

Earlston High School Parent Council speaking to you....

The Parent Council continues to meet monthly in order to support the pupils, parent and staff of our school in being the best we can be and if anyone wishes to contact Parent Council to raise a concern or (even) highlight something good about the school, please get in touch by the school email (FAO Parent Council) or by letter to the School office, who will pass on all communications.

It's not always easy to get the most out of your life, especially with the pace of living today, but I will not apologise to the younger members of the school for saying that your school years go by ever so fast (just ask the present 6th year!). This is the time when you make friendships that can last far beyond your school years and when you decide what you will do with the rest of your life. We should all try to make the most of every opportunity given to us. No two people will have the same goals but if we can say that we have achieved one small thing each day, we can surely give ourselves a wee pat on the back?

One more thing, with the Council reviewing School Dress Code Policy for all schools in the Borders, the Parent Council thought it timely to consider school dress at Earlston High School. We would like to support senior management by calling for a better adherence to the school uniform. It is there to create an identity amongst all pupils, to encourage all to have a pride in their school, as well as to develop a real sense of inclusion, so come on.... less of the logos, scarves and inappropriate gear and more school uniform during the school day.... and the following request from one concerned parent 'Please could we have ties properly tied and tightened around the shirt collar as they were designed to be? Not too much to ask?

Creative Writing Competition

To celebrate the 125th anniversary of Melrose Literary Society, an essay writing competition was open to EHS pupils, in order to



celebrate literature in the Melrose area. The English department received a high volume of top quality essays to pass on to the Society to select the winners.

In a ceremony that took place last week in EHS Library, the prize winners - Kate Henney, Andrew Bond and Evie Chalmers - were awarded prizes and certificates by Rosemary Morrison, the president of the literary society, who told winners that "Members of the Melrose Literary Society are delighted to know that the future of literature in the Melrose area is in safe hands." The prize winners were delighted and very honoured to be awarded with the special anniversary prize.

Accessorise event... a diary date!

The Parent Council Sub-Group is planning to hold an accessorise swap shop later on in the year. The aim of this event is to raise money to enable the school to purchase much needed items. We need your help now.

Mums/daughters....have a look through you closets, jewellery boxes and drawers I'm sure you can find some accessory items that no longer 'thrill you' but might be perfect for a friend. We then display and sell your items at our accessory evening. Your school benefits....what could be easier.

If you have items that you would like to donate to the accessorise evening please pass them the Learning Support Department for collection by members of the sub group. All items donated need to be of good quality.

Our accessorise evening is open to everyone... and will be a great opportunity to shop, enjoy a glass of wine and nibbles, meet friends, have a giggle and more importantly come home with those all-important accessories. What are you waiting for.....get rummaging!!

S1 Glow Blogs

Over the past few weeks, we have been introducing first year pupils to Glow. Glow is the Scottish Schools' Intranet and is potentially a powerful learning tool. They have now created a portfolio on Glow—their Glow Blog. It will be a useful tool for discussion about their subjects and their wider achievements. It will also be a useful record of their time at High School.

The blogs are only a part of Glow available to S1. There will be Maths and English groups for them to take part in, recommended reading lists, presentations from authors and scientists from all over Scotland and many other exciting developments.

Dates for your diary

Wed 16 March : S3 Parents' Evening

Wednesday 30 March : S2 Excursion Meeting for Parents

Thursday 31 March : Easter Concert

Friday 1 April : Church services & school closes for Easter

Mon 18 April : school restarts after Easter holiday

Monday 18 April : S3 exams start

Friday 22 April : Good Friday holiday

Friday 29 April : Royal Wedding holiday

Monday 2 May : May Day holiday

Tuesday 3 May and Wednesday 4 May : In-service days

Thursday 5 May - Friday 3 June (inclusive) : S4 study leave

Thursday 12 May - Friday 3 June (inclusive) : S5/6 study leave



THE EARLSTON HIGH SCHOOL BUGLE



THE NEWSLETTER OF EARLSTON HIGH SCHOOL

February 2011

RESPECT HONESTY RESPONSIBILITY COMMITMENT EXCELLENCE

Dear Parent or Carer

THANK YOU & BEST WISHES

As we rapidly approach the Easter holidays, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our teachers for helping our young people to catch up after the extended period of poor weather. The pressure is on as folios, dissertations, investigations and estimate grades are all submitted to the exam board this month. I hope the seniors will use the remaining time to prepare fully for the impending exams—with only nine school days in April, it is really important to get in to a good routine at home.

