



# NEWS FROM ULLAPOOL HIGH SCHOOL



20<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Dear Parents / Carers

Another busy and exciting term comes to a close and I remember that, last year, this was the time when some serious ice and snow began to feature; no sign of it at present and long may that continue!



## **CURRICULAR NEWS**

### **Internet Security / Chromebooks**

In the past few weeks I have been touring some of the feeder primaries and speaking to parents about Internet Safety. I have also given a talk in the High School about this important topic, the main message being that, whilst the internet is undoubtedly a powerful and useful tool, it needs to be managed sensibly given that there are major well-being issues to be considered around its use. At the talks I gave details of the programmes that run in both Primary and Secondary to educate pupils about using the internet safely and invited parents, particularly of younger children, to build in good habits now as it can become much more difficult to do so as the pupils get older. This advice was copied and sent out by email and I hope that, if you didn't manage to attend one of the talks, you can find the time to have a look at the attachment. Of course this information session is part of our preparation for the roll-out of Chromebook devices to our ASG which is scheduled to happen in the New Year. Chromebooks will become important tools for us in the classroom but they won't replace everything that we do normally. We hope to use them to enhance teaching and learning and will give more detail on this next term.

### **Gaelic Medium Education Consultation**

Early in the New Year we will be visited by an HMIE inspector as part of the consultation process on the catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education. Whilst the main focus is on the Primaries I'm glad that they have asked us to be involved and this will encourage us to all think about how we can build on these skills within the Associated Schools Group.

### **Health & Well-Being Programme**

Next term will also see our pupils look to take part in their own mini-inspection as they gather information and ideas around the School's Health and Well-being programme. Hopefully they will be able to give us some major pointers into how to improve this important area.



## **NEW FACES IN UHS**

Each year Ullapool High School works in partnership with a teaching college in Zurich to provide work experience for their students and, in late January, we will be welcoming Alma Nezri for 4 weeks to teach English and History. I'm sure she will be used to the cold!

We are also pleased to see an ex-pupil back in the building. As many of you will know, Ben Bruce has been appointed to the post of Active School Coordinator and he has already made his presence felt, starting up a popular Multi-Activity event on a Friday afternoon after school. Welcome back Ben.



## SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

As I said above, it has been a busy term since October and all pupils have been involved in lots of different activities and projects, including :

- ❖ The final part of the ambitious Men of Lochbroom Through the Eyes of the Children of Lochbroom project took place during Armistice Week and included a comprehensive and evocative exhibition together with a short service of dedication for the memorial glass bowl and inscribed pebbles which are now on display at the High School Reception. Please come along and see this beautiful artefact.
- ❖ *Made by the Sea* film project with S1 which resulted in lots of short, funny and thoughtful videos which will be edited together in the New Year
- ❖ A very well-attended Cardiac Risk in the Young event which provided free heart-testing for anyone aged 14-35. Over 200 young adults took part and the organisers, who had come up from England, were very impressed with the enthusiasm and good manners.
- ❖ The annual Social Studies trip to Edinburgh went well and included a visit to the Autumn Tests at Murrayfield.
- ❖ The BGE Profiling Fortnight has just finished and parents for S1 – S3 should be seeing the results of that now.
- ❖ One of the S3 Elective classes set up a social enterprise and raised money for Highland hospice by designing and selling local area tote bags. There are still a couple of bags available, priced £4 each.
- ❖ The Gaelic Dept took a group of S3 Gaelic speaking pupils to Lewis where they explored both their language skills and the island.
- ❖ Josh Quigley spent a day in November talking to pupils across various age groups about his mental health experiences – a very positive young man who gave everyone food for thought
- ❖ The Senior Design & Manufacture & Art students visited the new V & A Design Museum in Dundee and were very impressed by what they saw. The trip also took in those older, Scottish design icons The Kelpies and Falkirk Wheel. Let's hope they were inspired for their exam portfolios!
- ❖ Following on from the success of the Indoor Climbing Club which runs on a Friday afternoon, several pupils had the opportunity to climb on real rock (feels strange to type that!) at Rhue in the company of the world renowned climber, Robert Mackenzie.

The above are just a small sample of the 'extras' which happen in this busy school. We particularly appreciate the efforts of everyone who takes part and also those who contribute to their organising – many thanks!



## FUNDRAISING

Our Children In Need event raised **£60.21** while Xmas Jumper Day resulted in **£76.32** for Save The Children; and, earlier in this busy term, **£128.70** was collected on World Aids Day, **£132.56** for Show Racism The Red Card and **£74.15** for Highland Hospice. Also **£27.57** was raised for Stonewall through the efforts of the newly formed UHS Gender Awareness Group.

The Xmas Party & Ceilidh took place on Tuesday and raised just over **£770** which will go towards the annual Action Aid sponsorship of 3 children in Sierra Leone, Brazil and Honduras. Well done to the Charity Committee on their hard work promoting and organising this whole school event. The concourse and theatre were transformed for the occasion and it was uplifting to see so many pupils across the year groups enjoying themselves. The noise of 250 balloons bursting during the much-anticipated balloon drop was reminiscent of fireworks!



## ADVANCE WARNING

Dates for your diary next term include :

21st January – 1st February  
7th February  
18th & 19th February  
20th February  
22nd February  
27th February  
14th March

Prelims for N5, Higher & Adv Highers  
S3 Parents' Evening  
Half-term holiday  
In-service Day  
S4/5/6 Tracking & Monitoring Report issued  
S4/5/6 Parents' Evening  
S2 Parents' Evening



## ADVERSE WEATHER & TRANSPORT ISSUES

Whenever the snow and ice hit this corner in the winter months, there are always difficulties and concerns about the transport arrangements. However, it might perhaps be helpful to share the following information :

- All the school buses are public service vehicles (PSV), meaning that they carry fare-paying customers and follow a timetable regulated by the Dept of Transport. Therefore, they are required to **always** try to run each morning and will not cancel the evening before.
- The exception to this (there's always one!) is the Dundonnell bus to Braemore Junction which is solely a school transport and not subject to the same regulations.
- The school will always update the 0800 phone line and @ullapoolhs Twitter account as soon as it has news. If you call the line and there has been no update, please wait and try again in 5 or 10 minutes time when there may be fresh information.
- If the line is not updated, then that means the bus is trying to make its way to school. You, as a parent, may choose not to send your child to school and that is, of course, entirely your decision to make but your child will be marked as absent for Personal reasons. After all, the transport will have travelled to school and other pupils may well have made the journey.

As from 7th January, the school transport from Braemore Junction to Ullapool and return will be offered by Stagecoach who have taken over the Inverness-Ullapool run from D&E. Timings will be as before.



## AND FINALLY ...

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a good Festive Season and all the best for 2019

**Merry  
Christmas**

*Robbie McFedries*  
Head Teacher