

Leith Links

April '12

Headteacher's News

As Easter is almost upon us, it is a convenient time to look back on the term that has just been; at the various events and highlights, a flavour of which is contained in this newsletter.

I am now very much back into the swing of things here at Leith Academy and I would want, as I have done previously, to thank staff who kept the school on an even keel while I was at James Gillespie's.

There have been some staffing changes during the term and I am pleased to say that a number of permanent appointments have been made: Ms Carly Anderson and Mr Ali Mackay in PE (Mr Mackay will start in the new term); Mr Roddy Ramsay in Computing. We also welcome Ms Claire Dancer in English to cover for Mrs Sarah Gibson's maternity leave - she has had a baby boy! - and Mrs Susanne Quinn also in English to complete Mrs Lesley McLeish's maternity leave. (Mrs McLeish will return next session.) Mr Craig Downie has secured a PT PE post in another authority and we wish him well in that. Mrs Marcella Macdonald (Music) and Ms Nicola Brisley (Modern Languages), both of whom are on an employment break, have indicated that they will not be returning. I will begin the process of recruiting permanent replacements when the Authority's controls permit. When senior exam leave begins in May we will lose the services of Ms Deirdre Nicholls in Art, and Mr Stuart Clark and Mr Jonathan McKenna in PE. I would want to thank them for their positive contributions to the school while they have been with us.

Mrs Debbie Millar in PE and Mrs Debbie Shearer in Business Education are both due to go off imminently on maternity leave and they do so with our best wishes for a safe delivery. This term has seen the school gain the services of a School Link Police Officer. PC Scott Sands will be with us on Tuesdays, Thursdays and every second Friday. We will be sharing him with Portobello, where PC Sands has been based for a couple of years now, so we will be able to benefit from his expertise and experience in the role.

Sadly I have to report that Mr Jim Wylie, CDT teacher in the school for over 30 years, is currently in hospital. Last month he suffered a cerebral haemorrhage and spent some time in intensive care at the Western General. One of the results of this haemorrhage is that he has lost his sight and is now in the Astley Ainslie undergoing extensive rehabilitation. This is a difficult time for Mr Wylie and his family and our thoughts are very much with them. I know that staff and pupils have visited Mr Wylie in hospital and that he has been appreciative of these visits. It will be some time before long-term decisions are made and in the meantime we welcome Mr Michael Tough on supply in CDT.

Our biennial International Marketplace and Diversity Show proved once again to be very successful and a high point in the school year. It was a wonderful showcase for the school, giving us the opportunity to celebrate the diversity that exists in the school community and the wider community and to allow pupils, of all backgrounds, to highlight and share their heritage with others. All those who took part and those who attended will have thoroughly enjoyed the variety of events and performances and will have recognised the enthusiasm and talent that



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Useful Contacts

Senior Management Team

Mr J M Simpson - Headteacher

Mrs D MacKinnon - Senior DHT

Mr D Peat - DHT

Miss S Cook - DHT

Ms M Peebles - Business Manager

Pupil Support

House Heads

Mrs F Stevenson (Anderson)

Miss A Bridgeford (Barton)

Mrs L Dewar (Cowan) - Acting

Mr G Hansen (Port)

ASL Manager

Ms C Prime

Community Programme Manager

Mrs C Carstairs

Important Dates for Your Diary!



Headteacher's News continued ...

April	
2 - 5	Easter Revision Programme
2 - 13	Easter Sports/Arts & Crafts Camps
17	Pupils resume
18	MONDAY TIMETABLE
19	S2 Parents' consultation (4.30 - 6.30pm)
23 w/b	S2>S3 coursing
24	LA Council (7.00pm)
25 - 8 June	SQA Exam Period
30	Adult classes begin
May	
07	MAY HOLIDAY
18	Primary Maths Magic Morning
21	VICTORIA DAY HOLIDAY
22	In-service Day
June	
04 w/b	New timetable
7-8	S6 Induction
10-15	Trenches Trip
11-15	Senior work/community experience
13	LA Parent Council (7.00pm)
18	Adult classes end
18-22	S1 Benmore trip
18-22	School Musical production 'Back to the 80s'
19	
20-21	S6 Walk
26	P7 Induction
27	S1/S2 Sports Day
	Evening of Celebration
29	TERM ENDS

lay behind all the contributions. I would want to thank particularly Sue Cook, whose commitment to co-ordinating the entire proceedings was evident over many months and built on the previous successes in 2010 and 2008. You may have seen some of the press coverage of this year's event in the Evening News and the local free newspaper, *The Speaker*.

