

Wallace Hall Academy

NEWSLETTER



June 2011

Working Together to Achieve More

Queensberry Initiative Wins Top Scottish Education Award!



The Queensberry Initiative was announced as the winner of the Enterprise and Employability Across Learning Award (Secondary) at the prestigious Scottish Education Awards held on Tuesday 14th June at the Hilton Hotel, Glasgow. QI staff and pupils collected this high profile accolade at the glittering ceremony which was hosted by BBC Scotland's Jackie Bird. QI Development Officer, Pat Kirby, said: "What a thrill it was to travel to Glasgow with some of our pupils to collect this fabulous recognition of pupil progress in the outdoor classroom." Full report and pictures on page 2.

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Ardèche Antics

Friday 3rd June saw forty three excited senior pupils and four members of staff from Wallace Hall Academy embark on the legendary Ardèche/Aosta Valley trip. After a gruelling 26 hour bus journey the group finally arrived and enjoyed a week of exciting activities including water sports, rock climbing and gorge walking. The trip was an enormous success with a fantastic time had by all. Full report and pictures inside.



Working Together to Achieve More

Queensberry Initiative Wins Top Scottish Education Award!

On Tuesday 14th June the Queensberry Initiative staff and pupil representatives Leanne Young and Lauren Hyslop were delighted to lift the trophy for the winning school in the Enterprise and Employability Across Learning Award (Secondary).

As Anne Marie Wood, one of the QI staff delighted to be able to attend the award ceremony on behalf of Wallace Hall and the Initiative, said: "Being one of the three finalists was a real achievement for us."

Leanne Peoples, another QI staff member added: "We are all really proud of this school and what we have accomplished in our Initiative over the past two years."

This honour highlights the work which the staff of Wallace Hall and the Queensberry Initiative are undertaking to improve the employability of its children and young people. It also underlines the importance placed on providing enterprising opportunities for pupils in a variety of subjects as well as through projects, modules and groups specifically designed to build the skills young people need to make a success of their future careers.

Barry Graham, Head Teacher commented: "Our Initiative is only just finishing its pilot years and has already picked up two major awards, the first the Dumfries and Galloway Rural LEADER award for Smarter Scotland and this time a national award for enterprise and employability. We are sector-leading in this key area of the Curriculum for Excellence and we plan to keep responding to the needs both of our communities and our young people. Wallace Hall and the Queensberry Initiative are demonstrating how innovation and partnership working can improve the life chances of our pupils and we are very proud of the whole school for our accomplishments in this area. Particular thanks must go to the Queensberry Initiative staff team of Pat Kirby, Leanne Peoples and Anne Marie Wood, who have accomplished great things over the past two years."

The staff and pupil reps who attended the ceremony at the Hilton Hotel, Glasgow, were particularly pleased to represent Dumfries and Galloway as a whole, as Wallace Hall Academy was the only D and G school represented in the finalists of this year's prestigious Scottish Education Awards.

Pat Kirby, Development Officer for the Initiative, stated: "We think that we have now demonstrated lots of ways in which both rural and urban schools can move this agenda forward. We are keen to work with other schools in Dumfries and Galloway and beyond to share some of the insights we have gained through our pilot years."

The Queensberry Initiative gratefully acknowledges the financial support it receives from Dumfries and Galloway Council, the Dumfries and Galloway Rural LEADER Award, the Holywood Trust, Keir Community Council and Tynron Community Council.

The last words have to be from the pupils representing the students of WHA, Leanne and Lauren: "It was great meeting pupils from other schools... we really enjoyed it!"

The Queensberry Initiative will be holding its first annual Celebrating Success event on Wednesday 6th July and all are welcome. Please see the invite below.



Some Queensberry Initiative Activities

Mrs Bruce hopes to find the school soon!



Andrew thinks this is a bridge too far!



Mr Pape inspires his team to win ...



... but first they had to walk the plank



Many fingers make good pizza



...and this pizza is gonna be good!

QI staff hunt for honey



Where have all the trees gone!



Pupil Work

Happiness
by Hannah Jones

If Happiness were a person
She would be full of smiles and beams
And every single night,
Dream sunshiny dreams.

She would love loud places
Like a funfair
And even if it were raining,
Carry on singing without a care.

Happiness would never, ever frown
And of course,
She would never feel down.

Her golden hair would hang around her head,
Like rays of the sun.
She would perform cartwheels and somersaults,
Having such fun.
Her pretty colourful clothes
Would brighten up any day.
With children in a playground,
She would be more than happy to play.



Isla
by Jordan Findlay

Dressing up, dancing, Dora, dollies
Messy, Minnie Mouse, movies,
Small, smiley, silly
Little, loud, lollies

Cheeky, chocolate, colourful, cute
Painting, Peppa Pig, pasta
Funny, flumps, flowers
Toddlers, teddies, tea cups.

All these things my little sister loves!

Book Review

by James Wright
"Harry Potter and the
Goblet of Fire"
by J K Rowling

Star Rating - ★★★★★

Harry Potter is just about to start his fourth year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Harry is getting older and noticing new things. Harry has taken an interest in a girl from Ravenclaw House called Cho Chang. The Dark Lord, Voldemort, is trying to return. Harry and Voldemort's endless battle is growing near. There are new spells to be learned but Harry is about to have a big surprise.

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of

Fire" is an exciting and excellent fantasy novel from the award winning novelist J K Rowling. This book is suitable for children, teenagers and adults.

The author, J K Rowling, makes all the characters believable and strong by putting them in different situations - for instance how Ron and Hermione always stick by Harry no matter what.

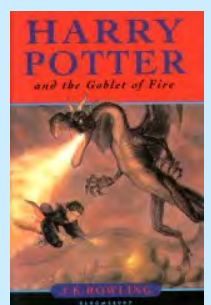
She makes the book really good by putting lots of vivid description in the story. A quotation that shows this is "Fawkes, Professor Dumbledore's phoenix was standing on a golden perch beside the door. The size of a swan, with magnificent scarlet and gold plumage, he swished his long tail and blinked benignly at Harry." This is just one of the many good descriptions that J K Rowling puts in the book.

For me the ending of the novel

is the best part of the story. Voldemort is reborn. Harry is finally face to face with the Dark Lord. Voldemort lets Harry try to fight him... then it gets interesting.

When you finish the book you will instantly want more Harry Potter. When you read the next Harry Potter book you will feel just the same way as you did with the last book.

