

## FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Parent

The Session Report provides information for the wider School community on the development work undertaken by the School during the session. In addition, information is provided on Improvement Plans for the new session and on staffing changes. My normal practice is to issue the Session Report during June and I must apologise for its delay this session, which was due to the inspection of the School. You will appreciate that a great deal of work had to be undertaken in the weeks leading up to the inspection during a time when the Session Report and the new Improvement Plan is normally written.

Comments below refer to both Schools unless otherwise stated.

### **Learning & Teaching in the Senior School**

The main aim of the Staff Learning Group this session has been to establish challenge through critical thinking and to embed the notion of learning as an active process with the learner at the centre. A number of projects were used to develop this.

- SI – Learning logs based on the 5 Rs – reflectivity, responsibility, resilience, reasoning and resourcefulness – were issued to all pupils and Heads of House taught a series of lessons on learning skills using a booklet developed by the Learning Group.
- Senior IV – reflective journals were issued to all pupils who were asked to reflect on their learning styles.
- JSTOR Archive Trial. A JSTOR licence was purchased to enable all pupils and staff to have access to the back runs of over 1,000 scholarly journals. It is expected that the journals will be of considerable use in preparing SVI pupils, through the development of research skills, for university and beyond.

The most ambitious project was the SI multi-disciplinary conference on *Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* organised by Ms Brash. Ten pupils in Senior I prepared and delivered papers to their fellow pupils and, over three days during Activities Week, pupils participated in a number of workshops on the issues selected by pupils themselves as challenges for the future. Initial evaluation from pupils was that the event was most successful and the initiative will be developed in future years.

In Junior School, staff have focused on the development of higher order thinking skills. An expert in Edward de Bono's Thinking Hats led in-service training for staff which proved to be very successful and, following which, staff experimented with some of the techniques in the classroom. The plan for the new session is to continue with training to include the opportunity to see Thinking Hats lessons in action.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

A staff working group, under the chairmanship of Mrs Vicky Reilly, audited the School's provision of health and wellbeing from Prep to Senior VI in line with Curriculum for Excellence guidelines and devised a School policy which is due to be implemented in the new session.

### **Inter-Disciplinary Learning**

Senior School Faculties have worked together to pilot a range of projects and initiatives with the purpose of encouraging pupils to make cross curricular connections in their learning. In Junior

School, staff have been involved in the development of planners to support the effective planning of inter disciplinary learning.

### **Junior School/Senior School Liaison**

Science has been the focus of development meetings this session, to ensure continuity and progression in the teaching of Science from Junior 6 to Senior II. There are plans to further develop science liaison in the new session.

### **Literacy**

As part of the implementation of the School's Literacy Across the Curriculum Policy, all Senior School subjects have made the development of literacy skills a focus of teaching and learning this session.

### **Numeracy**

Chaired by Mr Iain Weir, the Numeracy across Learning Group finished conducting its audit of numeracy from Prep to Senior VI in line with Curriculum for Excellence guidelines and devised a School policy which will be implemented in the new session.

### **Senior School Subjects**

As well as adapting courses and programmes of study to ensure that there is coverage of the experiences and outcomes which are central to Curriculum for Excellence, Senior School Faculties have been employing active learning strategies to further engage pupils both in and out of the classroom.

### **Junior School RME Curriculum**

RME Curriculum was the focus of thorough revision during the course of the session. A staff group, led by Ms Gillian Beggs, drafted a policy document and piloted new resources. Further developments will take place in the new session.

### **Senior School Baseline Testing**

Analysis of the results of standardised tests (MidYIS) continues to be used by Heads of House and Support for Learning staff to encourage individual pupils to develop in areas where they could be performing more effectively. The data has also been used to analyse and compare progress of pupils currently in Senior III with their attainment in Senior II and expectations of success in Senior IV.

### **Faculty Weeks**

Our Faculty weeks are firmly embedded in the curriculum and this session Humanities and Design took pupil learning beyond the classroom during the months of November and March.

Humanities Faculty week, despite being hampered by School closure due to snow and freezing conditions, was most successful. Among the highlights were Fraser Docherty, the *Jam Boy*, who spoke to Senior V and Senior VI about his business; the identification of staff in historical costumes as a quiz for pupils; a workshop on development in Africa; and the Tenement House artefacts brought to St Columba's by its curators.

The Design Faculty organised a trip to Scottish Opera's costume department for pupils studying Art; drawing workshops by former pupil Georgina McMaster and parent Rosemary Beaton; a

bridge building competition for Senior II; Dragons' Den with designer Oliver Shields; and a Cupcake Corner.

Both weeks were enormously successful in broadening pupils' learning.

