



The
Highland
Council
Comhairle na
Gaidhealtachd

SERVING The Highland Community

Inside this Issue

- Service Plan
- Gaelic
- News on Highland Library Services
- Child Protection Inspection Pilot
- Sound Start plus 'Big Band' Begins in Grantown Primary
- PPP2
- 2007
- Out of Eden
- Active Schools
- Travelling Pupils Project
- Scottish Executive Education Department
- GTC(S) Lecture

Education, Culture and Sport Service – Autumn/Winter 2004

Seirbheis Foghlaim, Cultair Agus Spòrs – Foghar/Geamhradh 2004

Dear Colleague

I hope you find this edition of our Newsletter interesting and informative. The range of articles gives you a flavour of the vast array of work ongoing in the Service. **Please accept my best wishes for the Festive Season.**

*Bruce Robertson
Director of Education, Culture and Sport*

Service Plan

Over the last few months we have been reviewing where we have got to in the Service Plan and what our priorities should be through to 2007/08. During the Autumn Area Forums we asked staff and parents for their views on priorities for action. Our ECS Committee signed off the Plan in November and final version will be issued early in 2005. Our main message is to ensure that we consolidate on the good work already seen across the Service and make sure it becomes well embedded in our practice.

For further information please contact Evelyn Johnston on 01463 702063. Email: evelyn.johnston@highland.gov.uk

Gaelic

Late 2004 is proving to be a busy period for Gaelic developments nationally. The Scottish Parliament is taking evidence on the Gaelic Language Bill and Highland Council presented both written and oral evidence to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee of the Parliament. In addition, draft Guidance to Education Authorities is currently being considered in relation

to how Gaelic can best be supported and promoted in schools.

For further information Contact D J Macleod. Tel 01349 863441
Email: DJMacLeod@highland.gov.uk
Morag Anna Macleod. Tel: 01478 613835.
Email:
MoragAnna.macleod@highland.gov.uk

News on Highland Library Services

Am Baile Wins National History Award

The Am Baile website has won the Alan Ball Local History Award 2004. The Alan Ball Awards were established through the Library Services Trust to encourage local history publishing by public libraries and local authorities. The judges were highly impressed by Am Baile and its comprehensive guide to the history and culture of the Scottish Highlands. This is the first time a non-print resource has won this award.

The website which can be viewed at www.ambaile.org.uk continues to increase in popularity and now attracts around 19,000 visitors a month.

Libraries On-Line

A new web-based library catalogue is [now available](#) on the Internet enabling people to search Highland Library stock on-line from home or via the People's Network computers in libraries. It is also possible to search a variety of external sources via the site such as the National Library of Scotland catalogue and the British Library, plus both Amazon and Google. Library members will be able to renew their loans or make requests from stock

and to choose from which site they wish to collect the items. The new service has been available to Highland Council staff on the intranet for the past month so that library staff could evaluate its performance before making it available to the public. If you would like to take a look at the site it is available on <http://libraries.highland.gov.uk/TalisPrism> and if you have any comments or suggestions please contact pauline.chapman@highland.gov.uk or john.dempster@highland.gov.uk.

Health Literacies

Highland Adult Literacies Partnership has worked with NHS Highland to produce an information leaflet for practitioners which was launched during International Health Literacy month, October 2004.

Highland Adult Literacies will also be distributing information for patients, through the NHS Service, about the literacy help available in their local area.

Free Literacy Awareness Training, including information on Health Literacy, is available to health practitioners throughout Highland. The first session of this type was held at the Dunvegan Medical Practice on the Isle of Skye. For further information please contact:

Julie Simmons
Adult Literacies Strategy Officer
Telephone: 01463 251278
julie.simmons@highland.gov.uk

Mary Rhind
Adult Literacies Co-ordinator
Telephone: 01463 251276. Email
Mary.rhind@highland.gov.uk

Partners in Practice Conference Highland Adult Literacies Partnership 8th November 2004

The aim of the Partners in Practice conference was to give practitioners, working in community education in all sectors, the opportunity to come together to share good practice and their experiences in the field of Adult Literacies. Examples of Literacies

projects currently taking place in Highland were showcased and workshops focusing on some of these ran throughout the day. An inspirational keynote speech on creativity and literacy learning was given by Professor Bart McGettrick from Glasgow University. The day was very successful, as reflected in the feedback from the delegates.

Thanks to Learning Connections (Communities Scotland), the conference was recorded on video and this will be used by them as a national Literacies resource. The conference report which will include details of all the projects funded through Highland Adult Literacies and a video of the proceedings will be available soon.

If you would like to receive a copy of the conference report please contact:

Christina McIntock
Tel: 01463 251277. Email:
christina.mcintock@highland.gov.uk

Child Protection Inspection Pilot

A multi-agency Service for Children Unit has been established within HMle, and this unit will undertake two pilot child protection inspections in early 2005, including one in Highland. A format for full inspections in every other authority will be determined once the pilot inspections have been evaluated.

