

CASTLE DOUGLAS and DALRY SPRING NEWSLETTER



Dear School Community

As the Easter holiday approaches and we start to benefit from the lighter mornings and evenings I hope that some improved spring-like weather will be with us for the holiday period.

January to Easter has been a very busy term with lots happening in school in terms of learning and teaching and lots happening out with school in terms of extra-curricular activities. Many of the photographs featured in this newsletter demonstrate just how actively our young people participate in the opportunities we offer in school and how dedicated they are to the activities they enjoy.

Pupils in S1-S3 will be looking forward to their Easter break as a chance to down tools for a couple of weeks of rest and relaxation.

For our S4, S5 and S6 pupils who will be taking National Qualification SQA exams this will be a two-week window in which a great deal of focussed revision could make the difference between a pass or a fail or between an 'A' grade and a 'B grade'. This year the SQA exams will begin for our pupils with Higher Physical Education on Monday 22nd April.

On a personal note, I am delighted to inform you that after 38 years of continuous service in education I will be retiring from my post as Head Teacher in the summer of 2024. The process to appoint a new Head Teacher will begin after the Easter break. Deck chairs and cocktails await!

SQA Study Leave 2024

At Castle Douglas High School study leave will officially start on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 with the new timetable for session 2024-25 beginning on Monday 3rd June 2024.

Any pupil with an exam prior to the 23rd April will be able to study from home on the day before their exam and their absence will be authorised.

On the working day before each exam at CDHS a revision master class will take place in the school. Details have been issued to pupils via Teams and posted on the school website.

The arrangements for S4 pupils at Dalry Secondary will be the same as in previous years whereby pupils will be granted the day immediately prior to each exam for them to study at home should they wish to do so but otherwise the timetable will run as normal. This means that exam preparation can largely be teacher led and those doing N4 or below can have the maximum time to complete courses/assessments (this may include progression onto the next level if the course has been completed).

Dalry Secondary



Over the last few months there has been a considerable amount of discussion taking place around the future of secondary schooling in the Glenkens. The roll of Dalry Secondary has fallen steadily and is now at a critical point where providing high quality educational experiences is increasingly difficult.

The central team of education officers have held meetings with the parents, staff and wider Glenkens community. At this point in time final decisions around how the school will operate in session 2024-25 are still being made.

In the interim period while we await a final decision, in school we continue to try to prepare the young people for every possible outcome. Young people have been given the opportunity to make option choices for their National Qualification subjects at Dalry Secondary. They have also been given the opportunity to make choices should they have to make a setting change to Castle Douglas High School.

This has been a stressful time for pupils, parents and staff but we are all working together to try to ensure that, no matter what the final decision is about the future of Dalry Secondary school for session 2024-25, the young people feel supported to be able to continue with their education.

Castle Douglas High School Presents... "Mary Poppins!"



We are very excited to be putting on our first school show in a number of years. Rehearsals are well underway for "Mary Poppins" and we are having so much fun. The pupils have been working extremely hard to learn their lines, songs and the choreography and it is looking to be a great show.

Come along and see "Mary Poppins" on the 12th, 13th and 14th of June 2024. The doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Tickets will be on sale from the school office and The Toffee Shop, King Street, Castle Douglas after the Easter holidays.

Ticket prices are as follow: £8 (adult), £5 (concessions) or £20 (2 adults and 2 children).

Programme Advertisements

Within our show programme we have spaces reserved for business advertisements on either full or half pages.

Advertisement prices are as follows;

Full Page - £30

Half Page – £15

If you would like to support the school show, and have your advert featured in our programme, then please contact the school office on 01556 502821 and ask for Zoe Paterson.

Raffle

We will be holding a raffle on the evenings of the show and we are looking for raffle prize donations. If you would like to donate a raffle prize, please drop these into the school office. Any donations will be gratefully received.



Easter Donation

Pupils from Castle Douglas High School wanted to give a little something back to their community. The enterprise group who organise and run the school Christmas Fayre, donated some Easter eggs to the Stepping Stones Foodbank.



Friday the 22nd of March will be a dress as you please, non-uniform day. Pupils are asked to donate an item for the foodbank in exchange for being able to wear their choice of clothing to school. These donations will be forwarded to Stepping Stones as soon as possible.

Galloway National Park

Young people at Castle Douglas High School have worked over a number of sessions in their geography lessons on exploring the pros and cons of a new national park being established in Dumfries & Galloway.

Lorna Slater the MSP Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity came into school to discuss the potential for the national park with the young people.

The Minister emailed to thank the young people and to congratulate them for the quality of their contributions. That e-mail stated:

I really enjoyed visiting Castle Douglas High School and hearing the students' views about what Galloway has to offer as a potential new National Park and what National Park status could mean for young people in the area in terms of new employment opportunities, improved access to nature and local efforts to tackle climate change and protect the natural environment.

The minister went on to say that hearing a range of views from the pupils first-hand was a very powerful way of getting their voice heard.



Castle Douglas High School Cross Country Championships

Congratulations to all young people who braved the winter weather to compete in the school cross country championship on Friday 16th February. Some pictures of the brave competitors shown below, more available on the school Facebook pages.



