

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT

FOR

The Gordon Schools, Huntly



Standards and Quality Report for Session 2012-13

Aberdeenshire Council Education, Learning and Leisure Service Vision

"Working together for the best quality of life for everybody in Aberdeenshire; from mountain to sea, and helping through Education and Recreation to make it the best possible place in which to live and learn, work and play.

Our aims are the building of capacity, the realisation of potential and the achievement of excellence in Aberdeenshire – the very best of Scotland"

Standards and Quality Report

<u>Secti</u>	ion <u>Section Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Contents Page	2
2	Aberdeenshire Council School Improvement Framework- Foreword	3
3	Aims	4
4	The School in Context	5
5	Progress Check – Evaluating the School's Previous Improvement Plan	8
6	Self Evaluation Audit	22
7	Other Achievements	28
8	School Improvement Priorities for session 2012-13	39

2. Foreword: Aberdeenshire Council School Improvement Framework

Aberdeenshire School Improvement Framework forms part of the Education, Learning and Leisure Service's Quality Improvement Framework, and is the overarching strategic management tool which directs and supports school improvement in establishments across Aberdeenshire. At the heart of the framework is the notion that self evaluation practice within each school drives improvement aimed at delivering positive outcomes for children and young people in Aberdeenshire.

"Self evaluation is a reflective, professional process through which schools get to know themselves well...Improvement Planning builds on that self knowledge by involving us in understanding and valuing the best of that which already exisits, deciding how good we can really be, and identifying the best way forward."

The Journey to Excellence Part 4: Planning for Excellence, HMIe, 2007

In partnership with its schools, Aberdeenshire Council will work to provide education of the highest quality to meet the aspirations of pupils, parents, staff and the wider community

"....to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential".

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000, Section 2

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to support and challenge schools and staff in their efforts to nurture an ethos of achievement and to develop focused improvement strategies.

"A pre-requisite for sustained improvement is the recognition by all staff that there is indeed a need for improvement, and that improvement is possible. Giving learning and teaching the highest priority, results in improvements in ethos, behaviour and outcomes for learners."

Improving Scottish Education, HMIe, 2006

Aberdeenshire Council acknowledges its statutory duty to educate the whole child and to promote the active involvement of children and young people in their learning.

"To enable all children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors."

Ambitious, Excellent Schools, HMIe, November 2005

The school's Standards and Quality report is an important component of the School Improvement Framework which provides an account of the progress the school has been making in implementing it plans for improvement, together with an update of the school's own assessment of the quality of its provision in relation to a set of recognised indicators, which reflect national, authority and school level priorities.

3. Vision, Values, Aims

We have a vision of school which deploys highly motivated and skilled staff, enables ALL young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors, makes families proud, and reflects the values on which Scottish society is based. We are committed to continuous improvement through partnership, working closely with people with whom we share a common purpose. We believe that pupils should have high expectations and ambitions, and that their educational experiences should stretch them.

All pupils in The Gordon Schools are encouraged to develop their talents and abilities to the greatest extent possible. This must take place in a happy, secure and purposeful environment, in which pupils develop and progress in a society rich in culture. There is a developing ethos, based on the qualities of openness, accountability and partnership, which emphasises high expectations, individual needs, equal opportunities and participation within a caring community

Our aims:

1. Achievement and Attainment

We have high, consistent expectations for all pupils, encouraging them to strive for the highest standards in their personal and social development and in their educational attainment.

2. Framework for Learning

We provide the best kinds of learning and teaching experiences, having a well managed and well resourced curriculum, delivered by dedicated and highly skilled staff. We are a well-disciplined school, with an open, friendly ethos. We are accountable, aiming to reflect excellence in education.

3. Inclusion and Equality

We are a school in which pupils of every race, gender, background and learning need are accepted and valued. We promote equality, within a caring community, enabling pupils to have access to and experience of the whole curriculum at an appropriate level. We value each young person as an individual, being supportive, encouraging each pupil to develop her or his abilities.

4. Values and Citizenship

We develop good relationships between all involved in education, by working in partnership. We are aware of the environment, taking care of it, helping to manage its resources. We also value the responsibilities involved in promoting good citizenship.

5. Learning for Life

We have a vibrant, participative and lively school, rich in academic, sporting, cultural and social activities and experiences. We value working with pupils to build skills and confidence to participate in a changing world, encouraging creativity and ambition.

In other words, we aim to be a school which works very hard to develop:

- good teaching and learning;
- good pupil-teacher relationships;
- good courses;
- good discipline;
- regular homework;
- good examination results;
- an ethos of achievement;
- a wide range of resources;
- good management;
- good home-school links;
- good links with business and industry;
- a sense of accountability;

- · each pupil's talents and abilities;
- a friendly, trusting, open atmosphere;
- opportunities for pupils to be represented;
- a caring Guidance and Tutor system;
- high standards for all;
- · a chance for all to join in;
- equal opportunities;
- a wide range of sports, clubs, musical and extra-curricular activities;
- the best in the arts, science and technology;
- a sense of life and purpose;
- a strong set of moral values.

4. The School in Context

The Gordon Schools is a non-denominational, comprehensive secondary school, providing education for pupils aged 11 to 18 years old. The school has an established educational tradition, stretching back over 150 years to its origins where the Duchess of Gordon founded the school and the famous architect, Archibald Simpson, designed the original buildings which provide a striking and distinctive image of the school. We draw from an area of up to sixteen miles around the town of Huntly in the north east of Scotland. Our current school roll stands at around 816 pupils.



Huntly is situated adjacent to the A96 Aberdeen-Elgin Road, north west of Aberdeen. Proceeding from the town square by Castle Street, visitors will be struck by the impressive view which opens out at the top of the town, featuring an area of mature trees in which The Gordon Schools' buildings are set. We are often asked, "Why The Gordon Schools and not just School?" In 1839 the last Duchess of Gordon, known as the 'Good Duchess', erected a building in the town of Huntly as a memorial to her late husband. She invited the four major local schools to occupy it, and The Gordon Schools was born. This building still

stands today as part of our present accommodation. It was renovated a number of years ago and is now a striking home for our Music, Drama and Home Economics departments. The Gordon Schools celebrated 150 years of continuous education in Huntly in 1989, with festivities, a pageant, and a set of commemorative items including jumpers, ties, cups and a historical booklet.

The school has steadily grown over the years in a succession of stages, with buildings linked by a network of corridors. We have a large assembly hall, gymnasium, and games hall, together with well-equipped and pleasant classrooms in all subjects. We are fortunate in having our playing fields and all-weather sporting facilities on the same site as the school and doubly fortunate in having access to the grounds of the local Cricket and Rugby Clubs adjacent to the school. We also have the local Authority's modern swimming pool on-site and use this as part of our Physical Education curriculum. All of these facilities feature strongly in our extra-curricular programmes.





The school has very strong links with the local community, where we play a key and distinctive role in Huntly and the surrounding areas. Involvement with local groups, businesses and organisations are encouraged to provide a rich educational tapestry for our young people and we value the input of parents and guardians who are very much involved in the life of The Gordon Schools. There are effective pastoral and support mechanisms in place for all pupils and each pupil's achievements are valued and encouraged.

There are many distinctive features of The Gordon Schools, including regular assemblies, a school dress code, theme day and a prize-giving event. We offer a broad range of extra-curricular experiences including a wide range of sports, music and arts experiences, and many of our pupils go on to represent the school and even the country in a variety of ways. We aspire to be a caring and friendly school where pupils and visitors alike feel welcome and a part of the school. We encourage our pupils to have a responsible approach to life and we promote positive behaviour in all of our young people.





All current S1 and S2 Aberdeenshire pupils will study a Broad General Education through to the end of S3 followed by an S4-S6 Senior Phase curriculum. Throughout the S1-S3 Broad General Education, your child will have the opportunity to build on prior learning from his/her primary school and will continue to experience success across each of the eight Curricular Areas. Towards the end of S3, your child will have the opportunity to make choices for Senior Phase qualifications. In the S4-S6 Senior Phase, your child will continue their 'learning journey' through a range of personalised curricular pathways.

