

BERWICKSHIRE HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

News

Message from the Headteacher

It has felt like a very positive and exciting start to this academic year.

In terms of staffing, we have had a number of folk join us putting us in the position of not having any long term vacancies for the first time since I arrived at the school. All these staff members are settling well into their new roles and we are delighted to have them as part of our team.

We have looked at length over the last few weeks at our recent exam results and it has been great to reflect on some of the best results that the school has had in recent years. The focus now is on how we continue that journey of improvement at the same time as bedding in a whole host of new courses.

We were also able to watch with interest as many of our young people engaged actively in the political processes of our country for the first time. The referendum debate that we were able to hold in the school, for those that were able to vote, proved beyond doubt how knowledgeable our young people are when it comes to the bigger political issues and it was great to see them actively participate.

We have much more news to share with you and I hope that you will enjoy reading some of the good news stories within the newsletter.

John Clarke
Headteacher

Parent Council

The Parent Council AGM, the office bearers for 2014 /15 were confirmed as the following:

Chair	- Avril Hamilton
Vice-Chair	- Agnes Owtram-Temper
Secretary	- Kath Lothian
Treasurer	- Audrey Gaston

The role of the Parent Council ('PC') is to represent the views of the Parent Forum (ie all parents of pupils at the school) and to support the school in its aims. We meet once a month (next meeting Wednesday 8th October 2014 at 7pm) in the school, with Mr Clarke, as Head Teacher, also in attendance. All parents are welcome to attend any meeting, without having to commit to being on the PC. However, only those who are members of the PC are entitled to vote on any issues that may arise. Whilst issues which relate to a specific pupil should be dealt with through their Guidance teacher, any parent who has a more general issue or question relating to the school is welcome to raise the matter at a PC meeting themselves or to contact any member of the PC who will bring it to the next meeting. We currently do not have a separate PC email address, but you can email me on berwickshirehighpc@gmail.com. Details of meetings, including agendas and minutes once approved, are posted on the Parent Council page of the school website.

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Staffing Changes

- The English department have been joined by Miss Flannigan who replaces Mrs Gumbrell who retired in June.
- The Social Subjects department have been joined by Miss Smith who replaces Miss Holroyd who left us to work abroad.
- Miss McAleece continues with us for another year in the Social Subjects department as Mr Watson has taken up a temporary Pastoral post in another school.
- The Health & Wellbeing department welcomed Mrs Shields who will teach on a Monday as Mrs Lawson reduces her teaching commitment and also Mrs Royan who has taken over Mr Gracey's PE timetable commitments on a part time basis.
- We are delighted to have Miss Whelan with us who has filled the Business Management vacancy.
- The Learning Support department have had Mrs Hartop join them on a part time basis to replace Mrs Sumerling.

Homework

As part of our work to ensure that we continue our journey of improvement we are taking an extended look at homework. It is widely recognised that if parents at home take an interest in homework, however small an interest, then the benefits to the young people doing it are improved. We are therefore requesting all of our young people to share what homework they have done with their parents/guardians so that they can sign off the work in their homework diary at the end of each week. This is subsequently being checked in school. We would very much appreciate if you would support us with this initiative in order to gain maximum impact on the learning that takes place within homework. For clarity, we are not asking that you do the homework, only to sign it off!

There will be further work done on homework protocols within the school and to this end I would like to invite any parents that would consider joining a short-life working group with staff and pupils to contact me at the school to express your interest. The group will be meeting immediately after the October break during the school day.

National Kindness Day

National Kindness Day will be recognised in The Berwickshire High School on Monday 17th November 2014.

The event will be organised by class 1C1 and they are going to have an Afternoon Tea for Senior Citizens within the Duns area.

The class are going to bake at home before hand, and in school with Miss Mackay's help and supervision.



Senior School News

Work Experience

On the week beginning the 10th of November, senior students across 4th, 5th and 6th year will have the opportunity to participate in a week's worth of work experience which will help them to get a feel for the world of work and prepare for the possibility of working in that field of expertise in the future.

Participating in the Work Experience programme also let the students stand out amongst the crowds when applying for jobs and further education, as they will be able to reflect upon the skills they have developed.

