



AM MÀRT 2024

MARCH 2024

# SkyeLines

Ard-sgoil Phort Rìgh  
Portree High School  
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Striving for Excellence  
READY, RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL, RESILIENT

We are almost at the end of another busy term in the life of our young people and staff at Portree High. Despite the snow days disrupting our prelims at the start of term, our seniors showed resilience by meeting the demands of both the exams and the SQA coursework required this term. Examinations will be starting on Monday 22nd April and running until the end of May. Whilst we are on holiday over the next two weeks, I would ask our young people in S4-S6 to ensure that they have some time off to refresh and recharge their batteries and then get focussed on the key areas of work that they need to revise.

Our pupils have had the opportunity to experience a wide range of extracurricular activities, taster sessions for industry, STEM activities and musical opportunities which are highlighted here.

As a school, we are keen to support the wellbeing of our young people and, as you may be aware, the use of mobile phones in schools has been on the news. Whilst there are a range of benefits in this technology, there has been a concern that mobile phone usage is a distraction to our young people's learning and that removing mobile phones during the school can be seen to improve wellbeing and provide a safe space. This term, we have been focussing on ensuring mobile phones are out of sight during classes and in corridors, but we'd like to hear your opinion as to whether we should be looking to extend this to the social areas too. We would ask that you complete a school parent/carers survey, which has a section at the end about mobile phone usage.

As we move forward and start to think about next session, our S3-S5 pupils are thinking about their options and our S2 pupils will be looking to personalise their S3 curriculum next term. This is an important time for our young people and relevant documents have been shared on our website. Pupil Support staff will be available to speak with parents next term - please do contact them if you would like further information.

I wish all our parents, staff and young people a great Easter break!

**Mr T Breen, Head Teacher**

### Science Skills Academy



### Industry Visits



### Future Chef



◀ Skye Young Musicians ◀ School Photography Competition ◀ Upcoming Events

#### HOUSE

**Glamaig:** Miss K MacPhie  
**Marsco:** Mr N Burrows  
**Tianavaig:** Mrs D MacLeod

#### PUPIL SUPPORT

#### E-MAIL ADDRESS

[Katie.Macphie@highland.gov.uk](mailto:Katie.Macphie@highland.gov.uk)  
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## Parents' Questionnaire and Mobile Phone Policy

As a school, we complete an Annual Improvement Plan and we would be grateful if parents were to complete the questionnaire with regards to life at Portree High School. Parents are key partners with the school and your views are valuable to help us make the school an even better learning environment for your children.

Following a consultation with staff and further to recent news about the overuse of mobile phones and potential dangers of social media, we would also like to ask your opinion on the current policy of mobile phone usage and how we can support our young people with their mental health and wellbeing.

Our Parent Council discussed this and have asked me to share this clip from psychologist Jonathan Haidt, who shares research findings from his upcoming book.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVq4ARlINVg>

Every school has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all pupils, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of pupils own a mobile phone.

Mobile phones risk unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion. One in three secondary school pupils report that mobile phones are used in most lessons without permission. This not only distracts the single pupil using the phone, but disrupts the lesson for a whole class, and diverts teachers' efforts away from learning.

We owe it to our children to do what we can to remove distractions and enable them to be fully present and engaged in the classroom. We also owe it to our pupils to keep them safe at school. One in five pupils have experienced bullying online.

By removing mobile phones from the school day, we can create a safe space where pupils are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying, as well as the peer pressure and possible stigma associated with owning what are often expensive devices.

By removing mobile phones, children and young people can spend more time staying active and socialising face to face with their peers, activities which have a positive impact on wellbeing. Schools can help young people develop these habits, which will in turn help them thrive outside of school.

From other schools, headteachers reported that after removing mobile phones from the school day, the whole culture of the school changes for the better. The environment becomes safer, protecting pupils not only from the short-term distraction of a notification but also the background noise of their lives outside school.

Pupils have the headspace and calm to focus on their lessons.

