



In this edition we have a review of the 2014 - 2015 session.

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Wester Hailes Education Centre News

Scottish & South African Fusion

In February 2014 students and staff had the pleasure of visiting our partnership school in Barkly West High School, Kimberly, South Africa. In return we had staff and students from Barkly West visiting for a week in August 2014, two learners, Alisha and Grace and their teacher Joyce. They had a fantastic time learning here at Wester Hailes Education Centre and going on cultural visits in Edinburgh. At our Commonwealth event, our visitors and students joined together to give us a spectacular fusion of Scottish and African dance with vibrant performances of Tswana style and hip hop dance and a Scottish ceilidh! Sara Cooke also came to the event bringing a Gold Medal from the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and spoke about her motivation and commitment to reach the peak of her career in Judo.



At Wester Hailes Education Centre we believe it is important to celebrate the achievements and successes of our young people and staff. I hope you will enjoy reading this round-up of our many achievements and activities over the past session. In taking over the role as acting Head Teacher my aim is to work with staff and students to enable them to realise their potential and to secure successful outcomes for all, regardless of ability or background. I will maintain the wonderful positive ethos which exists at all levels of the school, where students take on fresh challenges and responsibilities every day and truly thrive. I value the opinions of our parents and carers and hope that we will continue to work together in partnership.

'Together we are succeeding' - Stuart Heggie - Head Teacher (acting)

Improved Results

Once again our Senior Students excelled in their SQA exams in 2014 with results rising for the third year running at WHEC. The number of Students achieving Advanced Highers, Highers and National 5s showed significant improvement and compared positively against all City Schools. Students this year have just completed a full range of exams and for the first time sat new Higher exams in some subjects which have been developed to support Curriculum for Excellence. Candidates will receive their final results at the beginning of August, we wish them every success and are confident that improved results will continue.



Billboard: A Sculpture by Kevin Harman at WHEC

WHEC in partnership with The Art Room charity has launched Billboard, an installation work by artist Kevin Harman in the main playground of the school. Billboard will become a platform for messages and images that will change every two weeks as part of an interactive programme. The students will also have the opportunity to show their art work on the billboard.

Kevin Harman, an ex-student of WHEC has been an important supporter of The Art Room and said of this project, "the School is a place close to my heart. It had a formative effect on my commitments to becoming an artist. I needed to produce something for all; to try and adopt the WHEC slogan which says, 'together we will succeed'."

The Art Room believes in learning and achieving through art. Since opening at WHEC over 40 students have used The Art Room, and this year the intervention is being extended to the neighbouring associated primaries.



Pack Up Your Troubles - 'Project Kit Bag'

Pack Up Your Troubles – 'Project Kit Bag' is a unique, interdisciplinary learning experience to commemorate World War One. Four Kit Bags of World War I resources were developed by a Young People's Steering group over a period of five months and given as a learning resource to High Schools. Students from S1 and S2 used the resources over three days in May to explore WWI together with staff from across the whole school. The parents and staff who attended the performances and exhibitions were extremely impressed with the quality of the work and performances including dance, art installations, trenches experience with sound effects and celebrations of local heroes.

Career Academy - Sir Win Bischoff Student of the Year Award

Congratulations to Ella Gibbs S6 who won the Edinburgh area Sir Win Bischoff Student of the Year Award. As part of her award Ella will receive a paid employment opportunity with Standard Life. This is a fantastic achievement recognising Ella's growth and development with Career Academy. Career Academy is a programme currently running in the school that prepares students for the world of work, focusing on linking students to employers through masterclasses, mentoring, workplace visits and internships.



RS1 visit to Stirling Castle

One of the highlights of the recent S1 residential to Stirling was a visit to Stirling Castle. Students enjoyed exploring the apartments that were once favoured by many of Scotland's Kings and Queens. Our students were able to enter the world of Scotland's Renaissance Kings & Queens and even meet and speak to characters and try on their period costumes.



Christmas Truce Football Match

Pupils studying the brief truce that occurred in the trenches at Christmas 1914 re-enacted the football game to commemorate the one hundred years anniversary. They also investigated footballers who served in First World War to produce their own research on a player who served their country. Many pupils chose to investigate the lives of Heart of Midlothian players who served in the 16th Royal Scots Battalion. However, Walter Tull, Britain's first black officer and professional footballer proved to be a popular and inspiring story to investigate. Curriculum leader of Social Subjects, Stuart Sinclair said "The pupils have been genuinely been moved by the stories of sacrifice made by so many footballers in the Great War and been very engaged in this cross curricular project."



