



Easter Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

March 2004

Appreciation

NICHOLA JOHNSTON



Nichola Johnston of Fourth Year died ten days ago from an illness she had borne with great bravery and good humour since her early youth. Friends, fellow-pupils and staff will remember Nichola for the rest of their lives, such was the positive effect she had on everyone who knew her. Uncomplaining to the end Nichola was typically more concerned about others than she was about herself. Somehow she rose above personal adversity, making us at once humble in her presence yet proud to have known her. Our own lives have been put into clearer perspective by this dignified and profoundly good young lady. For that we will forever remember and appreciate Nichola as "a rare wee lass".

THIRD YEAR STUDY DAY

At the end of February presenters from the Learning Performance Seminar Group in London visited the Kilrymont Road building to work with third year pupils on Study Skills. Through entertaining and thought-provoking presentations the pupils explored Memory Skills, Mind-Maps, Revision and Note-taking. This enhanced the school's Study Skills Programme presented through Social Education lessons.

The Donald Dewar Memorial Debating Tournament 2003-04

Sponsored by the Law Society of Scotland



John-jo Ryan and Catriona Kay

It started in November with *Reality Television*, February 2nd was the *Monarchy* and then at the beginning of March the scariest of all: an 'impromptu' debate (1 hour's notice of the motion and no staff help) on *Voting at 16*. These were the three victories which won Catriona Kay and John-jo Ryan (both S6) a place in the final of this prestigious debating competition, along with teams from Daniel Stewart's and Melville College, Edinburgh, St Aloysius College, Glasgow and Webster's High School, Kirriemuir.

The final took place in the offices of the Law Society in Edinburgh. This time the Madras team had to oppose the motion: *This House Believes Scotland Deserves to be Fat*, and a lot of weight was lost preparing for it! At the end of a fiercely fought competition, Catriona and John-jo were delighted to be placed first, winning £1,000, and a handsome cup.

They were praised for presenting a consistent, coherent and well-rehearsed argument.

For John-jo success has come in a relatively short time, having only started debating competitively last year. For Catriona it was a case of third time lucky as she has already been runner-up twice in other national finals. It was also particularly welcome as she had given up a chance to visit the European Parliament in Strasbourg to compete in the final.

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Rector's Note

School is at its busiest as the Easter holiday swiftly approaches. Courses are coming to their completion with the usual rush of assessments and assignments. Pupils in S2, S4 and S5 are busy making choices of subjects for next session; those in S4, S5 and S6 who are leaving at the end of session are setting up the next stage of their careers. The programme of team sports which ran through the autumn and winter is coming to its final stages; running shoes and tennis rackets are being looked out; music concerts and competitions take a prominent place; debating finals come one after another; the charities programme is nearly complete. Winter's annual assault on the fabric of the school buildings is being assessed, leaks that have ruined parts of the recent refurbishment of the South Street library are finally stemmed (or has the rain just stopped for a week or two?), heating stutters from bearable to Baltic in parts of both buildings, causing the Kilrymont part of the school to be closed for a day in February. After six months of night-shift work the whole electrical system is nearly (but not quite) fully upgraded. The final phase of this is due to take place during the two weeks of the holidays.

It's been busy, demanding, disappointing, exciting, sad and uplifting – all in different measure – but never dull, as the pages that follow should show.

Happy Easter to you all!

Staff Notes

It has been a term of few changes. In January Miss Simpson joined us to cover in PE for Mrs Dobie's career break and we welcomed back Miss Sturrock to cover the maternity leave of Miss Stewart in Art. In February Mr Walker, Mathematics, took up a new post in Queen Anne High School and has been replaced meantime by Mrs Orr.

Fairtrade Coffee Morning



Pupils in Madras College organised a coffee morning for their staff on 12th March. The Kilrymont Road staff room was filled with the aroma of Fairtrade coffee and free samples of chocolate and biscuits were available.

This was part of ActionAid's nationwide 24 hour Coffee Break and celebrated the end of Fairtrade Fortnight. The event raised £27 in donations and also produced over £100 of orders for Fairtrade products. These funds will aid the fight against world poverty and to campaign for the introduction of fairer trading rules.

