



Kirkcudbright Academy

St Mary's Wynd Kirkcudbright Dumfries & Galloway DG6 4JN

Rector D.C.Forbes
tel. 01557 330440
fax 01557 332604
email ht@alj.dumgal.org.uk
www.kirkcudbright.dumgal.sch.uk

INFORMATION TO PARENTS

19 January 2010

Dates to Remember

Thursday 28 January – Wednesday 3 February
Thursday 4 February
Friday 5 February
Saturday 6 February
Tuesday 9 February
Monday 15 – Wednesday 17 February
Tuesday 2 March
Wednesday 3 March

Upper School Prelims
Junior Candlemas 7-10pm
Senior Candlemas 7.30 – 10.45pm
Adult Candlemas 8pm – Midnight
S3 Parents' Evening 5-7pm
Holiday for pupils (16-17 Staff in-service)
Parent Council 7.30pm
S2 Parents' Evening 5-7pm

Staffing

We are pleased to welcome Mr Andy Margerison who has joined the staff as Principal Teacher Pupil Support: Additional Support for Learning and also Mrs Mary Nurse who will be working in English and Additional Support as well.

Candlemas

We are fast approaching the Candlemas Balls (4, 5 and 6 February), the highlights of the Academy's social calendar and the current S6 have plans in place to ensure that these dances are memorable events. If their Christmas Dance gave us a taste of their party-planning skills, then we should prepare for most enjoyable evenings. As usual, we will be making every effort to outdo previous years in terms of glamour, highland dress and dancing skills and we are very fortunate that Bert Rae is determined to continue his amazing run as band leader for the dances. A number of guests have been invited – dignitaries, councillors, our community police officer and others – because we believe that Candlemas shows our pupils at their best.

There are four key rules for pupils regarding Candlemas. These are the same every year and have already been reiterated at Assembly on 15 January.

- Pupils who are absent on the day of a dance will not be eligible to attend (and will have ticket money refunded). Pupils who have medical appointments or interviews should bring letters to show this in advance.
- Pupils whose behaviour in school has been unacceptable or who have been excluded this term will not be eligible to attend.
- Tickets will not be on sale at the door, but will be available up to the end of lunchtime on the day of the dance.
- There is a strict 'no alcohol' rule. Pupils are warned not to consume alcohol before or during the dances and not to have alcohol in their possession. Parents will be asked to come and collect any pupil who breaks this rule and the pupil will be banned from future dances.

Adult Candlemas

This event has also become well known for its conviviality, good music and dancing and excellent buffet supper. This year, the event will take place on Saturday 6 February from 8 pm until midnight and Bert Rae will once again be providing the music. Tickets, costing £13.50 each, are available from the School Office and from Thomsons the newsagent in Kirkcudbright. The Ball is one of several fund-raising events organised by parents and this year funds will be used to assist in the purchase of a new Clavinova electronic piano for the school as well as to support extra-curricular activities and travel.

Severe Weather

After the stresses and strains caused by the swine flu epidemic, the academic year has been further interrupted by the recent spell of severe weather. I would like to thank staff and parents/carers for their efforts to ensure that, as far as possible, we were able to continue to run the school for 'business as usual'. When this proved difficult, we appreciated the good sense shown by parents/carers who made decisions based on local weather conditions. Owing to variations in weather across the region, directives were not always easy to give or follow and there were some regrettable alterations to



plans. In future, headteachers' decisions about closure will be supported. We have now lost several days of valuable teaching time and both staff and pupils are under some pressure to catch up. Can I ask that parents and carers ensure that their youngsters' attendance is as good as possible and that time out of school for holidays, appointments and other activities is kept to an absolute minimum?

Absence notes

Now that we are using the SEEMIS management/registration system, it is even more important that we are given reasons for absence. If we do not get a reason (by note, telephone call or email on the day of absence, if possible), the pupil's absence is logged as 'unauthorised' and this has a negative effect on attendance record.

Internet Use in school

Following negative coverage in the local press, it is important to stress the very strict monitoring procedures we have in place to track abuse of internet access in school. In an age when hackers and web-spies take it as a challenge to breach any firewall or safeguard that is placed on children's internet use as quickly as they can, we do our utmost to supervise use in school. Indeed, it was only our very close monitoring of pupils that 'caught' the instance of abuse that was highlighted!

Uniform

We have already undertaken two uniform checks this term in an attempt to smarten up some of pupils. The vast majority of pupils wear white shirts and school ties with black trousers and dark shoes (although the variety of outdoor jackets has given an impression of untidiness). Black jeans are not acceptable: they may look smart when new but are designed to fade and soon look shabby. Please help us reinforce high standards of dress.

Young Enterprise

The Kirkcudbright Academy Young Enterprise team 'Kaizen' has created an original cook book. It is full of great family dishes, tasty treats and is priced at only £4.50. They have also been busy sewing recycled fabric to create fantastic aprons to compliment their book, these are £7.00. Kaizen will be selling at the S3 Parents Evening on Tuesday 9th February, or if you would like to order the products go to www.kaizencookbooks.com

German Exchange Trip 6-13 June 2010

This year, it's our turn to go to Gymnasium Hochrad in Hamburg for our 11th year of exchange visits. The visit includes 5 days in Hamburg, staying with German host families, and 2 days in Berlin, staying in a hostel. The German teachers have already drawn up a very extensive programme for our visit – a mixture of educational visits, sightseeing, social events and sports. Pupils do not need to be able to speak German to enjoy the trip as the German students have excellent English, but it would obviously be a good opportunity for pupils to improve their language skills. Any S3 – S5 pupils who are interested in this trip should collect an information letter from Mrs Fulton (PE Dept) as soon as possible. If any parents need more information, please call Mrs Fulton at the school.

Search Begins for Dumfries and Galloway Education Stars

People in Dumfries and Galloway are being urged to nominate their local schools, nurseries or individuals who have excelled in their field of education as part of the Scottish Education Awards 2010. For further information and to make a nomination visit www.scottisheducationawards.org.uk/cc

Sports and Clubs

The following afterschool clubs have restarted in the PE department. New members are very welcome; pupils should check the noticeboards in PE and the dining room for more details or ask in the PE department.

Mondays: S2/S3 football, Badminton for all and Netball for girls.

Tuesdays: Basketball and S1 Boys football.

Wednesdays: Hockey for all after school and also Boxercise for S1.

S4 starts on Wednesday 20 January from 6pm - 6.45pm in Kirkcudbright Sports Centre at a cost of £2.20.

Thursday: Girls club needs more members and meets on a Thursday after school. It is principally aimed at girls who do not particularly enjoy PE but would like to become more active, try different activities and learn how to take care of themselves. Senior boys football also takes place on a Thursday.

These clubs will not run without enough people to make up teams. Please encourage your youngsters to get fit and healthy and join in! If there is an activity or sport that is not available at the moment please contact Mrs McEwen and we can check for interest and availability of staff. Likewise, if you have a coaching qualification and are willing to offer support at lunch or after school please get in touch.

Forms are also available in the PE office for:

Level 1 Dance leaders Award – 16th, 17th Feb or 7-9th April at CD High School. Delivered by 'Y Dance' Tutor from 10 - 4pm each day. Normally £125 but free! Forms to be returned to Mrs McEwen by 26th Jan.

Stewartry Athletics Fun Run – Sat 7th Feb. Races for S1/S2 boys and girls (2400 m). Entry fee £2, forms from PE office.

Annan and District Athletics River Race – Sun 7th March. Races for all age groups boys and girls.