We aim to provide quality learning and teaching experiences at the Gordon Schools. Prior learning is always important whether moving from primary to secondary school or from one stage to the next. We invest in top quality staff development and training to ensure that young people in The Gordon Schools have the best learning opportunities. The quality of pupils' learning is monitored closely by senior and promoted staff in the school.

We have a thriving Parent Forum and Parent Council and a Parent Fundraising Group to which we are grateful for helping to support the school. We aim to work closely with all carers of our pupils and always welcome positive and constructive ways of improving links between home and school.



Extra-curricular Activities

Sports, activities, clubs and societies are flourishing in school. Sports offered include athletics, badminton, cross-country running, football, hockey, netball, rugby, swimming and volleyball, to name just a few. There has been sporting representation regionally and nationally. We have enjoyed successes at debating and public speaking. Seniors are involved in the Buddy Support System and Paired Reading with first year pupils, in Young Enterprise and the Engineering Education Scheme. We have a training orchestra, a senior orchestra and a school windband. There is a junior drama group and we put on annual show. There are trips throughout the country and abroad. All pupils in all years are given wide and varied opportunities to participate in the life of the school.



The Gordon Schools' Crest



At the top of the school crest, two yellow boars' heads on an azure background represent the Gordon family. Two lion's heads on a gold background are linked with Badenoch. Two red crescents on a gold background link with Seton. Two fraises, or strawberry flowers, on an azure background represent Fraser. The Gordon family owned Badenoch, Seton and Fraser lands and these four names are remembered in the names of our House system. A red chevron with silver stars carries the link with the Brodie Arms, the 5th Duke of Gordon having married Elizabeth Brodie. The colours black and gold relate to the Barry Arms of Strathbogie. The green lime leaves represent our Linden trees. The grey tower represents the tower of the Simpson Building, the original building dating from 1839. The motto *In Fas Constans* derives from *Bydand*, which appears on the armorial bearings of the Gordon family. Both mean *Steadfast* or *Abiding*.

Assemblies

Pupils attend regular assemblies which help to celebrate pupil achievements, cover key moral and important issues and communicate key messages to pupils. Special Assemblies or individual year group Assemblies are often held.

5. Progress Check – Evaluating the Schools Previous Improvement Plan

School Improvement Priorities 2012 / 2013

No	Improvement Priority	Eva	aluation / Impac	t	Evidence
1	QI 1.1: Improvements in performance Maintenance of, and improvement in, attainment and achievement across all subjects	Angus MacLean 4 A Annabelle McLeod 4 A Katie Morley 5 A Abigail Norris 4 A Rosie Watt 5 A Abby Proctor 4 A	verages and broadly aining averages. At all all all all all and have reaped the gained 5 or more Crown S5 pupils achieved em with 4 or more vere Higher Grade pare Grade par	y in line with tainment is particular ining levels at our youngsters have e benefits of all their edit/Intermediate 2 d 5 or more Higher A's.	STACS Analysis S1/2 Assessment Data Exam analysis Review Meetings Classroom observation Improvement plans Standards & Quality Report Student of Month nominations Department 'good news' stories Charter of Achievement School Newsletters Sporting successes Huntly Xpress

Freya Coursey	3 AH	ABC
Hadley Williams	2 AH & 1 H	AAA
Cait Lennox	3 AH & 1 H	AABB
Cuthred Shepherd	3 AH	ABC

Vocational (SfW) courses in Construction and Hairdressing continue to offer some students appropriate and relevant enhancement to their curriculum. Unfortunately we have not been able to offer this provision for next session though. To date, however, the rate of success in these courses is high and building on these partnerships is highly desirable.

Rural Skills courses and an Outdoor Learning Project with B&B College has enhanced further the wider achievement opportunities. The school allotment is now up and running and producing a variety of food. A guest speaker from Seeds of Change speaking to the Huntly Allotment Association described it as the best school allotment they had seen. We continue to support staff with CPD for outdoor learning enabling staff to attend training at Glenmore Lodge.

Our Skillforce partners continue to be a valuable partner helping the more vulnerable groups of children. They focus on developing knowledge and skills for learning, life and work. Their input utilises a more enterprising approach to learning & teaching, takes learning outdoors, builds confidence and responsibility and supports transitions to senior school and beyond. Learning and achievement is recognised through a range of award bearing schemes including: ASDAN Bronze & Silver, Heart Start, First Aid, National Navigation Award and SQA First Steps and Employability Awards. We have also introduced Skillforce into our S5/S6 course choice with a focus on Employability

Wider aspects of pupil achievement are very strong at The Gordon Schools. The school continually develops an ethos which encourages achievement and celebrates success in the widest sense. Pupils are provided with opportunities to participate in a broad range of curricular and extra-curricular activities celebrated proudly through our Student of the Month awards, regular assemblies, local press, website and our prizegiving events and house award assemblies. We have been recognised nationally for

our Global Citizenship – winning the Scottish Education Award for Global Citizenship in June 2013

Departments across the school take every opportunity to place learning in context through exciting in school and out of school activities. Examples include pupil success in the Tesco Bank Art Competition, success in the National Gallery of Scotland Schools Competition – pupil work displayed in the Portrait Gallery, S5 pupil winning the Deveron Arts Creative Cup, Music successes in and out of school at local, regional and national level. UK Maths Challenge success at Junior, Intermediate and Senior sections, S4 participation in Maths in the Pipeline at BP North Sea Headquarters, senior pupil success in Stem in the Pipeline saw their work recognised by attaining 3rd place (the first time a team from TGS has been placed), S6 pupil participation in the Lessons from Auschwitz programme run by the Holocaust Educational Trust, S2 pupils selected for the national finals of Inspire-Aspire Awards, Arkwright Scholarships. For the 1st time a team from The Gordon Schools made it through the regional heats of the Enterprising Maths Competition resulting them in taking part in the national finals in Glasgow. We are thankful to the Huntly Educational Trust for sponsoring the finalists in their trip to Glasgow.

S3 pupils were involved through their studies in RMPS in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative. A finals nights in April saw 6 teams present to a panel of judges why their charity should receive a £3000 donation. The winning team saw 'Car Aid Rhynie' gain a much needed boost to their funds.

The Business Education, ICT and Enterprise Faculty introduced The MycroTyco project to their S3 classes with the aim of raising awareness of less developed economies with the aim of raising money for them.

We have had continued success with the Jasmine Challenge this year with an excess of £10,000 being raised.

Pupils have again been successful in gaining both Nuffield and Arkwright scholarships for their work in science and engineering.

The Gordon Schools are involved in a pilot of the Career Academies programme where 10 youngsters have been selected to take part in a 2 year mentoring programme with industrial partners.

Senior school responsibility through elected positions – school captains/vice captains, House captains/vice-captains, sports captains/vice captains and prefects – is well developed and enhances further their educational experience in its widest sense. Pupil Council, Enterprise & Citizenship activity, Buddy scheme, Sports Leadership, Health & Well Being Leaders offer further, well established means for youngsters to develop the '4 Capacities'.

In particular the pupil council have seen their suggestions for improvement come to fruition, in particular more access to fresh water and hand driers as well as having a big input into the review of the school dress code

Mentoring was introduced to a select group of S4 pupils with the view of raising their attainment. This scheme is currently being evaluated with a view to expanding further.

Another focus on raising attainment has been to review the school's behaviour management policy. This will be implemented in August 2013.