From Department of Education "[Mobile phones in School](#)" policy document, FEB 24



Please complete the questionnaire [here](#).

## Science Skills Academy

Over three weeks in February, S1 and S2 pupils were able to visit the Science Skills Academy at Portree Community Centre. Here is a report from one of our S1 pupils, Caitlin Farr.

*On Monday January 29th, Mrs Vine's S1 Science class went on a trip to the Newton Pop-up room in the Community Centre.*



*At the Academy, we were learning about energy. The first activity we did was a marble-running game. We had to shape insulating tubing to make a track for the marble. The track had to have at least one loop in it.*

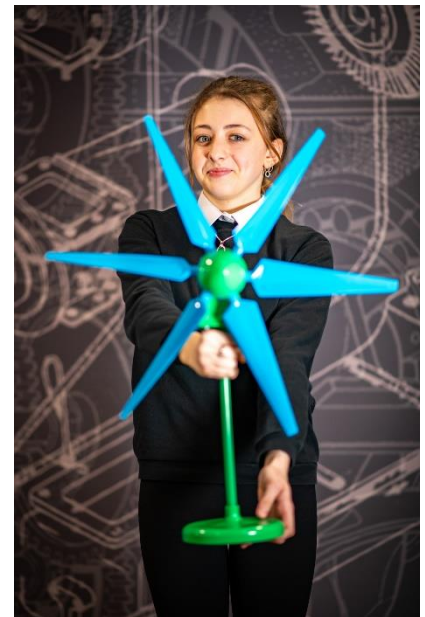
*Then we had to build a vehicle for the marble to hit, causing the car to move. We were in teams of 4 - 2 people made the track, the other 2 made the vehicle.*

*We then learnt about gravitational energy, and where some sources of energy come from. We then had a representative from SSEN come and talk to us about his job and what other jobs SSEN provides. Our second activity was to build a wind turbine. We stayed in the same groups and we were given parts to build back together.*

*We then came back to school and it was a good experience.*







## Tutor Time

As part of Tutor Time, our S1 classes focussed on Article 24 of the UNCRC- Health, Food, Water and Environment. 1T were doing a litter and recycling pick-up in the school and local community. 4Rs – Responsible.





## *S2 Presentation Skills*

Our S2 pupils worked on Powerful Presentation Skills with guest speaker Andy McKechnie from Jammin Fitness. We look forward to Andy returning in June for our S6 Induction Programme.



## *Community Partnerships*

PC MacInnes, our school liaison officer, has been in school this term to speak to our NPA Criminology students. Questions focused on the role of the police in the Highlands, priorities in our area and crime prevention strategies.

PC MacInnes and her colleagues will be working with our S3 PSE classes over the next month, looking at some of the local issues that our young people should be aware of.



## S1 Burns Day

On 25<sup>th</sup> January, some of our S1 pupils celebrated Burns Day, with a Burns supper supplied by Mrs Fuge in the English Department. 🇸🇪



## Lessons from Auschwitz



Annually, two of our senior pupils take part in the Lessons from Auschwitz Project, a national project run by the Holocaust Memorial Trust.

Anna Moller and Lois Langlands shared their experience of the project with S2 RME classes. Pupils were responsive and asked very pertinent questions. The girls delivered their presentation with clarity and confidence.





## Focus on Careers

Our DYW West Highland careers visits continue! Over the last term, we have been working with Mowi Scotland and Dunvegan Castle and Gardens to talk about careers in these sectors. Some of our senior pupils went to QinetiQ in Kyle to look at careers in engineering. A group of S3 pupils also went on a visit to Skeabost House Hotel to look at different types of careers in the hospitality industry. Finally, we have three architects coming in to deliver a short presentation about their journey in architecture and to answer any questions pupils have about this career.