The public agencies in Highland have welcomed this opportunity to work with the Scottish Executive and HMle on these important new inspections. The Education, Culture & Sport Service will be fully involved in the process, and will make a major contribution to this significant initiative.

The pilot inspections will examine all aspects of child protection from strategic management to operational delivery, and including outcomes for children and families. The first fieldwork phase will start on 31 January, and interviews with staff and children, and practice visits, will

commence in the second phase from 28 February – 11 March.

The inspection will evaluate the range of services that help protect children. In addition to joint-working arrangements, it will look at activities in schools and hostels, youth work and other services where we have contact with vulnerable children. It will also look at how we work with the voluntary sector, with communities, and how we support children to protect themselves.

Bruce Robertson and other Chief Officers have formed an Operational Group, including representatives from across the ECS Service, to prepare for the inspection and support staff through the process. Managers will be briefed further as the inspection draws closer, to enable them to keep staff apprised of developments.

For further information please contact:-

Bill Alexander
Head of Service
(Children, Young People & Families)
NHS Highland & Highland Council
01463 702870. Email
bill.alexander@highland.gov.uk

Sound Start plus 'Big Band' Begins in Grantown Primary

The Sound Start project was launched in Grantown primary last year as a pilot scheme to give pupils the chance to learn to play a musical instrument of their choice from brass, woodwind and percussion sections in a 'big band' within school time. Thirty three primary six pupils received two hours of group tuition throughout the school year which provided them with an insight to the rudiments of playing a 'big band' musical instrument. The response to the project was so positive from the pupils, teachers and instrumental tutors alike that a parent group was set-up by Head Teacher, Mairi Robertson and Arts

and Community Development Officer, Lynn Johnson to seek funding to keep the project going in an after-school setting.

The after-school project is now established, called Sound Start Plus; a name suggested by a school pupil, and the first session was on 17th November 2004. Whilst Sound Start continues within school time for each new primary six year group for the next two academic years, the children who come through the school initiative now have the option to join Sound Start Plus. Almost every child from the Sound Start initiative's first year has opted to join the after-school project.

Funding has been secured from Awards for All, Cairngorms Leader +, and Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey to run Sound Start Plus in the first year. The committee of parents will continue to seek further funding to make the project financially viable with the support of Mairi Robertson and Lynn Johnson. Lynn Johnson said: "Sound Start Plus is providing an exciting new opportunity for children to participate in the arts in an out-of-school context."

Mairi Robertson said: "I am really looking forward to hearing the band playing their first concert which will hopefully be sometime early in the New Year".

For further information please contact: Mairi Robertson, Head Teacher, Grantown Primary: 01479 872525
mairi.robertson@highland.gov.uk

Lynn Johnson, Arts and Community Development Officer, Badenoch and Strathspey Area: 01540 664535.
lynn.johnson@highland.gov.uk

PPP2

Although we issue more detailed newsletters to the schools involved directly in "PPP", it is important that we keep you advised of progress. This £131M project will take 21st Century School and Community

facilities to 10 locations across Highland. Our Private Sector Partner is Alpha Schools and as 2004 comes to a close, matters are being firmed up on school designs, construction plans and the operation once commissioned. It is planned that all the facilities will be open by 2008 including some very significant community facilities across Highland. For further information contact Ken Allan Tel 01463 717102: Email: ken.allan@highland.gov.uk

2007

The Year of Highland Culture is to take place in 2007, when locally, nationally and internationally there will be a celebration of Highland culture. The key partners in the venture are HIE, the Scottish Executive and of course Highland Council. Major other agencies at local and national level will be actively involved so that a wide range of quality experiences and opportunities take place. Already major capital projects such as the redevelopment of Eden Court Theatre are being tied in with this initiative and there will also be a variety of local chances to showcase the best of Highland culture in its full diversity. This is likely to be a unique opportunity for us so let's make the very best of it. For further information contact
Fiona Hampton Tel: 01463 702039.
Email: fiona.hampton@highland.gov.uk

Out of Eden

Out of Eden is a unique partnership between a professional theatre and a local authority. Its success can be seen not only in the daily workshop programme in schools and youth theatres that meet throughout the region but in the number of projects which are only available to young people in the Highland Council area.

As I write, Dominic Rickhards an ex-*Coronation Street* actor who has just finished a 42 week run in *Woman in Black* on one of London's West End stages now directs *Macbeth in a Day* in 10 Highland secondary

schools with the support of Out of Eden. Dominic and Brendan Fleming, (also a professional actor) perform with the pupil-participants in the 45 minute abridged version of the play, on the evening of the same day. Over 250 students are benefiting from this memorable experience, just one example of how Out of Eden is able to create tailor-made projects for Highland schools.

Another example is the *Good Night Out Network* which has just been launched by pantomime star *Cinderella*- Nicola Daley. G.N.O. is part of the *Determined to Succeed* initiative, through which we wish to encourage and support pupil enterprise groups in 10 secondary schools to become mini - Eden Courts, hosting professional touring productions in drama, dance and music which they select, programme, publicise and support through front of house within the school.