2 **QI 2.1: Learners Experiences**

Consolidation of all aspects of AifL and continue to develop specific dynamic and active approaches to learning in and out of the classroom and in line with Curriculum for Excellence. Continue to develop the use of technologies to support learning & teaching where appropriate Continue to ensure pupils feel safe, included and respected and that their views are taken into account. Continue developing an ethos of achievement and respect for

others

Visits to classrooms would indicate that the learning experience for most pupils is a positive one. Pupils seem well motivated and, and more and more, accept responsibility for aspects of their learning. In most lessons pupils receive appropriate, formative feedback that impacts on learning. Indeed, the ongoing development of our Learning and Teaching Group and the sharing of good practice is beginning to show impact and improve learners experiences. Most teachers are now sharing the purposes of lessons with learners and are setting more challenging and interesting tasks. In almost all classes teachers set learning targets and share these with the young people. All teachers need to ensure that the young people clearly understand their learning targets and what they have to do to achieve these. The more effective use of formative assessment strategies is beginning to impact on the quality of learners experiences and young people are becoming more actively engaged in their learning. A number of staff have attended Cooperative Learning courses and are using these techniques in the classroom

The developing curriculum is now becoming more focused on developing the 4 capacities through discrete and interdisciplinary learning and enabling our pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Examples of good practice are clearly evident

- ✓ S3 pupils were involved in the Microtyco project
- √ S3 pupils were involved in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative
- ✓ Senior pupils were involved as Health and Wellbeing Young leaders
- ✓ S2 pupils were involved in planning and running the P7
 Give the Boot to Poverty programme as part of transition.

These are just a few examples of work carried out by pupils which saw the school recognised at the recent Scottish Education Awards winning the Global Citizenship Category. Opportunities for staff to take part in Rights Respecting schools CPD have been

- Classroom observation
- Improvement plans
- Standards & Quality Report
- Observation of pupils engaged in activities beyond the class, in the playground, corridors, on excursions and fieldwork
- Levels and trends of attendance and exclusion;
- Participation and progression in social, sporting, cultural and citizenship activities, including out-ofschool learning.
- Student of Month nominations
- > Department 'good news' stories
- Charter of Achievement
- > School Newsletters
- Sporting successes
- Huntly Xpress

taken up by staff on the Citizenship Committee.

A wide range of extra-curricular activities including inter-house an inter-school competition add to a full range of appropriately targeted experiences and contexts through which to 'learn' in the widest sense.

The range of wider experiences and opportunities for personal achievement offered to pupils is a particular strength of the school and we ensure pupils' successes are recognised and celebrated at assemblies and through a range of awards. Such achievements are also recognised through prominent corridor displays, in the local press and through annual prize giving ceremonies.

Inclusion is important to us and we strive to ensure that pupils with additional support needs have access to as wide a curriculum experience as possible. IEPs, CSPs are carefully constructed with input from pupils and parents as well as a range of professionals in and out of school and will ensure planned and supported access to an appropriate range of relevant learning experiences and outcomes. Progress is discusses at annual review meetings.

The Pupil Representative Council, now refreshed, ensures that pupils have a direct say in the improvement agenda and decision making processes in the school. School Captains, House/Sports Captains and Prefects also have a major role in supporting the ongoing work of the school and as a result develop personally, build self confidence and learn important life/learning skills.

Developing technology has a growing impact in enhancing learning and teaching. The use of Smartboards, laptops, on-line resources (eg Scholar) etc is a prominent feature in lesson planning and delivery and enhances the learning experience of all pupils. We continue to develop GLOW as a platform to support/enhance learning with increasing numbers of pupils and staff using GLOW regularly. Momentum here has slowed as we await national developments to the platform.

QI 5.1: The curriculum

3

Continue to develop curriculum content, structures and delivery in line with Curriculum for Excellence in consultation with all stakeholders and in response to Authority guidelines.

Very good work has been pursued in support of implementing A Curriculum for Excellence.

The Broad General Education has been/is being developed to provide both discrete and interdisciplinary contexts to deliver E's & O's. Personalisation and choice within each curriculum area is offered at the end of S2 while still maintaining coverage of E's and O's and offering appropriate preparation for transition to the senior phase. An audit of experiences and outcomes across the curriculum will ensure that we are meeting requirements of the broad curriculum.

Interdisciplinary learning takes place through delivery of timetabled 'Enrichment' topics as well as across the curriculum. Blocks of time have been extended across all curriculum areas to enable development of more active learning experiences.

Learning teams have been engaged in developing a progressive curriculum in Numeracy, Literacy, Health & Well Being and Outdoor Learning across the Cluster. These teams now require a 'refresh'; in school developments within departments and across the school to be evaluated and plans for further development refocused.

Plans for the Senior Phase are well established, generated by our curriculum planning group and supported by ongoing discussion with PTs and department colleagues. Plans for CfE developments have been shared regularly with parents with through the parent council and regular information evenings with S1/S2/S3 parents. Work with pupils to further develop senior phase 'choices' which support appropriate curriculum pathways through school is now required. Further consultation with PTs will take place about the range of courses to be offered to ensure that options meet pupils' needs.

The further development of awards in Sports Leadership, D of E, John Muir Trust, ASDAN and YASS Open University will add valued outcome and accreditation to wider curriculum experiences as plans to deliver unfold.

- Information on course structures and timetables
- Discussion with managers and cross section of staff, partners and other stakeholders
- Curriculum aims and policies
- Improvement plan and evidence of impact
- Minutes of meetings
- Data on improvements in progress
- Attainment and achievement data trends
- Standards and quality report
- Observation of programmes and courses as experienced by learners in learning and teaching
- Documentation about programmes and courses
- Options and choices information
- > Staff plans and programmes
- Attainment data, (STACS)
- Observations about the impact of information transferred about prior learning on learning and teaching after transition
- Trend data on leavers' destinations

4 QI 5.3: Meeting learning needs

To continue the implementation of Aberdeenshire's guidelines on partnership working within the multi-agency framework to ensure all pupils are safe, active, healthy, included, respected, responsible and achieving their potential.

The G.I.R.F.E.C. agenda is a key priority in The Gordon Schools. The commitment by SMT, PTG's, ASL and all staff to support individuals is consistent and effective. Time allocated to this is very high and seen as a priority. PTG's are full time allowing them time to respond to the needs of individual pupils. PT ASL has the responsibility of staff and PSA's in B17, B4/5 and the Deveron Building. There is a very close working relationship among SMT, PTG's and ASL staff where needs of individual pupils are shared and discussed in both formal and informal meetings.

ASL teachers and PSA's are well used in both meeting legal requirements and meeting pupils' needs using flexibility of task and approach.

ASL teaching staff provide informal consultation for pupils requiring additional support.

Ed Psych provides staff CPD, observes pupils In class and meets with staff to discuss positive stratagies, attends MAAP when required and liaises with PTG's DHT and partner agencies especially Health. Staff CPD is also provided at staff meetings, inset days and lunch times with a variety of personnel with expertise invited to speak..

The Deveron Building is a unique resource for flexibility in the curriculum.

PSA allocation is managed by QIO and D Harper PT SFL..

Skill force has had a major Impact on a group of pupils in 2 year groups with challenging behaviour, confidence issues, low self esteem and disengagement in education. Pupils have achieved success in team building activities, self esteem is developing and all but one achieved ASDAN bronze. These pupils are continuing this project into S4 and S5 and a new group of S3 pupils began the course IN June.

A group of S2 girls are participating in Friends a 10 week programme to build resilience with our CLD partners in the Linder Centre..

There are also plans for a similar boys group with the aim of investigating feelings and developing communication skills.(DHT and CLD partners.).

- Classroom observation
- Information issued to staff on those with additional support needs
- Discussion with learning support staff, pastoral care staff, class teachers, key workers
- The role of specialist staff in meeting learning needs including visiting teachers, specialist staff and relevant staff from partner agencies
- Support, advice and training the school receives from specialist staff and their agencies
- Evidence from pupil progress records [PPRs] and other attainment and achievement records
- Quality and effectiveness of care planning, CSPs and IEPs
- Interviews with parents, learners and partner agencies, as appropriate, in planning and reviewing
- Minutes of planning meetings to identify and assess needs
- Minutes of review meetings
- > Transition arrangements

A small group of pupils mainly ASD pupils are working on The John Muir Award as part of their individualised timetable as an alternative to exclusion. This will be taught cooperatively by ASL and Maths colleagues. A Maths teacher is involved with this group of vulnerable youngsters in an outdoor/flexible learning group who work at the school allotment, in and around the school and were part of a project at Fyvie Castle.

"Seasons for Growth", group work sessions for S2-S4 pupils, who have experienced loss or change have been completed, led by our pupil counsellor and family support worker(S.W.). The Life Choice (baby training) course is now embedded in our wider achievement column led by PTG. A babysitting qualification has been added to this course and input from CLD will help deliver it.

