

Newsletter –February 2022

Welcome to the February newsletter.

As we move out of winter and into spring we hope the weather improves. This allied to a further easing of COVID restrictions and should mean that we have a very positive and productive term leading up to the Easter break at the end of March. In this edition of the newsletter we will focus on the following:

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I hope you enjoy the contents of this newsletter.

New school

As you may already be aware East Dunbartonshire Council has been engaged in a feasibility study across 2021/22 looking into a replacement school for Lenzie Academy. At a council meeting on 24 February elected members agreed to continue with the feasibility study by committing an additional £3m over the 2022/23 session. There are various options being considered at the moment and the additional funding will allow the council to firm up plans with contractors. At the council meeting elected members agreed provisional funding for the replacement school, subject to investment from East Dunbartonshire Council and Scottish Government sources. A future report will be brought to council in session 2022/23 session. This is all very positive news for the pupils, parents/carers and staff of the school and we await further developments with optimism.

Senior phase assessments

Across the month of January our S4-6 pupils were engaged in assessments to help them in their preparations for SQA exams in April/May of this year. It is difficult to make any comparisons with previous years due to COVID. The last year when pupils undertook these types of assessments was in session 2019/20. This year we have 'chunked' the assessments more than we normally would so comparisons with 2019/20 or years prior to this are problematic. What I would say is that the vast majority of our pupils took the assessments very seriously and have benefited from going through this process. The indications for their state of readiness for the SQA exams is positive. There are some further assessments in March in most subjects and these are just as important as the October and January assessments as they will allow teachers to have a more informed judgement of learners progress across the whole course of study and allow teachers to make reasoned and informed estimates for each young person studying their subject. As with previous years we will engage in detailed moderation of standards to ensure fairness for all young people in this process.

COVID updates

As you will be aware, from 28 February pupils no longer need to wear a face covering in classrooms, though some may still wish to do so for a variety of reasons and this, of course, is perfectly acceptable. Pupils must still wear a face covering in corridors when they come in to school and during period changeover as well as in other communal areas such as social areas, when not eating or drinking.

As a school we can now have full assemblies and this is a very positive development as we are now able to discuss important matters with year groups such as discussing important school values; our links with the local community; celebrating the successes of our pupils and relaying important information about SQA, school procedures and so on.

There has been an easing of restrictions in various other areas too as we emerge from nearly two years of sometimes very challenging restrictions e.g. on school trips, on curricular restrictions in PE, Dance, Drama and Music. We will continue to keep separate entrances for pupils in the mornings and there is a continued need for enhanced cleaning; the operation of one-way systems as well as a few other restrictions. Overall, these will be seen by most as positive developments and teachers can now see the faces of the youngsters that they are teaching.

Covid Absence

The rules on self-isolation have changed and so the vast majority of pupils who are absent for covid related reasons will have contracted covid. If your child is absent from school with covid then it is the same as any other illness and there is no expectation that children who are off school unwell engage in school work.

Staffing update

Further to interviews held earlier in the month we have appointed two of our staff to Acting PT PEF posts:

1. Mr McNeil will lead on aspects of character education.
2. Mr McKinstry will lead on aspects of quantitative and qualitative data on the effectiveness of PEF and what further improvements we can make as a school to enhance the impact of the existing programmes that we operate.

We have also appointed a new Technical Technician, Mr Forrester, who will start with us at the end of March.

Purple Friday

As part of our school improvement plan we are developing a range of activities and events that celebrate equality and diversity, which is an EDC priority. To this end we have developed a range of power point presentations. Over the past few months we have looked at the following:

- Black History Month.
- The Equalities Act.
- Remembrance assemblies
- Holocaust Memorial Assemblies.
- Chinese New Year.
- World Religion Day
- LGBT History Month. As part of this we had Purple Friday led by our 'Allies Group' on Friday 25 February

All the work for these assembly inputs have been led by our pupils and they must be commended for all their hard work in raising other peoples' awareness of key issues in relation to equality and diversity.