Co-coordinator of ActionAid's 24 hour Coffee Break, Lisa Morfi, said: "We wish our coffee drinkers the best of luck. However our aim is not to fund raise but emphasise how global trade rules are actually increasing poverty, harming livelihoods and undermining the rights of poor communities".

The pupils at Madras are now hoping to introduce some Fairtrade products to the school tuck shop as well as set up a monthly Fairtrade outlet for staff.

UK Schools Intermediate Maths Challenge

In the UK Schools Intermediate Maths Challenge we gained 10 Gold, 23 Silver and 17 Bronze. This makes 50 National awards, one of our best ever performances in this contest. Of particular merit were Scott Cull, Hamish Hepburn, Rachel Hutchison, Jing Liu, Charles Oliver (all S4) and Sana Eljamel (S3), all of whom qualified for the next round due to their excellent scores. They sit the 'Pink Kangaroo' and await the results with interest. Congratulations to Jing Liu who achieved best in the school award along with his Gold award.

Scottish Parliament Visit

The Advanced Higher Modern Studies class took their second opportunity to visit the Scottish Parliament on February 26th. This not only gave the group the chance to witness democracy in action but also to see a live protest by an initiative which pupils have been studying in class. Unphased by the famous faces present at Question Time, the pupils resisted the temptation to heckle. After a day of hard-hitting political drama, full brains were accompanied by full bellies - a pizza being a well-deserved reward for a long day of learning!

"Ghost" Writer

Davey Heitler (S5) has won a national short story competition. The competition run by the Guardian and Picadilly Press involved Davey writing the perfect ghost story. Davey's short story along with ten others will be published in a collection in September. Madras College English department hope to purchase a number of copies of the collection for other pupils to read and perhaps be similarly inspired.

If the book sells well, then Davey will be in for a percentage of the royalties – however he is not considering retirement just yet!

JUNIOR INTER-SCHOOL DEBATE

The Final of the Courier Inter-School Debating Competition in Parliament Hall in the University of St Andrews was an exciting and invigorating affair. Two Madras teams consisting of third years Claire Field and Lindsay Forbes and Rebecca Malek and David Watson won their way through first and second rounds and a tense semi-final to compete magnificently in the final on *This House Would Ration the Old to Nurture the Young*. Another third year team of Sarah Gillespie and Grace Carridice reached the second round only to be put out in a very tough debate. All pupils would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the English department, especially Mrs Macfarlane and Mrs Harvie, for their great coaching, encouragement and time. Rebecca reported: "Although we didn't win, the competition has been very rewarding and all hope to continue debating in years to come".

Fourth Year Standard Grade Drama Performances

At the beginning of this session, all fourth year Standard Grade Drama pupils performed in a production of their own devising. The pupils were given the stimulus, 'Colours' and from this they discussed and interpreted what colour means to them eg emotions, seasons, places, people, events etc. From this point they were required to devise a short piece of Drama applying the relevant skills they have learned so far. Some of the issues covered in their work included bullying, racism, family conflict, morality, guilt and betrayal. The issues were explored 'colourfully', dealing with them in a caring, sensitive fashion. Overall, their efforts resulted in some excellent work, with performances taking place in the Quad Studio Theatre at lunchtimes. Several groups also gave great evening performances.

SENIOR INTER-SCHOOL DEBATE

The 18th Annual Inter-School Debate between Madras College, Waid Academy and Bell Baxter High School was held on Wednesday 14th January, where, despite eager challenges from the defending champions, Madras' four-year run of victory came to an end.

The school's team of John-Jo Ryan and Chris Lucas (Proposition), Elizabeth Lawrenson (Chair), Nick Cole-Hamilton (Vote of Thanks) and Daisy Radford and David Watson (Opposition) produced very good arguments proposing fee university education and opposing the selling of human organs. The Chair and Vote of Thanks remained suitably neutral.

While over-all victory went to Waid Academy, Chris Lucas was awarded best second position. With many first time debaters on the team, Madras was glad to test itself against the more experienced opposition, and a great time was had by all.