'Breakfast PSE' and ASD Support is provided voluntarily by colleagues from Guidance and ASL to pupils who are unable to sustain whole class PSE lessons.

Using Community Learning Staff and facilities, ASN pupils access the community kitchen led by NHS partners and are also involved in music sessions. The kitchen facilities in school are also used as part of individual pupils flexible learning packages.

Pupils with ASN access Riding for the Disabled weekly benefiting from animal therapy, outdoor learning and physical exercise.

Work experience for pupils with ASD will be offered as part of their flexible curriculum.

Music Sessions for both individuals and groups are planned with Music Instrumental Services for ASN pupils in blocks throughout the year.

There is a new Transitions project for pupils with ASD.

In class rooms there is widespread good practice with regard to individual learners needs being catered for. AIFL is evident as is differentiated learning materials, methods and approaches. Pupils from S1-3 have received new profile diaries in order to

collect information on their latest and best work. Staff are asked to have discussions with pupils regularly on their personal achievements.

Educational Psychologist and ASL staff provide in-house inservice and ASL staff are consulted regularly. ASL staff visit all departments to highlight individual pupils' needs and strategies re GIRFEC will be discussed. There are efficient processes in place to communicate information among staff.

Early intervention is paramount and discussions take place once a term with school counsellor, school nurse, pupil support worker, family support worker, CLD Social work, head janitor and Police Scotland in our Multi Agency School Team(MAST) meetings. Care conferences for teachers of ASD pupils take place at lunchtimes where positive strategy sharing of information takes place.

Work experience has been re-introduced and the MCMC programme in partnership with Skills Development Scotland provides support for some youngsters to pursue better contexts for learning. The activity agreement is also a new initiative for pupils in the MCMC group of pupils.

EAL pupils are also well supported as are our talented and able pupils.

The school boasts a vast selection of extra curricular activities throughout the year.

Achievements and successes are recognised formally in praise slips, student of the month awards, house assemblies and prize giving. A new stamp system for recognising positive behaviour has been introduced this session.

The quality of information on pupils at transition from primary school is good as DHT Pupil Support, Acting PT ASL and PTG's visit primary schools, gather information and share with relevant staff. Pupils who would benefit from our Bridging group (for vulnerable pupils) and the Deveron Building group are identified and meet weekly for 6 weeks prior to the 3 day visit. Individual visits take place if required.

IAF/MAAP framework is in place and more work will be done on MCMC framework. A MCMC group has been reformed and now

meets regularly.

Information can be shared effectively through regular communication with the Pupil Support Team in school, Community Network, Liaison Group, Health and Well Being group, school nurse, pupil councillor and pupil support worker. A new pupil support newsletter is planned to keep staff up to date with success stories and general information about high tariff pupils each term.

There are regular meetings involving DHT Pupil Support, PT ASL, Ed Psych and PTG's to identify and share needs of individual pupils. (IEPs, CSPs, Care Plans etc) are written as a result of these.

S1 Midyis Tests are another indicator used to help identify pupils' needs. Key staff have been trained on CSP and IEP writing. At an in –service this session the new 18 page IEP will be shown and implicatons for all staff discussed.

Pupils with IEP'S with ASD attend 6 week review meetings with DHT, PTG, PT ASL and support teacher to discuss IEP feedback from class teachers and new targets are set.. Reviews for vulnerable pupils with IEP's take place annually. Parents attend along with Ed Psych, and Skills Development Scotland when required.

Prefects and senior students support a Buddy System in school which begins on the transition 3 day visit and continues throughout year in many cases but certainly until Christmas. There are a variety of clubs in school which supports vulnerable pupils at lunchtimes both socially and academically. A group of senior peers support S1 pupils in there classes

Subject choice in S2, S3 and S5/6 is flexible in meeting the needs of individual learners. The process involves pupils, PTG's, subject teachers, Skills dev Scotland and parents. The needs of able pupils and EAL pupils are also high priority. The Live and Learn Company were invited to school to run motivational and resilience workshops for all our S4 pupils. There are also follow up resources for staff to dip into.

Detailed reports are issued one week before the well attended Parents' nights. These evenings assist school in sharing information and helps further develop the Parent/Carer/School partnership.

All staff attend annual input from DHT Pupil Support at in-service on Child Protection and Looked After Children. LAC and other vulnerable children are monitored and supported by internal communication procedures.

Other CPD twilights are offered regularly on ASN Topics. A mentoring scheme was introduced for S4 pupils and its success means it will continue this session. Any member of staff can identify pupils and members of staff both teaching and non teaching can volunteer to be mentors.

The new seemis module for attendance, monitoring and tracking has been rolled out and staff are currently being trained. SMT PTGS and office staff received intensive training.

QI 5.9: Improvement through self-evaluation

Review approaches to selfevaluation to ensure greater consistency in, and focus on, learning and teaching. We believe that pupils should have high expectations and ambitions, and that their educational experiences should stretch them. All pupils in The Gordon Schools are encouraged to develop their talents and abilities to the greatest extent possible. We are proud of the school's well established tradition stretching back over 150 years and we work, together, to take forward the best of the old with the best of the new. Providing the widest of opportunities for youngsters to achieve is at the heart of school improvement - in sport, music, arts and cultural activities as well national examinations - and we all share this philosophy.

At The Gordon Schools we focus on learning and teaching as the key to school improvement.

We make use of learners' views and of the collective knowledge, experience and interests of staff.

We look to make an impact individually, within teams and across our school. Leaders at all levels play a very strong role in leading improvement and innovation in learning and teaching. We wish to provide opportunities for all staff to undertake lead roles in a variety of contexts and nurture and develop their expertise and confidence. Such leadership establishes high

- STACS Analysis
- Exam analysis Review Meetings
- Classroom observation sheets
- > Improvement plans
- Standards & Quality Report
- School Self Evaluation paperwork
- Faculty/Dept Reviews
- QA Calendar
- > LfL visit
- > Parent Council
- > Parent Meetings

5

quality educational provision and promotes continuous improvement.

To help harness the collective knowledge, experience and interest of staff, to develop leadership of improvement and change and support the decision making process, opportunities for membership of various school groups and committees are made available through School Development Groups and Committees. These have bee recently reviewed and reconstituted and will hopefully begin to influence school improvement in an informed and planned way.

Principal teachers play a key leadership role in the school supported by DHT Links and this should be subject to ongoing development. The Faculty/Department liaison structure is key to school improvement and would aim:

- ✓ to provide a direct line of communication between faculties/departments and the Senior Management Team in order to facilitate the two-way flow of information
- ✓ to provide members of staff with a clear point of contact with Senior Management
- ✓ to promote the dissemination of good practice wherever it occurs
- ✓ to support Principal Teachers with their self-evaluation of their faculty/department/team, and with the analysis of examination performance
- ✓ to assist departments with the preparation and monitoring of their improvement plan
- ✓ to provide induction for new Principal Teachers
- ✓ to provide advice and support with classroom management

Developments are ongoing to streamline all QI procedures in light of Aberdeenshire EL&L's Quality Improvement Framework, HGIOS/other HMle support papers and JtE 4. Revised policy and support documentation is in place for the current session and places Classroom Observation/Learning visits at the heart of our self evaluation processes. The very strong culture of professional dialogue, trust and collegiality that will hopefully develop will ensure that learning and support for young people are at the heart of the school's work. Impact on the experiences

Pupil Council

and achievements of all our youngsters is where we wish to base evidence of our success and ongoing review and development of our self evaluation practices will focus our attention on this. Aspects of best practice we wish to encourage and pursue are: ✓ Observation of a class teacher by Principal Teacher (at least once per session) ✓ Observation of class teacher/Principal Teacher by SMT link (at least once per session) ✓ Peer observation – informally arranged – is strongly recommended ✓ Triangular observation – locally arranged by three (or more) teachers who share similar focus points. Potentially this could see cross-sector liaison Shadowing – of a pupil's day or of a peer teacher's day √ Head Teacher visits to Faculty/Department ✓ Engagement in wider reflective opportunities, eg Teacher Learning communities Aberdeenshire EL&L have revised its Professional Development & Review Scheme (PDRS) for teachers and this requires a

renewed focus to support colleagues CPD.