Some popular work experience locations include pharmacies, vet-

erinary practises, law firms or primary schools. Students may choose any form of work experience they wish - some students have even chosen to attend a week long residential experience with The Army.

We look forward to reporting on their experiences in a future edition of the newsletter.

Higher Education Conference

At the start of September, a group of our sixth year students travelled to Kelso for a Higher Education conference. The group left in the morning on Thursday 4th to participate in activities which would help them to decide if furthering their education was to be their next step after leaving school.

Accompanied by Mr McKenzie and Mr Fleming; the senior students arrived at Springwood Park to find a vast amount of stalls from a variety of universities and colleges from across the UK. These stalls

were set up by the universities to help and encourage students to find the right course for them – hopefully at their establishment.

The students were given the opportunity to attend talks on writing personal statements, student finance and alternative routes to education. These talks were full of vital information that students need to consider when applying to higher education.

Sixth year student, Rowan Stanforth said "It was a great day out and very helpful".

Man Ho Tze added "I was able to collect lots of prospectuses which helped me to decide what I wanted to do".

Overall, the day was a great success with many of the students coming back to the school excited for their oncoming years in Higher Education and looking forward to what the future holds for each of them.

"It was a great day out and very helpful."

Employers & Careers Fair
Looking at Employment Opportunities and Providing Information for Young People, Parents and Carers in Berwickshire
6.30pm - 8.00pm
7th October 2014
The Berwickshire High School

Employers
Local Job Opportunities
Local Career Prospects
Local Apprenticeships
What employers are looking for in Young People

Advice
Interview Skills
CV Writing
Application Forms
Letter Writing

Borders College
Courses
Applications
Modern Apprenticeships
Student Views

Skills Development Scotland
Careers Advice
Available Training
Government Initiatives
Personal Support

Light Refreshments

Careers Evening

Should you wish to attend this event please inform Mr McKenzie via the school office.

Senior School News continued.....

Upper School Awards Ceremony



There was a good turn out of parents on the evening of Thursday 4th. September, when the Attainment and Achievement of our senior students was publicly recognised.

The Music Department gave its usual excellent standard of performance with the Chamber Choir and Instrumental soloist, Heather Hughes, both items being greatly appreciated.

Our Guest Speaker for the evening was Garry Lees , originally from Coldstream and now lives in Kelso. Garry is a former student of the school and attended Berwickshire High School from 1981 through to 1985. Garry was quite open with the fact that he did not work as well as he might have whilst at school, however, that has not stopped him from getting to where he is today, Watch Manager in charge of Kelso Fire Station. He even competed with Mr Clarke by quoting his own 'mantra'

"Stay Focussed, Try your Best, Ask for Help, Get Involved, Expect the Best."

Well done to all our students who have performed so well. Many thanks also to the Parent Council for providing all the refreshments at the close of the evening.

Thank you to all concerned who made the evening a success. Here's to a repeat performance next year.

School of Thought



This year, the senior school, under the banner of Moral and Ethical Enquiry, will have the unique op-

portunity to think through a mixture of contemporary issues and traditional beliefs. Our aim in doing this is to enrich the senior student experience.

We hope that the sessions presented by a variety of outside speakers will provide a point of departure for young people's understanding and a critical

starting point for their exploration of the wider world. The sessions feature an advocate of a point of view or adherent of a belief, open-

ing up the opportunity for our senior students to closely question the speaker on their belief or opinion.

The sessions will include: Judaism from a Rabbi's perspective, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Hinduism, LGBT Issues from LGBT Youth perspective, Palestinian Poetry and Identity and Amnesty International.

(The Senior Stage Team with the support of our librarian, I. Bain.)

Social Subjects News

S3 Modern Studies - Scottish Parliament Trip

On the 24th August, a group of 15 Modern Studies students from year 3 of Berwickshire High School visited the Scottish Parliament, at Holyrood, to learn at first hand where the majority of Scotland's laws are debated.