Fair Trade Fortnight

Our Fair Trade group has been working hard to devise a series of fundraising opportunities in aid of Fair Trade. They presented me with a very detailed set of proposals that had been thoughtfully put together and includes:

- Raising awareness of UN Development Goals.
- Creating leadership opportunities for pupils.
- Strengthening partnerships with the local community groups such as 'Fairtrade Lenzie', 'The Fairtrade Foundation' and 'The Scottish Fairtrade Forum'.
- They have planned a range of opportunities e.g. attending assemblies to promote awareness of Fairtrade; devising a Fairtrade bake-off for pupils, teachers and parents; cake sales at intervals and devising an S1 Fairtrade product competition; asking departments to create Fairtrade themed lessons.

The group of youngsters are to be commended for their initiative and commitment over a prolonged period of time– Oliver S, Rebecca G, Sarah A, Caitlin R, Georgina E, Josh M and Rosie M. Special thanks also to our staff who supervise - Miss Holland (Modern Studies), Mrs Davidson (Religious and Moral Education) and Ms Shirreffs (our Youth Worker). Well done to everyone involved.

Parental Support

I would like to thank, on behalf of our whole school community, a number of parents/carers who have, through their generosity, raised significant sums of money for our school. Our PE department asked for some sponsorship of PE kit and we have been taken aback by the generosity of the response enabling us to get a number of full kits for our sports teams. Many local firms, parents/carers and staff donated prizes for the raffle that took place as part of the PTA Race Night on Friday 25 February. Through a combination of the race night itself and the raffle, a sum of over £1700 was raised by the PTA for use in supplying the school with a wide range of supports across the session.

Many thanks to the parents/carers and staff of the PTA whose dedication and hard-work has resulted in such a successful evening for the school.

Pupil Success

Scottish Schools Athletics Association

Holly K in S6 won Gold at this week's SSAA Indoor Track & Field event at the Emirates Arena. Holly was successful in the long jump event with an incredible distance of 5.35M



Scotland u15 Football

Lucy B in S4 represented Scotland u15 this weekend in Northern Ireland. They were 3-2 down at half time and came back to win 6-3.

<https://twitter.com/sschoolsfa/status/1492668951591112708?s=24>

Scotland u16 Hockey

Kyle F (S4) has been selected for the Scotland U16 hockey team, a fantastic achievement and well deserved!

He will play his first international against Wales at Easter



North East Open Figure Skating

William and Alison S had fantastic skates earlier this month with both scoring personal best scores.

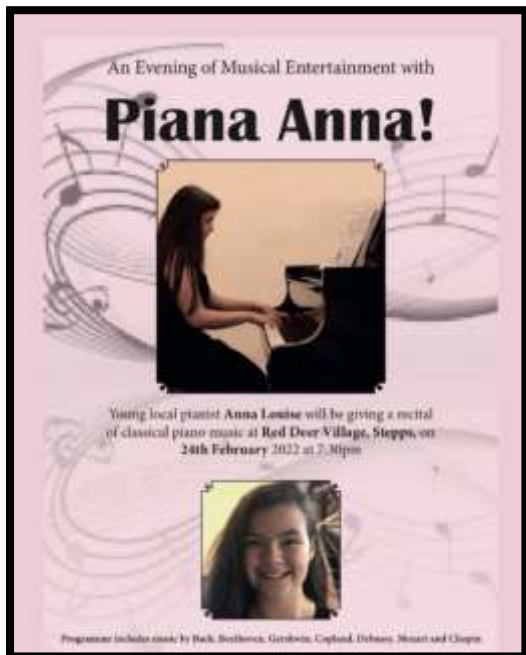
William placed first in his group (level 2 boys) with a score of 20.80

Alison placed sixth (of 23) in her group of beginner girls with a score of 15.62.

Absolutely fantastic performances for both and has given them a real confidence boost.