6. Self Evaluation Audit How Good is Our School 3 (HGIOS3)

Quality Indicator

Audit Levels (shaded)

Evidence

Next Steps

Wh.	What outcomes have we achieved?											
4												
	Key performance	<u> Uuti</u>	COII	162								
1.1	Improvements in performance	1	2	3	4	5	5 6	6	 STACS Analysis S1-3 Assessment Data Exam analysis Review Meetings Classroom observation Improvement plans Student of Month nomination Department 'good 	Review available STACS and other data with faculties/departments and identify action points through self evaluation process. SMT to adopt a more active role in supporting PTs to lead learning & teaching within Faculty and across school. Develop an effective, SEEMIS based, Reporting/Monitoring & Tracking system. All Faculties draft assessment & moderation procedures Further develop the use of Baseline Assessment (MIDYIS), alongside ongoing analysis of other assessment data (eg Prelims) to identify underperformance and to inform learning planning/target setting. Evaluate Mentoring programme introduced session 2012/13 and expand where appropriate		
1.2	Fulfilment of statutory duties	1	2	3	4	5	5	6	news' stories Charter of Achievement School Newsletters Sporting successes Records of ASFL, CP policies and procedures etc.	Continue to expand the range of homework/revision support sessions and maintain availability of Easter Revision classes Review S3 Profile. Build on existing department 'profiling' processes to develop procedures/materials/documentation to support the production of S3 Profile. Discuss/develop further opportunities to recognise wider achievement. Explore further use of ICT Implementation of Behaviour Management Review. Implementation and monitoring of new National Qualifications in line with SQA standards		

Hov	w well do we mee	t th	e no	eec	ds (of o	ur	Scho	ool Community?	
2	Impact on Lear	ner	S							
2.1	Learner's experiences	1	2	3	4	5		6	 Improvement plans Observation of pupils engaged in activities beyond the class, in the playground, corridors, on excursions and fieldwork Levels and trends of attendance and exclusion; Participation and progression in social, sporting, cultural and citizenship activities, including out-of-school learning. Student of Month nominations Department 'good news' stories Charter of Achievement School Newsletters Sporting successes 	Continue to develop AifL and active learning approaches in planning learning experiences for all pupils. Continue to develop role of Teacher Learning Communities (TLC) to support effective learning and teaching and to help share and develop good AifL practice Continue to work on cross-sectoral progression through the development of 'learning teams' and continue to develop Inter-disciplinary working. Input into the Cluster Improvement Plan Continue to develop opportunities to utilise fully new technologies and 'glow' to support effective learning and teaching, including building on ICT resources across the school Implementation of behaviour management review, incorporating systems for managing discipline, promoting praise and positive behaviour Exploration of Restorative Justice as a means of promoting positive behaviour Provide further opportunities for widening and accrediting pupil achievements Continue to Improve pupil council structures and impact on decision-making in the school

4	Impact on the co	omn	nun	ity					
4.1	The school's success in working with and engaging with the local community	1	2	3	4	5	6	CSN minutes, Huntly Cluster minutes, Rotary links, business links, community involvement in the school, Parent Council role.	Further develop positive links through the groups already identified. Continue to develop cross sector work with Primary Colleagues.
4.2	The school's success in working with and engaging with the wider community	1	2	3	4	5	6		

Hov	v good is the educat	ion	we	pro	ovio	de?		
5	Delivery of educati			•				
5.1	The curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	 Information on course structure and timetables Discussion with managers and cross section of staff, partners and other stakeholders Curriculum aims and policies Improvement plan and evidence of impact Minutes of meetings Data on improvements in progress Attainment and achievement data trends Observation of programmes and courses as experienced by learners in learning and teaching Documentation about programmes and courses Options and choices information Staff plans and programmes Attainment data, (STACS) Observations about the impact of information transferred about prior learning on learning and teaching after transition Trend data on leavers' destinations Continue to work on cross-sectoral progression through the development of 'learning teams'- Focus on Maths/Numeracy Continue to develop Inter-disciplinary working Continue to develop Inter-disciplinary working Continue to develop, evaluate and revise their curriculum in line with E&Os taking into consideration Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Well Being. Develop appropriate assessment and reporting arrangements and training for staff, including National Assessment Resource (NAR) and moderation systems in line with BtC5 Continue to develop Inter-disciplinary working Develop, consult and finalise curriculum structures and arrangements for the Senior Phase. Two year implementation programme will ensure developments are managed, phased and feasible. CPD heavily focused on CfE and outcomes. Review the BGE in terms of structure to ensure a smooth and deliverable transition into the senior phase
5.2	Teaching for effective learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	 Observation of lessons, programmes and courses as experienced by learners in learning and teaching Documentation about programmes and courses Staff plans and programmes Tontinue to develop AifL and active learning approaches in planning learning experiences for all pupils. Continue to develop role of Teacher Learning Communities (TLC) to support effective learning and teaching and learning planning at all levels. Focus CPD on teaching and learning methodology

5.3	Meeting learning needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	 Classroom observation Information issued to staff on those with additional support needs Discussion with learning support staff, pastoral care staff, class teachers, key workers The role of specialist staff in meeting learning needs including visiting teachers, specialist staff and relevant staff from partner agencies Support, advice and training the school receives from specialist staff and their agencies Evidence from pupil progress records [PPRs] and other attainment and achievement records Quality and effectiveness of care planning, CSPs and IEPs Interviews with parents, learners and partner agencies, as appropriate, in planning and reviewing Minutes of planning meetings to identify and assess needs Minutes of review meetings Transition arrangements Continue to develop AifL and active learning approaches in planning learning experiences for all pupils. Continue to develop receive freather Learning experiences for all pupils. Continue to develop good AifL practice Continue to develop curriculum opportunities in S3-S6 to provide wider scope for all pupils. Continue to develop good AifL practice Continue to develop curriculum opportunities in S3-S6 to provide wider scope for all pupils. Continue to develop good AifL practice Continue to develop structural changes in AASL provision. Respond to authority ASL Review and, in particular, continue to review and revise arrangements for deployment of ASL staff. Continue to develop Deveron Building as resource to support ASN across the Network Continue to develop wide and effective partnership working through Integrated Assessment Framework / MAAP Continue to develop More Choices More Chances (MCMC) processes to meet the needs of all young people Develop an effective, SEEMIS based, Reporting/Monitoring & Tracking system to include using to assist monitoring of LAC, CP and A
5.8	Care, welfare and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	 Quality and effectiveness of care planning, CSPs and IEPs Minutes of planning meetings to identify and assess needs Minutes of review meetings Transition arrangements Documentation about programmes and courses Options and choices information Trend data on leavers' destinations Support staff through structural changes in ASfL provision. Respond to authority SfL Review and, in particular, continue to review and revise arrangements for deployment of SfL staff. Continue to develop Deveron Building as resource to support ASN across the Network Continue to develop wide and effective partnership working through Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF) Continue to develop More Choices More Chances (MCMC) processes to meet the needs of all young people

thro	provement ough self- aluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	A A A A A A A A A A A	STACS Analysis 5-154 Data Exam analysis Review Meetings Classroom observation sheets Improvement plans Standards & Quality Report School Self Evaluation paperwork Faculty/Dept Reviews QA Calendar LfL visit Parent Council Parent Meetings Pupil Council	Continue to review the annual QI programme to accommodate changes in Aberdeenshire procedures and to further involve staff in consistent approaches to self-evaluation across the school. Continue to promote classroom observation (Learning Visits), including peer observation, as an important vehicle for maintaining our focus on learning and teaching, its impact for learners, and to promote learning conversations. PTs maintain notes on informal visits to classes to provide cumulative feedback to colleagues SMT undertake a specific observation programme which focuses on CfE developments. Use HMIe documents; "Improving our Curriculum Through Selfevaluation", "Improving Outcomes for Learners Through Selfevaluation" and "Learning Together: Opening up learning" to help focus on learning and teaching and the developing curriculum. Renewed focus on developing PDRS/EDRS cycle of review to support the professional development of all staff.
------	-------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------------	--	--