The events in this book link really well from the other Harry Potter books in the Harry Potter series. All the tension from the first book, when Harry first fights The Dark Lord, is in this book. I would thoroughly recommend "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire".



Mark My Words!

Inspired by World Book Day some of Mr Hall's pupils, now in S2, recently combined their literacy and design skills in the National Book Tokens annual bookmark competition.

In a series of collaborative lessons involving English teacher Mrs McMillan the pupils designed and produced bookmarks to promote the enjoyment of personal reading. Having considered and discussed suitable images and slogans, the pupils used a variety of techniques and media to create the finished products (a selection of these are pictured left) which are now in use in the school library. Photograph right shows some of the pupils involved with their bookmarks.



Recital Recognition by Caitrin Stirling

Catherine Anderson won the Friendship Cup for Verse Speaking, and Best Verse Speaker for First and Second year, at the 2011 Robert Burns World Federation Limited National Secondary Schools Festival, with her recital of Robert Burns' poem 'To A Mouse'. Catherine has been doing recitals since Primary 5, and is familiar with many of Burns' works, but 'To A Mouse' particularly stood out for her. After coming through the regional part of the competition on top, she and the rest of the Dumfries and Galloway team then progressed to the national level stage, with the final being held at Lockerbie Academy on Saturday the 30th of April. Teams were present from

all over the country, but Catherine successfully fended off the competition to emerge victorious in her category, with a 100% mark for her recital. The D & G team collected the highest points for recital and the highest overall points in the competition. At the final stage of the competition, the best in the four categories of Verse Speaker, Singer, Bagpipes, and Instrumental compete against each other. Catherine was a little more nervous than before at this stage, having to do her recital again in front of a large crowd. The final title of Burnsian of the Year was won by an exceptional singer. Catherine's success in the competition is not the first that Wallace Hall Academy



has seen; Ewan McCall was also a past winner in Verse Speaking.

Supporting Our Pupils



The Principal Teachers of Pupil Support for 2011 – 2012 are Mrs L Wilson (P7, S1 and Additional Support for Learning), Mrs K Fraser (S4, S5 and S6) and Mrs P Kirby (S2 and S3).

If you have any concerns about your son/daughter please feel free to contact the relevant PT Pupil Support by telephoning the school or emailing one of the addresses below.

- ◆ Mrs Wilson: lwilson596@ea.dumgal.sch.uk
- ◆ Mrs Fraser: kfraser980@ea.dumgal.sch.uk
- ◆ Mrs Kirby: pkirby384@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Clothes recycling - funding the outdoor classroom

We now have a 'Rag Bag' clothes recycling bin in the car park. Rag Bag collect the clothes when the bin is full and the school receives payment (per kilogram) for the clothes collected. A big 'thank you' to all of those who have used this facility.

The bin has been filled twice since March and we have raised almost £100 from this. Money raised from the clothes will be put towards the outdoor classroom (for example, equip-

ment for use with our vegetable patch and polytunnel). The funds, so far, have helped to pay for Geoff Forest of Sustainable Design Crafts to come into school and teach some of our S1, S2 and S4 pupils the craft of willow weaving. Pupils enjoyed a day creating raised beds and conical bean supports to be used in the vegetable patch.

Please continue to hand in your old clothes whenever possible.



Staff Achievement

The school's DofE Co-ordinator, Catherine McNay, was recently recognised for her hard work and countless hours spent volunteering with DofE. Mrs McNay was presented with the Anthony Murray-Flutter Memorial Award at the Dumfries and Galloway Award Association AGM.

The school is justifiably proud that Mrs McNay has been awarded this honour as she devotes an enormous amount of her own time working with pupils on DofE activi-

ties including residentials, overnight camping, day walks and training events. Mrs McNay is an outstanding example of a committed and dedicated individual who embraces new challenges while helping and supporting our young people to achieve their potential. We are delighted that she has received this accolade which is held in high regard across Dumfries and Galloway. On behalf of the school and all our DofE participants, congratulations, Mrs McNay, and thank you.



Ailie elected as your MSYP

At the end of March this year I was elected to become a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament. I would like to thank all of the people that voted for me and who made this fantastic opportunity a reality for me.

At the weekend, I travelled to Stirling for my first National Sitting where I was enlightened about what it is really like to be a MSYP. It was here the next National campaign was chosen which was for Marriage Equality for Homosexual

and Heterosexual couples. This was an inspiring weekend where I witnessed many experienced MSYPs participating in debates and showing the new MSYPs what it was all about.

I came back from this experience excited and prepared for challenges ahead. Please feel free to come and speak to me about any local issues you may have. I look forward to fulfilling my time as a MSYP and representing you.

Five senior pupils from Wallace Hall Academy will be leaving for a trip of a lifetime to Honduras to visit the rain-forest and tropical coral reefs. They will be taking part in scientific research and learning to scuba dive. The pupils have funded the trip independently and have been busy raising funds to cover their costs. We wish them well on this amazing adventure. See the next school newsletter for full report and pictures.

Achieving Success

The evening of Thursday, 28th of April was an important one for many of the senior pupils at Wallace Hall Academy when they officially said goodbye to their childhood at the annual Wallace Hall Academy Awards Ceremony. This was an auspicious but light-hearted occasion which marked the school's wealth of achievements along with the end of an era for some 170 pupils.



The pupils were piped to their seats at the start of the ceremony by Callum Park and Graeme Marshall and the event began with the customary address from Head Teacher, Barry Graham. Guest speaker for the evening was Gavin Stevenson, the Chief Executive of Dumfries and Galloway Council, who entertained the capacity audience with an up-beat account of

his life after leaving school.

Among the many prestigious awards presented was a new trophy named after outgoing and well loved PE teacher, Ian Wilson, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the sporting ethos at Wallace Hall Academy. Maimie Sloan was the first recipient of this trophy and she was delighted to be presented with this award for all the hard work she puts into working with younger pupils in the PE department, particularly in coaching with the after-school hockey club. Dux of the school this year, sponsored by UWS, was Robert Peacock, awarded this accolade in recognition of his excellent Higher results in S5.

The evening was punctuated with performances by some of Wallace Hall Academy's talented musicians and dancers. Outgoing pupils were kept entertained by slide shows of photographs showing many happy memories of their time at Wallace Hall. Mrs Kerry



tribute to the senior pupils at Wallace Hall Academy and wished them well on their transition to life beyond school. Head boy and girl, Stephen Morrison and Lisa Murphy delivered a heart-felt positive speech of their time at Wallace Hall Academy and thanked all the



staff involved for making their journey through school so meaningful.