Study leave for S4 begins on Thursday 5 May. For S5 and S6, study leave begins on Thursday 12 May.

I wish you all the best and look forward to sharing your success on Thursday 4 August.

UNIFORM

School uniform is now very much part of the ethos of the school and most pupils are proud to be identified with the school. The extreme weather in December and January saw some leeway with school dress but it is now time to return to our high standards. I therefore ask parents to work with us on this and check that your child is dressed appropriately for school each morning. In particular, are skirts of a reasonable length? Is footwear black? Are shirts fastened up respectfully? Do they have a tie on? Please also remind your child to remove hoodies and scarves as they enter the school- we are concerned about the risk of scarves, particularly in practical environments.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

WE NEED YOUR VIEWS TO HELP US IMPROVE

Every Spring EHS evaluates its successes and through consultation with pupils, parents and staff identifies priorities for the coming year. Although some of the improvements are dictated to us from National and Local bodies, as a school we also identify aspects that we wish to develop.

In the past the Pupil Council has been very effective in helping us identify these aspects. We are keen to hear from parents and ask you to either email us at earlstonhs@scotborders.gov.uk or write and hand it in to the office. I look forward to hearing from you thank you for helping us to improve the experience for our young people.

Best Wishes,

Miss M Strong.

Burns' Supper 2011



On Tuesday the 25th of September, the most famous Scottish poet's life and works were being celebrated all over the world, including here at the Earlston High School Burns Supper. The evening, which was organised by the Parent Sub Group, was an evening full of entertainment, delicious food and brilliant music. Mr Kidd took on the challenging role of chairperson, and was able to deliver many fabulously awful jokes throughout the course of the evening, winning many laughs and groans in equal measure.

After the Selkirk Grace was gracefully delivered by Andrew Shafik, the haggis was piped in and addressed brilliantly by Daniel Wilson, before everyone enjoyed all courses of traditional Scottish fare on offer. After shortbread and tablet, guests were able to enjoy the speeches.



First was the outstanding immortal memory by Doctor Brian Magowan, which prompted us to remember the true greatness of Burns, and the mark that he left. This was followed by a lively and captivating performance of 'Tam O'Shanter' by Matthew Burgess, before Andrew McDonald's humorous toast to the Lassies, and Kate Henney's equally amusing reply.



Further traditional entertainment was interspersed throughout the evening: Jessica Bennett's wonderful highland dancing, accompanied by the

Blain twins, and a moving performance of 'Scots Wha Hae' by Advanced Higher Music students, accompanied by Mr Jeff Thomson. The evening ended in everybody singing a rousing rendition of Auld Lang Syne.

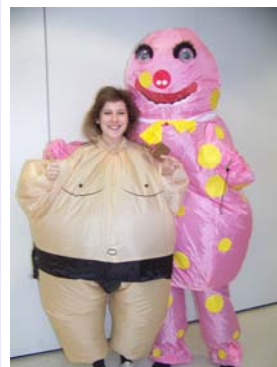
Overall, the evening was a brilliant success, well attended and well enjoyed, thanks to a combination of great food, wonderful speakers and fantastic entertainment!



Charity Fancy Dress



The Sixth Year Charity committee—always a busy bunch—organised a fancy dress day at school at the end of January. It was a bit of light relief before the seniors went on their prelim study leave.



There was no particular theme to the day and so it was a colourful array of characters who turned up for school. Some were unrecognisable and we still wonder who was Mr Blobby! The sumo wrestlers looked a mean team as did the gangsters and combat guerrillas. Famous faces were there too— Super Mario, Johnny Depp, Dorothy.



The committee also sold cake and candy at break time and collected donations from those pupils who had opted for the non-uniform option.



In total, the day raised nearly £800. Given that the committee has already hosted a successful fashion show among other events, the sixth years this year look like they will have healthy donations for their nominated charities: Breast Cancer Research, Action Aid and Arthur Shiel Rescue Centre.

Royal Wedding—Friday 29 April 2011

To mark the wedding celebrations of Prince William and Kate Middleton, Scottish Borders Council has granted a day's holiday on Friday 29th April. Please note that this is in addition to Good Friday (Friday 22 April) and the May Holiday (Monday 2 May).