Quality Indicator

Audit Levels
(shaded)

Evidence

Next Steps

	\												
Hov	y good is our leadership?												
9	Leadership												
9.3	Developing people and partnerships	1	2	3	4	5	6	 Aims, values and vision statements Assemblies Leadership for Learning visits Pupil councils Handbook S&Q Report Further develop distributed leadership across the school to empower staff at all levels, particularly at classroom teacher level. Clear focus for PT on developing high quality L&T across faculty. Further develop classroom observations and learning conversations Further promote partnership with parents and business partners 					
9.4	Leadership of improvement and change	1	2	3	4	5	6	 S&Q Report Exam analysis Review Meetings Classroom observation sheets School Self Evaluation paperwork Improvement plans Faculty/Dept Reviews Classroom observation Learning Teams LfL visit PT/Staff meetings Collegiate activity Staff committees and groups Cluster meetings Cross sector meetings 					

7. Other Achievements

The school encourages an ethos of achievement through:

- providing opportunities for participation in a variety of activities
- recognition and praise of achievement

Pupil successes and achievements have been many and are proudly recorded, with due recognition given, locally, regionally and nationally, to the outstanding talent and ability being developed here in Huntly. Our pupils continue to excel in and out of the classroom, in sport, music, arts and cultural activities and are a credit to themselves and their parents/guardians. Credit must also be given to the many staff in school, and community helpers, who willingly give of their time to nurture, support and develop such talent. There are too many achievements to list in their entirety, but I will try and give you a flavour of what has been achieved:

Some examples of our achievements this session are:

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

2012/13 OVERALL CHAMPIONS FOR ALL NASSA EVENTS

Winners for the second year in a row (also won this year but will be presented in October.)

NASSA Cross Country

2nd year boys winners 3rd year girls winners 5th/6th year boys winners Overall Boys winners Overall Girls winners

NASSA Road Relay

Winners of the NASSA Road Relay

NASSA Badminton

Winners of the NASSA tournament.

NASSA Tennis

Winners of the NASSA tournament

Swimming

2nd in the NASSA swimming event with a number of successful individual and team performances.

Rugby

Girls Under 18 team competed in the Scottish Cup and won the bowl, winning against Cumnock. The Under 15 girls also reached the final of the bowl finishing second in the competition to a strong Argyll and Bute side.

Both the Under 16 and Under 18 teams took part in the North of Scotland Cup and the Scottish Cup. The Under 16 team won the Grampian Plate and reached the quarter final beating a strong Bell Baxter side. The Under 16 team also won the Grampian Schools 7's competition. The Under 18 team finished in second place in the Grampian Schools 7's competition.

Angus Rennie represented Scotland at Under 18 level and Raoul Sutcliffe represented Scotland at Under 16 rugby league.

Football

Co-ordinated by Active Schools, teams were entered into soccer 1 competitions in Aberdeenshire.

Girls teams have also taken part in Active schools competitions.

S3 boys played against local opposition in friendly matches.

Volleyball

S1 pupils took part in the National Volleyball Festival in Edinburgh.

Senior boys reached the semi-final of the Scottish Cup just losing out to Mearns Castle High School in a very close game. They also participated in the National Volleyball festival in Dundee.

S4/5/6 girls won the Aberdeenshire Volleyball tournament held at Huntly.

S4/5/6 girls won the Aberdeenshire Volleyball tournament held at Huntly.

S2/3 girls won the Aberdeenshire Volleyball Festival held at Huntly.

Hockey

Senior girls won the NASSA competition and the overall hockey.

Netball

Practices led by Senior pupils in conjunction with Active Schools continue to take place each week, with teams involved in some friendly matches.

Basketball

Senior boys competed in the Scottish Cup at regional level.

Cricket

Kirstie Gordon represented Scotland ladies team. Cricket

Kirstie Gordon (4S) has been selected to play for the Scotland U19's development cricket squad in a tournament in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in February. The team have been drawn to play against other competitors from the UK including Wales, Lancashire and Sussex.

Kick Boxing

Rhiannon Chisholm and Keona Eastwood represented Scotland at the World Martial Kombat Federation Championships in Sicily.

Rhainnon (1F) won a bronze medal in the advanced level and although only 12 competed in the under 16 section. She has recently been nominated for Aberdeenshire's Young Sports Achiever of the year. The results of which will be revealed in March

Keona (3B) won a gold medal and became Junior Beginner World Champion.

Cross Country Skiing

A number of Gordon Schools have been selected to be part to be part of the British Nordic Skiing Development Squad. Duncan Gibb (4G), Beth Maclean(3F), Fergus and Oliver Newman (both 2G) are currently racing at the British Cross Country Ski Championships in Bavaria in Germany and racing in other races in Austria. We look forward to hearing how they got on when they return.

Before Christmas, the pupils were involved in a training camp in Norway. Other pupils from The Gordon Schools taking part in this camp were Jack Nicholls(2B), Harry Nicholls(5B), Daniel Coursey (4G), Angus Duncan (1F), Brodie Murray(2F).

NASSA Athletics

Winners of the Intermediate trophy Winners of the Senior trophy

Winners of the Overall Trophy

School records broken by Sam Stokes in 400 metres and Alex Bowie in Long Jump.

NASSA records broken by Paul Paxton in Discus and Paul Paxton, Fraser Sharp, Alex Bowie and Cameron Mann in the S3 boys relay.

Inter -House Events 2012 - 13 - Overall Points Score

Event		Badenoch	Fraser	Gordon	Seton	Winner
1	Road Relay	2	3	5	1	Gordon
2	Badminton	2	1	5	3	Gordon
3	Cross Country	3	1.5	5	1.5	Gordon
4	Boys Hockey	3	1	5	2	Gordon
5	Swimming	2	3	5	1	Gordon
6	Rugby (Boys)	1	2.5	2.5	5	Seton
7	Volleyball	2.5	1	2.5	5	Seton
8	Basketball	5	2	3	1	Badenoch
9	Rugby (Girls)	1	2	5	3	Gordon
10	Sports	2	5	3	1	Badenoch
	Total Points	23.5	22	41	23.5	
		Badenoch	Fraser	Gordon	Seton	
					2nd	
Final	Overall Position	2nd =	4th	1st	=	

LEADERSHIP COURSES

A number of pupils have completed coaching courses in conjunction with Active Schools.

A number of seniors were successful in achieving the Award in Community Sports Leadership with some actively involved in helping run teams within the school. Eight pupils attended a Lead 2014 training day and will go on to organise a sporting event for P7 pupils.

A group of S4-6 Health and Wellbeing Young Leaders have worked on a number of projects this year including organising a very successful mental health day with outside agencies for all pupils in S2.

HOSTING EVENTS

North Aberdeenshire Schools Sports Association Cross Country event Aberdeenshire Volleyball Festival for S2/3 and S4/5/6 Cluster Rugby for girls in Aberdeenshire Give Poverty the Boot for local primary schools

.

Maths – as in previous years the Maths Department have continued to provide opportunities for the development of Mathematical Skills. These are in the form of National and in school competitions. A number of students have achieved bronze, silver and gold certificates in Senior and Junior mathematical challenge competitions. The department has entered teams for the Enterprising Maths competition and for the first time students were successful in reaching the national finals in Glasgow. The department also continues to run Maths Olympics competitions in school for S1 pupils with the aid of senior students.

Four talented mathematicians made a trip to Glasgow to represent The Gordon Schools at the National Enterprising Maths Finals. Claire Anderson, Charlie Harrison, Megan McGowan and Nikki Mellor reached the finals by competing in regional heats and made history by being the first TGS team to reach the finals in the competition's 21 year history.

In Glasgow they competed against 60 other teams form across Scotland and they were one of the few schools who managed to complete the challenges in the allotted time.

Business ICT and Enterprise

Micro Tyco

S3 CfE Administration and Business were involved in the Micro-Tyco charity initiative during November, championed by famous entrepreneurs including Sir Tom Hunter and endorsed by Mike Russell MSP. With £1 loan capital, groups were tasked with turning this into as much profit as they possibly could from enterprising activities where £232.00 was ultimately raised and donated to help provide micro-loans to the world's poorest people through the charity, Wild Hearts. The initiative linked with delivery of key Social Studies, Technologies and 'across learning' Experiences and Outcomes at 3rd/4th level.