After a brief introduction to the building, the tour began in the Parliament's education suite with an interactive question and answer session based on students' perceptions of the range of law-making within the scope of the

Parliament. The students then moved to a committee room where MSPs meet to discuss specific topics with members of the public and others with specialist knowledge, often in advance of debating the matter in full session.

They then went to the impressive Debating Chamber, the heart of Parliament, clad in wood and featuring a sophisticated lighting and audio system. The tour guide described the seating arrangements for the majority and oppo-

sition parties and for the press and public.

They were then taken down to a room where a new community tapestry was being made to represent the Scotland of today, to add to the beautiful collection of tapestries which line Parliament's corridors. The students were given the opportunity to sew a piece of the tapestry and to add to the heritage of the building as a fitting end to a memorable visit.

Madeline Cawthorn (S3)



Referendum Debate



On the 1st of September the Berwickshire High School 5th and 6th year pupils had the pleasure of

attending a live debate with MSP Paul Wheelhouse and 'Yes' campaign activist Mirriam Brett, both of whom represented the 'Yes' campaign. Representing the 'No Thanks' campaign was MP Michael Moore and local MSP John Lamont.

The event was organised by Miss Grant in response to the Scottish Independence Referendum. Pupils

were then given the opportunity to ask questions posed to both sides in order to gain more of an insight into the debate. Pupils asked questions ranging from defence to agriculture in order to gauge responses from both sides. From this event the pupils gained help in deciding which box to tick on the 18th of September.

Reese Forrest (S6)

"Yes or No"... senior students were given a great opportunity to question representatives from both sides of the referendum campaign.



Sports Round-Up

Freddie takes Gold at National Age Group Championships

Berwickshire High School's Freddie Rooke secured gold in the Triple Jump in Aberdeen to maintain his no. 1 status for the Scottish Under 17s category.

The 15 year old has been competing in athletics competitions for 4 years since retired Berwickshire High School teacher, Mr Douglas, noticed his aptitude for running whilst on the rugby pitch in Freddie's first year. Mr Douglas encouraged his pupil to pursue athletics and soon entered Freddie into the Border Schools Athletics Championships where he has set many records over the years.

Freddie arrived at the recent Scottish National Age Group Champion-

"Freddie is now ranked 1st in the Under 17's Triple Jump for Scotland as a whole."

ships with quiet confidence in his abilities after months of intensive training. This cool attitude was soon lost when he discovered a newcomer to the line-up who has a personal best roughly a metre better than Freddie's.

After discovering this fact, Freddie set his sights upon leaving with silver – a commendable achievement for any athlete. However, his lowering of expectations was misguided as he achieved gold in the event and therefore he is now ranked 1st in the Under 17s Triple Jump for Scotland as a whole.

The effort that goes into winning a competition such as this has to be pointed out. Freddie trains about 3 times a week during the summer season and attends physiotherapy sessions regularly to maintain his physical condition in order to compete at national standards.

Unfortunately, no funding is available to help cover the cost of travelling around the country, entering competitions and



buying the necessary kits. This means that Freddie – like many other young athletes – relies on his parents to support him financially through each competition as, without them, he would be unable to continue competing for Scotland at this level.

After his success at the National Age Group Championships, Freddie is now preparing for the UK School games this Saturday the 6th of September and the Youth Development League UK Final on Sunday the 7th.

Rugby

It has been a tough start to the rugby season for all teams from Berwickshire High School. The teams have had 3 away fixtures at Kelso, Galashiels and Earlston. There have been some good performances and the teams are beginning to work well together. The S1 team have started to attract more players and performances have been good and the boys are looking forward to a busy season.

Training has been taking place at the High School on Mondays after school for S1 and S2 pupils. There is a further training session taking place on Wednesday at 6:00-7:30 for all players. This training will soon move to Todlaw where players can train under the floodlights.

A team from the Berwickshire Schools (BHS and Eyemouth) took the long journey to Hawick on Fri-

day 19th September.

This was to take part in an under 15 Rugby 7's tournament. It was an early start with the boys needing to be at School at 7:20am.

Although they did not progress to the finals they did come back with a very nice presentation shield and rugby tops specifically designed for the day.