Curriculum for Excellence -an update

National Qualifications

It was encouraging to see that the SQA have met their published timeline and we received the first information on what qualifications are likely to be available for our present S1 pupils. Although the actual content of National 4 and National 5 qualifications are unknown at present the information has given departments an idea on how they will move forward. Several departments used some time on INSET day to discuss this.

Literacy and Numeracy on Glow

We recently launched our Literacy Across The Curriculum and Numeracy Across The Curriculum glow pages. S1 and S2 pupils have had the chance to log on and see what is available. We encourage parents to ask their child to log on and show them the Literacy Handbook and Numeracy Help Powerpoint. There are also examples of good Literacy and Numeracy practice from different areas of the curriculum. Keep visiting these pages as they are updated on a fairly regular basis.

S1 Challenge Options

These took place in November and were well received. They focused on skill development and working with others. We were lucky to offer a variety of options and hope to do something similar before the summer holidays when hopefully the weather will allow us to offer more outdoor challenges. Activities ranged from curling to cake decorating and photography to planter making.

Decorated Christmas Cake in presentation wrap



Learn basic Italian and how to make the best pizza under the sun

Basic Bike Maintenance



What about S2?

Our plans are for pupils to continue to experience as many departments as possible. We feel this gives a broad education and it will make it easier for pupils to make choices in the future. At the end of S2 we are aiming to give pupils choice of subjects. Although these plans are not finalised we think choice brings motivation and greater academic success.

Curriculum for Excellence—cont...

Wider Achievement

At present we are exploring ways in which we can provide accreditation for wider achievement. Pupils are involved in a variety of activities out with the school curriculum and it is important to recognise the value of these. Our aim is to help pupils build a portfolio of achievements, formal and informal, allowing them to present themselves positively and reach the destination that they want when leaving school.

World Book Day

The Literacy committee is working to promote literacy across the school and is passionate about encouraging everyone (teachers and pupils) to read more.

To mark World Book Day, Thursday 4 March, the committee gathered together a gallery of photographs and information from staff in school. Teachers, janitors, school assistants - everyone - was encouraged to bring in their all time favourite book or the book that has been most influential in their lives and to share their choice.

Have you ever wondered just what Anne Taitt's, our librarian, favourite book is and why? What about Mr Roberts, PT of English and Literacy—which book influenced him? To find out the answers, pupils just needed to look on the classroom doors. Each one had a photograph of the teacher with their favourite book. At the start of each lesson, teachers gave a wee explanation to classes about their chosen book. At lunchtime, Advanced Higher English students set up displays and challenges to promote books from different genres.



Miss Watson
'The Twits'



Mrs Taitt
'The Boy with Striped Pjamas'



Mr Runciman
Lance Armstrong's autobiography



Mr Westgarth
'Catch 22'

Banner Displayed in BGH Chaplaincy

On Tuesday 1 March, four pupils from second year represented their year group to hand over the banner made in their Art and Design class. The banner now hangs in the Chaplaincy at Borders General Hospital. It is made from fabric and each square is a self portrait of individual pupils made by themselves.



Lockers

CARE/RESPONSIBILITY OF LOCKER KEYS : The padlock system is now being phased out and all lockers should have replacement locks and keys by the end of term. Pupils must bring their locker keys with them to school everyday. They must ensure that their lockers are locked at all times and that they keep their key safely. A replacement key costs £3 and the office only holds one spare key per locker.

S4 Study Leave for prelims?

We are currently reviewing the school calendar for next session and are considering the fourth year study leave in December. One option would be to retain the status quo and give pupils study leave for their prelim exams. In the past this has been for two weeks, which means pupils only come into school to sit their exams.

Another option is to remove study leave and for pupils to come into school full time, but be excused classes for their exams. This would allow for supervised and supported study. If a pupil's diet of exams finished early, the spare time would, for example, allow them to work on SQA folios and projects. This type of coursework contributes to the overall grade and therefore additional time to work on them would be beneficial. English, CDT, Business Management, Business Administration and Art and Design all have SQA coursework which contributes to the overall course award. Remaining in school would also allow pupils and teachers to catch up if adverse weather disrupts learning and teaching time is lost.

We would very much appreciate your views on S4 study leave. Please email the school with your suggestions and comments. We will be seeking pupil and staff views in the coming weeks. Please post your email comments by 25 March 2011 to earlstonhs@scotborders.gov.uk