Elementary Food Hygiene

As part of their S3 Home Economics Course the following pupils have gained their Elementary Food Hygiene Certificates. This is recognised and welcomed by employers in the food industry which may help pupils in applying for jobs in this sector.

Music News 2012/13

The Music Competition took place in February and we welcomed back Mr Richard Paton, head of Aberdeenshire Council's Instrumental Music Service, as our adjudicator. This event was kindly sponsored by the Parent Council and we are very grateful for their ongoing support. As usual, there was a wide variety of performances and a large amount of talent on display. Mrs Bell's woodwind group performed after the interval. The results this year were as follows:

Junior Section: 3rd Rebecca Henderson Oboe, 2nd Flossie Roberts, 1st Iona Fyfe Senior Section: 3rd Iona Gatenby, 2nd Ciara Ennis, 1st Cait Lennox

IMS Music Centre Concerts

Pupils from The Gordon Schools have been heavily involved in the IMS Music Centre Concerts. Rehearsals take place throughout the year. This year the South and Central Aberdeenshire Music Centre Concert Band won gold in the National finals in Perth. The following pupils were involved:

Laura Brook, Cait Lennox, Rebecca Henderson, Kate Mackie, Anne-Marie Aitken, Maggie Duffus, Rosie Watt, Esther Smith, Carolyn Thomson.

National Galleries & Tesco Bank Art Competition for Schools 2013

Clarice Dow S1 who won a special merit prize in the National Galleries of Scotland Schools competition in the S1-S2 Category. There were 6 categories and the competition received over 11,000 entries from all over Scotland so to be amongst the winners is a major achievement. Her work was framed and on display at the National Gallery from 8th June to 27th October. Some of the winning entries also featured on postcards and a calendar which will be for sale in the National Gallery of Scotland shops.

Cuban Artists visit school

The Art & Design Department had an inspiring visit from Cuban artists Celia y Yunior to talk to a group of 40 S3 pupils. They held a workshop based on their work, culture and country and involved pupils in a giant map of Huntly mapping where their friends were.

Celia Alvarez and Yunior Perdomo came to Huntly from Havana/Cuba for a three month period in Spring 2013. They are sponsored by Deveron Arts a local arts body whose international visiting artists are often involved with the school. This provides a wonderful opportunity for both staff and pupils to learn from them.

Celia Yunior's project is called **Faceloop**

'A friend to all is a friend to none'. *Aristotle*Celia y Yunior have collaborated for over ten years on projects that draw attention to the gaps in law and administration. Their aim in Huntly is to map real friendships and what they mean in our times of virtual social networks.

More information about their work can be found at the Deveron Arts web link below.

www.deveron-arts.com/celia-yunior/

Jasmine Challenge

The Senior Enterprise Group decided that, for a third consecutive year, The Gordon Schools would fundraise on behalf of The Grampian Children's Cancer Research Fund, which is based at Aberdeen Children's Hospital. We have already contributed in the Region of £20,000 to this very worthwhile Charity since 2011 and hope to raise a further £10,000 this session. We are well on our way to reaching this target thanks to the hard work of the senior pupils and staff involved and the generosity of both the school and wider community.

Roundabout Land Art Project

The Art & Design Department has been awarded £1000 from the Huntly Cultural Fund to allow a Land Art project to take place.

This exciting award will allow a group of s3 pupils led by Mrs Cameron to study the work of Environmental and Land Artists over the next few months.

The plan is to come up with a proposal for a piece of sculpture for the roundabout on the A96 at the entrance to Huntly.

This is planned to attract passing motorist to call into the town to see why it received the recent title of 'Creative Place Award 2013'

The pupils will have the opportunity to visit to Scottish Sculpture Workshop for practical hands on session. The final designs will be exhibited and perhaps if successful then funding could be sought to commission a sculptor to make the actual design.

Deveron Arts Creative Cup

S5 Pupil Sophie Lawson was presented with the Deveron Arts Creative cup. Her Design Project included armour for a Lord of the Rings Character and her Fantasy Portrait included a metamorphosis of mechanical parts showing through exposed flesh.

Arkwright Scholarship

Hadley Williams S6 has received the last £250 of his scholarship. Angus Maclean and Ian Cruickshank (S4) have both been awarded similar scholarships after having been successful in the Aptitude Test and the interview at Heriot Watt University in April 2012. Following that, a sponsor was allocated to both of these pupils. That sponsor was Maersk in Aberdeen and their mentor engineer.

Five applicants have been entered this year (Aptitude Paper in Feb) and for the first time, include three female pupils. The pupils are Daniel Skinner, Rebecca Sim, Ellen Harper, Megan McGowan and David Duffus.

Megan McGowan became our first female Arkwright Scholar.

World Poetry Day

S2 pupil Kyle Michie along with Mrs Duncan organised our 1st World Poetry Day Assembly with invited guests reciting poems in Dutch, American English, Mandarin to name but a few.

World Poetry Day is on 21st March, and was declared by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in 1999. The purpose of World Poetry Day is to promote the reading, writing, publishing and teaching of poetry throughout the world and, as the UNESCO session declaring the day says, to "give fresh recognition and impetus to national, regional and international poetry movements". To begin with, World Poetry Day was celebrated on 5th or 15th October, which is why National Poetry Day in the UK is still celebrated on 5th October. In the USA and Canada, National Poetry Month is celebrated in April every year.

Whether it's writing, performing or just enjoying poems, poetry helps us to reflect on the power of language and to celebrate the full development of each person's creative abilities. World Poetry Day supports and celebrates linguistic and cultural diversity through poetic expression; as, more than ever before, we are all citizens of the world and all our everyday lives are enriched by a vast range of languages and cultures. It also offers endangered languages the opportunity to be read and

spoken, heard and enjoyed. We hope that you will enjoy this chance to reflect how your own life is enriched by all the different cultures which make up your community.

Photography

Freya Coursey won a prize in the Chevron "Focus" competition. She collected her prize at their awards ceremony in Edinburgh The school received a framed certificate, a cheque for £75 and this year's Chevron Focus calendar which features all the winning pictures.

Youth Philanthropy Initiative

The final of our S3 YPI took place on Tuesday 16th of April. We were very proud of the way our pupils conducted their presentation on their selected charities. The winning team, judged by myself, Alisanne Ennis (PC) and Stewart Wright (Huntly Rotary Club) were impressed by the way they worked together to produce a simple but very effective presentation on their chosen charity – Car Aid Rhynie. The charity will now benefit from a donation of £3000 donated by the Wood Family Trust. The winning team have also attended t a Celebration Event in June. The winning pupils were Jamie Webster, Andrew Rough, Megan Hunter and Catriona Dempster

YPI has 6 main stages:

- 1. Pupils learn about citizenship and philanthropic values
- 2. Pupils work in small teams to analyse the social needs of their local community and identify a social issue they want to work with
- 3. The team researches charities working in that area of social need and selects the charity they want to work with more closely
- 4. Pupils make contact with the charity and find out more about its work locally (hopefully through a visit)
- 5. Pupils prepare a presentation on their chosen charity and the best presentation from each class goes forward to a school YPI final
- 6. An event is organised in school at which a panel of judges decides which presentation deserves the £3000 cheque to give to their charity

Scottish Education Awards – Global Citizeship

Mrs McGowan (Maths dept), Ms Booth (Citizenship coordinator with Aberdeenshire Council) Cait Lennox, Lucas Brookes Rooney and Miss Menzies attended the Scottish Education Awards in June.

We were all delighted to learn in a ceremony a bit like the Oscars that we won the Global Citizenship Category.

A total of 535 nominations across the different catoagories form every authority in Scotland were judged in round one of the process. The successful nominees all met specific criteria and demonstrated exceptional, innovative approaches to learning and teaching.

Phase 2 judges then shortleeted the nominations to select 3 finalists. Judges then visited our show case event in April.

