

GRAEME HIGH News



Issue 22 - June 2017



The senior school Personal Development class successfully delivered the results of an extensive survey that they conducted on behalf of local charity, Falkirk District Association of Mental Health. The class presented to representatives from the charity and from Network Rail. All the guests were impressed at the professional delivery and the creativity of the students. The students were presented with certificates. The charity are keen to develop the student's ideas in a project for the next Personal Development class.



Another Computing winner

Mr Douglas' S1-3 Computing Science pupils used their computing and design skills to enter OKI's 'Print My Ride' competition. The pupils used 3D modelling to design a car wrap for a British Touring Car Championship Ford Focus ST racing car and the chance to have their design used on an entry in a BTCC championship race later this year.

From entries all across the UK, Aidan Morrison (ST02) was chosen as the winner of the 'Best design from an Education Establishment'. Aidan has won a scale-model car wrapped in his artwork and a VIP trip for two to the Dunlop BTCC championship round at Knockhill in August. Well done Aidan!

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Rights Respecting Schools in GHS

We are on our way to becoming a Rights Respecting School!

On April 21st this year we were awarded with a Recognition of Commitment from UNICEF UK. This was only possible due to the hard work and dedication from enthusiastic pupils and staff.

Following our extended form activities in January where we focused on Holocaust Memorial Day, the plight of refugees and the devastating effects of poverty in the UK, our pupils suggested fantastic ways that our school community could help those who are disadvantaged. This has led to the creation of three banks within GHS; a uniform bank, a toiletry bank and a textbook bank.

How can you help?

The Uniform Bank

We are in the process of pulling together resources to stock a uniform bank for pupils from low income backgrounds. We are also raising funds to ensure the uniform bank is sustainable. Currently, we are collecting stock both new and nearly new items to get started.

Has your child grown out of any uniform items that could be used by someone else? If so, donations can be handed in to the main office and addressed to either Miss Curran, Mrs McCormick or Mrs Duffy. Desired items would be:

- White shirts/blouses
- Black trousers/skirts
- Black knitwear
- School ties
- Blazers
- Black socks
- Black tights
- Underwear
- School bags

Our leaving S6 pupils will have the opportunity to donate their no longer needed blazers and ties at their leaving ceremony. It is also our intention to have donation areas available at Parent's Evenings in the new session.

*If your child requires any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact: Miss Curran, Mrs Duffy or Mrs McCormick on Graeme High School's phone number.

There will be an opportunity for you to hand in any old/ unwanted textiles to the school after the Summer holidays. We will be collecting textiles as part of our Bag to School initiative which will take place on September 28th. This is where old clothes are weighed and sold which will generate funds for our School Uniform Bank. Donations can be handed in to the main office or to Miss Curran or Mrs McCormick.

The Toiletry Bank

This bank was inspired by news stories from Leeds that reported girls from low income backgrounds are missing out on their education during their periods as they do not have access to the sanitary products they need. It is our goal to

make sure this does not happen in Graeme High. At our inset day on May 4th staff were asked to bring in a toiletry item donation at our 'Soup and Soap' event. We have collected a huge amount of donations, some of which have already been utilised by our pupils. If you are able to make any donations of the following items we would greatly appreciate it:

- sanitary towels (not tampons)
- shampoo/ conditioner
- deodorant
- shower gel
- toilet bags
- any unwanted toiletry item gift sets

Donations can be handed in to the main office and addressed to Miss Bell.

*If your child requires any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Bell on Graeme High School's phone number.

The Textbook Bank

We currently have over 95 donated textbooks, past paper books and revision guides! Are there any at home that could be donated to us? With the end of the current exam diet, this is a possibility. We are striving to ensure that all pupils can access revision materials regardless of their economic background.

Donations can be handed in to the main office and addressed to Mrs Gallacher, Mrs Marshall, Miss Chalmers or Miss Ringrose.

*If your child requires any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Gallacher on Graeme High School's phone number.

If you would like any more information on Rights Respecting Schools, please visit <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/>

Thank you in advance,
Miss Mooty



Graeme Positive Families 2017

This year's group is well underway with all families coming from Westquarter. So far we have learnt about Family Food, Creative Art and Coping with Conflict. We have looked at brain development in young people, Five to Thrive key things to know and do in our families and finally talked about the importance of self-care.