Thanks are due to Mrs Baughan, Ms Comber and Mr Darge for all their help and support; to Alison Vaughan, Fiona Bennett and Helen Lewis, our tellers and supporters; to Mr Matheson; to Waid Academy for being excellent hosts, and most of all to the Rotary Club for sponsoring and organising the competition.

FORMER PUPIL

Dominic's Gap Year In Sri-Lanka

From August 2003 to February 2004, ex-Madras pupil Dominic Esler spent his Gap Year teaching English in Sri-Lanka. The placement was organised by Link Overseas Exchange who partnered him with ex-Bell Baxter pupil Paul Reglinski. They stayed in a small village, living in a mission house with a priest. The nature of the priest's job meant that the boys were invited to all kinds of church-related events such as weddings, funerals and birthdays. Dominic found everyone he met there 'very friendly, no-one was ever in a bad temper'. The village was so welcoming he and Paul were treated like celebrities, being invited to a different person's house for dinner every night. Dominic enjoyed eating Sri Lankan food.

The area in which they stayed was mostly jungle and paddy fields, which gave the boys a chance to see many animals and birds, including monkeys, snakes, cranes and even the odd elephant!

During their stay the weather changed dramatically, from raining every day at

the beginning, to being 'very dry and dead', near the end when the area entered the drought season.

On weekdays the boys would teach English at the village school and were allowed weekends for travelling.

Dominic's favourite memory is of the concert they helped to put on at Christmas. The boys taught the schoolchildren traditional Scottish dances such as The Dashing White Sergeant and the Virginia Reel. Dominic also played fiddle music as one act in the show. On their last day the school held a leaving assembly for them and a Scottish flag was hung from the ceiling.

Dominic says that it was 'the best experience of my life' and would 'definitely like to return to Sri Lanka'.

However, this isn't the first time Dominic's Gap Year has been reported. He and all the other Link volunteers had their picture published in the Sri Lankan Times!



For the second year running Madras College has claimed first and second prize in the StAnza Schools Poetry Competition. Catriona Liggat and Ruth Dunn (both S2) came first and second respectively.

Both poems reveal a sensitivity and maturity beyond their years.

The girls were invited to socialise with the world famous poets of the StAnza Festival. Who knows, perhaps they will be performing at StAnza sometime in the near future.

Sixth Year Valedictory

“This year’s Sixth Year pupils have been an exceptionally positive force within the school,” writes Year Head, Mrs C Easingwood.

This is the last Newsletter they will take home. Their Commemorative Year Photo, immortalising tiered rows of immaculate pupils on a sunny March day in the Quad, has been duly taken; their Year Book, rumoured to be “the best”, is safely away to the publishers; their long-awaited Ball is only a few weeks away. So perhaps this is the moment to pay tribute to a year group which has given fine service to the school and shown leadership in a wide range of ways - the year group who revived the custom of the wearing of a Sixth Year tie, but to their own design.

Many of their activities are reported on elsewhere in this Newsletter. Amongst these are the highest-ever participation in the Peer Tutoring Scheme; assistance in numerous Charities fund raising events; efficient help to staff, for instance in arranging daily class cover or ushering at school concerts; helping at school events and parties; producing the Madras Diary column in the St Andrews Citizen and engaging in a range of community service activities.

One central achievement has been establishing a Whole School Pupil Council, with representation from S1 to S6, which has met regularly through the session under the guidance of its Sixth Year members. They leave behind them

a written Constitution as a sound basis for expanding the future involvement of pupils in school management and decision-making. The Sixth Year Representative Group as a whole has handled this undertaking in an exceptionally energetic and responsible way. All contributed, but it would be only fair to recognise here the outstanding contribution of driving forces, Samantha Purves and Andrew Ayton.

Above all, however, I would like to praise the way the Sixth Year pupils of 2003/4 have used their transition year, preparing to leave the protected haven of school and embark on the open seas of real life. It is a year where pupils are given some freedom and responsibility for themselves - in the use of their study periods and signing-out privileges and accounting for their own absences from school. It is like learning to walk a tightrope - with a safety net. And there have been remarkably few tumbles!

