

CASTLE DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL AND DALRY SECONDARY SCHOOL SUMMER NEWSLETTER



Dear School Community

It is so nice to produce a newsletter at the end of a session that has had no interruption from a pandemic or any of the health mitigations put in place over the last number of years. However, just to keep us on our toes, the extreme weather temperatures over May and June have provided an additional challenge for young people and teachers in school. As a nation hot weather only really agrees with us if we are on holiday and next to a pool.

2022-23 has seen us able to return to a normal rhythm of school life and return to all of the usual end of session events such as sport days, awards evenings and activities day.

At the end of this session, we will say farewell to two long serving members of staff, Mr Courten (Technical subjects) and Mr Henderson (Geography who will take the step into retirement. Both Mr Courten and Mr Henderson have given many years of service to the young people of Castle Douglas High School. Students will miss their dedication and commitment to the teaching of technical subjects and geography respectively, staff will miss the humour and knowledge that both brought daily to their job. As a school community, we would like to thank Mr Courten and Mr Henderson for everything they have given to CDHS in teaching their subject and for being involved in so many activities out with the normal curriculum.

We changed timetable on the 5th June in order to give our young people the chance to settle into their 2023-24 classes and be better prepared to start the new session in August. I encourage pupils, parents and teachers to enjoy the summer holiday, to recharge your reserves of enthusiasm, effort and resilience so that all return to school in August ready for the challenges of a new session.

In a very busy term from Easter to summer so much has been happening in school as well as activities outside of school. The following pages will give you a flavour of the summer term.

Staff Retirements

Today Mr Stephen Courten and Mr Brian Henderson have taken the first step into retirement. Both Steve and Brian have served the education of Castle Douglas High School pupils for many many years. Both have been fantastic assets to the school in their subject knowledge; their positive relationships with young people and their families and in providing extra-curricular opportunities of our young people. Steve and Brian have had long and distinguished careers in Education and in Castle Douglas High School. The staff, the pupils and the parents will all miss Steve and Brian.

Thank you for your service to the Castle Douglas community, congratulations on your retirement and please take the best wishes of our school community into a long and well deserved next phase of your life.



Steve and Brian were both presented with engraved glassware by the pupils at the senior awards event

S3 Employability BHF Fundraisers

Third year pupils have been learning about the British Heart Foundation in their Employability classes. Students have found BHF videos and information on heart health very informative. Classes have viewed videos on CPR and pupils have been fortunate to practice in class with our 8 Little Annes and a Baby Anne doll. Subsequently, they were keen to raise money for the charity. During their final week of being S3 they had an emoji quiz; a bake sale for pupils; mugs and muffins for staff; a raffle for staff; plus dodgeball and football competitions. They also had to wear red, or a red ribbon, to support BHF charity on the Friday. Pupils were pleased to raise £244.20 for the British Heart Foundation.



Orchestra Performance As part of their Music courses S3 to S6 pupils were treated to a performance by the Edinburgh College School of Media, Music and Sound Production Orchestra in the school hall on Tuesday 13th June.



Blue Light Careers Event

Dumfries College held the annual Health, Emergency and Social Care event for students across Dumfries and Galloway that are entering S4. 13 pupils from Castle Douglas High School attended, all of who have intimated a future career in the sector is of interest. With over 15,000 people employed in the Health, Emergency and Social care service in the region, the sector is the largest employer.

The event was a chance for pupils to:

- Meet professionals from a range of job families
- Understand the educational and vocational pathways
- Learn about which STEM subject apply
- Find out about work experience opportunities
- Scan QR codes to each of the organisations career pages

An excellent and informative day.



Junior Sports Day

The junior sports day took place on Tuesday 30th May and it was a fantastic day of sport as the young people of S1-S3 enjoyed participating and competing in the competition. The sun shone, it was hot, and the competition was fierce.

The PE department organise this event and are supported by all school staff to deliver on the day. The events all ran smoothly with winners and 'runners up' all enjoying every event. I want to thank the PE staff in particular for their work in making this such an enjoyable day. I also want to thank all staff for their contribution on the day to make sports day such an excellent way to end session 2022-23 and signal the start of the new session timetable that began on Monday 5th June.