Top 5 finishers in each category

CDHS Cross Country Championship Results 2024			
S1 BOYS (1.5 miles)		S1 GIRLS (1 mile)	
1 st	Josh Stewart	1 st	Annie Barbour
2 nd	George Stewart	2 nd	Abbie Harvey
3 rd	Coby Blackburn	3 rd	
4 th	Oscar Pollock	4 th	
5 th	Ciaran Johnstone	5 th	
S2 BOYS (2 miles)		S2 GIRLS (1.5 miles)	
1 st	Thomas Lake	1 st	Izzy Barbour
2 nd	Jaiden Hunter	2 nd	Lucy Barbour
3 rd	Ben Williamson	3 rd	Isla McFarlane
4 th	Cameron Dawdry	4 th	Maria McMiken
5 th	Alfie Hering	5 th	
S3 BOYS (2.5 miles)		S3 GIRLS (1.5 miles)	
1 st	Leylan Murray	1 st	Poppy Sinden
2 nd	James Nelson	2 nd	Anna Dunlop
3 rd	David Ortega Perez	3 rd	
4 th	Sam Harnet	4 th	
5 th	Douglas McNaught	5 th	
S4 BOYS (3 miles)		S4 GIRLS (2 miles)	
1 st	Oliver Campbell	1 st	Heidi Miller
2 nd	Fraser Davies	2 nd	
3 rd	Finley Jardine	3 rd	
4 th	Graham Irving	4 th	
5 th		5 th	
S5/S6 BOYS (4 miles)		S5/S6 GIRLS (2.5 miles)	
1 st	Corey Shaw	1 st	Freya Spennage
2 nd	Rory Telfer	2 nd	Kristina Campbell
3 rd	Angus Bryson	3 rd	Carla Nicolson
4 th	Cameron Benson	4 th	
5 th	William Ross	5 th	



Regional Cross Country Championships

On Thursday February 22nd CDHS pupils competed in the regional cross country championship. Every competitor was a credit to the school. A special mention to Josh Stewart for winning the boys event, Izzy Barbour for finishing 3rd in the S2 girls event and Poppy Sinden for winning the S3 girls event. Fantastic performances, well done everyone.

National Cross Country Championships

More fantastic cross country achievements, Josh Stewart finished 6th in the national under 14 boys event and Alexa Swalwell finished 68th in the national under 15 girls event. Very impressive achievements, well done.

D&G Secondary Schools Gymnastics Championship 2023

Castle Douglas High School had teams competing in the secondary level 3 competition, on Sunday 3rd March 2024. They all performed brilliantly with the girls winning the overall level 3 competition! Well done to Cate bannerman, Erin Boardman, Isla McFarlane, Libby Earle and Ruby Hope who made up our winning team.

Special mention must go to Cate Bannerman, winner of the individual level 3 competition. A fantastic achievement! Finally, a big thank you to Megan at Stewartry Gymnastics Club for her work with the students and supporting this opportunity for them all.

Up next for the girls is the National Competition in June. We all wish them well for their preparations over the coming months.



Crufts 2024

Charlotte McIntyre and her dog Milo competed at Crufts this year.

What a fantastic time at Crufts for Charlotte McIntyre & Milo. They qualified for all 5 Young Kennel Club classes at Crufts then also got through to the Main Arena for the Agility Dog of the Year Final (however Milo was a little overwhelmed). They still enjoyed their time in the main arena and have had a fabulous experience.

Well done Charlotte and Milo.



Skiing, the Aosta Valley, Italy. February 2024

One of the most eagerly anticipated and exciting events of session 2023-24 was the skiing trip to the Aosta Valley in Italy. The young people all had a great time when they were on the trip and were very excited to talk about their adventures when they returned home. All young people on the trip were a credit to themselves, their families and their school. Well done.

Thank you to all staff who participated in this trip and helped to make it such a memorable occasion for our young people. Trips like these can only happen when staff are willing to be participants in the wider life of the school. I am sure all of the young people and their parents would join me in thanking staff.

Here are a few pictures from the ski trip and there are many more available on the school Facebook and website.



Under 14 regional Rugby

On Tuesday 30th January, our under 14 girls and boys Rugby teams travelled to Newton Stewart Rugby Club to compete in the West Regional Qualifier. Schools in attendance were Stranraer Academy, Douglas Ewart High School, Kirkcudbright Academy and Dalbeattie High School. Both teams performed exceptionally well on the day, winning all of their matches on the way to topping their respective groups. The teams will now travel to Dumfries Rugby Club on Tuesday 19th March to take part in the Regional Finals.



U14 Girls

Yvie Dunlop
Amy Nelson
Lucy Barbour
Maria McMiken
Holly Lamont
Lexie Low
Fern Craig
Amelia Renwick-Grant
Lily Spernagel
Annie Barbour
Alex Callendat



U14 Boys

Jack Peacock
Alper Altas
Jake McCubbin
Ben Williamson
Cameron Dawdry
Callum Young
Sam Brown
Fraser Cunningham
Louis Campbell
Thomas Lake
Rory Gibson
Jay Logan
Murray McCracken
Ciaran McMiken
Rory Williamson

Under 14 Regional Finals

Well done to our under 14 girls rugby team who won the regional finals on the 19th March. They won every game topping a group that included Moffat Academy, St Joseph's College, Wallacehall Academy, Douglas Ewart High School and Annan Academy.



Football

Congratulations to our under 15 football team who beat Sanquhar Academy in their final match to win the under 15 regional football league.

The boys have had a terrific season winning all of their games.

They still have a cup semi-final to look forward to on the 9th April.



Senior Sports Leaders

Our Sports Leaders have continued to deliver sporting sessions to a number of different groups this term. Lunchtime clubs have been in full flow, with the leaders running the sessions. These volunteering hours will count towards their Saltire Award. Additionally, the group received CPD from Disability Sport, learning how to create, adapt and deliver sporting sessions to those who require additional support. Well done to everyone involved.