Yet another display of commitment and talent was on display at the annual Spring Fling on Thursday, 22 March where nearly 100 musicians from across the year groups performed, including pupils from Craigentenny and Hermitage Park primary schools. The well-attended concert presented a wide variety of musical genres by soloists, small groups and ensembles, all of whom gave of their best. The next musical event will be the school show, *Back to the 80s*, which will run over three nights during the second last week of the summer term in June. Further details and tickets will be available soon.

As you will see from the article inside, the school's entrants in the HSBC/British Council Mandarin Chinese Speaking Competition excelled themselves in reaching the national finals at the British Museum in London. That they were able to do so after such a relatively short time learning Mandarin is a tribute to their commitment and effort as well as to the skills and encouragement of their teacher, Ms Lucy Zhang. We are hoping to build up our provision in Mandarin within school and offer some continuity and progress to pupils who have embarked on its study. In connection with these developments I have been invited to join an educational delegation visit to China during the Easter holidays. Along with other headteachers and education officials from across Scotland I shall be visiting Beijing, Tianjin and Xiamen between 8 and 15 April, including visits to schools in these cities. I am very much looking forward to this opportunity and hope that we will see the benefits of greater links with China right across the curriculum.

Next term will see the SQA exams begin for pupils in S3-S6, details of which have been previously issued. The Revision Programme run during the Easter holidays will provide an additional opportunity for pupils to revise. I would, however, be encouraging them to set up their own personal revision timetable for the weeks leading up to the exams and I am sure that parents will be working with their children at home to that end.

School starts again for the new term on Tuesday, 17 April at 8.30am.

Leith Academy Parent Council

If you would like to get involved in the work of the Parents Council. Please get in touch with co-chairs Diane Anderson and Christine Wallis.

Please note the following dates in your diary that the Parent Council will meet:

- 24 April 2012
- 13 June 2012 (AGM)

All parents/carers are welcome to attend meetings.

Edinburgh City Schools 'Dance Competition

Nine Junior school pupils and four senior pupils have been selected to perform in the Edinburgh City Schools' Dance Competition this year at Broughton High School.



Good luck to both the Senior and Junior Teams from Leith Academy.

Ms Anderson - PE Teacher

Modern Languages

Multilingual debate in Heriot Watt University

The Multilingual debate on Thursday 22nd March was very educational as it gave an insight of the level of language you have to work with to become a translator. The debate was also interesting as it gave the opportunity for the students to learn a few words in French, Spanish or German by listening to the context of the whole speech.

Carmen Murray

The Multilingual debate at Heriot Watt University about the future of the European Union if the Euro fails was very interesting. I learnt a lot about the economy and the state of the Euro. It was very interesting to have both sides arguing. I also found the work of the translators fascinating. They did a wonderful job, which seemed extremely hard.

Lucrecia Izquierdo

Mandarin Trips to Fettes College & London

Michelle Whitelaw (S3), Immaculate Kahembwe (S5), Sadaf Ashraf (S5), Krystie Mitchell (S5), Jolanta Vanate (S6) and Brooke Walker (S6) have been busy showing off their Mandarin skills in recent months.

After winning the regional heat in Newcastle and qualifying to compete in the final of the British Council Mandarin Speaking Competition in London, the girls were invited to perform at Fettes College's Chinese New Year feast. They performed their 'Britain Has Got Talent' routine for the very first time in front of the pupils and teachers at Fettes College, and held their nerves well. Krystie really enjoyed the starter course of the dinner and still dreams about those spare ribs, while Immaculate got a fortune cookie which said good luck would come to her... and then won a prize in the raffle! All pupils received traditional red envelopes as New Year gifts.

