



# Elgin Academy Newsletter

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## Head Teacher's News

School session 2011-2012 will be both an exciting and an historic year for Elgin Academy, as we prepare for our move to the new school building. This presents us with many opportunities, and gives us many reasons to be optimistic about the future of the school.

As Elgin Academy's new Head Teacher, I have spent my first two or three weeks getting to know the school and its community. This will clearly be an ongoing process, but, as I have said elsewhere, my first impressions have been very positive. Elgin Academy is clearly a school with enormous potential, and I will be working very hard with pupils, staff and parents to realise that potential over the coming years.

The School Dress Code is an important way of maintaining and developing high standards and expectations. Overall, the standard is high. However, there are one or two areas which require some attention. Please find the existing dress code outlined on page 4 of this newsletter. Several students are wearing black jeans rather than black trousers—we would ask for your support in trying to ensure that this does not happen. Please also try to ensure that the guidelines about black shoes are also adhered to. Many people comment very favourably on our smartly dressed students, and we hope that we can maintain and improve the current high standard of dress.

This newsletter contains much that is very positive about the school, and we hope that this newsletter will be issued approximately every 4–6 weeks to help everyone keep in touch with the work of the school.

David Barnett

## Exam Success

2011 has been a very successful year for exams at Elgin Academy, with some record highs being achieved on a whole school basis.

This year, a record high percentage of S5 students (16%) gained five or more Highers, with ten students - Katie Chambers, Jodie Clarke, Alice Cruickshank, Charlotte Johnson, Alasdair Keith, Lara Kelly, Laura McFarlane, Rosemary Nicol, Rebecca Stewart and Paul Whelan - gaining five As and one student, Brekhna Aftab, gaining 4 As and 2 Bs. In S6, Jake Smith gained 3 As at Advanced Higher. These are all highlights, but many more pupils have gained very good sets of results, the culmination of much hard work and dedication by pupils, staff and parents. We hope very much to build on this success by ensuring that all pupils are given every opportunity to achieve as much as they possibly can. In common with all other schools in Scotland, we are now in the process of analysing exam result data, with a view to seeing how we can improve



Head Teacher David Barnett with  
Senior Student Brekhna Aftab

## Lifescan Talk

S1 Science students at Elgin Academy, amongst them we hope the future scientific innovators and Nobel laureates of our nation, were treated to a presentation from a professional scientist on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August. The talk was delivered by Cordelia Chuku, representing Lifescan in Inverness, who is also an ambassador for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). Cordelia enthused a packed audience by highlighting the pivotal role of Science in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In addition, she highlighted some of her own research initiatives conducted at Lifescan into the treatment of Diabetes Mellitus. The S1 students understandably balked at the prospect of using the old fashioned method of testing for diabetes by tasting a urine sample, however, they did have the opportunity to use the latest diagnostic equipment. In addition, the S1 students asked a number of pertinent and insightful questions. We would like to thank Cordelia and the Lifescan team for their kind attendance and for such an informative presentation.

## Rugby News

After the success of the U-18 team reaching the Semi-Final of the SRY Brewin Dolphin National Bowl competition, Elgin Academy in conjunction with Elgin High School has entered the SRU Brewin Dolphin National Plate Competition with an Under 18 team due to play Garioch Schools away and the Under 16 team to play Inverness Royal Academy (away). School training is Wednesday 3.30 to 5.00 at the school. The teacher in charge of Rugby is Mr Kelly. Mr Abenheimer is the Elgin Academy Rugby Champion and Miss Goudie is the teacher in charge of Girls' Rugby.

Sic itur ad astra

## Drama Trip to Edinburgh Fringe

On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August at the gut-wrenching hour of 5.30am, the S5&6 Higher and Intermediate Drama pupils departed from Elgin Academy bound for a trip to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. The pupils spent the day immersed in culture, commencing with the performance "Wondrous Flitting" by Mark Thomson, Artistic Director at the Royal Lyceum Theatre. This dark comedy allowed the pupils to experience the efficacy of thrust staging, a range of acting techniques and appreciate the very clever use of set and special effects.

The second production of the day, The Dark Philosophers by the National Theatre of Wales, was an excellent educational tool. The highly original and dynamic production incorporated the full extent of acting techniques taught across the drama curriculum, providing pupils with further inspiration for their course work.