Mr Graham closed the evening by thanking everyone who contributed towards the success of this evening in any way.



Fraser, principal organiser of the event and PT of S4/S5/S6, paid



The Wallace Hall Easter Concert

Report by Emma Ackland

Photographs by Iona Brown

Tuesday the 22nd of March was the date of this year's Wallace Hall Easter concert. As usual it was a date we all had marked down on our calendars as these concerts are always excellent, and this year was no different. With a few new faces arriving on the scene and some different instruments the night was one to remember, with the Bailey Hall struggling to fit everyone inside. Backstage it was rather hectic with everybody getting ready to go on stage and last minute practices, but everybody was excited and, bar a few "I can't do this!" moments - which were quickly forgotten - the performers were all quite calm and ready to go out there and do their best.

Performances from Beth Johnstone, Warren Anderson, Jordan Tweedie, Jadie Wedge, Amie Kirkpatrick, Amy Landsburgh, Lisa Murphy, Lauren Dalgleish, Adele Queen, Kayla Kerr, Prussia Snailham, Jenny Hutcheson, Amy Muirhead, Jack Kehoe and Erin Williamson all gave people something to talk about. The group acts included Cara Halliday, accompanied by Kelvin Riley, Angus Blair and Grace Dale, Muir Coulter who played along with Rory Crawford and Andrew Macdonald, Part

Two (Aiden Halliday and Angus Bruce) and The Other Guys (Angus Blair, Ben Lord, Meyrick Harrison, Jack Gordon and Rory Crawford). The audience were kept entertained from the word go by comperes Paula Fitzpatrick and Scott Lisett who introduced each act throughout the night, making sure there wasn't a dull moment. Everyone involved had a great time and we hope that the people that attended had as much fun watching as we did performing.





High Achievers

by Brenna Aston

The Nithsdale Community Achievement Awards are a prestigious, high profile, fancy and exclusive event, so you can imagine our surprise when we were invited! Following our fundraising events last year, our team, consisting of Elisha Scott, Nicola Robertson, Tegan Kirkwood, Lisa Murphy and I were nominated for the 'Inspirational Individual' category, to our extreme surprise.

Once through the section of 'Motivation' and 'Words of Thanks' at 11 o'clock, our secret nominator Mrs Whyte, came on the huge screens at the front, explaining to everyone why we were worthy of this award. Entirely prepared to put on a smile and clap for the other worthy contestants as they made their way to receive their trophy, our team sat in suspense. We can honestly say that we did not expect to hear the

words 'Haiti Volunteers', as a group of 5 nominated for the 'individuals section' we thought our chances were pretty low so you can imagine our faces when they announced us winners. Overall it was a rewarding night and we would like to extend our thanks to Mrs Whyte for nominating and supporting us.



After School Excellence with Duke of Edinburgh

At the recent Nithsdale Community Achievement Awards Wallace Hall Academy's DofE Group successfully won the After School Excellence Award. This was a major achievement considering the stiff competition from the other nominees in this category.

The group were nominated for their hard working and dedicated attitude to the local community and for all the volunteering that the individuals do both within school and after school. DofE Co-ordinator, Catherine McNay, said "I am extremely proud of all of the

young people who give up their time to come along and develop their personal skills while helping each other to achieve their own goals. I have had a very large group this year and each and every one of them has given their best. We are now into "Expedition Season" which means that you need to watch the local hills for our young people showing off their map-reading and survival skills!" DofE will re-commence on a Tuesday evening after the summer holidays. Please see Mrs McNay if you can help out with the group or would like more information.



As You Like It - we certainly did



Globe Touring, the world-famous company of experienced Shakespearean actors and musicians, recently performed the comedy "As You Like It" at the Crichton Campus. Fifty Higher

and Advanced Higher English students from Wallace Hall were lucky enough to witness this crowd-pleasing production.

The play is based on the kind of show the Elizabethan audience wanted to see: a mixture of romance, fighting, comedy, cross-dressing and music – and it had lost none of its appeal over the centuries. The versatile actors took full advantage of the tree-lined outdoor acting space, using the element of surprise to bring characters on from out of nowhere.

Altogether this was a highly enjoyable experience. Sun, sweets and Shakespeare: what could be better? We'll definitely be going back next year, taking cushions, food and – depending on the weather – blankets!

Fantastic Finalists

Wallace Hall Academy reached the national finals in the UK's biggest environmental competition, the first Climate Week Challenge.

Pupils from Wallace Hall Academy recently competed with over 100,000 other people from schools, colleges and workplaces across the UK, in the country's biggest environmental competition.

The Climate Week Challenge was launched on the first day of Climate Week (Monday 21st March) and involved teams of four to six people. It required pupils to use their creativity and innovation to generate ideas that will help to combat climate change.

The exact challenge was only revealed at 9am that morning and teams were asked to 'develop a green idea to save or make money'.

At Wallace Hall Academy, 48 pupils from S1 – S5 took part. Two teams were then selected and put forward for the national competition.

The junior team developed the idea of the Rain-a-Drain. This involved a waterwheel secured under a street drain. Running rainwater would then make the wheel turn, producing energy. The energy produced from this would be used to power nearby devices, such as streetlights, which would save electricity costs. The senior entry involved Treelectricity; harnessing energy from wind. Magnets, which would be attached to wire and then onto tree branches, would move up and down within copper coils in the ground when the wind blew. This would generate energy which would be stored in batteries and used to power lights and small appliances.

The junior team were successful in being selected as national finalists within their category; one of four

teams from around the country and the only team from Scotland. The pupils behind the Rain-a-Drain idea were Lucy Brown, Melissa Dundas, Eliana Fleming, Mollie Hoddinott, Hannah Jones and Niamh Snailham. The final judging was carried out by a celebrity panel including Ben Fogle, Garry Neville, KT Tunstall and Eliza Doolittle.

Kirsten VanDyke said: "Our pupils came up with some fantastic ideas and showed much enthusiasm and creativity throughout the day. The two entries were chosen because they displayed innovative thinking and really tackled key issues which the challenge asked entrants to respond to.

"The challenge was an engaging and useful way for our pupils to continue learning about the damaging effects climate change is having on our planet and also an excellent opportunity to develop strategic thinking about the potential solutions.