Next fixtures:

Friday 26th September
V's Selkirk (Home)

Saturday 4th October
TBA
(poss Berwick fixture)

Saturday 25th October
V's Earlston
(Home – Eyemouth)

Sports News continued.....

Hockey

The hockey season has begun in earnest with matches against Selkirk, Gala and Earlston. The girls have played at S1, S2, S3 and 1st XI and 2nd XI. Some very good performances and some excellent victories have meant it has been a very good start to another busy season.

Training has taken place at the High School on Monday nights for S1&S2 students and Wednesday for the seniors. A number of girls have had trials for the regional development squads. The girls who have been nominated for trials are indicated below:

S1	Emily Hay, Beth Russell.
S2	Kirsty Morris, Lauren Dewer, Charlie Birkett, Eilidh Archibald, Martha Shepard & Rachel Burns
S3	Rosie Brown, Morven Stanforth, Lucy Runciman, Claudia Watson, Katie Watson, Kirsty Bell, Rachel Denholm & Megan Hay
Senior:	Kirsty Millar, Rona Fleming, Jenny Thumwood, Katie Browne

The girls 1st XI also found the time to take on an S6 boys XI in a charities match, which help raise funds for the Schools charities which are as yet undecided. After a very closely contested match and what onlookers have described as some dubious umpire calls the girls just went down in a narrow 1 nil loss.

Senior Basketball

Boys and girls basketball teams at u15's and open categories will embark for the first time in the national cup competitions. Their first round fixtures will take place before the end December. Their first round opponents will throw up some interesting challenges for the players in their first season:

U15 Boys V North Berwick (Home)	- TBA
Open Boys V Gracemount HS (Home)	- 21 st Nov
U15 Girls V Dunbar Grammar (Home)	- TBA
Open Girls V Holyrood (Home)	- TBA

Football

We have fixtures arranged for the S1 and S2 pupils against Earlston. These will be home fixtures and will take place on 24th October and/or 31st October.

And finally.....

Could the School take the opportunity to wish all our teams and players the best for the season ahead? We would also like pass on our thanks to the members of staff and various volunteers that help put on these fixtures, your time is very much appreciated.

S1 Health Day

The S1 students had opportunity to learn some key messages around the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle. The day involved a mixture of practical and theory sessions including a number of outside speakers, as well as sessions provided by the Home Economics, Physical Education and Science departments. Students undertook eight sessions covering a wide range of the 'experiences and outcomes' outlined in the Health and Wellbeing section of the Curriculum for Excellence. Below is a brief breakdown of the sessions the students attended:

Fitness testing: This session used a number of standardised fitness tests that will allow student to identify their strengths and areas of improvement in relation to their personal fitness. It allows students to compare their scores with the national averages.

Healthy Breakfast: This allowed students to consider the importance of taking breakfast and to consider the most appropriate food stuffs to provide them with healthy, balanced and nutritional start to the day. Students had the opportunity to prepare and taste a fruit smoothie with the key messages around the 'at least five a day' ap-

Medical professionals: A talk was given by the School nurse on where to find help and guidance on a variety of personal health matters. The Oral health unit provided detailed information on how to maintain clean and healthy teeth and good oral hygiene.



Food for Energy: This session took place in the week after the health day and focussed on the calorific value of food. Students undertook an experiment by burning a 'Wosit' crisp and worked out the calories it contained. This led to further discussion concerning calorific intake and daily recommended energy values.

Action for Children: This session discussed the myths around alcohol intake. Students had the opportunity to try different tasks while wearing 'beer goggles' which highlighted the way alcohol can affect your senses.

Catering Company: Representatives from the School's catering company led a tasting session on healthy alternatives. This included a very tasty 'quorn curry'. Messages on how to cut the amount of sugars and fatty foods out of our diets was a key theme of the session.