The girls performed their routine again when they travelled to London. Michelle said: 'I had never been so nervous in my life. I was shaking all over. After we had been on stage, I felt better. 伦敦非常美.' Both Jolanta and Sadaf think going to London for the Mandarin Competition was a great experience, especially as they challenged themselves to perform on stage in a different language. They had lots of fun visiting China Town on a snowy night, ordering Chinese food and shopping in the Chinese supermarkets. Brooke said, 'It was good getting to know younger pupils who also learn Mandarin. I am so proud of us all for getting to the final and I am sure Leith Academy will win it next year!'

Mandarin Teacher Ms Zhang wants to say a big thanks to Mrs Whitelaw who helped all the pupils to get to Fettes and sent them home safely on that night, and to Mrs Steele who helped to book the trips and who was an amazing tour guide in London. Also thanks to everyone at school and pupils' parents for all their encouragement and support, and to those who kindly donated money to fund our trip.

Ms Lucy G Zhang - Modern Languages Teacher



Dictionaries

This is a reminder that pupils are expected to bring their French or Spanish dictionaries to class on a daily basis and to their final SQA exams in May/June. If pupils need to purchase one, they may do so from the Modern Languages Department (£5.00 for the Collins Pocket & £2.50 for the Collins or Oxford gem/mini). It is essential that pupils bring their own dictionary for their final exams.



Thank you for your cooperation.

E Whitelaw - PT Modern Languages

FRIENDS for Life

Being a teenager is not easy! FRIENDS for Life helps children and teenagers cope with feelings of fear, worry, and anxiety by building resilience and self-esteem. The nine S2 pupils at Leith Academy, alongside Mrs Dewar (Acting Cowan House Head) and Heather Gorton (Educational Psychologist), took part in the 10 week programme felt that they got better at solving problems, relaxing, recognising their feelings, thinking positively and helping others.



What activities did you do during the programme?

"During the programme we kept a diary of our feelings, worked in groups to solve everyday problems, created a coping step plan, shared feelings and stories, discussed things that are important to us, learnt relaxation techniques and had fun!"

What did the FRIENDS programme mean to you?

"Some people don't realise that they are being hurtful for example slugging your bag or clothes. They don't think we can hear them but we can. We think these people would benefit from being on the programme so that they can be more in touch with their feelings and realise what they are doing.

"FRIENDS is not about having no friends, it's about understanding your feelings, being a good friend and making new friends."

Are you glad you were part of the FRIENDS programme?

"Yes because it helped me to calm down when I get angry"

"Yes it helped me cope with things I get worried about."

"Yes because if you fall out with a friend and needed someone to talk to you could always speak to someone in the group."

"Yes because I enjoyed the relaxation part because it helps you calm down."

Another programme for S2 pupils will start again in October 2012.

Mrs L Dewar- Acting PT Pupil Support

Ski Trip 2012

A fantastic trip once again to Alpe d'Huez ski resort in the French Alps. 24 Leith Academy pupils together with 3 members of staff went for a week long ski trip in the last



week of February. The conditions were perfect, if a little warm. Everyday we had perfect sunshine in which to progress through to achieving the French Ski School Awards. In the evening pupils enjoyed various activities from torch lit bum boarding, indoor assault courses, table tennis, karaoke and relaxation! It was a very rewarding week and a week in which the staff felt particularly proud to be in charge of such a well behaved, motivated group of pupils.

Community Education News ...



Summer term is nearly here and we are enrolling for our adult education classes - with our usual popular classes continuing from 8th April for a 6 week term. Our new courses include **Meditation and Relaxation** for an hour on a Monday 6-7pm to prepare you for the week ahead; **Stretch and Tone** on a Tuesday; a weekly **Bead and Silver Jewellery** course on Wednesdays; **French and Spanish for Holidays** on a Thursday for beginners to learn basic conversation for holidays - or else you can do the **revision conversation based courses in French, Italian and Spanish** if you just want to brush up your language. Also **Comic Book and Storyboard drawing** course on a Friday afternoon for anyone over 16 years.