"Although they did not win the event, reaching the finals was a terrific achievement for both our pupils and the school as a whole."



Send My Sister to School

Report by S4 Communication Class

S4 pupils in the English Communication class have been leading Wallace Hall's contribution to the Send My Sister to School campaign.

This is about the 67 million children across the world who don't get the chance to go to school, most of whom are girls. Instead they have to work on farms, in markets or in factories, or look after family members. All of them really want to go to school. World leaders have promised that by 2015 every child in the world will be in school, but there is still a long way to go before that happens.

Pupils from Wallace Hall will be writing and decorating messages supporting the campaign and sending them to David Mundell MP who will then pass them on to Prime Minister David Cameron.



Contacting the school

The telephone number for Wallace Hall Academy is **01848 332120**. The fax number is now 01848 332564 with the email address: woffice358@ea.dumgal.sch.uk. Our Office Staff are your first point of contact. They will be pleased to deal with any enquiry you wish to make regarding your child and to put you in touch with the relevant member of staff. Outside office hours you may leave a message on our answering machine. Please contact us if you have any problems. We are here to help. Visit the school website: www.wallacehallacademy.com for the latest news and information.

Budapest Trip

Report by Rebecca Moodycliffe

On Sunday the 22nd of May, five students on the Comenius Pupil Exchange Programme set off from Thornhill to Glasgow airport, on their way to Hungary. We flew with KLM to Amsterdam and then onwards to Budapest. Despite being stopped at security a few times, we arrived in Budapest on time and were picked up by the host families that we would be staying with. The first thing we noticed was the sheer heat, 30°C. We were then scheduled to spend the afternoon with our hosts. Scott and I left to go to "Aquaworld" (the largest indoor water theme park in Europe) and Michael, Rory and Lenny spent their time elsewhere getting to know their hosts.

The next day we all headed to the Xántus János High School where we split into groups and worked on presentations. The project work was based on modernisation and what we can do to make our schools more efficient. After the project work we left on the school minibus for a tour around the sights of Budapest. We got the chance to see the Heroes' Square, the Budapest State Opera House, the Budapest Parliament, the museum of fine arts and many other great sights. The architecture throughout the city was fascinating. That night all the Hungarian and Scottish students went bowling, which would have been good if we hadn't been so bad at it!

On the Tuesday we arrived at the school and set off for a visit to the Hungarian Parliament, which was enjoyed by all. The building was on the Pest side of the river Danube and had wonderful views over to the Buda

side. After our visit to the parliament we visited the Dohány synagogue, which is the largest synagogue in Europe and the second largest in the world. We also got to visit the Jewish Museum, which was constructed in the 1930s and holds a collection of religious relics and a Holocaust room. On the Tuesday evening we went to the Margaret Island, which is the largest island on the Danube. There the boys played a Hungarian/Scottish football match which despite our best efforts they still lost.

On Wednesday the 25th we got a day off from the project work and visited Szentendre, a scenic town on the river Danube. Here we tried langos (a Hungarian pastry, which was delicious), we took a walk around the market stalls, taught the Hungarians how to skim stones and tried the best ice cream ever. We also visited a marzipan museum (marzipan still tastes bad over there) where we saw life sized marzipan figures of Princess Diana and Michael Jackson, which was pretty weird. We visited an open air museum of country life where we experienced what it would have been like to live in Hungary in the 18th century (we also spent about half an hour doing a jigsaw...).

On our final day in Budapest we had to present the result of our projects in our groups. After that we took the underground to the Castle District, an area on the Buda Side of the Danube, which is surrounded by a massive wall. From there we could see the whole of Budapest. We then walked to the Buda Castle, the Fisherman's Bastion and St Matthias Church. After that we went to the Trófea Grill Restaurant for a farewell lunch with our hosts.

Despite the flight back being delayed, we had a fantastic time and we look forward to welcoming our exchange students from Hungary back to Wallace Hall Academy.





Heriot Watt Trip by Emma Harkness and Sophie Johnson



On the 5th of May, a group of Higher Physicists went on a trip to Heriot Watt University. We set off on our 2-hour journey to Edinburgh, arriving at Heriot Watt at about 11am, where we immediately found our rooms and unpacked. We then were treated to a tour of the university before we were ushered to the indoor football pitch. However, most of us girls were not interested in playing football, so we went to get a snack with Mrs Dalglish.

After lunch, it was time to go to the Physics Department to do our experiments. Mr Jack's class was to do the experiments on the first day, while the other class watched a demonstration by Heriot Watt staff. Our experiments were of First Year university students' standard. The experiments contained a diverse range of subjects which were related to the Higher Physics course, including measuring the speed of sound, finding the half-value thickness, thin lenses experiment and magnetic fields. We recorded our findings and made graphs of our results. We then went back to our rooms for a while before it was dinnertime. Some of us were feeling completely stuffed by this point and felt like we had been eating non-stop since we arrived!

After dinner, we headed into Edinburgh for the Ghost Tour at Edinburgh Dungeons. However, we arrived an hour early so we were given some time to explore the Royal Mile in small groups first. We used this time to get a drink at Starbucks and to take loads of photos with various statues, acting like proper tourists! We met up after about forty-five minutes and made our way to the start of the Ghost Tour.

It was there that we met our guide, a lady in a long dark cape, who seemed a bit...scary! She began by leading us over to a statue and telling us a story about how it used to be the site of torture and executions. She then proceeded to ask Mr Jack and Connor to come up to the statue while she demonstrated how the criminals would have been whipped in front of the jeering crowds. After taking us to a couple of other creepy sites around the Royal Mile, she led us down into the Edin-

burgh Dungeons. The dungeons are situated down a dark alleyway. Inside, they were lit by candlelight, and were very dark and quiet. We listened to our guide telling us stories about the first room. We learned that hundreds of years ago, the dungeons were home to hundreds of very poor homeless people, who were hungry and sick. She said that there were particular people who passed away in the dungeons whose spirits still resided there. The guide told us a story about a time when she had seen a ghost in the room, and invited us to take pictures in the hope that some paranormal activity would show up in the photos. In another room, she told us about the passages in the dungeons, which were used by body snatchers to take fresh bodies to the nearby medical school, who would pay the body snatchers through a hole in the ground. At the end of the tour, we went to the gift shop to buy souvenirs, before heading back to the bus.