There are several pictures of the sports champions and events in progress:



S1 Sports Champions Thomas Lake and Isla McFarlane



S2 Sports Champions Anna Dunlop, David Ortega Perez and Josh Wilson



S3 Sports Champions Gracie Hulland and Sam McKay Rudden

The Senior Sports

The senior sports takes place a little differently from the junior day as it takes place after the start of the new timetable when the senior school have returned from their period of study leave for their SQA exams. The senior pupils have to sign up and choose to participate in each of the events. Once again, there was fierce competition from all competitors on another very hot day, this time the 8th June.

The performances of several of our junior and senior pupils will see them qualify to compete in the regional sports on Tuesday 13th June.

The senior sports champions are below:



Senior Sports Champions William Ross and Tilda Henderson



**Senior Boys 1st William Ross, 2nd Jayden Cochrane, 3rd Craig Porteous
Senior Girls 1st Tilda Henderson, 2nd Freya Spernagel, 3rd Kristina Campbell**

Record breakers at the school sports

Three school records were equalled/broken:

S1 Boys High Jump

Fraser Cunningham - 1m 30cm

Equalled the previous record holders Jakub Van Rooyen and William Ross

S2 Boys 100m

David Ortega-Perez - 13.01s

Beat the previous record holder Jan Keeley who ran 13.16s

S2 Boys High Jump

Josh Wilson - 1m 48cm

Beat the previous record holders Euan Muir and Fraser Gibson who jumped 1m 40cm

Congratulations to all of our competitors and congratulations to the winning House – Solway



Girls on Track

On 11th May, Dalry Primary 7 and S1 girls joined together for a school trip to visit the Extreme E racing circuit at Lagrae Quarry in the hills near Sanquhar.

It is the site of a former open-cast coal mine, and provides an exciting off-road race track for state-of-the-art electric cars. The girls had the opportunity to meet the racing drivers, see inside the cars, learn all about the tyres and safety equipment, and test their own reflexes and team skills.

They took part in a "pit-stop challenge", their team changing the wheels in just a few seconds, and also an engineering challenge where the girls raced the model cars they had just made.

Famous female racing drivers talked to the girls about their experiences in the world of motorsport, as well as the career opportunities which exist. To add to the excitement, a helicopter landed on the hillside nearby, and a medical evacuation was rehearsed.

The girls were shown the medical tent and given a lesson in resuscitation by the motorsport team doctor. The race at Lagrae was shown on television that weekend, and some of the girls were able to watch their favourite drivers, Molly Taylor and Kevin Hansen win Season 3.



London 2023

In the wee small hours of 6th June, 54 CD pupils, 6 Dalry pupils and 8 members of staff set off on a 3 day adventure to London. The bus was cramped, but spirits were high as they made the 8 hour trip down to the capital. After the first evening meal at Pizza Express, the group made their way to the spectacular Shakespeare's Globe Theatre for an extraordinary performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Even the unscheduled discharge of the automatic sprinkler system didn't dampen their spirits.

Wednesday saw the group take in the V&A and the Science Museum and the sights. Some of the group made Mrs Robson proud by chatting with new friends **in French** and playing football, while the rest enjoyed the sunshine for a picnic lunch in Kensington Gardens.

The afternoon's flight on the London Eye gave the group spectacular views across the London skyline (and a few sweaty palms for some of the staff). The final night's performance of The Lion King with its wonderful costumes, staging, puppetry, songs and dancing was a truly unforgettable experience.

The final day's trip to Warner Bros' Harry Potter Studios was, for many, the highlight of the trip with the chance to see close up the amazing sets of Hogwarts, Gringott's bank and so much more.

Students' behaviour and attitude was exemplary and made everyone extremely proud.

2025 anyone?





Edinburgh 2023

On the 31st of May, a group of 22 pupils and 2 staff from Castle Douglas High School, headed off on an adventure to Edinburgh. This trip was designed to be the perfect balance between education and recreation and proved to be so. Some fairly tired S4 and S5 students who had just completed their SQA exams were ready for a break and were accompanied by some S3 pupils too. The trip was organised by the Art department so some of the activities were distinctly arty, some were historical and others were just hilariously macabre.