I would like to thank Sixth Year for their co-cooperativeness, their spirit and their good humour. They have given much and hopefully, with their growing maturity, also realise how much they take away with them from Madras College, which will serve them well in their future lives.

Good luck to them all!

PTA MEETING

Curriculum Matters

This February meeting, timed to support the Course Choice decisions being made by second, fourth and fifth year pupils, has become an annual fixture. It is clearly much appreciated by parents, since attendance is always high.

In a general introduction, Mrs C Easingwood described the courses and choices open to pupils at these stages and gave information about the choice procedures. Three separate shorter sessions were then offered by subject departments, outlining new

developments and progression routes available in their areas. This year, Dr Tomb offered a presentation about Chemistry and Science; Mr Beck, assisted by senior pupils, spoke about Business Education subjects, while Mr Kay demonstrated the scope of the Design and Technology department.

Charity Events

Both South Street and Kilrymont Road Halls were packed to capacity for the lunchtime activities on Charities Day, Friday 19th March. The school’s non-uniform day collected over £2,000 with additional donations coming from individual pupils. Pupil groups are now selecting organisations to support with the money raised.

Staff and pupils at South Street enjoyed their Twister and Dance Mat capers. Street cred was certainly on the line!!

At Kilrymont Road the traditional song and dance show, this year MC TALENT, was a resounding success with Derek Dishington (S2) first, Laura Gillet (S1) second and Havana Jetplane (S2) third. The exuberant audience rocked its way into period 5.

On the previous afternoon over sixty local residents and groups from Sheltered Housing and Residential Homes braved the weather to enjoy their community concert and afternoon tea. The letters of thanks from our guests were greatly appreciated.

Over the three events the work of the janitors, technicians and kitchen staff; Mrs J Nisbet, show co-ordinator; and the senior and third year members of the Charities Committees must be thanked for making the activities such a resounding success.

Kingsmill

Free Kit for Clubs

Madras College Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Club are participating in the *Kingsmill Kit for Clubs* scheme. Please support the club by collecting Kingsmill tokens during 2004 and send them to the school via registration teachers. We are hoping to collect 6,500 tokens which will allow the club to get a new hike tent. The more tokens collected, the more free outdoor kit we can claim.

Crafty Capers Club

Crafty Capers is a fun lunchtime club where pupils learn practical fabric skills and craft techniques through the creation of soft toys and furnishings. This has been well attended all year.

Whole School Council Success

Against all odds the Whole School Council has come on tremendously well since its creation earlier this year. Our Whole School Inter-House Quiz Project has been organised well by dedicated representatives from all year groups and has achieved our aim of uniting both the South Street and Kilrymont buildings. Another project that we have undertaken this year is lockers for Kilrymont, which should be in place for next year's third year.

Other items we have discussed include: the common problem of overcrowding on the buses, a Whole School Council Audit that looked at the running of our Council, we have been involved with the decisions on which charities the school would like to support and have selected representatives to attend various Fife and National conferences.

Junior Chess Club

The Madras College Junior Chess Club has been very popular again this year. Over thirty pupils meet every Tuesday where they play blitz-games and have fun. Anyone who is interested in playing chess is invited to come.

Pushkin Prize

A young first year pupil, Fiona Albert, now resident in New Zealand, has won a prestigious national poetry competition, The Pushkin Prize.

Encouraged by her teacher Mr Lappin and Mr Hynes of the Pick Up A Pen Club, Fiona will be offered the opportunity to attend the prizegiving in May and a creative writing course at Moniack Mhor – which could be problematic for her due to the distance involved.

5-14 Development Across Primary and Secondary

Three subgroups are currently working in the 5-14 framework:

Miss F Jackson has been liaising with her primary colleagues on developments across the sectors in Science; Mr J Urquhart and Mr A Pardoe on ITC links and familiarising staff with resources; and Mr M Barile and Mr C Mackay on Formative Assessment Strategies mainly in Mathematics and Language.