It was 10pm by the time we got back to our rooms. We were told we had to be in our rooms with the lights out by 11pm, but until then we could do as we pleased. We had a great time in the girls' corridor, eating sweets while sitting around the TV in Rosie's room. When eleven o' clock came, we all headed back to our rooms to go to bed.

We had been told the previous night that breakfast would be served between eight and eight-thirty am, so we should make sure we were at the canteen by this time. Surprisingly, all of the five girls managed to be up, dressed and fully packed by 7.55am, so we were among the first there! We had breakfast cards, which entitled us to a full fried breakfast; so, needless to say, we were all stuffed full afterwards. From there, we headed back to the Physics Department, after a quick look at the university's largest lecture theatre. Today, the groups would be swapping round, so our group would now be watching the demonstration by Heriot Watt staff.

The first activity we did when we got in was to make spectrometers out of cardboard and a CD. We then learned how photographs are developed and we had the opportunity to make our own photographs out of a





'camera' that we made ourselves, out of cardboard and a lens. Surprisingly, most of these turned out quite well! We then watched some experiments involving liquid nitrogen. These included one where liquid nitrogen was mixed with warm water to make a freezing cold mist, which we were able to touch. Then, we watched as the making of 'Liquid Nitrogen ice cream' was demonstrated. Fortunately, it wasn't actually made out of liquid nitrogen. The actual ingredients included cream, strawberries and chocolate chips. Liquid nitrogen was then added to cool the mixture down to turn it into ice cream. We learned that the ice cream would still be safe to eat because nitrogen isn't poisonous; it makes up approximately 70% of the gases in the air so we breathe it in all the time! A member of staff then produced some ice cream cones, and we all had a chance to eat a scoop of the ice cream. Surprisingly, it was actually really nice. One of the pupils then volunteered to go and put his hand in the liquid nitrogen. Fortunately, he was stopped before he actually put his hand in, as we were told it would have made his fingers snap off! Dipping flowers into the liquid nitrogen then demonstrated this effect. When they were first taken out, the flowers seemed fine, but they disintegrated as soon as they were touched. We then each had a chance to dip some flowers in the liquid nitrogen to observe the

effects for ourselves. It was all really interesting, but the flowers didn't meet a very happy end.

After the last of the Physics experiments were completed, we left the university and drove into the centre of Edinburgh. First, we went to Pizza Hut for our lunch. It was all really fun and tasty – and filling! At the end of the meal, a large cake was brought out for John, as it was his birthday that day. The cake was amazing (both looks and taste-wise), but after a meal where you were literally meant to eat *everything*, some of us were too full to manage much cake. We waddled (because of the food weighing us down) onto Dynamic Earth. We sat outside to have a couple of pictures taken before we went inside the HUMUNGOUS building.

For about the first hour-and-a-quarter we focused on a Physics lesson, learning about nuclear energy and trying to work out how to improve our planet's energy sources. We then went onto the actual tour, which was brilliant! We started off by going into this lift where pictures appeared on the walls as we seemed to be going 'back in time'. We end up 'seeing the big bang' and then walking out of the lift into a time that is several million years previous. We walked through many rooms full of things that move and turn 3D and all sorts. It was fascinating and we end up in this huge dome-shaped room where you basically watch a video on the roof about astronauts – what makes it exciting is that it all seems sort of 3D and makes you feel a bit sick. It was amazing.

It was the end of our trip. It was time to get back on the bus and head home. Our spirits were pretty low now that the trip was over, but the journey was made very eventful by the fact that the bus broke down about an hour into the trip. To be honest, I think everyone was glad in a way because the trip was extended! There was lots of singing and happiness on the new bus as we continued our journey back to the school.

We had a fantastic time and would all love to do it again. We'd like to thank Mr Jack, Dr Fulton and Mrs Dalgliesh for such a wonderful time.



MER meet the Miners

Pupils from the Managing Environmental Resources class enjoyed a visit to Glenmuckloch Open Cast Mine at Kirkconnel to see the impact on the local environment and how the mining company works hard to limit its effect.

They were lucky enough to get right down into the digging area of the mine which gave a view of the vast operation currently underway where they mine thousands of tonnes of coal each day. Pupils also got the chance to clamber over the huge digging machines working there. Thanks to Derek Moir, the site manager, and all his staff for organising the event.



Musical Maestros

Earlier this year some of our musicians entertained at a concert for the Community in Kirkton. The audience was treated to a varied programme that was very well executed. Comperes for the night were Hannah Ferguson and Kelvin Riley. All of the musicians taking part declined to accept the fee offered and generously donated this money back to the local community. Well done to all those taking part. Picture shows L - R: Amie Kirkpatrick, Adele Queen, Erin McGinley, Hannah Ferguson, Martha Ferguson, Amy Muirhead, Kelvin Riley, Erin Williamson and Grace Dale.



Top author, Dan Freedman, will be visiting Wallace Hall Academy on Wednesday, 6th July. Dan is one of the leading football fiction writers in the country and, having worked at the top level of the game for the past decade, combines his work in the sport with writing the best-selling series of Jamie Johnson football novels. For more information visit www.dantheauthor.co.uk. See the next newsletter for full report and pictures.

Election Report

By Catherine Anderson



The first week back after the long weekend all three Modern Studies classes were set the task of participating in a mock election. Each class was split into two groups which would be the group that we would be working with in both History and Modern Studies before the day of the election arrived. This meant all six teams had to agree on what party they would be standing for at the outset.

Firstly, we had to decide on a candidate, this would be the person that would read out the very important speech trying to get as many people as possible to vote for them and their party. Each group had to have very good tactics and work together in the process of this event. A lot of hard work needed to be done before the much dreaded election speech and that fateful polling day: tasks such as making posters and banners publicising who your candidate is and what party they are candidate for. Other jobs that were to be done were the extra things that would hopefully give you that little advantage, which each team seemed to have plenty of.

Wednesday had quickly passed

by and Thursday had come in a flash. This was our last chance to get people to vote for us before they entered the bustling polling station. The whole of lunch time most groups were buzzing around like bees surrounding anyone that came close to the polling stations telling who to vote for and why, my group, the Liberal Democrats (unfortunately) bribing voters with the occasional mouth watering brownies, cookies, éclairs or some melting in your mouth toffees. These were all soon gone, not only because of the voters but also because of the people giving them out. After lunch during our Modern Studies class, the very tense moment came when all the votes were being counted. The results that everyone had been waiting for all week were at last in Mr Graham's hands. Unfortunately all of



my hard work hadn't paid off. As expected the SNPs won by a long margin with Thomas Grierson as their candidate.