## *Focus on Crofting Skills*

This term some of our young people had a fabulous morning with Cheryl MacIntyre at Eynort fank where the boys helped to separate the sheep in the shed, dose them and protect them from ticks. They helped mark them and got to see a scanner at work which was helping to find whether a sheep was pregnant with twins, a single or empty. They also moved the sheep up onto the field once the work had been carried out in the shed. We are hoping to work in the local community to provide a crofting course next session for those interested.





## Use of Vapes

In Scotland it's illegal to sell vapes or e-cigarettes to anyone under 18, or to buy them for someone who's under 18, but this doesn't stop young people from getting hold of them.

We are deeply concerned about the increase in young people using vapes. Vapes are not a lifestyle accessory for children or adult non-smokers.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to nicotine addiction and are more likely to take health risks and discount the future consequences of this behaviour. Nicotine addiction can impact mental health, resulting in being tired, stressed and anxious and it can affect concentration and impact the ability to learn and study.

E-cigarettes contain some potentially harmful chemicals similar to those found in cigarette smoke, although at a much lower level. While the long-term effects of vaping are still being researched, it's thought they could have negative effects on the health of the heart although there is currently insufficient evidence to assess this.



### Getting Help and Support

If you are concerned about your young person vaping, you don't have to cope with the situation on your own. You can talk to your GP or call Quit Your Way Scotland on 0800 84 84 84 for advice and support. You can also contact your child's Pupil Support Teacher who can talk with your child about the harms. We are committed to focussing on this issue in PSE classes.

For more information visit [nhsinform.scot/vaping](https://nhsinform.scot/vaping)

## Skye Young Musicians

A number of our young people took part in the most amazing Highland Young Musicians concert in Eden Court on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024. Tom Campbell, Megan Campbell and Eva MacCaskill took part in the Highland Youth Wind Band as part of the event. Emma MacNab and Seumas Stewart performed in the Highland Strings Group (HYSO) and Tilly Ng and Leela Brandon performed in the Highland Regional Youth Orchestra (HYRO). They played in front of a sell-out audience of approximately 800 people.





Several PHS pupils achieved musical success in both Trinity College exams and at the Inverness Music Festival.

Lucia Cecchini-Fraser was highly commended for her performance in the Grade 6 Piano Class at the music festival, while the following pupils were successful in their music exams:

Jakob Ng - Grade 8 Piano with Distinction

Finlay James - Grade 6 Traditional Violin with Distinction

Tilly Ng - Grade 5 Piano with Distinction

Yvie Beaton - Grade 5 Piano with Merit

Grace Pert - Grade 3 Piano with Merit

Jessie Adams - Grade 2 Piano with Merit

Their teachers Roxinne Llewellyn-Porter (violin) and Jacqui Ross (piano) are very proud of them for putting in the hard work to achieve these results.

Well done to them all!



## *Present and Future Chef!*



Huge congratulations to Domhnall Angus Bruce, who won the North of Scotland Finals of the Springboard Future Chef. Domhnall Angus then went to Westminster Kingsway College, London, where he competed in the final 12 of the 13,000 entrants. Domhnall Angus said, "It was an amazing opportunity getting to meet some of the greatest chefs in the industry. I couldn't thank Calum [Montgomery] enough for the opportunities he has provided for me. Hopefully some future chefs in Portree High School will compete next year!"

When recently appearing on BBC's Great British Menu, former pupil Calum Montgomery (Edinbane Lodge) shared the story of the late Karen MacLeod (former pupil of PHS) who competed at the Atlanta Olympic Games. The display was donated to the school by Karen's husband, Angus Nicolson, to whom we extend our thanks.



Domhnall Angus with Great British Menu Chef Adam Handling





School Photography Competition



3rd Place -  
Brody Baillie-  
Stewart

2nd Place -  
Sadie Macdonald





1st Place -  
Isla Hyslop



## Dolina Nic'illinnein



Abair tlachd a bh'ann do sgoilearan agus luchd-obrach an cothrom fhaighinn coinneachadh ri Dolina Nic'illinnein, a'bhana-chleasaiche chliùiteach, nuair a thàinig i don sgoil an t-seachdain-sa.