All the families have been awarded a place on the family learning residential to Lendrick Muir in June being run by our school Community Learning and Development Worker Joanne Ellis.

Lisa Forbes



Cycling Elective

This year saw a new elective as part of G in the Park. Pupils in the cycling elective were kept very busy visiting a number of places across Falkirk and Edinburgh. The purpose of the group was to experience, record information then share where they had visited to show all the places you could visit within and around Falkirk if you brought your bike to a festival like G in the Park. Highlights of the elective included a visit to the Milk Barn, accessing the canal paths to visit the Falkirk Wheel, Callendar Estate, The Kelpies and Falkirk Stadium. If that wasn't enough there was also a cycle to Falkirk High Station to travel on the train to Edinburgh to complete a Scavenger Hunt at the Museum of Scotland and climb a monument on Calton Hill.



Author visits

Graeme High pupils enjoyed a number of high profile author visits this year.

First of all we invited Janice Galloway in to work with our S6 Advanced Higher English class.

The class studied her novel "The Trick is to Keep Breathing" as part of their literature course and were inspired by the creative writing tips she was able to pass on to them. It was also a thrill to hear such a critically acclaimed author saying she was impressed with the standard of creativity that the students demonstrated.

We held an event for all S1 pupils with Cathy MacPhail. Cathy talked about the inspiration for some of her novels and even said she might pinch an idea from one of our pupils who answered a question on what might happen in the sequel to her latest novel.

Our author events were rounded off with Alan Bissett working with a group of S4 and S5 pupils. He performed the opening scene of his hit production "Moir Monologues" and talked about how he turned real people he knew in Falkirk into successful characters in his fiction. All of our pupils responded positively to the authors and demonstrated a high standard of behaviour throughout the events.



Graeme High Under 13's Football Team

After maintaining Graeme High's proud record in the league by retaining the SSFA Central Region U13 League title for the fourth year in a row, our Under 13s team made it a league and cup double for the third successive year. The unprecedented 'triple-double' was achieved after the team won the Alloa Athletic U13 Cup at the Indodrill Stadium in March.

After navigating their way through the toughest of draws in the knock-out competition, the team produced another stellar display in the final, comfortably dispatching their opponents 4-0. The game provided another opportunity for spectators to enjoy the free-flowing and possession based approach of the team that has been a highlight of their undefeated local league and cup seasons.



P7 Numeracy Event

Every year in May we invite all of our P7 pupils from our cluster primaries to take part in an action packed afternoon of mathematical challenges. The senior



leadership pupils had organised the day which consisted of a team round, a nim round which is a strategy game, and a relay round. All pupils involved had an exceptional day using their numeracy and problem solving skills. Well done to the senior pupils for organising and running such a fantastic day and well done to all of our Primary 7 pupils who took part!



UKMT Challenges

Last month a selection of our junior classes took part in the annual UKMT Maths Challenges. The challenge consisted of pupils working through multiple choice questions designed to stimulate an interest in Maths and problem solving. Our pupils performed exceptionally well and many were successful in achieving an award. A special mention to Amy Clark who achieved Best in Year award for S1, and to Cory Dawson who won best in year for S2 as well as Best in School. He has also qualified for the Junior Kangaroo competition which he will take part in on Tuesday 13th June – good luck Cory!



A huge thanks to Corey Dawson and Michael Miller who represented Graeme High School at the Maths Masterclass event run by the UK Mathematics Trust which was held at Edinburgh University on Saturday 3rd June. The day consisted of a range of workshops and speakers in which the boys enjoyed taking part.

P7 Parents' Information Evening

Last month a selection of our S1 pupils eagerly volunteered to help out at the Primary 7 Parents' Information Evening. They shared their experiences of Maths at Graeme High School and informed the parents about the required expectations for the forthcoming new S1. The S1 pupils showed excellent communication skills during the evening and were a credit to the school. A variety of our excellent resources were on display to showcase the different activities available to pupils.



G IN THE PARK

THE SUN SHINES AS G IN THE PARK TURNS SEVEN!

On Wednesday 31st May the sun shone down on our S2s as the culmination of their two week Interdisciplinary Learning Project 'G in the Park' took place.

