



# Dalkeith HS Bulletin

Friday 23 August 2024

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*Gold DofE Expedition in Canada*



Mr S. Illingworth  
Head Teacher (acting)

# Head Teacher's Update

## Dalkeith HS retain Golf League Trophy!

Congratulations to Dalkeith High School's Golf Team on retaining the Midlothian Schools Golf League Trophy in 2023/24!

Team members - Tristen Tiley, Adam Bowen, Ben Inglis, Lewis Flett, Joseph Macdonald, Andrew McWilliam, Lewis Brown and Josh Hutton.

The first fixture of the new season has been arranged for Friday 30th August at Newbattle Golf Club.

If there are any players or members of staff who would like to get involved, please let me know.

Mr Cartwright



Dear Parent/Carer,

It has been great to welcome back the pupils following the summer break and get into the important work of learning and teaching. It has been particularly nice to have the new S1 join us. Staff have reported how enthusiastic, friendly and positive they have been. Last week we held House assemblies and I encouraged the S1s to focus on making a real effort to get to know their new classmates by going out of their way to speak to people they don't know. Hopefully this will result in new-found friendships that last through school and beyond.

As well as our S1s we have been delighted to welcome the following new staff.

- Sarah Sked and Stephanie Jack (English)
- Stacey Henderson (Learning Assistant)
- Jennifer Byres and Amy Wilson (History)
- Andrew Norby and Stewart Hope (Maths)
- Olivia Robertson (PE)
- Aneeka Dewan (Geography)

Congratulations go to all the pupils who sat SQA qualification last session. We are very proud of the results they achieved across an increasingly wide range of subjects and of the effort and commitment that the young people showed to their studies. I will be meeting with departments over the next month to look at results in detail and identify good practice and consider what next steps we can take to improve further.

Our school improvement plan for this session is now finalised and our main priorities are the following.

- Continue to develop our senior phase offer in line with the Midlothian Aligned Curriculum to provide a wider range of opportunities for young people.
- Review the S1 curriculum to support P7 to S1 transition.
- Embed our new bullying and equalities policy with

a focus on recording, monitoring and addressing issues of bullying.

- Closely monitor and intervene to improve outcomes for learners with additional support needs.

I would like to thank those parents and pupils who completed the questionnaire towards the end of last session which informed these improvement priorities.

At the end of last session staff ran trips to Berlin, Canada and Wimbledon. These trips were hugely successful and staff could not talk highly enough of the pupils, reporting that they were a pleasure to be with and threw themselves in to all the activities. These trips require a lot of work behind the scenes and I cannot thank staff enough for running them. It is all worth it when we see how much young people get from these experiences. Looking forward to a future trip, the Polar Academy group begun their weekly training with a high intensity aerobic session last Wednesday. The staff who joined them were still feeling the effects a few days later!

Please note that our first Parent Council of the session will be on the evening of September 2nd at 7PM in the Art Department. We would be delighted to welcome any new members to the Parent Council, especially parents/carers of our new S1s. In the same week we will be celebrating the Senior Awards Ceremony on the evening of September 5th

I am very excited about the school year ahead and am looking forward to working with you all to make it as successful as possible. If you would like to discuss any school issues with me please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best wishes.

*Steven Illingworth*

## Author Kate Jones Inspires Staff on In-Service Day

We were delighted to welcome acclaimed author and educational expert Kate Jones to our school during our recent in-service day. Renowned for her work on teaching and learning strategies, Kate shared invaluable insights on how young people learn, focusing on the role of working and long-term memory. Her session gave staff a deeper understanding of how to enhance student retention and engagement through practical, evidence-based methods.

Kate's thought-provoking presentation provided examples of effective techniques to challenge and support pedagogy across all departments. Her expertise will play a significant role as we continue our journey towards excellence in education. We are incredibly grateful for her visit and look forward to implementing these strategies in the classroom.



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Kate Jones



This summer 44 pupils had the chance to attend a school trip to London. They "spent" a day in Oxford Street exploring the shops. The next day was spent at Wimbledon on Court 2 watching some excellent tennis. Pupils were privileged to watch the likes of Andrey Rublev ranked 6th in World. We were lucky with the weather and there was little disruption to play. Mr Hamilton and the rest of the staff have nothing but praise for the way the pupils conducted themselves on the trip. They were a credit to Dalkeith High school and their families.

Mr Hamilton

# In the Classroom

S2 Science class are nearly finished the CSI: Dalkeith topic and have been extracting DNA from fruit and veg. The cloudy substance in the photo is the DNA!