I feel the winning party, the SNPs, did not win the election with their speech nor with their posters

etc., but because of whom they had chosen as their candidate. I think this made the difference because Thomas, or otherwise known as Norm, is a very popular, well known, funny and jolly person plus he was standing for a very good party that is favoured quite a lot.

The other parties did not win the election mainly because the SNP had their two very good qualities as stated above which were very hard to compete against. Also, perhaps, some groups were maybe not trying quite as hard as others were when it came down to making extra posters etc. I feel that everyone voting bypassed how good or bad the speeches were and only voted for a group depending on whether they were friends with the candidate or not.

Whilst doing this task I learned quite a lot of things. One of the main things that I learned about was the different parties, especially the Liberal Democrats, information about what their policies are and what they believe in. Another thing I learned was how the election is run and how much work there is to do especially as the candidate for a party.

Overall I found this activity very satisfying, interesting and enjoyable. I enjoyed it all and there was no negative experience. Although losing was disappointing the whole process was an enjoyable educational experience and I thoroughly enjoyed participating in it.



WHA Trip to Ardèche and Aosta Valley

by Ashka Desai and Catherine Bonn

We left for Ardèche on Friday, 3rd June 2011, only no one wanted to get on the bus as it was the hottest day of the year so far! Forty seven people stuck roasting in a tin box for 29 hours - what a treat! And to add insult to injury, it was raining when we arrived in Ardèche. However, once we had settled in and been greeted by the enthusiastic staff it was all worth it.

On starting the canoe descent we were all pretty scared from the talk they'd given us, but it turned out to be great fun, with cries of "Rainbow Donkeys!" and other similar silly chants all down the river. A night spent 'under the stars' turned out to be in a tent on a wooden floor, due to the miserable rain. The second day included some ungraceful landings off the rock jumps and a scary but beautiful drive back along the cliff tops. At the end of our time in France, we all received T-shirts with our name and a description of the descent on the back, each signed by

the instructors, which was a great gift so we will never forget the time we spent in Ardèche.

Although the journey through the Alps to the next stage of our trip in the Aosta Valley, north west Italy, was long, there was beautiful scenery of glaciers and snow capped mountains and endless tunnels and toll booths including the Mont Blanc tunnel where, according to the Geordie bus driver, if we didn't get rid of the rubbish, we'd be arrested. We had the chance to have a traditional Italian meal of pizza which was really good even though no one understood the menu! We all worked off our pizzas in the white water rafting that followed with some crazy Italian instructors singing "Bruno Mars" and the "Macarena". We weren't put off by the glacial water and at the end we all dived, leapt and bombed in. The professional photographer took some amazing photos which we bought CDs of, a really thoughtful way to capture the memories of the experience. Tin foil men and some skimpy bin

bag outfits, along with some rather inappropriate nursery rhymes, finished off the day.

Rock climbing, the high ropes course and boulder squeezes allowed a chance for everyone to overcome their fears of small spaces and heights and were also some of the best activities of the trip. Gorge walking was a challenge, as most of the time was spent in the freezing 2°C glacial river, which left many shivering, but happy at the end. One of the definite highlights of the trip was the cross dressing 'Miss Villeneuve' and 'Bob the Builder' competition with some extremely convincing competitors including "Francesca" and "Ting Ting".

A huge thank you to the staff who worked hard all year to organise the trip: Miss Wilson, Mr McEwen and Miss Fulton, and also to Mr Mack who kindly took the place of Dr Fulton who unfortunately was unable to make the trip. It certainly was a trip of a lifetime and will live on in our memories for many years.





Activities Week at Wallace Hall Academy

Activities Week at Wallace Hall Academy was once again a fantastic success with a wide variety of activities on offer for the pupils including: A Forest Feast, Boxing, Fly Fishing, French Cookery, Building a Giant Tetrahedron, Liverpool Trip, Performance of "Macbeth", Model Making, Ice Skating, Queensberry



Initiative Activities, Team Activities, Touch Rugby, Treasure Hunt, A Tree Walk, Wii Dancing and the opportunity to try Willow Weaving. There really was something for everyone to enjoy. Thanks to Mr Riley, Mrs Helen McLean and all of the staff who helped out and took part. Roll on next year!





Liverpool Trip

By Elspeth Nicholson and Amy Redpath

At half past nine, two buses full of second year pupils and some very excited staff set off on their trip to Liverpool. The first leg of the journey took around three hours which felt like much longer because of how excited we all were. Our first stop seemed to be in the middle of nowhere. We had arrived for our visit to the mysterious White Scar Caves. They were wet and cold but it was nice to stretch our legs after the long journey.

After the caves we set off on another journey to where we would be staying for the next two

nights. We got some time to relax and unpack when we got there and then it was off to dinner and bowling. The dinner was...alright! Afterwards we got ready then boarded the bus yet again for bowling. It was a great way to have some time with our friends after a long boring day of travelling.

On the second day of our trip it was chucking it down outside but that didn't stop the teachers making the museum and shopping people walk. The people who went to Anfield got the bus which we were all very annoyed about because we came back soaked and they were bone dry! The museums were very interesting and shopping was excellent, especially the FIVE STORY Primark! After we had spent all our money we headed back to the hostel for lunch.

When we'd finished lunch we got changed and headed for

Knowsley Safari Park. It was fun and interesting to see all the animals except we couldn't work out how to turn the flash on our cameras off so all our pictures of lions and elephants were really blurred!

We set off back to the hostel for dinner before changing again and going to the cinema to see the new blockbuster "Pirates of the Caribbean". The film was amazing and we had the whole cinema to ourselves!

The next morning we got ready in double time and we waited for what felt like hours for the teachers to be ready to leave for the renowned Blackpool Pleasure Beach. It was better than anything we'd heard about it and we were all very tired and wet (from the Valhalla) when we got on the bus again.

Finally after three days of fun and excitement we were home. Overall the trip was amazing. We would love to go again but then to see more of the city itself. We would like to thank all the teachers who gave up their time to organise such a fantastic trip.



DofE Expedition time!

Ten of last year's S4 pupils set off into Dalbeattie Forest last week to embark on what they saw as an easy couple of days walking and camping with their mates. Little did they know that they would encounter sunburn, fog,

muddy paths and midges with bites worse than Dracula!

