

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES ACHIEVEMENTS 13 FEBRUARY 2008

BURGHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

At Burghead we have been working with our new B.E.S.T programme since August 2007. From August to October 2007 43 pupils received no “warnings” for the duration of the term. (This means children were giving their best work, effort and behaviour and were successful in their learning tasks.) In term two, 49 pupils received no “warnings”. The pupils have now set their own target for term three and hope that we can raise our previous number to 50. Pupils receive certificates and personalised pencils for these achievements at an end of term assembly.

We have been engaged in various fund-raising events and, to date, have raised over £500 for charity. On 25 January members from our local churches, Lifeboats, Guide Dogs for the Blind and MacMillan Cancer will join our assembly to receive the monies raised.

In November we heard that we were to receive a prize pack consisting of smoothie makers, bakeware, kitchen scales, spatulas and aprons as a result of entering the British Food Fortnight Cook for Life Challenge 2007, sponsored by Kenwood. This came about when pupils were set a “Ready Steady Cook” challenge by Support for Learning teacher Mrs Manson, where pupils came up with names for fruit and vegetable characters and devised and cooked healthy recipes. Thank you to everyone involved in making these achievements possible.

ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL

Citizenship Week/St Andrew’s Day

All departments contributed to a week focussing on citizenship. This took place at the end of November and culminated in a celebration of St Andrew’s Day.

The inspiration for the week’s activities came from the Curriculum for Excellence developments. Departments were encouraged to work together so that S.1/2 pupils could see the links between subject areas. Topics covered included local issues, national identity and responsibilities as well as the global dimension, with further activities linked to our partners in Tanzania and Zambia.

On Friday 30 November, all classes took part in special assemblies. Pupils played the bagpipes, gave displays of country and Highland dancing and recited Scottish poetry. Outside speakers gave talks of what it meant to be a Scot. These included Councillor (and former Elgin High School pupil) Barry Jarvis, Peter Peacock MSP and Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead.

ROTHES PRIMARY SCHOOL

During the last week of term all the children in Nursery and P1-7 were involved in the school Christmas show. This year our venue was the Grant Hall; this allowed for a larger audience to attend. Our shows were very well supported both by parents and the wider community. The school choir were also busy carol singing in Rothes Church and Elgin Town Hall during the festive period. The Primary 6/7 children travelled to Aberlour to the Speyside Home to entertain the residents.

The children had fun at each of these events and the feedback from the community has been very positive.

SPEYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK DVD

A team of Speyside High School pupils recently completed the production of a DVD about Cairngorms National Park and its impact on the lives of people in the part of Moray which is within the park. The production team of Finlay MacDonald, Craig MacDonald, Ruaridh McIntosh-Turner, Amanda Biscombe and Ross Sommerville had the opportunity to attend the premiere of this video, and of others produced by schools in the Park area, at Nethybridge. The Speyside Team were presented with an award for their production by Mr David Green, Convener of the National Park Board.

CHAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK QUIZ WINNERS

Speyside High pupils have also taken part in one of a series of Cairngorm awareness days for pupils of the eight or so secondary schools which serve the park area. One of the events of these was an inter-school quiz. The Speyside team were the overall winners of this quiz and were presented with a trophy by a member of the park's management team at a school assembly this month.

ENTERPRISING FUNDRAISING

Planning is now at an advanced stage for this year's Sixth Year Adventure Residential. The year group will set off on Friday 8 February. They will be based at a hostel on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The residential will include skiing and snowboarding at the Braehead Centre in Glasgow, rock climbing, high ropes and adventure activities at Fordell Firs in Fife. The group have also been able to fit in visits to the Sea World Centre in Rosyth, the Edinburgh Ghost Tour, ten-pin bowling and a cinema visit. The residential has been funded through a range of enterprising activities by the year group which have included a rock concert, a photography service at school parties, fund-raising discos, a slave auction and other fund-raising entertainments.

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ADULT TEAM, ELGIN

Elgin Team comprises of

Susan Leonard, Community Learning and Development Worker (24hrs/wk)
Denise Gormley, Community Learning and Development Worker (24hrs/wk)

Side By Side

Side By Side is a project set up by a group of women who felt they had benefited from getting involved in the supported adult learning opportunities provided by the Community Learning and Development adult team in Elgin.

With the support of the local Community Development Worker, assisted by YWCA Moray, the women set up a buddying project for isolated residents who want to access learning opportunities in Elgin but lack the confidence to do so alone.

The project proved to be successful for both members of the project team as well as participants. They have now moved on to take up a range of learning opportunities in the library, leisure centre, college etc.

“It was my weekly escape where I could help myself, by helping others”, Lisa Addison, Participant, who has now moved on to employment with the Leisure Centre.

This project was recognised by HMIE earlier this year as an example of national best practice. The Side By Side concept is now being delivered through Loose Ends

Loose Ends

Loose Ends is a drop in service which runs weekly in New Elgin and Pinefield. Socially isolated residents who have been targeted by the adult team over the past year have been key in the design and implementation of this project.

Loose Ends is marketed through agencies who deal with the most vulnerable residents, e.g. NCH, Social Work, Health Visitors. In the main, those who attend have had a bad experience of learning and do not have the confidence/self esteem to access the services of existing agencies e.g. Careers Service, College, library etc.