Mental Health: This session highlighted how mental aspects can affect our overall health. It looked at issues such as anxiety and stress and their causes. The session was geared towards understanding the highs and lows that young people face in their daily lives and



Fitness Testing 2: The multi-stage fitness test (Bleep test) is the nationally accepted test to measure cardio-vascular fitness. This is a key indicator of cardio vascular health and relates to a level of personal fitness. The session highlights the importance of taking exercise to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The underlying purpose of the day was to give students as much information and practical experience to maintain a healthy lifestyle now and for the future. Many of the students commented on how much they enjoyed the day and indicated what changes that they may make to maintain a healthy approach to living their lives. These included: 'eat less sugar', 'use floss on my teeth', 'exercise more on my bike', 'make a healthy snack instead of biscuits', 'less fizzy drinks', 'eat a breakfast', 'be more positive', 'don't drink alcohol at all' and 'eat healthier foods and avoid energy drinks'.

The school would like to thank the S1 students for the positive way they approached the day, as well as the S6 helpers for their support. The success of the S1 health day very much depends on the help of the outside agencies and we would like to thank the following contributors for their continued support:

Linda Fraser: School Nurse

Becky Bass: Action for Children

Lisa Nichol: Oral Health Dental Nurse

Haylis Smith: Mental Health Unit

Susan Sergent : SBC Hospitalty

Jill Weatherburn: Quorn

Music News

Community Concert - Sunday 5th October, 7pm

The annual Community Concert will take place on Sunday 5th October. The concert is a chance for school pupils, parents, friends and community bands to come together to have some fun playing some light-hearted music. This year, we are pleased to welcome back the Reston Concert Band, Norham Brass Band and the Swinton brass Monkeys. They will be joined by wind players, singers and soloists from the school to perform a range of


music - including some much-loved film themes and Pharrell William's smash hit, 'Happy!'.

The concert is at 7pm and will be finished no later than 8.20pm. Entry is by donation at the door and 50% of proceeds will go to Fogo nursery, who will also be running a 'cake & candy' stall.

Parents and friends are welcome to come along to play in the concert. There will be a rehearsal from


4.30pm on the day, followed by a light supper for players (provided by our Parent Council). The music is not difficult. Anyone who wishes to play should get in touch with me at school (01361 883710 or cmabon@scotborders.gov.uk). There are parts for all woodwind and brass players. (String players are also welcome, although they will be in a minority and may be drowned out by the legions of brass!)

The Berwickshire High School




Community Concert

Pupils from the school with the Norham Brass Band, Reston Concert Band, and more!



**BHS Assembly Hall
Sunday 5th October, 7pm**

Entry by donation at the door.
50% of proceeds will
go to Fogo Nursery



BHS Christmas Concert

This year's Christmas Concert will take place on Wednesday 10th December at 7.30pm. More details will be announced nearer the time.

Other News from around the School

Mrs Bertam's Trip to Tanzania



As you all know, last June I took a group of S5 and S6 pupils to Peru for 16 days with the Vine Trust. The Vine Trust is a charity based in Edinburgh that help provide medical and dental care to the remote communities in both Peru (along the Amazon river) and Tanzania. They also support the welfare of vulnerable children by helping provide accommodation and education.

I had an amazing experience last year so I decided that this summer I would go to Tanzania for a month with the Vine Trust. I spent 2 weeks

with a work party helping build 2 houses - one was in a banana forest, the other in a Maize field! We spent most of our time carrying bricks, mixing cement and moving sand and water in buckets! It was really hard work but very rewarding and by the end of the 2 week work party the houses were almost finished.

I then travelled to Fuka to work at the Fuka English Medium Primary School. This school has links with the Vine Trust as they have just finished building an orphanage there to help look after some of the many children in Tanzania that are orphaned due to HIV/Aids.

In my 2 weeks at the school I did a little teaching but primarily spent my time helping paint and decorate 2 of the 6 new classrooms that have just been built. I decided to add the A-Z and 1-10 onto the walls to help make it a more inviting

room to learn in! This classroom is for the new Primary 1 class.

The afternoon before I flew back to Scotland I revisited the houses we built - they were roofed and I was assured that the families would be moving in within 2 weeks of completion, so they should be living there by now.

It was an amazing experience and I have been so lucky to be able to have a "once in a lifetime experience" twice - in both Peru and Tanzania.



