School term ends: Friday 18th December 12.20pm

Staff return: Tuesday 5th January
Pupils return: Wednesday 6th January

Parent Council: Wednesday 20th January 5.30pm

Higher/N5 Assessment period: Monday 25th January —Thursday 11th February

S2 Full reports issued: Friday 29th January

Course Choice 2016–2017 booklet issued: Friday 29th January

Moving into Senior Phase parent presentation: Thursday 11th February 6.30pm

Holiday: Monday 15 & Tuesday 16th February

Course Choice week commences: Monday 22nd February
S3 Parents’ Evening: Thursday 3rd March

S4–6 Full report issued: Friday 11th March

Parent Council: Wednesday 16th March 5.30pm

S1 Parents Evening: Thursday 17th March
Last day of term: Thursday 24th March

Higher & National 5 Prelim Assessment opportunities

Senior pupils will be involved in a range of assessment opportunities during January/February. These assessment opportunities take place either in classrooms or in the Assembly hall with results obtained indicating the likelihood of success in upcoming SQA examinations. Senior pupils and parents are reminded about the importance of these assessments and the need to ensure adequate revision is undertaken before the day.

An assessment timetable has been issued and a copy of this can be downloaded from the school website.

Show My Homework
Our online homework facility has had a makeover recently. The school continues to encourage parents and pupils to access this site regularly to ensure all are fully aware of homework that has been issued.

Educational research is very clear about the benefits of homework and how a work ethic that involves regular study at home will impact positively on future academic success.

You can access the ‘showmy homework’ site via the homepage of the school website. If a pupil has forgotten their password this can be reset in school.

Bright Lights Science Success
Congratulations to Ellie Macdonald, Reece Wilson, Amber Sommerville, Sophie Cornett, Adam Menzies and Jessica Ross who competed in the Bright Lights Big Experiment to produce an educational video to celebrate the International Year of Light. They were ably directed by Dr Angus McCarthy, who works on optoelectronic laser sensors. On 2 December 2015, they were awarded the winning trophy by Prof. Jim Al-Khalili at the IlluminNation event at Heriot Watt University in front of a full auditorium, and cameras live-streaming the event to Italy, France and Germany. Their video will be available for educational use through the Heriot Watt youtube channel.

This is a fantastic achievement and one we know the Science faculty are extremely proud of.

School Bus Bay: dropping off and collecting pupils
Over the last few weeks we are noticing an increasing amount of cars entering the bus bay to wait for and pick up children at the end of the day. We must ensure the safety of all pupils as they make their way to the buses and also ensure buses have unimpeded access when entering the bus bay and when leaving.

As such, can we ask that you do not enter the bus bay area after 3.15pm and please look to arrange an alternative pick up point for your son or daughter.
Masterclasses for Senior pupils

To register a place please email your child’s details to Susan susan.comrie@westlothian.org.uk

WLC Masterclass Co-ordinator

On Friday afternoons a number of Higher English tutorial sessions have started between now and the final exam. There will be also be a final revision day prior to the exam on Saturday 30th April 2016.

A number of Higher Mathematics tutorial sessions will be offered from the end of January until the final exam in May 2016. A final revision day will take place prior to the exam on Saturday 7th May 2016. There will be some Masterclass provision for pupils studying National 5 Mathematics - more details to follow.

Deans Community High School will host a Higher History conference on the afternoon of Friday 4th March 2016.

A Higher Business Management Conference will take place in The James Young High School on the afternoon of Friday 11th March 2016.

Higher and Advanced Higher Music tutorials will take place at St Margaret’s Academy on the afternoon of Friday 22nd April 2016. The JYHS will host a revision session in Higher Computing on the morning of Saturday 23rd April 2016.

Revision sessions in Higher Chemistry and Physics will be offered on Sat 14th May and Sat 20th May 2016, in Armadale Academy. Higher Biology will take place on Friday 6th May 2016 in ICHS and the JYHS.

There will be one day revision sessions for Higher French and Higher Spanish. Date to be confirmed.

SCHOOL FOCUS

QUAD and Dining Hall refurbishment

2 pupil focus groups have been working on how we can improve the school environment, in particular the Quad area and the dining hall.

As you will be aware the Quad area plans have been agreed and we are now waiting on a contractor to be appointed. This work should be completed by the Easter holidays.

Another group are looking at the dining hall furniture and how we can make this area more ‘grown up’, zoned better with areas for eating and socialising and a better range of furniture.

The group have met with a design consultant and we will have 3D plans for the area early in the new year. These plans will go out to all pupils for their feedback and then we can proceed with making the changes.

Futurechef Competition

Congratulations to Hannah Cowan who after winning the local finals, has now won the Lothians final of the FutureChef competition. The Scottish finals involves preparing a 3 course meal within the budget of £10.00. If she wins this stage she will get a trip to London to compete in the National finals where she will meet famous Celebrity Chefs.

Good luck!!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Paige McAllister and Katie Barrie who have both been selected for a place in the Scottish FA u14 and u16 regional performance squads for 2016. This is a great achievement for both girls! Well done, now the hard work begins!!

Welcome

Welcome to Shirley Miller who has recently joined us as a teacher in the Learning Support department.

‘Head Lines’

Another busy year comes to an end, and although thoughts will be turning towards the festive period, our pupils, especially those in the Senior Phase, will be very aware they are coming back to a very demanding new term.

The school continues to stress the link between regular submission of homework and planned personal study with increased attainment and better results. Teachers have a responsibility but our learners also have a personal responsibility to work hard and take advantage of the additional opportunities on offer to them. Study Support classes and West Lothian organised masterclasses are all available and I hope the majority of pupils take up these offers.

Can I wish you all an enjoyable festive period and the very best for 2016.

Grant Abbot