Loose Ends offers information, signposting, guidance and learning opportunities in a supportive environment, as well as the invaluable opportunity for the more vulnerable residents to socialise and restart their learning journey.

The unique quality of Loose Ends is that it has been designed by local people to meet their learning needs. It is now a key component of our Elgin adult lifelong learning process.

“My confidence has grown since joining the group and it has provided me with opportunities to learn new things and meet new people” - Kirsty Duncan (participant).

Sport po anglelsku

This is a partnership, family learning project initiated and managed by the Community Learning and Development Adult Team in Elgin. It addresses 2 key issues identified in recent research commissioned by Communities Scotland - 'A study of Migrant Workers in Grampian' by Philomena de Lima (2007) and additional research undertaken by HIE Moray.

1. The need for English language provision;
2. The fact that new residents with English as a second language are facing difficulties accessing sports and leisure provision.

It is a 10 pilot project, which targets Polish families with Primary School age children. Each week families have one hour of English based around a sports theme. They then practise their English through playing particular sports.

Partners with Community Learning and Development are Sports Development, Active Schools, Adult Literacies, Moray College and Elgin Library.

This innovative family learning project successfully secured funding from the recent allocation of ESOL funding to Moray from Learning Connections.

"It has helped me with vocabulary and fitness. I come with great pleasure. I can't wait for the next session" - Filip Kaczmarek (aged 9 years).

"I've learnt some vocabulary that helps me understand weird shouts in the pubs!" - Przemyslaw Kaczmarek.

"...There was the chance for attendees to undertake an activity as a family, which is rare for families generally. The continued attendance of participants also demonstrates their enjoyment" - Ada MacNeil (tutor).

Family Learning Book

Family Learning Day was a multi-agency, one day event spearheaded by The Libraries and Information Services.

Community Learning and Development Adult Learning Team in Elgin designed and delivered a 'Family Messy Time' event as part of the day. Each family used a wide range of materials and techniques to create their own unique image of what they enjoy doing together in Moray.

They have all now been compiled into a book, which was presented to the Principal Librarian, Sheila Campbell and is displayed in the foyer of the library.

17 families participated. This included mums, dads, carers, grandparents and children of all ages.

The information collected on the day is being used by the team to develop more family learning opportunities, to meet the needs of Elgin families.

"It's great to do new things as a family, especially when we have children of different ages. We have really enjoyed today and have learnt new things" - Mum aged 42 years.

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT - ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Moray Adult Learners Forum was established in 2003 and since then has become a forum which represents adult learners in Moray locally and nationally. James Grant, the forum treasurer and chairperson on the National Learners Forum, was recently invited to Shetland to talk to learners about what is involved in setting up a forum, what a forum can do and what the advantages are. James was the main speaker at their conference.

James explains, "I started my learning journey about seven years ago when I decided to get back into learning. Back then I just wanted to be able to be confident about my reading, writing and spelling. I never imagined that this decision would change my life and inspire me to do things and take me places I'd never thought about before.

When my tutor informed me that a Learners Forum was starting up locally I gave it some thought before deciding to attend; I'd never been very confident meeting people and saw this as an opportunity to overcome this anxiety. The more I became involved in the Forum the more I was to learn that learning wasn't just about literacy but lots of other things like building confidence, self esteem, working as a team, support and learning from one another. A Forum gives Learners a platform to voice their thoughts and opinions on adult learning, an opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge, share additional learning and socialise.

Being involved in the forum made it possible for me and others to develop new skills, advocate and promote the importance of Adult and lifelong learning. Through promoting lifelong learning and the benefits of having a forum at various events throughout my local community, I was asked to get involved nationally and invited to attend the National Learners Forum in Edinburgh. This was another step on my journey which opened up new opportunities to learn more about Adult Learning. Through the National Forum I started to meet other learners from across Scotland and find out what difference having a Forum in their area has meant to them.

In November I was invited to Shetland to talk about Forums at their first annual conference. I talked about Moray Forum, how it came about, what it has done and the difference having a Forum has made to me and other learners in Moray. I never imagined that going back to learning would have taken me to so many places, to meeting so many people from MP's, MSP's, funders, providers and learners from all over the globe. This would not have been possible without the support of the Forum and Scotland's Learning Partnership, and I only started out asking for a little help with my reading and writing. Best thing I've ever asked."

MUSEUMS SERVICE

On November 30 the Falconer Museum in Forres re-opened after a fourteen-month closure for refurbishment. The museum now features new exhibition areas, new displays and interpretation, and tells the story of local man Hugh Falconer, who gifted the museum to the people of Forres.

Pupils from Dallas Primary School, who had been one of the last schools to take part in a museum event before its closure, returned to the museum to take part in the opening event. They gave a short presentation using some of Falconer's fossils, demonstrating how the museum's collections can be used to inspire learning in young visitors, and to improve their learning experiences.

Visitors are engaged through a variety of different media, including handling objects, quiz sheets, computer-based interpretation, audio interpretation, and a short film on Falconer's life and work. The building also features new display lighting, and a lift.

The museum welcomes schools and other specialist visitor groups, and also offers a range of resources for schools and groups to borrow and use away from the museum.

The museum has a bright future, with modern displays and interpretations within the classical setting of a Victorian building. It is underpinned by its renewed sense of community ownership, and celebrates Hugh Falconer, the local scientist and explorer whose name it bears, and whose collections it contains.