The project, which is now in its 7th year, built upon the success of previous years as staff and pupils worked hard to create a day to remember. The afternoon kicked off with a fabulous performance by our S2 Dance Group who were all looking the part in their festival t-shirts designed by our S2 Textile Designers. We were then treated to a whole host of entertainment from school based acts such as the S2 project Band 'The Notes', a junior band 'The Rhythm' and two senior bands, including one who signed up Mr McLeod as a guest bass guitarist for the day. Up and coming Grangemouth based band, 'The Patryns' then played a set using well known covers and material from their new EP 'Last Orders'. The festival was brought to a close by boy band 'District 12' who have a record deal with Universal and are currently supporting The Jackson on tour. The proceedings were all pulled together by our S2 Media team of presenters, photographers and film editors and some of our senior students worked with our partners at Sound Sense on sound and lighting.

Festival goers were also entertained by a wide range of charity stalls put on by other G in the Park project groups. As well as traditional stalls planned by our S2 Charity Ambassadors, such as tin-can alley and a bouncy castle. Our new group of Cycling Promoters and the S2 Music Researchers provided interest stalls with games and quizzes and S2 caterers provided



a delicious range of hot and cold snacks and The Environmental Explorers invited provided toasted

marshmallows. A group of

S2 Health Promoters also provided a Health and Wellbeing chillout zone for those revellers who preferred to sit in the shade to enjoy the festivities. The festival day was a great



success with all funds raised going to our three house charities:

Teenage Cancer Trust, Strathcarron Hospice and Simpsons Special care Baby Unit.

Whilst the festival day was a huge success, it did follow innovative planning by staff and two weeks of successful learning, hard work and enthusiasm by our S2s. All learners took part in lessons which looked at the impact of music festivals on the local environment and the contribution they make to Scottish tourism and the local economy. They undertook the role of band managers in Maths and they also learned about festivals in other countries, the impact of music on our lives and the dangers of drug and alcohol on the body. At the core of their learning pupils were given the chance to develop skills in enterprise, leadership, communication and for work and life – from catering to marketing, camping to first aid, presenting to pond dipping, orienteering to cycling filming to fundraising to mention but a few. Yet again the pupils gained valuable experiences and created lasting memories. It's incredible to think that the students who first undertook this project are now 20 years old and since its birth, thousands of pounds has been raised for charity.



GHOST TOWN AND IT'S GHOULS GETS A GIGGLE

2017 brings the fourth Graeme High School original production, 'Ghost Town' – written and directed by our very own Miss Galletly.

'Ghost Town' tells the story of a forgotten town and its residents who are struggling to cope with the demise of its local industry, high unemployment and levels of boredom. Hopes are raised when a building developer moves in to town and promises to bring the town back to life but the promise of a brighter future is under threat if they reach a compromise with some of the towns more 'spiritual' residents!

As the 12th show under the current production team, 'Ghost Town' follows in the footsteps of previous shows; showcasing not only Graeme High School's talented actors and actresses but also our gifted dancers and singers with an exciting mix of old and new tunes help to tell the story.

The audition process for the show began back in February when many brave hopefuls faced panel of staff and were asked to demonstrate their skills in acting, singing and dancing. Successful auditionees were taken through to 'Boot Camp' where they were again put through their paces to compete for parts. Following numerous casting meetings, a group of pupils from S1 – S5 were finally chosen to be the cast of this year's show and allocated their own roles. As with every production, each cast member brought their unique influence to the part and truly made it their own. Miss Galletly, Miss Ringrose and Mrs Duffy were impressed by the high calibre of new and talent discovered in this year's auditions and were delighted to see each cast member grow with both confidence and ability throughout the entire process.

With weekly rehearsals beginning back in March, hours of hard work and preparation were put in. As performances drew closer, cast were supported by a number of pupils and staff who

worked behind the scenes in stage management; sound and lighting; scenery painting; advertising; programme design; ticket sales; catering and front of house duties. Without the team effort of everyone involved, 'Ghost Town' would not have been such a success.

Monday 19th June 2017 saw the 'Ghost Town' debut and the culmination of the dedication and enthusiasm from cast and crew resulted in a slick opening night, this was then followed by further great performances on the Tuesday and Wednesday evenings respectively. Audiences were entertained and gave great feedback on the talent on show - from both serious and comedy performances, excellent choreography and dancing, to strong vocals.