Piano Recital



One of our S6 pupils, Anna-Louise K performed a concert at the Red Deer village in Stepps. Her programme of classical piano entertainment included music by Bach, Beethoven, Gershwin and more. Anna is a superb pianist and I'm sure the audience were treated to an evening of outstanding music.

EDC Young Peoples Forum

Two of our S5 pupils – Oliver S and Mark A – have been selected to join an East Dunbartonshire Young Peoples Forum. The boys had to go through an application process and will join a discussion group looking at how East Dunbartonshire incorporates the 'Convention of the Rights of the Child' into its schools and early years' centres. This is a commendable achievement and I'm sure our two representatives will offer sensible and realistic ideas as part of the discussion group.

LA Launch

LA Launch has a new home and time! It now takes place every Tuesday lunchtime (1:15pm - 1:45pm) in the library. Pupils can use the time to work on homework, access the computers for schoolwork, print resources and work together on class projects. All pupils welcome. Why not drop in and give it a go?

DYW @ LENZIE ACADEMY - UPDATE – Feb 2022



Overview of DYW

DYW stands for Developing the Young Workforce and was introduced by the Wood Commission for the Scottish Government in 2014 with the 7 year aim of reducing youth unemployment. With the impact of the pandemic, it is now more pertinent than ever to ensure young people have equal opportunity to achieve a positive destination after they leave school.

February Army skills workshop

Four representatives from the Army Recruitment Centre visited Lenzie Academy on 23 February 2022. Selected pupils in S3-S5 took part in a very interactive and enjoyable workshop, where they took part in a military-drill style warm up and various code breaker, map reading and team building challenges. The pupils then had the option to attend a follow up Army Careers presentation, which the vast majority did. Engagement and cooperation in the event was excellent, and the pupils asked the officers some very thoughtful questions about life in the armed forces, and the application process.



Scottish Apprenticeship Week – 7-11 March

For those interested in pursuing an apprenticeship after they leave school (*choose from Foundation, Modern or Graduate apprenticeships – visit <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/> for more info*) Scottish Apprenticeship week is a great place to start. Visit <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/scottish-apprenticeship-week/see-whats-on/> for the full virtual programme.

As parents/carers you may find the following helpful to attend:

- **Overview of Scottish Apprenticeships (targeted at parents/carers)** – Thurs 10th March, 6.30-7.15pm – Register here <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/overview-of-scottish-apprenticeships-tickets-252175282057>
- **Scottish Apprenticeship Awards** – Wed 9th March, 7.00-8.00pm – Register here <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/events/awards/scottish-apprenticeship-awards/>

Tell your child to keep an eye on the school website homepage, Teams and Twitter for updates for virtual opportunities that we can host in school.

****If you or someone you know works for a local enterprise that can offer employer engagement with young people (this can be careers talks, workshops, application and interview advice or work experience) please get in touch with Ms Byres. It is always helpful to have as many employer links as possible to widen the scope of opportunities for our young people!***

RMPS

S2 RMPS

All of S2 have been working on an extended research project this term as they investigate what makes someone heroic and analyse and evaluate the heroic qualities of certain well known individuals who are considered moral heroes by many.

The aim of the project is to introduce pupils to the skills required for individual research such as planning, researching, note taking, summarising key points in their own words. They are also required to develop their ICT skills by using a wakelet of resources and completing their assignment online within the class team. The skills have been modelled in class and pupils can use their class work to inform their own individual project. All classwork is made available in the class team for access at home and the wakelet of resources also contains information on how to take Cornell notes and how to write the final essay.

It is hoped that this extended research project will not only give the pupils of S2 understanding of what makes certain character strengths lead to heroic behaviour but also equips them with useful strategies for writing investigations and research papers when they move into the Senior phase.