ROTARY ROUND-UP

Euroscola

Francine Toon (S6) has just returned from a visit to the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

Business Enterprise

Alison Brodie and Krystin Ingram (S6) will participate in a weekend programme at Elmwood College over Easter designed to raise awareness of opportunities in the business world.

CampRYLA

Charles Oliver (S4), Christopher Birrell, Daniel Collins, Nene Udofot (S5) and Natalie Jackson (S6) are sponsored by North Fife, St Andrews and St Andrews Kilrymont Rotary Clubs to undertake leadership training in the Cairngorms in July.

Exchanges

Madras College is involved in exchanges with Keil (Germany), Ohtawara (Japan), Upper Arlington (USA), Philadelphia (USA) and South Slovan (Canada). Applications are received from S4 pupils to host Japanese students in July 2004 and to travel to Japan in July 2005. S5 and S6 pupils can apply to go to Upper Arlington during the October holidays 2004 and to host in February 2005. Philadelphia and British Columbia are exchanges for several weeks and are open only to S6 pupils. These exchanges enrich the experience of all participating.

DRAMA SHORTS

- Recent theatre trips have included Byre Theatre productions of 'The Glass Menagerie' by Tennessee Williams and Shakespeare's 'Much Ado About Nothing'. Advanced Higher pupils enjoyed the opportunity to interview Steven Little, the director of Much Ado about his approaches to directing Shakespeare.
- Advanced Higher pupils have been demonstrating their creative skills by designing set models, acting and directing in preparation for their practical exams.
- Higher pupils are enjoying their rehearsals for the acting exam. Each pupil acts two contrasting extracts from a wide range of plays including Arthur Miller's 'The Crucible'.
- Intermediate candidates are looking forward to their performances of extracts from the plays 'Blooded', 'The Game's a Bogey' and 'Shelter'.
- S3 pupils have been developing radio productions as part of their course and twelve lucky participants will have the opportunity in April to work with professional staff at Tay FM and record their work.
- The Drama department production later this year will be 'As You Like It' by William Shakespeare and will be directed by Mrs Esler.
- Several pupils have again been involved in the training of Children's Panel members through the means of mock Hearings in Dundee and Edinburgh.

CAREERS

All S2 travelled to Glenrothes to participate in "Made in Scotland" workshops in February.

The Careers Convention in late February was again well attended with almost 50 specialists from Tertiary Education and employers providing their expertise before courses choices are made.

First Higher MER Fieldwork Study

A party of 30 pupils studying Higher Managing Environmental Resources left South Street on the morning of Friday 19th March with Mrs Thomson, Miss Russell and Miss Latto. We travelled in two minibuses and by lunchtime reached the school cottage in Glen Tilt where soil, vegetation and slope studies were carried out. We were disappointed to find part of the ceiling in the smaller dormitory had collapsed. *If anyone reading this could offer a day of their time and expertise to effect general repairs we would be very grateful. Please contact the school.*

From Glen Tilt we travelled to Aviemore where we stayed at the Youth Hostel for two nights, visiting Creag Meagaidh National Nature Reserve and

Rothiemurchus Estate on the Saturday. At both, we were met by rangers and given talks and tours – and even coffee and biscuits. On Sunday morning we went up Cairngorm by the funicular railway, after another talk by a ranger. We learned a great deal about the management of the mountain environments we visited and the information and ideas gathered will help to produce an investigative report as well as provide useful firsthand knowledge for the final exam.

We all enjoyed a busy and informative weekend despite four-season weather including blizzards, and the breakdown of one of the minibuses!

Madras College School Board

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 31st March 2004 at 7.00 pm in the South Street Staffroom.

Members of the School Board are:

<i>Parent Members</i>	Mrs C Dunn Dr I Falconer Mr D Macgregor Mrs H Marriage (Chair) Prof P McKiernan (Vice Chair) Mr C Palmer Mrs E Rogerson	<i>Staff Members</i>	Mrs M Brown Mr C Jessop Mrs S Thomson
<i>Clerk</i>	Mrs M Wilson	<i>Co-opted Members</i>	Mr J Flegg Mr A Liggat Mr A Ayton* Miss S Purves*

For any matters that you wish to raise with the School Board please either contact the Clerk on 01334 412500 or visit our website www.madrasboard.org.uk

* S6 Pupil Representatives

VACANCY

As from August 2004 the position of Clerk to Madras College School Board will be vacant.

