

Carluke High School



Newsletter – November 2008 2008

Welcome to the first of our new style of newsletters. We have changed the layout and format to try and make our newsletters more 'readable'. This was one of our action points following last session's Inspection. A very brief summary of what we are doing in response to our HMIe report is enclosed. Given that we are now heading towards winter (was there a summer this year?) we have also listed

the procedures that will occur if we are forced to close early due to bad weather. Our thanks go to Barry Wright and his team for all their hard work in putting this newsletter together.

James Yuille

Head Teacher

Shoe Box Appeal

Thank-you to everyone who supported this year's Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal. 53 shoeboxes will be sent from Carluk High School, to homes, orphanages, projects and schools in Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, and India.

Parent Council

As we enter into the second year of the Parent Council, we still have three vacancies for parents. Although Parent Council meetings were well attended last year, the response and involvement of parents to ideas and suggestions was very disappointing. There is only one meeting per term, lasting only a couple of hours, but even if you feel unable to join

the Council, your support in organised fundraisers would always be appreciated. Any monies raised are for the benefit of pupils, an example of which is funding for a stage extension. Parents do not require any experience, so if you would like to be involved in the Parent Council, please contact Adele Pessina, the Parent Council Chairperson.

Maths News

The Maths Department at Carluk High School are running a block of Supported Study classes after school on Wednesdays from 3.30 to 4.30 pm. The aim of this exercise is to help and advise Intermediate 1 & 2 pupils in their preparation for exams. If you require further information please contact Mr Anderson at the Maths Department. Solutions to Prelim Papers from previous years can also be downloaded from the school website.

European Language Awareness Week

In September, the Modern Languages Department ran a number of events to promote the use of European languages. European breakfasts were held for S2 pupils, a Maths and Languages challenge was created for S1 and a European quiz was produced for the whole school to enter - congratulations to the winners, Stewart Murphy and Graham Kidd of S3. The Street area was also decorated with European Union flags as many pupils and staff made extra efforts to try another language that week.

S5 English - Actor Visits

Higher English pupils will soon be treated to a guest appearance by professional actors who will recreate the unique and complex characters of William Shakespeare's 'Romeo & Juliet' and 'Othello.' This will support S5 and S6 pupils in their understanding of the Shakespeare texts that they are studying this year.

English Department Trips

The English Department have already organized a number of school trips so far during this academic year. S5 pupils enjoyed a useful and enjoyable trip to East Renfrewshire to watch a production by Giffnock Theatre Players of Blood Brothers, by Willy Russell. Meanwhile, 70 S4 and S5 pupils were lucky enough to travel to Glasgow to see William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet performed by the world famous Royal Shakespeare Company at the King's Theatre. Finally, a further 60 S5 pupils took advantage of National Schools Film Week to consolidate their Higher studies of Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and Alfred Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps*.

Wearing It Pink

Hundreds of pupils and staff dared to wear it pink to help the fight against breast cancer on Friday 31st October by donating £2 each to Breast Cancer Research.

Visit to Auschwitz

During the October Holiday, senior pupils Fiona McFetridge and Gavin Thompson visited the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland. Auschwitz was the largest Nazi concentration camp and is located approximately 30 miles from Krakow. Gavin wrote this short account of his experience:

The most striking aspect of the camp was the size of the complex. Under the NAZI regime, concentration camp inmates were systematically dehumanised. On entering, individuals lost all sense of identity; clothes, hair, possessions, and worst of all, their family. At the end of our visit to Auschwitz, before we left the camp, we were each given a candle. As we travelled back to the bus we placed our candles on the railway as a mark of respect and remembrance to those who died.

Response to Inspection Report

A number of school groups are already working on the recommendations that were made in the inspection report. In summary:

- Curriculum - we are looking at the courses we offer and where improvements can be made.
- Attainment – we are trying to improve our consistency in M&T reports, giving more complete information to pupils on what they need to do to get better; we will also introduce a new way of assessing each S2 pupil's strengths and weaknesses as part of the option process.
- Learning & teaching – a whole school system of observation has been introduced to make it easier to share practice and improve consistency; every department is now looking at how they teach certain topics or activities and at ways in which pupils can be more active in their own learning.
- Support for learning – improvements are being made to our pupil profiling system, differentiation of materials/ strategies and the system of assessment for special exam arrangements.
- Self evaluation – systems and structures have been introduced on a whole school basis that allow staff and pupils to look at what they are doing and how they could be doing it better.

For additional information about what we are doing, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

New Head Girl & Head Boy

Congratulations go to Robert Gibb and Nicole Irwin, Carluke High School's new school captains. Nicole and Robert will undertake

numerous roles this year which will include representing pupils on the parent council. Everyone at Carluke High wishes both Robert and Nicole well as they undertake their duties this year.

Early School Closure in the Event of Bad Weather

In the unfortunate event that the school requires to close due to adverse weather conditions, the following will apply:

- Bus pupils will be told to go to designated areas within the school building and will not be released until we know that their buses have arrived.

- Under no circumstances should bus pupils take it upon themselves to walk home. This is extremely dangerous at any time but particularly in difficult weather conditions.

- Members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) remain in school until all pupils are safely collected or appropriate arrangements made with parents. Pupils who know they will be unable to get into their own house or that of a friend, relative or emergency contact must report to SMT in the 'Street'.

- We would ask that you ensure that your son or daughter knows what they should do and where they should go in the event that the school is forced to close early due to bad weather. For bus pupils from outlying areas, this might include

making arrangements to go home with a friend if the weather conditions prevent the bus driver being able to complete the normal route.