Bha i air cuireadh fhaighinn bruidhinn ri clasaichean an Àrd-Ìre (an dà chuid ann an Gàidhlig agus Beurla) mun dealbh-chluich iomraiteach 'The Cheviot, The Stag and the Black, Black Oil' a bha i fhèin cho mòr an sàs ann nuair a nochd e air àrd-ùrlar an toiseach.

Dh' innis i dhuinn mar a bhiodh na cleasaichean uile a' rannsachadh na cuspairean a tha tighinn am bàrr ann agus a' cur ris an sript agus na h-òrain; Si bhiodh a' gabhail na h-òrain Gàidhlig agus a' toirt guth do na Gàidheil a bha air an riochdachadh ann.

Tha an ceangal san dealbh chluich seo (chaidh a sgrìobhadh bho chionn 50 bliadhna) eadar ar n-eachdraidh agus na tha a' dol nar saoghal-sa air a' Ghàidhealtachd a' beantainn a cheart cho math ris na tha tachairt san latha an diugh.

Mar an dealbh chluich fhèin bha Dolina fiosrach, dìreach agus làn spòrs na còmhradh. Chòrd e rithe glan a bhith coinneachadh ri ar n-òigridh a' freagairt na ceistean aca

agus gan comhairleachadh mar a ghabh i fhèin ris an dreuchd a tha i air leantainn.

Bhiodh fàilte mhòr roimhe uair sam bith a bhiodh i airson tilleadh!

What a pleasure it was for pupils and staff to have the opportunity to meet Dolina Nic'illinein, the famous actress and singer, when she came to school a couple of weeks ago.

Dolina had been invited to speak to the senior classes (both in Gaelic and English) about John McGrath's play 'The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black, Black Oil' in which she herself was so involved when it first appeared on stage. She told us how all the actors would research the themes and contribute to the script and the songs; she used to take the Gaelic songs and give a voice to the Gaelic people who were represented in the lyrics.

Although the play was written 50 years ago, the links it portrays between our history and what is going on in our Highland world today are just as relevant as ever.

Dolina was curious, direct and full of fun. She thoroughly enjoyed meeting our young people, answering their questions and giving them great advice to help with their study of the play.

She would be most welcome any time she wanted to come back!

## Scottish Fire Service Fireskills course



On International Women's Day, eight of our young people had their 'Passing Out' ceremony for their Fire Skills Course at Broadford Community Fire Station. Their hard work, commitment and dedication over the week was celebrated by demonstrating the skills they had developed throughout the week, before being presented with their Level 4 Fire Skills Certificates.









## *Kitchen Ceilidh*

We celebrated Down Syndrome Awareness Week by holding a Kitchen Ceilidh for some of our S1/S2 and Enhanced Provision groups. Many thanks to our performers: former pupil Ester Strachan, along with her sister Iseabal, Magnus Turpie and Dominic Blaikie. S1 pupils Elliot and Grant also joined in with a set of tunes.



We also raised awareness of World Down Syndrome Day by encouraging our staff and young people to wear bright or odd socks on 21<sup>st</sup> March!







The school office receives numerous enquiries about school holidays. The up-to-date calendar and holiday dates are outlined below and can be viewed on the school website: <http://www.portreehigh.highland.sch.uk>



The dates can also be accessed on the Highland Council website:  
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/schooltermdates/>

## HOLIDAY DATES 2023-2024

Opens	Closes
	1.15pm, Friday 22 December 2023
Monday 08 January 2024	1:15pm, Friday 16 February 2024
Thursday 22 February 2024	3.40pm, 28 March 2024
Monday 15 April 2024	12 noon, 27 June 2024
Tuesday 20 August 2024	1:15pm, Friday 11 October 2024

Note:

1. Additional Holidays: May Day: Monday, 6th May;
2. In-Service Days: Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/schooltermdates/>



PLEASE LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE for any further updates and information.

<http://www.portreehigh.highland.sch.uk>



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