The final production of the day was a libretto, retelling the gruesome tale of the great plague of London, used as a metaphor to draw poetic parallels with modern epidemics. Ten Plagues written by Mark Ravenhill and performed by Marc Almond, (of the 1980s band Soft Cell) achieved a Fringe First Award.

Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to see a range of performance forms and styles. On evaluating the trip, pupils commented on the value of being able to bond with their class, as well as being inspired to be more creative in their use of theatre arts and direction. Asked to sum up the trip in 3 words, the most popular responses were *amazing*, *entertaining* and *insightful*. The pupils now face the challenge of directing & performing their own productions, to take place in the Drama department during September.

## Talent Show

Preparations are under way for this year's Talent Show on **5 October 2011**. The number of people wishing to take part has risen substantially and we look forward to what promises to be an entertaining evening. Tickets will be on sale from the start of October.

## Praise for Languages Links

The various links between the Modern Languages courses – especially S1 - with local businesses have been praised by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching in London. A Highly Commended certificate will be awarded at a ceremony by the European Commissioner in London in September.

S6 Higher French and German candidates will once more be visiting our ASG throughout the year to meet and teach our P7s some French and German.

## Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Ten 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years will be teaming up soon on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme with a group from Forres Academy and will be completing a coastal walk for their practice followed two weeks later with a walk in the Glenlivet Estate.

Students have had to plan their routes, meal plans and sleeping arrangements on top of their own personal organisation and will carry everything they need for the two day treks. Participants will also be required to navigate themselves from start to finish using map and compass.



All pupils are encouraged to address the six 'A's needed for success at Elgin Academy:  
**Attendance Appearance Attitudes Ambition**  
**Attainment Achievement**

# Extra-curricular Activities

Active Schools and Elgin Academy combine to bring you a range of sporting opportunities outwith the school day This table represents activities available for Term One (August—October):

Activity	Day	Location	Dates	Times	Year Group	Cost
Trampolining (need 12 to run session)	Mon	Small Gym	12/9/11-3/10/11	3.30-5.00	S1-6	£8
Fit For Girls	Mon	Small Hall	5/9/11-3/10/11	3.30-4.30	S1-6	FREE
Basketball Elgin Eagles	Tues	Small gym Games Hall	23/8/11-4/10/11	3.45-4.55 5.00-6.00	S1-S3 P5-7	£2 per wk
Badminton	Wed	Games Hall	31/8/11-5/10/11	3.30-4.30	S1-6	FREE
Girls' Rugby	Thu	Playing Fields	31/8/11-5/10/11	4 – 5.00	S1-6	FREE
Girls' football	Thurs	Playing field /games hall	1/9/11-6/10/11	3.30-4.30	S1-3 S4-6	FREE
Mountain Biking	Wed	Bishopmill Primary car park	24/8/11-5/10/11	7.00-8.30	S1-6	TBC
Surfing		Lossie Beach	Go to <a href="http://www.newwavesurf.com">www.newwavesurf.com</a> for more information on dates and times			

\*The netball coaches have left Moray so there will be no netball until a new coach can be found. Look out for notices.

## Holland Trip 2012

Once again Elgin Academy will be travelling to Valkenburg in Holland for activities days in May 2012. During this 5 day trip pupils will be visiting some of the best theme parks that Europe has to offer. The proposed itinerary for the Activities Week trip to Holland is as follows:

- Wednesday 23rd May 2012 - Leave Elgin Academy at approximately 6am for the Hull overnight ferry to Rotterdam.
- Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012 – Arrive in Rotterdam and travel directly to De Eftling Park to spend the day in the park then on to Valkenburg. Check in to Hotel Den Halder and do some sightseeing round Valkenburg.
- Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012 – Travel to Phantasialand to spend the day then back to Valkenburg for evening activities, including laser tag.
- Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012 – Spend the day in Valkenburg trying tobogganing and a chance to do some shopping. Back to the

ferry for the overnight ferry to Hull Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2012 – Travel back to Elgin arriving approximately 8pm. If pupils are interested and would like to be considered they should collect an information letter from Mr Abenheimer or Miss McNeil before Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

## Paintballing Club

Why not join the Pythons Paintballing Club? S1 to S6 pupils are taken to a paintballing arena in RAF Lossiemouth or Ardersier (just outside Inverness). Pupils learn about team building, strategy and problem solving to work collaboratively to win games. Pupils of any level of experience can participate and all have a very exciting, high octane time. The club is now in its third year of running and we usually aim for at least one outing/term. Winter weather can prove an undesirable hindrance!