Anyone who is interested in taking over this post, please contact Morag Wilson on 01334 412500 or enquiries@madras.fife.sch.uk for more information.

Afterclass

The third year homestudy pilot *Afterclass* has been running for four weeks now and initial response has been extremely encouraging. Created to support those who are finding aspects of homestudy challenging and as a result to attempt to raise attainment, the classes are well supported and in fact pupils are self-referring. The class meets in the Kilyrmynt Road library on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and is supervised by staff and S6 volunteers. Early evaluation suggests the pupils who attend are accessing more of their curriculum. Parents who wish more information on this initiative should contact Mr C Mackay.

English Theatre Trip

On the evening of Thursday 11th March, Madras College pupils attended an enjoyable performance of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Byre Theatre in St Andrews. The upbeat comedy kept students amused through the two intervals and several hours later, they emerged in high spirits.

Tesco Tokens

Learning Support are again collecting the *Computer for Schools* tokens. Thank you to all who collect for us – keep sending them in.

Ski Club

In an exceedingly poor season for Scottish skiing, we have managed two successful trips to snow. Most of the pupils who went on our trips to Hillend managed to be included on these trips.

At the end of January a group of pupils enjoyed a breezy day at Glenshee. Then in early March we investigated new territories with a very good trip to the Lecht. Well worth the longer road trip.

SPORT SNIPPETS

• Cross Country

In the Fife Schools' Cross Country competitions this session the S1 boys team were first, the S1 girls team third, the Under 15 boys second and the Over 15s first.

Fiona Bracegirdle won the S1 Fife Schools' Cross Country title (she was also 7th in the Scottish Schools' Under 14 race) while Andrew Evans (S2) won the Under 15 Boys Cross Country title.

• Football

Schools football, like hockey and rugby, has again been very strong this year. At senior level Mark Brown (S6), Scott Henderson, Scott Grant (S5) and Scott Gates (S4) have been regulars in the in the Fife Under 18 squad who defeated Forth Valley 7-3 in the quarter-final and Perth and Kinross 2-1 in the semi of the National Shield. More information on the final next term.

• Hockey

Another excellent season for the S3 Girls' Hockey Team. They won the S3 Fife Tournament this year and have only lost one game this season.

The Senior Girls' Hockey Team won the Waid Sevens Tournament earlier this term.

• Rugby

The S3 Rugby Team have had another very successful season, winning 17 out of 18 competition matches and performing well in 2 tournaments. The most recent success was in the Fife Schools' 15-a-side Competition in Dunfermline which they won by beating all other teams and not conceding a single try. The whole training squad deserve credit for their enthusiasm, commitment and application throughout the season.

Schoolboy Internationalist



Scott Henderson is the first Madras College schoolboy Internationalist at Under 18 level and has played against Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and in the Easter Break against England and New Zealand.

Music News

The annual Class Burns Singing Competition continues to arouse interest and participation in the pupil body with some 700 taking part overall and over 110 winners receiving the World Federation Certificate. Over 40 took part in the school competition and sang at the Burns Supper. At the time of writing 6 singers prepare to compete at regional level, contesting all available classes.

Young clarsach players from the school provided entertainment with a difference at the Fife Fiddlers' Concert. We hope to hear some of them at the Summer Concert in June.

At Fife Festival the school was again well-represented by individuals with a number of notable wins. Stealing the show, however, was the Junior Wind Band which won against experienced senior bands from elsewhere in the region. Congratulations to Mrs Craib and her band.

No term seems to be complete without a major concert and all are to be congratulated on the recent Spring Concert, not only for the quality and variety of the music on offer – which depends on high-quality teamwork by teachers and pupils week in-week out – but the gratifyingly high level of audience support. Now is the time to put the date of the Summer Concert in your diary: Wednesday 23rd June.