S3 RMPS

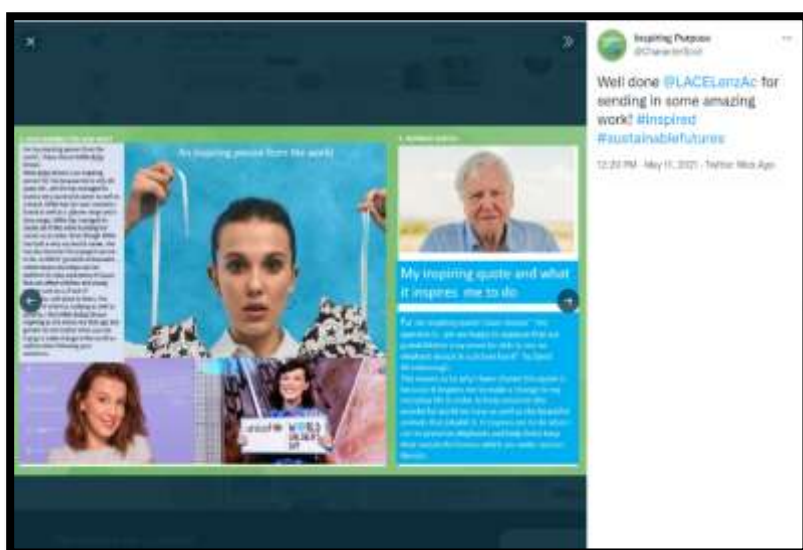
Inspiring Purpose – Sustainable futures

This term all S3 classes have been working on their own entry to the national Inspiring Purpose poster competition run each year by the Association of Character Education Scotland. Last year the S3 pupils had to undertake this in lockdown but this year's pupils have had the advantage of face to face lessons going over the key themes as well as the online support within their RMPs class team on Glow. Pupils are encouraged to make good use of their developing ICT skills and help is available from our school librarian as well as various homework clubs and LA launch to solve ICT problems.

The Inspiring Purpose competition enables all pupils to reflect on their own character strengths as well as work out what areas they feel they need to work on to improve. As a Character Education school we try to encourage all pupils to engage in all four capacities of the curriculum rather than just focus on academic achievement.

Sustainable futures is this year's theme which encourages the pupils to look at the issues facing our planet and how they can be overcome. Pupils have to decide on an individual that inspires them, a quotation that inspires them and detail their own aspirations for the future.

Last year's top 5 entries were recognised by Character Scotland with one of the pupils being asked to present their views at a national online conference. With the final pieces of the poster being submitted in March it is hoped that the standard will be even better this year.



Wider Achievement

The Fair Trade Committee is holding its inter house Fair trade chocolate bake off at the end of Fair Trade fortnight on Friday 4th March. All year groups are invited to contribute a chocolate cake/bake which can be entered via their House captain on Friday morning, together with the packets/photos of fair trade ingredients used in their creation. Prizes will be given in addition to House points and all goods will be sold by the Fair Trade committee to raise money to support Fair Trade.



Wider Achievement Opportunity for Senior Phase pupils

Lenzie Academy Community Engagement has been given the opportunity to pilot Playlist for Life training in school at no cost. This training has been offered at university and college level to encourage young people interested in working in social and healthcare settings to become aware of the benefits of music to elderly people especially those with dementia.



As one of the first schools to be able to do this, LACE is now looking for senior pupils who would like to be trained. The training takes 2 hours of time in total but can be done online whenever the trainee is able to fit it in their own schedule. For more details contact Mrs Davidson or use this link <https://www.playlistforlife.org.uk/training/>

Parents Portal

parentsportal.scot

Reminder that Parents Portal is now live! Many of our parents have signed up to East Dunbartonshire Council's new way schools and families communicate with each other through the new online service called **parentsportal.scot**. It's an online portal designed to be a one-stop shop for a number of school-related activities and will create a new digital relationship between you and us. This exciting development is intended to make communicating with one another easier and more efficient.

Here are just some of the things it will help you do: make online payments (cashless catering), report an absence, view your child's attendance and timetable, look at our twitter feed, update your contact details and get latest news from us. More services will be added in the future.

You can access the new Parents Portal via the Scottish Government's secure online account called **myaccount**. There is more information and FAQs on the **school website** and on the **Council website** too.