pupils could reflect on their Transition Days and had a number of relevant, interesting questions for Mia & Jerry.

Sports Day

The annual Stromness Academy Sports Day, with barbeque lunch, was another great success, with glorious sunshine throughout! The school timetable was cancelled for the day as each class competed against the other classes in their year group in a variety of activities; athletics, football, netball, hockey, basketball, rounders, dodgeball and fun events. Even the staff competed this year! All pupils quickly got involved in both activity and the all-inclusive spirit of the day.



Much fun was had by all and we were delighted to see many examples of fair play and sportsmanship throughout the day. There were some noticeable quality performances too; Ellen Hay (3R) and Tegan Spence (3T) both broke

Stromness Academy athletic records. Ellen beat a record set in 2000, in the 200m, by running in a time of 31.26 seconds, and Tegan beat an older record set in 1999, in the 400m, by running in a time of 66.86 seconds.

Congratulations to Thorfinn who won the overall Sports day Trophy with 552 points, followed by Rognvald with 508 points and to class 2T who were given the most Fair Play certificates on the day. Well done to everyone, pupils and staff, for making this event such an overall success!



S2 Hoy Trips

As in previous years, in May all S2 pupils travelled to

Hoy to participate in a three day outdoor education experience. Before the trip pupils were given the opportunity to prepare food, plan activities, map read, develop inter-personal skills and learn how to set up tents. In Hoy, Outdoor Education Staff enhanced the school's programme by providing the expertise to run a variety of specialist activities. Over the course of the trip itself the pupils were given the opportunity to coasteer, do a Tyrolean Traverse with abseil, go on an extended journey either by foot, by bicycle or by sea in a kayak and to spend a night camping at Rackwick.

The essence of this programme of work is to help pupils enhance their confidence, increase their sense of responsibility, improve their ability to communicate with others and give them the chance to successfully learn new skills in a challenging environment. This educational experience takes pupils out of their 'comfort zone', and gives them an opportunity to develop a range of skills which will help them both in and out of school and ultimately in the world of work.



As part of the programme, pupils gained recognition of the work they undertook through the Dynamic Youth Award Scheme (DY), as the Hoy trip and associated preparation provided all the necessary challenge, experience and evidence required to achieve this award.





House Assemblies

Building towers from spaghetti and marshmallows; designing dresses; testing your accuracy with a frisbee, or playing Countdown. What does any of this have to do with education?

Quite a lot, in the era of Curriculum for Excellence, which requires us to develop our pupils as 'whole people', not just as consumers of the curriculum and sitters of examinations.

On Friday, 3rd June, Stromness Academy held its first House Day. In groups of about 12 pupils, with a mixture of S1, S2, and S3 in each group, pupils undertook a variety of half-hour challenges which required them to make strategic decisions, work as a team, meet deadlines, and use their knowledge in new contexts. Our incoming and outgoing House Captains came into school to lead the groups.

The day culminated in the House Awards Ceremonies after lunch, when pupils who had worked particularly well throughout the year were acknowledged and congratulated. Our outgoing House Captains handed over to their successors, and the day finished with a whole-house challenge.

We will be developing our programme of House events in the coming year, and look forward to the opportunities this will give our pupils to make connections with pupils older and younger than themselves, and to build a sense of House identity and community.

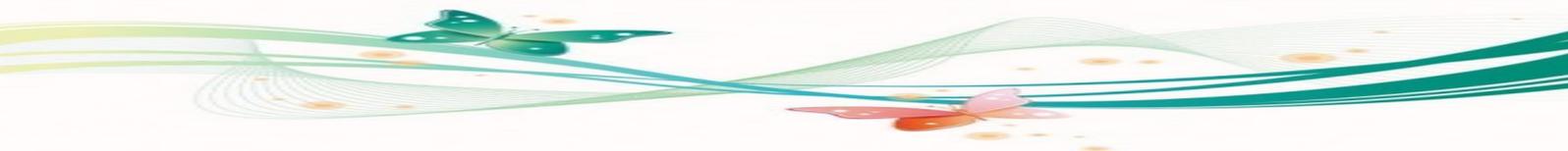
Congratulations to our new House Captains, who are: for Magnus, Erina Brown and Aisling Phillips; for Rognvald, Jamie Flett and Liam Thomson; and for Thorfinn, Jack Norquoy and Mirka Borek.



SCHOOL YEAR

PUPIL CALENDAR DATES FOR 2016 – 2017

Autumn Term 2016	Tuesday 23 August – Friday 14 October
Winter Term 2016	Monday 31 October – Wednesday 21 December
Spring Term 2017	Thursday 5 January – Friday 31 March
School Closed	Thursday 16 - Monday 20 February
May Day Holiday	Monday 1 May
School Closed	Friday 19 May
Summer Term 2017	Tuesday 18 April – Tuesday 4 July
Back to School (pupils)	Tuesday 22 August 2017



Parent Council

Contacting your Parent Council

Chair—Kate Carmichael

Vice Chair—Kate Thompson

Secretary—Joe Horrocks

Co-opted Staff Members—Mr Berry and Mrs Stead

Fiona Laing / S2 / Leave message at school reception

Linda Hall / S3 / 0778 898 4440

Carmel McElroy / S4 / 851792 / c@eday.org.uk

Kate Carmichael / S4 / 751343 (evening) / 872859 (day) katecarmichael@yahoo.com

Joe Horrocks / S5 / 07867908320

Kate Thompson / S6 / 851835 / kate.thompson@phonecoop.coop



What we have been up to

This term Parent Council members have been involved in meetings with the Council Liaison Officer, Head teacher, attending staff interviews, and attending parent evenings.

We held a successful raffle for school funds at the spring concert.

We attended the P7 evening welcoming next year's First year parents and were delighted that several parents have indicated they would be interested in joining the Parent Council.

We would welcome any parent or carer who would like to attend any of our meetings.

We currently have vacancies in all years on the council, and new members would be most welcome. Just get in touch or come to the next meeting.

Our next Parent Council meeting will be on September 22nd 2016 in the Upper Library at the school at the new earlier time of 7.00 PM. All parents and carers are very welcome to attend.