The group visited the Scottish Parliament, where they met one of our MSP's Colin Smyth. He talked to our students and they had the opportunity to ask questions ranging from free bus travel, to potholes on the roads and issues involving the recruitment of care workers and dentists. They were then taken into the debating chambers where they heard MSP's from the Highlands and Islands asking about the ferry contracts which was both interesting and topical.

We then went to the Edinburgh Dungeon, which was pretty scary in parts and funny in others. This created a theme for the day and following dinner and a little shop in the St James Quarter, we went on the Edinburgh Ghost Bus. I think most decided the best word for that activity was 'random'.

The next day we headed up to Edinburgh Castle to explore and take photos. We then visited the Portrait Gallery where we took part in a workshop which most enjoyed. The highlight of the day for the group was a longer shopping experience followed by some highly competitive games of Ten Pin Bowling, which Katie Gibson won. We finished the day off with a visit to Baskin Robbins ice cream parlour and then Karaoke at the youth hostel.



On the last day, the group were picked up by the bus and taken to the Gallery of Modern Art where we found an exhibition by the Barbadian artist Alberta Whittle really interesting and thought provoking as she addressed some of the issues surrounded being a member of the BAME communities both in her homeland and her adopted home the UK.

We finished our activities with a cruise of the Forth; from here we saw the Forth Railway Bridge, the Forth Road Bridge and the Queensferry Crossing from a more unusual viewpoint, we were also lucky enough to see lots of bird life and seals sunbathing on buoys and rocks. We had lovely weather for the cruise which made the trip even more magical.



A big shout out to all the students that took part, they were great fun and represented the school in an exemplary manner.

We are looking forward to our next trip already!

More photographs here:



Award Ceremonies

We were able to have award ceremonies with an assembly hall packed with parents, carers, families and young people for the first time since June 2019. We celebrated the achievements of our young people, acknowledging their efforts and commitment throughout the session.



S1 awards winners



S2 award winners



S3 award winners



S4 award winners



S5 award winners



S6 award winners



Ollie and Nyasha with the small schools football trophy
 Moray with the Wardhaugh Trophy for achievement in Physical Education
 Reuben with the Guthrie Prize for musical performance and the Noel and Arthur Brown award
 for Advanced Higher Mathematics
 Tilda with the Miss McCrindle Sports trophy as senior girls sports champion
 Fraser with the Golden Trowel award for construction



Sadie with the Stewarty Veterinary Trophy for achievement in Higher Human Biology
 Charlie with the Clayton Cup for endeavour
 Freya with the Lockhart Rose bowl for the best academic performance in S5

House Captains

The final act of our house captains for session 2022-23 at the senior awards even was to announce the house captains for session 2023-24 and hand them their badges.

The house captains had to apply in writing for the position and then make a short presentation to their peer group outlining what they hoped to achieve should they be selected for their house.

The successful house captains are pictured below:



Solway House
Captain – Callie Houston
Vice-Captain – Morgan Mirren



Threave House
Captain – Will Ross
Vice-Captain – Katie Henderson

Netball

On Monday 12th June, our Senior Netball Team travelled to King George V Sports Complex in Dumfries, to compete in the Dumfries and Galloway School Senior Netball Festival. It was a scorching hot day with temperatures reaching above 30 degrees! Regardless, our girls did not let this phase them, doing us proud and playing fantastically.

After the morning games, our team were placed to play in the plate competition in the afternoon, in which they finished 4th.

Player of the Tournament was Freya Spernagel for Castle Douglas High School

Well done girls



Senior Netball Team

Junior Netball Festival – Friday 19th May 23

Well done to the junior netball team who had a successful day in extremely hot conditions. They showed commitment, dedication and resilience throughout the day.

In the morning they were in a randomly selected pool. They won 3 out of 4 of their games to finish in 2nd place. Beating Dumfries Academy B, Dumfries Academy C and Stranraer Academy B along the way, with their biggest win being 10-0.

This ensured they were in the plate competition. These games were closely contested. The girls beat Langholm 4-1 and Kirkcudbright 3-1. Unfortunately they were beaten by Stranraer A 5-3 and Wallacehall 3-2. This meaning they finished 3rd in the Plate competition. Every one of the girls gave 100% throughout and it was a pleasure to see their netball and confidence grow as the competition progressed.

An extra well done to Jasmine McCullough for winning the CDHS player of the tournament.