Staff Achievement Awards 2014

Our staff were joint winners in the Children & Families Achievement Awards with the Cool, Calm and Connected Peer Education programme which saw S6 students being trained to deliver sessions focusing on the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. Staff also celebrated the success of the work undertaken by the Wester Hailes Cluster – Student Monitoring Group which was awarded a Highly Commended. Sheila Paton won Leader of the Year at the Pride in Our People Staff Awards. This award recognises excellent leadership. Our Parental Engagement Group were finalist in the Customer First category recognising the success of the new format of "one to one" meetings between parents/carers.



Brightest Watts Outreach

SI students at Wester Hailes Education Centre will get the opportunity to experience innovative, exciting science, technology, engineering, mathematics and business workshops next session. Staff have worked closely with Heriot Watt University to develop an outreach programme for our students where they will have the chance to learn new skills and gain confidence in these subjects as well as finding out about student life at Heriot Watt's Edinburgh campus. Working with a team of University staff and students over the coming months we hope our students will also develop skills that will equip them for life after leaving school such as team working, communication and organisational skills and will be great experience for anyone thinking of going on to higher education and a future career in these fields.



'ASDA Price' for WHEC Breakfast Club

The school recently received funding from Asda at Chesser to provide students attending our Breakfast Club with a nutritious and healthy start to the day, allowing them to concentrate fully on their learning. The club also provides a safe and warm haven for students arriving early in the morning, particularly during the winter months. Our whole school attendance is now consistently above 91% and having a nurturing and safe environment and providing a hot meal for some of our young people has contributed to this improvement. High attendance is inextricably linked to raising attainment. The students also enjoy meeting a mix of pupils of all ages - apparently it is the place to be for the most up to date gossip!



Highly Commended from Sky Sports Mentors

We are delighted to have been given an award Highly Commended from Sky Sports Mentors for our project Leadership which we have been running in conjunction with Sky Sports Living For Sport. Only three schools in the UK have been given this award and we are the only school in Scotland to receive the accolade out of nearly 300 schools. The generalised plan was to increase engagement of the participating pupils in the project and to re-engage our cluster primary schools in increasing activity levels. We are delighted and proud to have received the Award especially from such an inspirational mentor as Steve Frew; Steve is a Commonwealth Gold Medallist and has represented both Scotland and Great Britain in gymnastics.

1:1 Digital Learning

All of our S3 students received iPads in January 2015 to use in school and at home for carrying out research and doing their homework. Staff at Wester Hailes already use iPads in class however, this does not mean that students will not still be putting pen to paper and using books in class. Janet Walker, Deputy Head Teacher, said "Having access to this kind of mobile technology will give our students the opportunity to develop the kind of skills they will need for future employment and enhance their learning". The Digital Learning Team, based in Wester Hailes Education Centre, is supporting the introduction, their website has lots of useful information for students and parents

www.digitallearningteam.org It is hoped that iPads will be introduced across the whole school in the near future.



World Book Day

Celebrations in school began with the distribution of World Book Day vouchers to our cluster primary school pupils attending Maths and English lessons here. There was some lively discussion, about favourite books and favourite characters! At lunchtime, students and staff were invited to the Library, to choose and take home for keeps, any books they wanted from the Library stock edit. It was wonderful to see the delight on the students' faces as they raked through piles of books too old for the Library shelves but still of special interest to some.

The Health & Wellbeing Cluster Cup

The HWB Cluster cup took place on Thursday 30th April where all three of our cluster primaries (Canal View, Clovenstone and Sighthill) competed to win the coveted title of Wester Hailes Cluster Champions. In the morning pupils took part in a variety of activities including Football, Rugby, Gymnastics, Athletics, Dance and Basketball. We had support from coaches and partner agencies across the city including Forrester Rugby Club and Macron reps. We were lucky to have Commonwealth Gold Medallist Steve Frew along on the day to demonstrate some of his skills and encourage pupils to work hard to achieve in sport. We would like to congratulate Clovenstone Primary School for achieving the coveted title which was closely fought all day. Well done to all and we look forward to next year.