### **Improvement through Self Evaluation (Senior School)**

The critical reflection of staff on pupils' learning and their own teaching has developed significantly this year following two in-service sessions led by Chartered Teacher, Mr Gary Smith, and Dr Iain Spencer, who is participating in the Chartered Teacher programme. The first module of the Chartered Teacher programme develops reflective practice in its participants and Senior School staff have benefited directly from the experiences of Mr Smith and Dr Spencer. Reflecting on what works well in the classroom and developing pupils' learning as a result, is very important in continuing, and enhancing, the very effective teaching we already have at St Columba's.

### **Eco Schools**

In the closing days of the session, the School celebrated its success in achieving Green Flag status. Much of the work was carried out by pupils - in the Junior School by Eco Warriors and in the Senior School by the Eco Committee under the chairmanship of Douglas Turner and Rachael Kemp. A large number of staff were involved and the entire project was led by Mrs Vicky Reilly and Mrs Gill Hall. Green Flag status is a wonderful accolade for the School and congratulations are due to all those involved in earning this status.

### **Healthy Living Award**

Congratulations go to the School's Catering Manager, Mrs Pauline Drummond, for steering the School to achieve this major government award.

### **Chinese Art & Culture**

SVI students benefited from a short course on Chinese Art and Culture. A number of topics were explored including calligraphy, poetry of the Tang Dynasty, brush drawing, Tai Chi and poverty in China. This was done through a link forged with the Ricefield Arts and Cultural Centre of Glasgow which is at the forefront of the promotion of Chinese Arts and Culture in Scotland.

### **Charities**

This has been another successful year for charity in Junior School with over £6800 being raised from weekly donations and special appeals. The children chose 14 of their favourite charities and sent £115 to each. In addition, special collections were made for the earthquakes in Japan and Pakistan; £1344 was donated to Children in Need; and further donations were sent to the World Wildlife Fund and Water Aid. As part of their enterprise work J4 children made clocks from recycled CDs and raised £320 for Yorkhill from the sale of clocks. £1379 was raised for Literacy Network Uganda from the collection after the Junior School Carol Service and "A Pampered Chef" evening.

This was another busy and successful year in Senior School with £4,739 being raised by pupils and staff. Most of the money raised will be donated to the Teenage Cancer Trust which has supported one of our senior pupils. We have continued to support a former pupil, James Mitchell, through Orkidstudio by donating £750. The Charities Committee also decided to support the Kilmacolm New Community Centre Appeal with a donation of £200 and Olivia Giles' charity, 500 Miles, with

a similar amount. In addition, we have supported former pupils and friends of the school by smaller amounts from or funds.

Senior School pupils and staff were extremely generous in their contributions this year and were keen to support a charity with which they could identify. Each year group organised an event with the help of Form Teachers. The year began well with Senior VI raising £565 at a Harry Potter themed tea party. SI girls asked for a charitable donation in place of presents at their birthday parties. Parents and friends of the School were once again generous in the retiral collection at the Christmas Carol Service with £615 being offered. In what have become yearly traditions Senior School pupils helped at a street collection in aid of Ardgowan Hospice and the Pipe Band donated the money raised at their Christmas performance in the village centre.

### **Tours & Excursions**

Tours and excursions this session have included:

- Junior 6 to Newlands (Outward Bound)
- SVI Team Building Weekend to Ardeonaig
- SVI Motivational Weekend to Drymen
- SI to Paris
- SII to Ardeonaig (Outward Bound)
- SIII to World War I Battlefields
- SIII to SVI International Independent Schools' Public Speaking Competition, Canada
- SIV to Castle Toward (Outward Bound)
- SV to London (Theatre Trip)
- SVI to the Ardeche (Water Sports)

### **Duke of Edinburgh's Award**

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has enjoyed another successful session with 57 participants at Bronze, 26 participants at Gold and 40 participants at Silver. Not all participants have completed their award programmes yet, but hopefully will do so soon.

### **National Honours**

The following pupils have been awarded Gold Honours for representing their country at under 18 level:

Alexander Baum	SVI	Scotland Under 17 Cricket
Fraser Quinn	SIV	Clarinetist with Scottish Opera Orchestra

The following pupils have been awarded Silver Honours for representing their country at under 16 below:

Lucy Bishop	SIII	National Youth Girls' Choir of Scotland
Fiona Faint	SV	National Youth Girls' Choir of Scotland
Melissa Meighan	SV	National Youth Girls' Choir of Scotland
Sally Bishop	SV	National Youth Girls' Choir of Scotland
Rebecca Ronney	SV	National Youth Girls' Choir of Scotland
Caitlin Findlay	SV	National Youth Girls' Choir of Scotland
Luca Hlaing	SV	National Youth Boys' Choir of Scotland
Archie Morris	SII	National Youth Boys' Choir of Scotland
Niamh Moran	SIV	Scottish Fleadh Cheoil (Traditional Irish Music)