With no S6s in this year's show, staff were delighted to not have to say goodbye to any of the cast and pleased that they all hope to sign up for auditions next year. This year's cast were led by a group of fantastic seniors who proved to be excellent role models to their younger peers in terms of their hard work and commitment as well as their ability to embrace new recruits in to the GHS 'show family.'

Thank you to all members of our school community who came along to support the show. It is always a pleasure to see so many familiar faces from previous shows and all support is greatly appreciated by all cast and crew, your laughs and cheers make all of the hard work worthwhile. Grateful thanks to Toni Wilson Photography for taking such wonderful photographs.

We look forward to entertaining you again next year!



SE!



Sports

Sports leader end of year festivals

Throughout the year our Sports Leaders have been assisting with sports clubs and school events within our school and local community. They have led swimming sessions, ran lunch time and after school clubs and assisted staff with the delivery of Physical Education to primary classes. Most recently they travelled to Hallglen Primary School to deliver a potted sports activity and organised a cluster competition at Graeme High school. Our leaders have been a credit to themselves and the school on each and every event. Well done on another successful session.



Primary School sports days

This year we have been blessed with sunny sports days. Once again a large number of pupils from S3 –S6 volunteered their time to help the Physical Education staff in the running of all 6 cluster primary school sports days. The pupils helped in the running of potted sports stations and assisting in the general organisation of the day. All were a credit to the school.



Sports leader award

Falkirk Council Sports Leader runner up award

This year Lewis Conway S6 was nominated for his outstanding contribution to extra-curricular clubs in GHS school and cluster primaries.



Basketball player

Congratulations to Ewan McCormick (S4) who has been selected to represent Scotland U15s Basketball team. Ewan is currently training hard in preparation for the Euro Basket Cup which takes place in Barcelona in June this year. This is Ewan's third year representing the national team and is the highlight of his season. Ewan also plays in the Scottish National League with Falkirk Fury and let's not forget our school team! Well done Ewan and good luck for the tournament.



PRIZE-GIVING

This year our annual S4-S6 Senior Prize-giving took place on Wednesday 7th June - it was a swanky affair with red carpet, cabaret-style seating, centre-pieces and fancy table settings. Pupils sat with family and friends - all feedback has been extremely positive so we intend running the same format next session.

Musical items included Traditional Piping; a piano item by S2 pupil Aiden Lyons; and a performance from the Samba Band. Our amazing pupils won awards for attainment and endeavour in all subjects across the curriculum and, in addition, there were prizes and trophies for outstanding achievement and



Trophy with a grand total of 1650 points with Captain Caitlin Murray collecting the shield.

Our premier award winners were two S5 pupils:

The James B McHardy Medal

Proxime Accessit

Eilidh Hunter

The Graeme High School Medal

Dux of the School

Conor Whitehead

Needless to say we are very proud of the achievements of all our award winners and wish all our senior pupils the very best of luck when their SQA Exam results arrive in August.

Please keep Wednesday 20th September in your diary for the S1-S3 Junior Prize-giving, which will be an evening event for award winners and their families.



service to the school and community.

Steele House won the Inter-house



GRAEME HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

All parents are automatic members of the Parent Forum and a number of us form a group called Graeme High Parent Voice. We meet around five times a year to hear school plans, to give our voice to proposed changes, to get a deeper understanding of the way the school is running, to hear about issues that are important to us and our children and to support the head teacher, the management team and staff with our varied skills, knowledge and expertise.

Over the past year our agenda items have included: Improvement Planning, Curricular Structure, Changes in qualifications, Pupil Reward Scheme, Wellbeing and anti-bullying. We also support the school with Senior Management appointments. The main agenda items and the dates are worked out in September but other agenda items are placed on as and when pertinent.

We are looking to have a variety of arrangements in place for gathering the views of members of the Parent Forum on other matters that are of interest or concern to parents. We would ideally like representation from all year groups and all houses on the committee to show full engagement of parents across the school. We would love to see more parents join our Parent Voice group but we would also like to hear from parents who want to read our minutes and to keep in touch through social media.