## Litter

Litter is an ongoing problem in the environs of Elgin Academy. We would be very grateful if you would discuss the issue of litter with your children at home in order to underline the messages they are given at school. It does not, of course, take much to hold on to your food carton or wrapper until you reach a bin. The vast majority do put their litter in the bins provided. However, it is the minority who help to give their school a poor image in the community. We hope to work with the Police and with Elgin North Area Forum to try to improve the litter problem. All students should be reminded that littering is an offence punishable with a £50 fixed penalty. We have also discussed the litter problem with Tesco. We will be trying various strategies over the coming months to address the issue of litter. With all parties pulling together, we can make a positive difference to the situation.

# World Kickboxing Champions!

Three Elgin Academy students experienced considerable success recently when they travelled as part of the Kaizen Club in Elgin to Karlsruhe in Germany for the World Kickboxing Championships, held between Sunday 21 and Sunday 28 August. Jodi Henderson won two gold medals in the 13—17 age category, whilst Bradley McNairn won a gold medal in the Under-12s category. Meanwhile, Dylan Jackson won a silver medal. The school's congratulations go to this trio of talented and dedicated youngsters.



## Musical Activities

Elgin Academy offers a wide range of musical activities to its youngsters:

Orchestra – after school – Monday  
Junior vocal group – Tuesday – Lunch  
Brass group - Wednesday – Lunch  
Woodwind group - S1-3 - Friday – Lunch

Senior vocal group and string group will be starting shortly.

## Parent Council

Elgin Academy Parent Council exists to represent parents and carers at Elgin Academy, and to support the school in everything that it does. As we prepare for the move to the new school, this is a particularly exciting time to become involved with the Parent Council. We are particularly keen to involve parents more fully in the life of the school.

If you feel that you have something to contribute, why not become a member of the Parent Council? To find out more about the work of the Parent Council, you are invited to its first meeting of the new school session, to be held in Elgin Academy on Monday 12 September 2011 at 7.00pm.

## London Trip

Once again, a trip will be going to London to see the sights – Theatre, London Eye, Science Museum, sightseeing and shopping. This is the seventh year this trip has been organised and it has, to date, been a very positive experience for all pupils. All letters have gone out and permission slips returned. Successful applicants will be notified by the first week in September.

## Diary Dates

Monday 12 September—Parent Council  
Thursday 29 September—S3 Parents' Evening  
Wednesday 5 October—Talent Show  
Friday 7 October—End of term

Monday 24 October—Start of term  
Wednesday 2 November—S5/6 Parents' Evening  
Thursday 17 November—S1 Parents' Evening  
Monday 21 November—In-service day  
Tuesday 22 November—In-service day  
Tuesday 6 December—S4 Parents' Evening  
Friday 9 December—Farmers' Market  
Monday 12 December—Music Concert  
Tuesday 13—Monday 19 December—Parties  
Wednesday 21 December—End of term

## School Dress Code

The following is the dress code for Elgin Academy—parents are urged to support this in ensuring that their children come appropriately dressed to school.

“All students should wear uniform as follows:

- Black trousers or skirt of any suitable style (optional school tartan skirt)
- White shirt or blouse of choice
- School tie (red for S1-S4; striped for S5/6)
- Black EA zip top or plain black jersey or cardigan of choice
- Black EA waterproof jacket or suitable outer jacket of choice
- Black footwear

Jeans, coloured tops or trainers are not acceptable dress.”

## Auschwitz Visit

Caitlin McLean and Cydney Risko, our S6 Ambassadors for the project, attended their orientation seminar in Edinburgh on Thursday 25 August. This included examining pre-war Jewish life, hearing first hand testimony from a Holocaust survivor and meeting their group to prepare for the visit to Poland in week commencing Monday 5 September.

## School Football

The football season kicked off this week with the Senior team facing Speyside High and Gordonstoun. Results will follow next week. The first North of Scotland U15 trials took place this week with Jordan Whitta, Rory Cooke, Garth Mitchell and Dean Stewart taking part. Currently only the Senior and U15 teams have coaches. If any parent is interested in coaching the U13 or U14 squads, please contact Mr Baker or Mr Davidson as at present neither of these teams have an adult in charge.