They set off with high spirits through the forest with the intention of heading towards Sandyhills. A couple of hours later, they had detoured around the

more scenic pathways in the forest (just to add in a couple of extra miles they assured me!) and finally headed south towards the coast. A harsh lesson to learn; however navigation was top priority from then on! The sun shone and everyone was happy setting up camp later that afternoon overlooking the sea (once all the tent poles had been located that is....!) After several games of football and a walk along the beach, it was time for food. A la carte dining on the stoves was had by all aka Pot Noodles.

Day two started off a little damper than hoped but it soon blew up into a lovely warm day. The group followed the coastal pathway to Rockcliffe and then finally onto Kipford for their well deserved ice-creams. Everyone was delighted when the DofE assessor said they had all passed and that they could look at their blisters with pride.

Well done everyone – you have done yourselves proud.



Parent Council News

The Parent Council has had a very busy term. We welcomed two members of WHA staff as guest speakers to our meeting held on Tuesday 10th May; Caroline Menzies and Pat Kirby. Caroline gave an overview of life in the Library and highlighted how busy it is all through the school day. She warmly thanked the Parent Council for their recent donation, some of which was spent on the visit to the school in March by childrens' author, Cathy Cassidy. Pat showed the film made by the BBC about the outdoor classroom and explained how the Queensberry Initiative offers pupils the opportunity to acquire additional skills that will be useful in the world of work. All Parent Council members agreed that a sum of money should be donated to support the purchase of a garden shed to store QI equipment.

On the 30th of June, between 4 and 7 pm, there will be a special Health and Wellbeing event for the whole community. Members of the Parent Council

and a small group of staff have been working hard for the last two months to put this event together. There will be over 30 displays and opportunities to get information related to health and wellbeing. Sporting events including football, hockey, badminton, bowling and boxercise sessions will be on offer and there will be displays related to nutrition and looking/feeling good. There will be opportunities to make jewellery and watch some Ready Steady Cook competitions. Healthy food will be on sale and some groups of our pupils will be providing information about how they have become more confident individuals during the last year. This is sure to be a fantastic evening with something for everyone to enjoy.

We are very keen to welcome new members onto our Parent Council and we are here to represent the views of all parents. Our meetings are very informal with tea and coffee provided - please feel free to come along and join us. A big thank you to Mary Anderson who leaves us this summer.

Finally, can I wish you all a lovely summer holiday and I look forward to meeting all our new S1 parents in the Autumn term.

The Drama department has recently started a blog to highlight the activities of the young people in the Drama department. You can read it at <http://wallacehalldrama.edublogs.org>



Photograph of Eclipse - Laura is fifth from the left

Laura Brown, S3, has been enjoying the taste of success recently through her hobby of synchronized skating. Laura skates with two local teams, Solway Eclipse and Solway Stars, and they recently competed against forty three teams from all over the United Kingdom, Italy and Iceland. Solway Eclipse, the junior team, won Gold

Skating sensations

in the preliminary category, the title of Scottish Synchronised Champions and were presented with the International Trophy D'Ecosse 2011. Nine teams competed in this category and Solway Eclipse had the highest score throughout the day. The older team, Solway Stars, won a bronze medal in the Intermediate 1 Category.

These achievements were all the more impressive due to the teams having only 6 months to rebuild their skating skills due to the closure of the Ice Bowl for refurbishment. Following the teams' success, Solway Eclipse won the Nithsdale Sports Council Award for a Junior Team with Solway Stars awarded second place in the same category. Laura said that "competing in the synchronised skating teams is fantastic and I really enjoy training with people from all different schools in Dumfries. We have all become quite close and I have made some great friends."

Top at Table Tennis



S2 pupil, Andrew Kennedy, is starting to make quite a name for himself on the Table Tennis circuit. He started the sport at 10 years old and used to only play for fun but now, three years later, he trains 3 times a week at Dum-

fries Table Tennis Club.

Andrew competes in tournaments all over Scotland and plays in the Dumfries Table Tennis League. He has won numerous awards and trophies and the ever expanding list of achievements include the Dumfries Primary Schools U12s Singles Champion 2009 - 2010, the Dumfries Club Championships U13s Runner up 2009 - 2010, the Dumfries Club Championships Doubles Winner 2009 - 2010, the Dumfries Club Championships Division 2 Singles Winner 2009 - 2010, the Dumfries Schools U14s Singles Champion 2010 - 2011, the Dumfries Club Championships U15s Singles Champion 2010 - 2011, the Dumfries Club Championships U18s Singles Runner Up 2010 - 2011, the Dumfries Club Championships Doubles Runner Up 2010 - 2011, the Dumfries Club Championships Division 2 Singles Winner 2010 - 2011 and the Dumfries Division 2 Cup Winner 2010 - 2011.

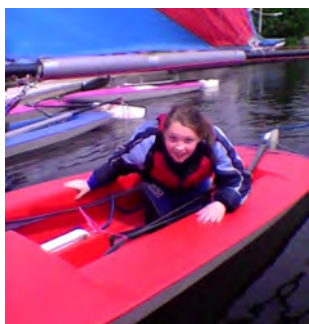
Andrew said he "enjoys table tennis because it is a fun, fast paced and exciting game. Also the coaching at the club is great and has helped me to be the player I am now." Andrew's aim is to climb up the junior rankings in Scotland and one day to play in the Commonwealth Games. We are sure he will reach this goal and wish him well with his future competitions. Good luck Andrew!

Stationery Shop in the Library

A reminder that the following items of stationery are for sale in the School Library: pencils (30p), pens (30p), erasers (30p), sharpeners (30p), protractors (50p), highlighters (40p), 15cm rulers (30p), 30cm rulers (30p) and 4GB data pens (£9.00). As a result of pupil demand, scientific calculators (£7.50) and jotters (60p) are also now on sale. Any profit that is made from this venture goes towards purchasing new books for the Library. We also accept donations of good quality books for our Library, in particular junior fiction, senior fiction and study skills books. Please hand any books in to Mrs Menzies in the Library. Any books that are not suitable for our shelves will be taken to a charity shop. Thank you.

A day Sailing

By Antonia Webster



Not many of us had sailed before so it was all new to us, but we were looking forward to it!

When we arrived at the sailing club on Friday, 27th May we all got changed into our wetsuits. Then we got shown how to put the sail into place on this little boat. We also got shown how to put a rudder on and all the other

things. After we put all the things on the other three boats we tied them on to the jetty. Before we went out on to the boats we had to be shown how to set the sail. Eventually we got on to the boats. We were shown how to steer and we went in pairs or on our own.