If you would like to hear more, please contact us through the school website or email chantelle.russell@falkirk.gov.uk to let us know to include you in our mailing circle. You can also follow us on Twitter@GHS Parent Council



Music News

NYCoS Silver Award

Congratulations to Rachel Forbes on gaining a NYCoS Silver Award. These are not easy to come by and is the culmination of years of rehearsals, aural training and hard work.

Piping Group

This year has seen the forming of Piping Group run by Miss Leitch and they've been busy already. Their debut performance was at the Christmas Concert 2016 and they have gone on to perform in the local community at the Falkirk Wheel and Senior Prizegiving – not bad for a first session together especially considering the Group consists only of junior pupils! Piping Group are on the lookout for new members so for any new S1's out there, bring your pipes and drums in and see Miss Leitch...

Guitar Group

Now in its' third year, guitar group took on a slightly different complexion this year with the intake of around 20 first years! We actually ran out of guitars to use but thanks to the GHS community, The Big Walk proceeds stepped in and purchased some additional instruments. As some of our senior pupils stopped attending regularly this session to focus on their exams, and with so many beginners, we have not performed as much as usual this year but have mainly been building up skills.

School of Rock

This is a project still in its infancy but has already produced some excellent bands and performances. Highlights include the Christmas Concert and G in the Park but the future

looks even brighter... Not only do we have some very keen S1's starting to form bands of their own, there is an exciting performing opportunity in the pipeline being organised by Bo'ness which we will be putting forward some of our bands for. I'm also hopeful that we might have enough GHS bands next session to run our own band night - watch this space... And if you want to show the pupils what their parents are made of and form your own band, please contact the school! Thanks, Mr Burke.

Samba Band

This continues to go from strength to strength and Samba Band perform regularly throughout the school year. Under the tutelage of drum tutor Mr Brown, some of the rehearsals and performances are now being led by senior pupils – a great example of peer learning and that music groups are there for everyone to participate in, from S1 – S6.

Department News

The Music Department continues to play an integral role in the school calendar. We run the Christmas Concert and are helped every step of the way by our excellent team of music tutors. If your child would like to be considered for music tuition on ANY instrument they should speak to their teacher about being put on the waiting list. The more pupils who learn, the more varied extra-curricular activities we can run. We have also been heavily involved in P7 transition and G in the Park as usual this session, as well as giving parents a road-test of what it's like in the music classroom during the P7 Parents' Open Evening. Next session, as well as the existing music groups, String Group will continue and there are new groups available for pupils to take part in – Folk Group and Choir – get involved!

We regularly share success stories and class performance recordings on Twitter @GHSMusic1 so please follow us to keep up with all our news.

A Bicycle Built For...

This year, the Crochet and Knitting Club decided to try something different.....Yarn bombing. Yarn bombing is a form of non-permanent graffiti where groups knit and crochet to decorate objects to make them look more interesting.

Yarn bombing is believed to have originated in America when Texas knitters tried to find a creative way to use their leftover and unfinished knitting projects, but it has since spread worldwide.

People all over the world have decorated trees, railings, fences and even public statues with their knitting and crochet but here at Graeme High we thought as a first attempt we would be a little less ambitious and decided to yarn bomb a bike. It has taken us all year to do it but I think you'll agree it's been a job well done.