News from LC01

On Tuesday September 23rd, a group of pupils from LC01 visited the Ahlstrom Paper Mill in Chirnside for a tour of the plant. This was the first visit of a 6 week block of volunteer-

ing when the pupils will be helping the janitor there to keep the site gardens and boardroom tidy.

The pupils are working with Tanya Easton from the

Youth Inclusion Team and hope to gain a Saltire Award at the end of this and two further spells of volunteering elsewhere.



Pupils listening to a presentation from Martin Tenant, HR Manager

Meeting Malala

On Monday 25 August, a group of 12 students from Berwickshire High School were lucky enough to get a chance to attend an event featuring Malala Yousafzai at the Edinburgh International Book Festival. Not only did they see the inspirational Malala but J.K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter books, provided a moving introduction.

Aged 8, Malala was blogging anonymously for the BBC about her life under the Taliban in the Swat Valley of Pakistan. A very dangerous thing to do, but Malala was determined. The Taliban had banned women from singing, dancing, and even from going to the shops. A year after she started blogging the Taliban made a rule that girls should not attend school. This had a huge impact on Malala's life and put her in grave danger. The more famous her blog got, the more threats she received and finally the Taliban decided to assassinate her while she was going to school. One ordinary school day, Malala's school bus was stopped and several Taliban got on board. One of them shouted out "Who is Malala?." When they found her they shot her through her head, neck and shoulder. That shot rang around the world. The bullet was immediately removed in hospital and she was flown out of Pakistan to Britain where she was given further care. Cosmetic surgeons then carefully reconstructed her face and, as we saw, did an amazing job. Recently, the Pakistan authorities have caught and arrested the Taliban death squad responsible for Malala's shooting.

Malala's Dad also attended the Edinburgh event. She said that he was her role model, having a major influence on pushing for girls' education in Pakistan. Malala said, my father didn't force me to do anything, he gave me equality." Malala has always loved school and education. She asked the audience "Science and Maths don't you like them?" She thinks homework is precious and believes strongly in girls continued education. Her mother at her age was not as keen on education, she had dropped out of school at an early age (like many Pakistani girls). Malala says that now her mother realises what she has missed and she often works alongside Malala while she does her home work.

Malala says that she first wanted to be a doctor, but now she wants to be Prime Minister of her country so she can make sure that every child gets an education. "You can kill terrorists through education." she says. She recently met Barack Obama and she told him to send school supplies instead of weapons to war zones. Malala thinks that everyone can help by using social media to spread awareness, ask for donations and encourage people to attend events. "It's everyone's duty to stand up and tell the world." Malala has



won many awards including the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought and is the youngest ever nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize.

At the end of the event, two BHS students' questions were selected to be asked: "What do you remember about the Swat Valley?" and "What book are you reading at the moment?" With regard to Swat, she replied that she misses the picturesque landscapes and temperate weather in Swat – "we have 4 seasons there just like UK but it is not as cold in Swat." She said she also misses the snow-topped mountains, green waving fields and fresh blue rivers. The book she was reading was "An Inspector Calls"

Overall the BHS students thought it was an informative and worthwhile experience and the Library hopes that it will be able to organise more such events in future.

"Malala has won many awards and is the youngest ever nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize."

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
www.berwickshirehighschool.org.uk

Notices

Rag Bag Collection

The next Rag Bag collection of Textile Recycling will take place on **Wednesday 26 November**. All good quality clean and dry clothing, paired shoes, handbags, wallets, ties, etc are welcome. The company no longer accept pillows, cushions, duvets, or rugs. This has been an extremely successful fundraiser in the past as the school receives money for each kilogram of clothing donated. Please feel free to contact Kathy Huffman at the school with any questions.



Primary 7 Disco

All primary 7 pupils are invited to a disco at The Berwickshire High School on Thursday October 30th from 6pm to 8pm. Tickets costing £3 are on sale at the Primary Schools. Several High School teachers and pupils have offered to oversee the disco but if any parents would like to help please get in touch with Mrs Paulin,. Your help would be most appreciated.



Ski Trip 2015

Reminder that the meeting for parents takes place in the PE seminar room on Tuesday 21 October at 7pm. Many thanks, Mrs Rennie