This year it is the turn of Madras to host the annual Bell Baxter Centenary Young Musician Competition on the night before term ends (Thursday 1st April - 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm) in Kilrymont Hall. Let us hope that this continues to be well-supported as it represents the pinnacle of success for players from all three schools. Competition apart, it is usually a feast of music. On the same night one of our rock bands competes on a regional level.

Term doesn't end 'until the fat lady sings' – which for the Music department means throwing in four major musical assemblies too!

Modern Languages

The S3 visit to Loches is ready to go. Visits to the local school will include sampling of the French school lunches. Comparisons will be interesting!

The exchange to Kiel will be going ahead in June. A meeting will be held soon after the holidays.

Dance Festival

Over 40 girls ranging from S1 to S6 participated in the Lochgelly Dance Festival this year. This is the largest group so far from Madras. All dances were excellent and the girls performed very well in both day and evening shows.



INFORMATION

EXAMS

S3

Monday 10th May 2004
to Monday 24th May 2004

SQA

Tuesday 4th May 2004
to Friday 11th June 2004

Additional Support for Learning Bill

A Bill is currently going through the Scottish Parliament with the aim of assisting schools and parents to identify the support needs of all children and young people (up to the age of 17). The pamphlet issued with this newsletter explains the purpose and scope of this proposal in more detail. The Bill is expected to become Law, at the earliest some time during next year.

Family Holidays During Term

As intimated in the national media recently there is a change to the regulations governing pupil absence for family holidays taken outside the twelve authorised holiday weeks. With immediate effect any pupil holiday absence during term is to be classified as "unauthorised", putting it in the same category as unexplained absence and truancy. Such absence would then be recorded against the pupil and the school as "unauthorised". The only exceptions to this new regulation are those based on exceptional compassionate reasons, granted at the discretion of the Rector or, if necessary, the Head of Education.

"Parentzone"

This is a new national website designed to assist parents to access centrally-held national data about their children's schools. There will also be information available about various publications and organisations of interest. To access this site use www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk then follow the menu instructions, using the section entitled "Scottish Schools Online" and entering the name of the school.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

(all dates inclusive)

Session 2003/04

Monday 5th April 2004
to Friday 16th April 2004

Monday 3rd May 2004

Monday 7th June 2004

Friday 2nd July 2004
to Friday 13th August 2004

Session 2004/05

Monday 11th October 2004
to Friday 22nd October 2004

Wednesday 22nd December 2004
to Tuesday 4th January 2005

Thursday 10th February 2005
and Friday 11th February 2005

Friday 25th March 2005
to Friday 8th April 2005

Monday 2nd May 2005

Monday 6th June 2005

Monday 4th July 2005
to Friday 19th August 2005

INSERVICE DAYS

Session 2003/04

Tuesday 8th June 2004

Session 2004/05

Monday 16th August 2004

Thursday 11th November 2004
and Friday 12th November 2004

Wednesday 23rd February 2005

Tuesday 14th June 2005

STUDY LEAVE

S4

Monday 4th May 2004
to Thursday 3rd June 2004

S5/6

Monday 10th May 2004
to Thursday 3rd June 2004

Kilrymont Road - Collecting and Delivering of Pupils by Parents

To assist in managing the ever-increasing movement of vehicles and people at the Kilrymont Road building parents are asked to follow the system outlined below. The numbers are shown on the sketch map. *This arrangement will be closely monitored from the start of the summer term.*

- ① Pupils may normally be dropped off at the rear entrance in Roundhill Road at the start of the school day. This avoids cars mixing with buses and pedestrians at the bus lay-by.
- ② At 3.30 pm parents collecting pupils could do so at any agreed point near the rear gate. Again this will greatly decrease congestion of traffic on Kilrymont Road.
- ③ Parents attending for an appointment or collecting sick pupils should use the car park to the left of the main entrance.
- ④ Parents collecting or delivering pupils at other pre-arranged times may use the bus lay-by on Kilrymont Road.