When sailing we learnt to steer the boat in straight lines and in circles. We also learnt how to



make the speed change by loosening or tightening the sail.

The thing that I enjoyed most was when Niamh's boat tipped



over and she fell in. Luckily she was rescued very quickly, wet but having enjoyed the fun.

I think we all benefited, learning skills for the future, for employment or just for fun.



MY SWIMMING GALA

By Zoe Bell 2S2



On Thursday the 19th of May I entered the DG1 swimming gala. When I got to the swimming pool I felt scared but when I got into the water I was fine. I was racing against 5 other pupils. When they blew the whistle I swam as

fast as I could to the finish line. When they told me I was 2nd I felt happy. Jim Thomson from Queen of the South presented me with a silver medal and he gave me a high five! I really enjoyed my day.

Dumfries Sevens Report

By Reid Paterson & Sean Wicks

Our squad was (see photograph L - R): Sean Wicks, Fraser Lethardy, Connor Barnes, Andrew Henderson, Ian Carlisle, Reid Paterson, Ben Wicks, Fraser Morton and Tom Martin.

We won our first game 8-0 against St Joseph's B team. Our second game was more challenging than the first game, but we still managed to pull out a 6-0 win against Dumfries High School. Our final group game was against St Joseph's A team. This was our toughest challenge yet as we only just managed to pull out a 2-2 draw thanks to a last minute try by Fraser Lethardy.

The Final was WHA versus Dumfries Academy. The final score was 11-1. We had won the Dumfries Sevens Tournament

Most tries scored: Fraser Lethardy with a brilliant 14 tries.



Football Focus



WHA Football Teams achieved well this year with the Under 15 team winning the Small Schools League and the Under 16 team winning the Under 16s Small Schools Cup. Well done to all our football players.



Tournament Triumph!

By Sophie Henderson and Jessica Ireland-Hughes

The day of the Dr Turner's tournament had arrived and we boarded the bus, kitted up and ready to play. We were all so excited. On the approach to the King George V Leisure Complex in Dumfries we could see all the other teams (Sanquhar, St Joseph's College, Moffat, Dalbeattie, Annan and Dumfries Academy) already warming up with sticks in hand. The excitement and adrenaline really kicked in when we saw all the other teams psyched up and ready for battle.

I decided with the captain of Dalbeattie who was to get pass back. The first match was a tough game but we got a result which motivated us to tackle the remaining teams in our path to victory. We played Sanquhar, Annan, Moffat and St Joseph's and managed to play well and win through. At the end it was announced that Wallace Hall Academy had won the whole tournament. On behalf of our team, captain Sophie Henderson collected the trophy. We each were pre-

sented with a hockey badge and a shield for the school cabinet. Overall it was a brilliant afternoon and everyone put an outstanding amount of effort into the matches we played. Many thanks to all the staff who helped umpire the matches and ensured that the day ran smoothly. Team L - R: Kathryn Park, Sophie Henderson (Capt.), Beth Johnstone, Katrina Taylor, Katie Grierson, Claire Manson, Jessica Ireland-Hughes and Chloe Davidson.



Junior Sports Championships

The competition at Junior Sports Day was fierce this year with seven long standing school records broken. Following the final count up of points the Junior Sports Champions for this year were announced as follows:

S1 Boys - Connor Barnes

S1 Girls - Ellis Corrigan

S2 Boys - Angus Bruce and Declan Hill

S2 Girls - Kathryn Park

S3 Boys - Craig Neill

S3 Girls - Claire Manson

Congratulations to all the pupils taking part and thank you to the PE Staff for organising the event.



Curling with Confidence by Ross Whyte

In January I played for the Dumfries team in the Scottish Division 2 group. We were promoted into Division 1 for next year. This was a good start to the year.

In February Sophie Jackson and I entered the Dumfries Open Mixed Pairs Curling Competition. Our first match was against Ross Fraser and Caroline Donaldson who were last year's winners. We were very surprised when we won our first game. Our second match was against Heather Morton and her dad but unfortunately he was unable to play so Gavin Maxwell played instead. We had another good night and won through to the semi final. This time we were drawn against Graham Sloan and his aunty. Graham is the RCCC coach at Dumfries and he won the Scottish Juniors when he was under 21. Sophie and I definitely did not expect to win this match but yet again luck was on our side and, after a slow start, we won this match and got through to the final. Two weeks later was the final and this time it was against Graham's school friend David Owen and his wife Linda. We were on form and we could not do much wrong and, much to our delight and surprise, we were crowned the winners of the Dumfries Open Mixed Pairs. I think we are the first

juniors to win this adult competition at Dumfries.

Also in February, I skipped an under 13s team at Dumfries and we played against a team from the Borders and Lockerbie. My team consisted of local curlers Ashley Street, Scott Oliver (both first years) and Shaun Milligan (p7). We won every match and did not lose one end. From this achievement we were selected to represent the South of Scotland at Aberdeen in the National Under 13s Bonspiel. Our first match was against the East of Scotland team, then the North of Scotland team and then the West of Scotland team. These matches were close but yet again we won every game and achieved the accolade of becoming the National Under 13s Scottish Champions.



Queensberry Half Marathon
Drumlanrig Demon 10K
and Castle View Fun Run

Drumlanrig Castle Grounds
 Thornhill, Dumfriesshire, Scotland DG3 4AQ

Wallace Hall Academy
 "Working together to achieve more"

Saturday 29 October 2011

Information and entry forms available at:
www.whahalfmarathon.com

Race Administrator: Diane Jarvie
 Tel: 01848 332120.
 Email: wmaratho264@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Organised by Wallace Hall Academy in aid of Wallace Hall Academy Fundraising Account

Under UK Athletics Rules

scottishathletics Permit Event

RACES BECOME ANNUAL EVENT!

After the success of last year's races, we have decided that the Queensberry Half Marathon, The Drumlanrig Demon 10K and the Castle View Fun Run will become an annual event. This year they will be held on Saturday 29th October 2011.

If you would like any further information or would like to volunteer to help out on the day, please contact us at the school on 01848 332120 and ask for Mrs Diane Jarvie, Race Administrator, or Mr Shaun Graham, Race Marketing Officer. Alternatively you can email us at wmaratho264@ea.dumgal.sch.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

We have launched a new website where you can find race information, route maps, photographs and entry forms.

Please visit us at: www.whahalfmarathon.com