- It is not possible for the school to individually phone parents to advise of an early closure. However, a text message will be sent to all parents via our Groupcall system. We would be grateful if you would ensure we have an up to date mobile number for you otherwise a message will be sent to the home number.

- We understand that snow will always have its attractions to school pupils. Nevertheless, all pupils should be aware that deliberately throwing snowballs at staff, visitors to the school, cars, buses or any part of the building is unacceptable behaviour. Pupils involved will have their parents contacted and further sanctions may also be applied.

Royal Scottish Geographical Society

Our congratulations go to Stewart Murphy (S3) who won a prize in the RSGS John Bartholomew Essay Competition. Stewart discussed "How easy it is to change your carbon footprint," and will attend a prize-giving at Glasgow University in November to receive his prize.

Book Amnesty

As an incentive to pupils who have forgotten to return school books over the past few years, Carluke High School will be operating a Book Amnesty during November and December. This means that any books that you have lying around at home can be returned and no questions will be asked. If you do have any books at home, please bring them to the English department, who will distribute them to their rightful owners to save much needed resources.

Scottish Space School 2008

Senior pupils, Gemma Forbes and Kirstie Mauchline have this year been selected to attend the Scottish Space School at Edinburgh University.

The Space School is a week long residential visit and is a fantastic opportunity for students to learn more about

a range of science issues and to take part in a variety of great activities.

This year the activities included lectures, workshops, talks by NASA Astronauts and a visit to the Royal Observatory

As well as the organised activities, the girls had a great time meeting new friends and attending social events. Who else can say

they've had dinner with NASA astronauts or Dr Bunhead from Brainiac! Look out for details on how you can enter the event next year.

Department In Focus - Maths

In each newsletter, we will profile a different faculty, asking them what skills and abilities their subject offers and finding out why their subject is relevant for youngsters today. This month we have spoken to Mr. Jim Anderson, the principal teacher of Maths at Carluke High School:

Tell us a little about the Maths Department.

Maths is one of the core subjects for all pupils in S1 - S4. Courses follow 5 - 14 national guidelines in S1/S2 and Access 3, Int. 1 or Int. 2 in S3/S4.

In S5/S6 pupils may continue with Maths at Higher level or one of the Intermediate levels, which is determined by their level of previous attainment. In S6 we offer Advanced Higher.

We encourage all pupils to participate in a wide range of mathematical competitions including Maths Challenge, Mathematiques sans frontiere, Maths department puzzle of the month and World Maths Day.

Why is Maths so important?

Maths helps pupils to describe, tackle and ultimately solve problems which require the use of mathematical knowledge and techniques. These skills are important in all areas of employment and provide students with life skills.

If I'm no good at Maths, how can I improve?

If you're in the junior school, the first thing you should do is learn your times tables. All pupils can improve their maths skills by reading over notes, completing homework, asking the teacher, attending supported study, practicing past papers, and always showing their working. This helps your teacher to find out the specific bit that you need to work on.

What can parents do to help their children to improve their Maths?

Parents can help by providing a suitable environment for homework and by encouraging their children to complete homework to as high a standard as possible. Parents should also try to talk to their children about their homework and should try to provide support when possible.

Carluke High School FAIRTRADE Group

The Carluke High School Fairtrade Group have had a very successful year so far and will continue to run events in 2009.

The group had a stall and Fairtrade Cafe at the school's Open Evening in October and would like to thank everyone who visited either the stall or the cafe for their support.

In the run up to Christmas the fair-trade group are going to be having a sponsored fast as part of their fundraising efforts and will also have a stall and cafe at the S5/6 parents evening (11th Nov) and at the S1 parents evening (3rd Dec). If you will be there on either of these evenings, please come along and choose from the selection of delicious goodies.

The group are always looking for new members and extra support so if you would like to take part in any of the events, or you would like any information about Fairtrade, please contact Mrs McIntyre or Mrs Mitchell at the RME Department.

Library Study Sessions

The library is now open until 5pm on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for private study for all year groups.

Fun Run

30 pupils and 4 staff from Carluke High School recently took part in the St Andrews Hospice Fun Run at Strathclyde Park Billy Clarkson was our first pupil to complete the race in an impressive time of just 24 minutes. Our thanks go to all our pupils and parents for getting involved and especially to Mrs Fingland for her assistance.

Gig

S5 & 6 PD class are organising a gig to raise money for Victoria Park. It will take place on Thursday 20th November between 7pm and 10pm and tickets will cost just £3.

Dates For Your Diary:

26 th November -	S4 Prelims Begin
2 nd December -	Monitoring & Tracking Reports (Except S4)
3 rd December -	S1 Parents Night
8 th December -	S4 Work Experience Begins
11 th December -	S1 & S2 Dance
15 th December -	Christmas Concert
16 th December -	S3 & S4 Dance
17 th December -	S5 & S6 Dance
19 th December -	School Closes at 2.30pm
5 th January -	School Reopens
5 th January -	S4 Report Cards Issued
13 th January -	S5/S6 Charities Begin
30 th January -	Monitoring & Tracking Reports (Except S2)

Why prepare for prelims?

A Teacher's view:

Prelims help teachers to understand where pupils need to improve. Before the prelim, teachers have no idea how pupils are going to react to a real-life exam situation. It's vital that teachers are able to gauge the ability of pupils when it really matters. Teachers can then identify learning needs and adjust future teaching to fulfil these requirements.

A Pupil's view:

I've never had to deal with so many important tests in such a short period of time before, but I feel that if I get through it, then I'll be confident about the real deal in May. The knowledge that I can survive it and the lessons I'll learn about organising myself and studying will hopefully prepare me for future exams and help me in my working life.

4th Year Prelims
26th November until 5th December.