**EDINBURGH KILT WALK 2024**  
**Sunday 15th September**

**The Might Stride (21 miles)**  
**The Big Stroll (11 miles)**  
**The Wee Wander (5 miles)**

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14 pupils set off from DHS on a trip of a lifetime to Canada to undertake our Gold Duke of Edinburgh's expedition in Canadian canoes. We arrived at the Algonquin Park HQ after a tiresome day of travelling, then quickly settled into our bunks and prepared for the days ahead. We started our first morning with a lovely group paddle over to the main area, then set off from there. On the first day, we practised our portaging after being taught how to carry a canoe by ourselves on our backs - something we hadn't had to do back home in Scotland! We had to swiftly get to terms with carrying all of our equipment, including canoes, across quite rough terrain. While we canoed we saw some Canadian wildlife, including Canadian geese, beavers, eagles and loons. We used our mapping skills to navigate accurately across the lakes which took us to our next portage point. We all learned how to cook nutritious food and set up tents efficiently.

On our second day we got up bright and early at 4am to try and spot some moose. The views were beautiful with our images not doing it justice! Unfortunately we didn't get to see any moose; but the environment alone was enough to make the early rise worth it. We travelled another several kilometres that day and tackled our biggest and most difficult portage, walking over 9 km of walking, carrying heavy bags and our canoes. The heaviest bag was the kitchen bag, which weighed around 35kg! We all managed to power through to the campsite and gave ourselves a well deserved pat on the back and had a long rest before the day ahead.

On the final expedition day, canoeing felt like second nature and we knew exactly how to get back. It was a lovely day with clear skies. We had a few quick and easy portages, paddled a long meandering river, sang karaoke, managed a lot of fishing and maneuvered some rocky boats, but we succeeded in getting back to the HQ with no capsizing! Everyone felt happy and proud to finally complete our Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award!

We were all so excited to go to Toronto, we didn't care how long it took. We arrived at our hotel 4 hours later, ready to start the next part of our adventure. We spent our first day in Toronto sightseeing and experienced Ripley's Aquarium then we split into groups. Half of us went to see the Blue Jays play the Yankees in the Baseball stadium and the others went shopping in the Eaton Centre. The next day we went to Niagara Falls and got to go on a boat to see the falls up close. Niagara was spectacular and probably everyone's favourite. Finally, on the last day, we did more shopping and although everyone was sad to leave we were ready to go home. It really was an incredible experience and one which we will all remember for the rest of our lives!

Gold DofE Team.

# Senior History trip to Berlin!

In June the Humanities department embarked on their first foreign trip in over 5 years. 40 eager students had a busy schedule visiting the sites of the German capital, Berlin. We got our bearings with a guided walking tour which included the Berlin Wall, The Reichstag, Hitler's bunker and the Brandenburg gate. An afternoon at the Resistance museum helped pupils understand the story of Germans, both civilians and soldiers, who defied the Nazis. The museum is situated in the German defence buildings and pupils stood where Hitler announced his plan to begin WW2 to his Generals. Outside of Berlin is the Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen which we visited on our second day. Although at times difficult to comprehend, and clearly emotive, it was important to recognise the horrors of WW2 and those who were persecuted by the Nazis.

Our evenings were spent eating out, socialising on our hotel rooftop and bonding as a group. It was wonderful to see pupils chatting to teachers and those from different year groups. One evening, we took the opportunity to adorn our Scotland tops and flags and made our way to the fanzone to soak up the atmosphere and watch some football beside the iconic Brandenburg gate. The whole group really enjoyed the atmosphere and the attention we got from fans of other countries. We finished the trip with a trip to Berlin Zoo, one of the best in Europe, and enjoyed our last taste of 30 degree summer sun before our journey back to Dalkeith. The pupils were a credit to the school throughout the trip. It was a joy for all four staff to be part of the experience and was a lovely way to end the school year!



## S1 and S2 Outdoor Learning

All S1 and S2 pupils will get the opportunity to experience a full day of outdoor learning this session over the course of the year. S1 and S2 outdoor learning days will take place on Thursdays and each pupil will have a date allocated for them to attend. This session, S2 pupils will go mountain biking and S1 pupils will either go up the pentlands or to the beach.



These days are completely free of charge and if required, the school is able to supply pupils with any equipment or clothing they would need to take part.

Please look out for a letter with more information and a parental consent form to return in the coming days. If you have any questions regarding this opportunity, please get in touch with Mr Agnew by email: [f.agnew@midlothian.education](mailto:f.agnew@midlothian.education)



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**Dalkeith High School PTA & PC**



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