Out of Eden has just completed two other partnership theatre-in-education tours which have visited most secondary schools. One of these workshop-productions, *Stigma*, was on the subject of teenage mental health, the other, called *Decisions Decisions*, launched a day of career choices for 4th year students.

Through Out of Eden Highland Council provides pathways for students wishing to follow a career in performance through the SQA Higher Drama and Higher Dance Practice courses which take place each year and are open to students from all schools who are willing to commit to giving up their Saturdays to study the subject. The Council will be one of the first local authorities to offer a new (presently being designed) SQA *Professional Development Award*, for arts practitioners wishing to work with children and young people in schools.

For further information please contact Sonia Rose at Eden Court Theatre. Tel 01463 239841:
Email: sonia.rose@highland.gov.uk

Active Schools

The roll-out of the Active Schools network is progressing well. The appointment of an Active Schools Manager and 9 full-time Active Schools Co-ordinators has taken place. The next round of appointments are expected to take place in April 2005 with 9 ASC appointments followed by the third stage of 8 posts expected in August 2005. This will give full network coverage of Highland with 26 full-time ASC for primary clusters, 29 ASC working one day a week in secondary schools and 1 SEN Co-ordinator working a day a week in Drummond. It is hoped that an additional ASC post will be created specifically targeted at school age disability sport.

The role of the ASC is to provide safe and enjoyable physical activity and sporting opportunities for children and to address target 1 of the Sport 21 Strategy by making 80% of children active for one hour a day every day of the week. In secondary schools the target is to increase sporting participation amongst mid teens particularly girls. Already we are seeing an increase in the variety and number of activities taking place in and around schools. Better communication of information and support is being given to children to enable them to become more active.

Central to success is making children more active will be increasing, sustaining and developing the volunteer base. It is hoped to do this by spending more time mentoring our volunteers and providing them with appropriate training. This will be done by developing strong links with Gael Force Ten, Volunteering Highland and through the Community Tops programme. The sports clubs also have a strong part to play and it is hoped to create pathways to clubs for children to participate in their chosen activities. It is also encouraging that there will be a

move towards 120 minutes of physical education for all children as this will stimulate interest and develop the basic skills that children require to be physically active. Active School Co-ordinators will assist with making the links for children from the curriculum P.E programme to the opportunities available in out-of-hours time in communities and at clubs. In addition the new Sport Development Co-ordinator team will develop community and club sport across the Highlands.

Already training has been provided to develop community volunteers, develop First Club golf Tutors, promote Highlife, organise play ground games and develop children's confidence to learn.

The future for Scottish school children becoming 'more active, more often' is significantly moving forward.

For further information please contact:- Alan Clark, Active Schools Manager
Tel: 01349 868616:
Email:alan.clark@highland.gov.uk

Travelling Pupils Project

For the past 3 months a group of young Travellers have been exploring their heritage through the museum collections in Inverness Museum and at the Highland Folk Museum. The collections that the project has been based around have been Inverness Museum's *Morrison Family's Punch and Judy*, and photographs from the Shennan collection as well as the Highland Folk Museum's objects, which are mainly related to the past crafts and occupations of Travellers (such as pearl fishing, metal working, including jewellery making, and basket making). The group have enthusiastically engaged with the project, taking inspiration from the objects, but also looking beyond them to make links between their life today and that of Travellers in the

past, interviewing older Travellers about their lives and experiences, discussing issues of interpretation and pointing out ways in which they might be more fairly represented in the museums. One of the main outcomes of this project will be an exhibition comparing Traveller life today with that in the past. This will be held in Inverness Museum's Community Exhibition Space between 30th January and 25th February 2005. We hope this exhibition will raise awareness and increase understanding of the Travelling Community. All welcome!

For further information please contact Rhona Hamilton: Tel 01463 661307: Email: rhona.hamilton@highland.gov.uk

Scottish Executive Education Department

SEED has been busy over the autumn period in a number of fronts. The 'Autumn Agenda' has seen the publication of a few key policy documents which will have long term consequences. Badged "Ambitious Excellent Schools" a number of initiatives have been pulled together to set a clear direction nationally. The outcome of the review of the 3 – 18 Curriculum is welcome as is the signal to review the part parents should play in education. Leadership is seen as a key factor in school improvement and it is very pleasing to confirm that Highland is one of only 6 Authorities to be invited to take part in Leadership Development initiatives. For further information Contact your Headteacher or the Scottish Executive Web Site www.scotland.gov.uk

GTC(S) Lecture

For the first time ever GTC Scotland have taken their lecture programme out of the Central Belt. The Lecture, involving Lesley Riddoch, Matt MacIver and Bruce Robertson will take place in Culloden Academy on

Thursday 27 January, 6.15 p.m. to
9.00 p.m. See posters in schools for
details.