TRASH FASHION

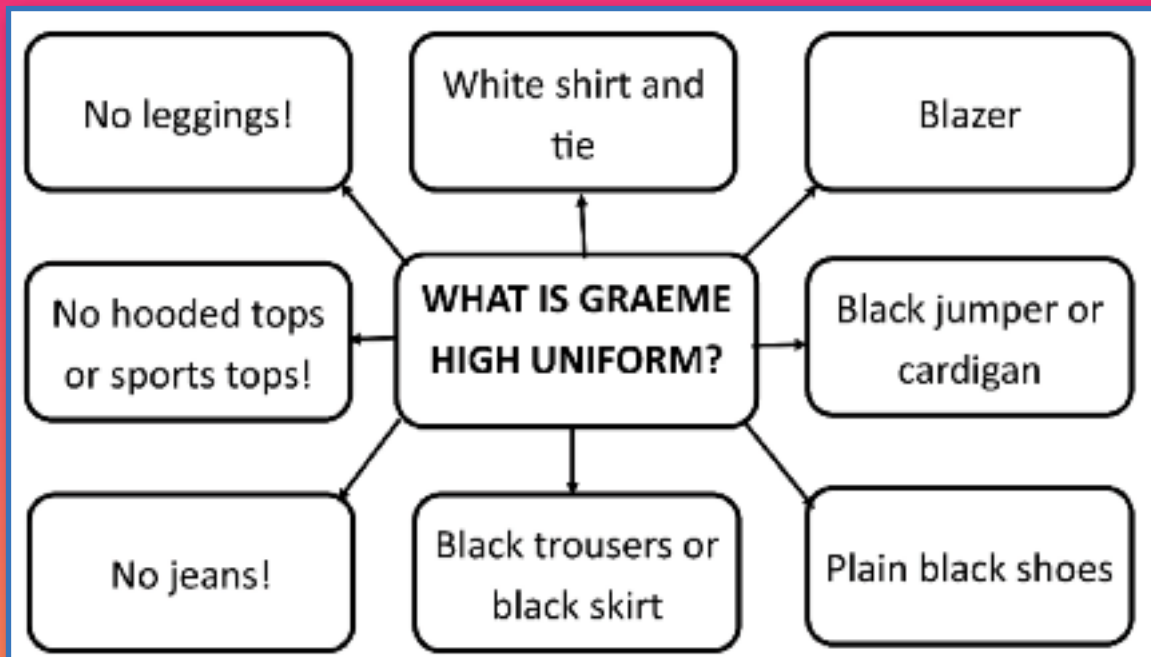
The Trash Fashion club performed a fashion show at the P7 transition night.



Graeme High Uniform—Let's Smarten Up!

With the summer holidays approaching, it'll be time to get in the new uniforms for next session! Can we take this opportunity to remind parents and carers what makes up Graeme High Uniform. Despite what pupils may claim, leggings, jeans and sports tops are not part of the uniform!

We want to start the term as a really smart, unified community and we encourage pupils to set the highest possible standards for themselves, dressing as smartly as possible to contribute to the positive ethos we wish for Graeme High.



Scottish FA performance School Graduation 2017



Graeme High's Performance School pupils graduated at the recent Scottish Cup final match. The pupils achievement was recognised with a certificate and medal presented by Scottish FA Performance Director Malcky McKay. The pupils were also introduced at pitch side prior to the match with Taylor Hamill providing an interview of her experiences within the programme live on the big screen in front of the Aberdeen and Celtic supporters. The graduation concluded a successful year with pupils Zac Butterwoth, Leah Eddie, Connor McBride, Kim McCalpine, Jonathan Mitchell and Aaron Reid, all representing Scotland at national youth team level.



Creative industries

Congratulations to Octavia Graham who has been accepted into Granton Campus at Edinburgh College, which is packed with state of the art facilities, to undertake the Creative Industries Performing Arts course. Octavia joins a long list of Graeme High drama students who are pursuing a career in the Creative Industries sector studying the likes of acting, filmmaking, media and drama! Although we will miss these talented bunch of pupils including Andrew Dunn, Samuel Smillie, Zane Campbell and Elijah Ruiz Jack, to mention but a few, we wish them every success in the future!

A Final Headline

Summer holidays again, I think we all must have been very busy for it to come around so quickly?

With a quick read through this summer newsletter I'm sure, like me, you will be very impressed with all that our pupils have engaged with and everything that has been achieved. Whilst this describes a very impressive array of activities and achievements, these are just the tip of the iceberg.

I would like to thank our fantastic pupils, committed staff and supportive parents for their ongoing dedication to our school community. We will continue to aspire to be the very best that we can be, individually and collectively.

As many of you may already know, Ms Middleton and Miss Shearer retire this summer after many years of service to the school. We wish them both a very long and healthy retirement.

I look forward to seeing our pupils back in their full school uniform, with blazer, on Wednesday 23 August at 8.35 am.



Art

Congratulations to Jack Cunningham whose textile designs came out top out of all S2 pupils. The winning designs which merged orange halves and contemporary geometric patterns were created to decorate a Cala Homes show house. Jack created multiple pattern combinations by using printing techniques he had learnt. The final designs were bright and eye-catching and could be used in any kitchen or living interior.