Emma Findlay	SIV	Showjumping
Kirsten Findlay	SIV	Showjumping
Jessica Lee	SIV	Showjumping
Hannah Edmundson	SVI	Showjumping
Alexandra Findlay	SVI	Showjumping
Rachael Ferrier	SIV	British Skiing Champion
Jazz Catto	SII	Young Chef
Heather Fleming	SII	Young Chef
Tom Thickpenny	SII	Karting Champion, Runner up to Young Scot of the Year
Sarah Bradford	SI	Scottish Tri-Athlete
Caitlin Girdwood	SIII	Scotland Under 16 Hockey
Laurie Kirkland	SIII	Scotland Under 16 Hockey

### Staffing Changes

The following members of staff left St Columba's at the end of the session

- Mrs Isobel Evans retired from St Columba's after 23 years of service to the School as a Transitus teacher.
- Mrs Diane Hecht, Depute Head of Junior School has taken up the post of Principal of the Pre-Preparatory School at Highgate School, London.
- Mrs Betty Kidd has retired as Vocal teacher.
- Mrs Jane Flinders, Junior School Learning Support teacher, has left St Columba's to move down south.
- Mr Graeme Sutherland, and Miss Jill Paterson, temporary teachers, have left to move on to new posts.

A number of new appointments have been made:

- Mrs Alison Duncan is the new Deputy Head of Junior School. Mrs Duncan joins us from The Mary Erskine and Stewart's Melville Junior School where she was a Head of Year. She is a graduate of St Andrews University where she studied Modern Languages and has, this year, achieved the Scottish Qualification for Headship.
- Mrs Laura Carlton has taken up her post as teacher of Physical Education and Senior Hockey Coach. Mrs Carlton is a Scottish Hockey Internationalist, a graduate of Edinburgh University and comes to us from St Thomas Aquinas' Secondary School, Jordanhill.
- Mrs Rachel Porter – Part time Learning Support, Junior School. Mrs Porter is a graduate of Strathclyde and completed her Learning Support qualification at Glasgow University. She joins us from Kelvinside Academy.
- Mrs Lesley Reid – Part time Learning Support, Junior School. Mrs Reid is a graduate of Glasgow Caledonia University and took her Additional Support Needs diploma at Edinburgh University. She joins us from Inverclyde Council where she taught visually impaired children.
- Miss Rhona McKay – maternity cover, Junior School. Miss McKay is a Geography graduate of Edinburgh University and joins us from Hutchesons' Grammar School.
- I am delighted to welcome back Mrs Emma Corbett following her maternity leave.
- Mrs Zoe Shaw, teacher of Accounting and Business Management, who has been with us on a temporary basis for one year joins the permanent staff.
- I am delighted to welcome Mrs Angela Moore back to the full time staff. Following an extended period of absence, Mrs Moore has returned to School on a full-time basis as Junior 1 class teacher.

## **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2011-2012**

### **LEARNING & TEACHING (all in line with Curriculum for Excellence)**

- Reviewing the Senior School timetable structure.
- Reviewing the School's policy on assessment and reporting
- Implementing revised subject courses for Senior II and responding to the publication of course arrangements and specifications for National 5 (due Spring 2012)
- Implementing the Health & Wellbeing policy and responding to the recommendations made by the Health & Wellbeing Working Group
- Implementing the Numeracy policy and responding to the audit of numeracy teaching undertaken last session
- Developing inter-disciplinary learning in Senior School
- Developing learning experiences for all pupils through critical thinking including devising a Multi-Disciplinary Conference for SII
- Auditing and reviewing the teaching of research skills across the curriculum
- Reviewing the Language Curriculum in Junior School
- Devising a Multi-Disciplinary Conference for SII

### **PUPIL SUPPORT**

- Reviewing and improving the use of pupil focus groups established last session to allow greater account to be taken of learners' views
- Expanding the use of pupil progress plans and extending this to Senior VI
- Reviewing methods of assessing progress and attainment in PSE

### **THE WIDER SCHOOL**

- Extending Faculty weeks to Mathematics and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Introducing a Challenge week
- Responding to action points raised in the Green Flag report
- Responding to issues raised in the IiP report of 2010
- Introducing ParentPay
- Reviewing the School's ICT infra structure

### **SESSION DATES**

I enclose further copies of Session dates for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

With best wishes for a successful session.