Our one day courses are over the weekends of 12th /13th May and 26th / 27th May to avoid the holidays, 10-3pm for a one day course at £17.50:

Laughter Therapy - something we could all benefit from in these gloomy times. **Proof Reading** - to help with basic presentation or to assist with seeking a new job. **Baking Bread and Rolls made easy** - scrummy summer feasts - or else **Outdoor Entertaining** with some lazy snacks to liven up your picnic basket or BBQ. Develop your own **Superpower Memory** with some simple exercises to keep the little grey cells active. **Mexican Cookery** or **Japanese Cookery** could be just the thing for some variation to your cooking skills. Or why not try a day of **Sketching Outdoors?**

We have some great exercise classes to tone you up for the beach as well - **Pilates, Boxercise, Bums, Tums & thighs, Swimming, Aqua Fit and Aqua Circuits, Belly Dancing, Zumba, Tap dancing, dancercise, Fitness retro style with Hula Hoops, Yoga, Circuit Training, General Fitness, Badminton and Tai Chi.**



Plus **Chinese and Thai Cookery, French Cuisine, Indian Cookery, Dressmaking, Adobe Photoshop, Pottery, Guitar, Swarovski Crystal Jewellery design, Stained Glass, Watercolour, Computing** and many more. A standard 2 hour class for the term is £39.40 and £26.50 for a 1 hour class.

And remember - parents and Staff are entitled to a 10% discount.

Girls' Football at Leith Academy

Leith Academy Community High School has a new girls' football structure whereby girls can play football from S1 all the way through to S6.

Thank You

Loanhead based, car repair workshop, Edgefield Coachworks have generously supported Leith Academy by donating a set of strips.

The girls, who helped design the strips, are now playing in strips they feel comfortable in and is up to their fashion tastes!



The girls and the school would like to say a massive thank you to Edgefield Coachworks for their support and look to maintain this positive relationship in the future.

Mr Enwood - PE Teacher

Gymnastics News ...

The Lothian Gymnastics Championships this year saw two teams competing from Leith Academy, one at Level 1 and one at Level 2. Unfortunately at the last minute we no longer had a Level 2 team as one of our gymnasts fell down stairs before the competition and ended up in A & E with torn ligaments! However Abbie Davidson and Sarah Glanville still competed and finished with very respectable individual scores.

The Level 1 team comprising Brooke Dougal, Natasha Russell, Rachel Vaughn and Chloe Hunter competed against the other Schools in the Region and performed very well to finish in 4th place only being beaten by the Craigmount teams. The standard at these competitions is very high especially from Craigmount, who are the current British Champions.



Left to right - Brooke Dougal, Natasha Russell, Chloe Hunter & Rachel Vaughn

Gymnastics Coaching

Two of our senior pupils, Sarah Glanville and Toni Quinn, recently attended a UKCC Level 1 Gymnastics Coaching course, with funding from Sports Scotland and the ILA as the cost of this course is £360 - a bit outwith their pocket money! The course was held over three days and covers basic coaching techniques in how to coach and what to coach, from rolls on the floor to swinging on bars. The girls now need to put the theory into practice in the school gym as they have to do some mentored hours and complete a log book followed by a practical exam in their coaching ability. We wish them every success in their future coaching endeavours.

Jane Edwards - Gymnastics Coach

Rugby Club

The Leith Academy Rugby club has recently been involved in a series of games involving boys from local schools. These games have seen a number of successes for the boys and special congratulations to Koral Orkisz, Konrad Kantorski, Ben Meldrum and Ali Kelly for being selected into the Scottish Rugby Union's Edinburgh School's Regional Training camp this Easter.



Leith Academy Rugby Training runs after school every Wednesday from 3:30 - 4:30pm and anyone can attend.

Mr McKenna—PE Teacher

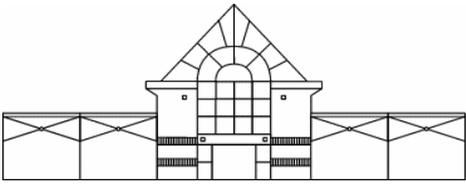
Street Café

The street Café now open at Leith Academy



From 12.30—1.30 pm

A wide choice of snacks and drinks are available.



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