Yours sincerely

**Rector**

# Date List

## Session 2011/2012



### AUTUMN TERM 2011

Monday	15 <sup>th</sup> August	Staff In-Service Day
Tuesday	16 <sup>th</sup> August	Staff In-Service Day
Wednesday	17 <sup>th</sup> August	School opens for pupils
Thursday	18 <sup>th</sup> August	J1 pupils commence
Friday	19 <sup>th</sup> August	Preparatory, Nursery pupils commence
Friday	7 <sup>th</sup> October	School closes for mid term holiday +
Monday	24 <sup>th</sup> October	School re-opens
Tuesday	20 <sup>th</sup> December	School closes for Christmas holiday +
Wednesday	21 <sup>st</sup> December	Senior Ball

### SPRING TERM 2012

Thursday	5 <sup>th</sup> January	School re-opens
Friday	10 <sup>th</sup> February	School closes for mid term holiday +
Monday	20 <sup>th</sup> February	Staff In-Service Day
Tuesday	21 <sup>st</sup> February	Staff In-Service Day
Wednesday	22 <sup>nd</sup> February	School re-opens for pupils
Thursday	5 <sup>th</sup> April	School closes for Easter holiday +

### SUMMER TERM 2012

Monday	23 <sup>rd</sup> April	School re-opens
Monday	7 <sup>th</sup> May	May Day holiday
Monday	4 <sup>th</sup> June	Mid term holiday
Tuesday	5 <sup>th</sup> June	Queen's Diamond Jubilee holiday
Wednesday	6 <sup>th</sup> June	Staff In-Service Day
Thursday	21 <sup>st</sup> June	Junior School Prizegiving, Junior School closes thereafter
Friday	22 <sup>nd</sup> June	Senior School Prizegiving, Senior School closes thereafter

### **Provisional starting date Session 2012/2013 Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012 (for pupils)**

+Seniors 3.40pm. Junior pupils 3.30pm (or as mentioned in notes below)

**NOTES:** Children in J1-3 finish at 12.30pm each Thursday.

Preparatory children finish at 12.00noon each day.

Junior 1 children finish at 12.30pm until Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September after which date, times are as for J2-3.

**N.B.** Family holidays should be arranged outwith term dates.

# Date List

## Session 2012/2013



### AUTUMN TERM 2012

Monday	20 <sup>th</sup> August	Staff In-Service Day
Tuesday	21 <sup>st</sup> August	Staff In-Service Day
Wednesday	22 <sup>nd</sup> August	School opens for pupils
Thursday	23 <sup>rd</sup> August	J1 pupils commence
Friday	24 <sup>th</sup> August	Preparatory, Nursery pupils commence
Friday	12 <sup>th</sup> October	School closes for mid term holiday +
Monday	29 <sup>th</sup> October	School re-opens
Thursday	20 <sup>th</sup> December	School closes for Christmas holiday +
Friday	21 <sup>st</sup> December	Senior Ball

### SPRING TERM 2013

Monday	7 <sup>th</sup> January	School re-opens
Friday	15 <sup>th</sup> February	School closes for mid term holiday +
Monday	25 <sup>th</sup> February	Staff In-Service Day
Tuesday	26 <sup>th</sup> February	Staff In-Service Day
Wednesday	27 <sup>th</sup> February	School re-opens for pupils
Thursday	28 <sup>th</sup> March	School closes for Easter holiday +

### SUMMER TERM 2013

Monday	15 <sup>th</sup> April	School re-opens
Monday	6 <sup>th</sup> May	May Day holiday
Monday	27 <sup>th</sup> May	Mid term holiday
Tuesday	28 <sup>th</sup> May	Mid term holiday
Wednesday	29 <sup>th</sup> May	Staff In-Service Day
Thursday	27 <sup>th</sup> June	Junior School Prizegiving, Junior School closes thereafter
Friday	28 <sup>th</sup> June	Senior School Prizegiving, Senior School closes thereafter

### **Provisional starting date Session 2013/2014 Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2013 (for pupils)**

+Seniors 3.40pm. Junior pupils 3.30pm (or as mentioned in notes below)

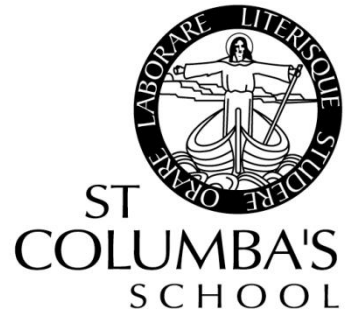
**NOTES:** Children in J1-3 finish at 12.30pm each Thursday.

Preparatory children finish at 12.00noon each day.

Junior 1 children finish at 12.30pm until Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September after which date, times are as for J2-3.

**N.B.** Family holidays should be arranged outwith term dates.

# PARKING CODE



This code has been drawn up following discussion between the School, the Police and representatives of the local residents.

We commend the parking code to staff, parents, pupils, visitors and neighbours in an effort to ensure that neighbours have open access to their driveways.

## **Please do not park:**

- **across any gates to the school or neighbouring houses**
- **directly opposite gates to the school or neighbouring premises**
- **in a coned area**
- **close to junctions** (in line with the highway code)

This Code applies during the **day and evening**.

Thank you for your co-operation.