On winning the award, the judges highlighted the fact that at The Gordon Schools 'global citizenship is a thread that runs through every aspect of the curriculum' and that 'strong partnership working and confidence shown by the young people to get

involved and be active citizens for a better way of life locally and globally'

As well as receiving a Scottish Education Award Trophy, the school received a cheque for £500 which will be used by the citizenship committee for future projects.

Congratulations to all staff and pupils for making this award possible

BBC Schools Report

Our S2 pupils were once again involved in the National BBC Schools Report. Under the direction of Miss Abercrombie and Miss Illingworth the pupils investigated and reported on a wide range of topics including bullying, health and wellbeing, the recent horsemeat scandal and the recession. News Day ended on a high when a member of the BBC called the pupils directly to interview them about their stories and experiences.

The work carried out by the pupils can be found on the school website.

Anne Frank Awards

Andrew Swarbrigg (S2) and Cerys

Ghandi (S2) submitted presentations as part of the Promoting Respect competition

They attended a presentation ceremony in Aberdeen accompanied by Mr Knak.

They were supported in their work by Mr Parker.

Inspire Aspire Awards Poster Competition

Simon Norris S2 won 3rd prize in the Gold Level Section, Chloe Shorten S2 was a Silver Level finalist and Findlay Munro S2 was a Bronze Level finalist.

Night of Comedy

4th year Drama students entertained over two –hundred and fifty people in the main hall with "An evening of Comedy"

The evening was deemed an utter success which began with a duologue from Isadora Lee and Iona Ritchie and finished with a monologue from Maggie Duffus. There were thirty- five performers on the night who kept the audience wrapped up in a warm blanket of merriment and mirth from start to finish.

At the end of this night of comic loveliness, feedback the students received from members of the public reinforced the effect they had created for the audience on this comic indulgence of an evening.

Mac Lennox successfully auditioned to NYCOS (National Youth Choir of Scotland) in January and spent a week over Easter down at Loretto learning this year's repertoire. This culminated in an excellent concert in Glasgow City Halls and he's about to do one today in Strathpeffer too.

World Burns Federation Competition Finals Regional Competition in March

Both Cait and Annie Lennox won the gold medals for singing, recitation and silver for instrumental. This allowed them to take part in the final last weekend in Dunfermline against the best Burns scholars from all over the country (apparently 175,000 kids go in for this competition every year so it's brilliant to get down to the last 16 in the final).

Cait got the gold medal in S5-6 singing and the silver in S5-6 recitation and music

which is great. Annie got the gold medal in S3-4 singing and was awarded singer of the day. At the end of the competition they run a champions event where the best singer, reciter, instrumentalist and bagpiper go head to head in front of the 4 adjudicators and one gets crowned Young Burnsian of the Year. Annie was awarded this – a huge honour.

Also the girls were selected to travel to Finland for 6 days in the Easter holidays as part of a group set up to develop links between Huntly and Finland sharing culture and skills. They appeared at an Arts Festival in Parkano and went down really well. The group also included members of the Huntly Development Trust and Deveron Arts. The Fins are due to make a return trip in August.

Cait secured the lead part in this years Aurora Productions "Whistle Down the Wind". She'll play Swallow on the 5th, 7th and matinee on the 8th June.

And Annie auditioned and successfully gained a coveted place as one of 8 musicians on the Trad Trails this summer (for 16-24 year olds). She'll be touring all over the country for 4 weeks playing at concerts and events. She did really well to get a place – all the others are studying music at University / Conservatoire. She'll be singing, playing fiddle and harp and dancing.

Annie has also been selected for the NYCoS training choir (for 16-20 year olds) this summer.

BP Sponsored student tutoring scheme

Phillipa Hurst a History of Art graduate of Robert Gordon University has just completed a successful 8 week block working in the Art and Design Department. She was able to assist with a wide variety of classes and experience seeing how art and design education is delivered first hand. Her knowledge was also valued by the art staff and the scheme was seen as a great success.

STEM in the Pipeline 2012

The Gordon Schools team of Fraser Cranna, Mitch Murison, Kieran Rough, Cuthred Shepherd, Abigail Proctor and Hadley Williams enjoyed recent success by gaining third place in the annual STEM in the pipeline competition. The team, 'TGS Turbodiesel', worked on a project based on challenges developed by experts in the oil and gas industry. The competition, organised by Techfect Setpoint, involved assessing the volume of oil in a field from seismic traces, developing a production profile and designing a three phase separator for the oil production platform. Other issues, such as environmental impact, had also to be considered. To complete the task, which took over three months, the group had to produce a report and give a poster presentation. The team worked closely with a mentor from CococoPhillips, who provided invaluable advice. The group are shown with their poster at the final presentation day, which was held at BP, Dyce, in December. The team was commended on their high quality presentation and their suggestions to minimise the environmental impact of carbon dioxide emissions. All team members have gained a Silver Crest Award for their work

TGS Young Engineers

The Project

We have started making a wind-tunnel to test our model cars, which were created before the holidays. We are making good process on this front, and everyone is lending a hand with the practical side of things.

We have been looking at different rockets and aerodynamics for our models and we hope to assemble our first prototype in the next few weeks.

Also, the rockets have now been purchased.

TGS 'Knitters' !!

Greenfields Africa is a charity that has teams of knitters throughout the UK and in neighbouring EU countries, who knit baby clothes and cot blankets which are sent to Uganda and Kenya.

Staff, pupils and parents at TGS are knitted baby hats for the charity,

BIG BANG: UK Young Scientists and Engineers.

S6 Student Cuthred Shepherd was one of just 5 Scottish Scholars invited to show case his work at the Excel centre in London in March. Cuthred, a Nuffield Scholar and Gold Crest Award winner entered his project on identifying protein Markers for Escherichia coli Pathogenesis in Humans in the senior section of the Maths and Science competition

Saltire Award Winner

Hazel Watt (6S) recently received a Saltire Award for her commitment to volunteering at Gordon Rural Action's Bargain Box. Hazel works at least 2 hours a week and received this Scottish Government Award which recognises her 50+hours as a volunteer.

Connecting Classrooms

Recently five pupils from The Gordon Schools travelled to Windhoek, Namibia as part of the international learning initiative Connecting Classrooms. This scheme twins schools from around the globe to promote Global Citizenship. The aim is develop students' understanding of their national identity and its place in the wider world and give an opportunity to learn about life and culture overseas.

Cait Lennox 6S, Euan Petrie 6S, Meg Sutherland 6S, Jordie Cole 6G and Jessica Tidey 5B2 were the pupils involved along with teachers Tracy Booth and Jane Dixon.

Among the activities enjoyed by the students were sessions in our partner school Khomas High School where many new friendships were made. Pupils and teachers from the school have visited us in Huntly in the past, most recently in June 2011. In conjunction with students from Windhoek, the group devised health and wellbeing activities based on alcohol and sexual health issues, comparing pupil concerns and experiences in Scotland and Namibia. These activities will form part of the PSE curriculum in both schools. A further project looking at the concept of National Identity in both nations will be added to the Enrichment programme based on work undertaken during the trip.

In addition the group had a brilliant adventure on safari, shared their own Scottish

culture in the form of Highland dance and songs at a school Assembly and ate traditional Namibian foods. There was also the chance to see traditional street markets and visit the shanty towns, experiencing at first hand the significant gap between rich and poor in Windhoek.

The group are immensely grateful to all who supported their fundraising in preparation for the trip and for the generous hospitality of Khomas High.

Meg Sutherland summed it up: 'It was such a rewarding experience and I would urge anyone who has an opportunity to take part in a future trip to do so'

8. School Improvement Priorities for session 2013/14

- Curriculum implementation of next phase of curricular reform and development of plans for continuing improvements.
- Continue planning for revised National Qualifications framework
- Learning and teaching implementation of further active approaches to learning to enable young people to learn in dynamic and engaging ways. Include further developments of new technologies.
- ➤ Implementing formalised ways of recognising pupils' achievements, in particular by the end of S3
- Partnership developments, including primary schools, to improve learning and curricular experiences
- Implementing further opportunities for ensuring young people move into sustained positive destinations
- Glow further development of Glow as a central component to learning across the curriculum.
- SEEMIS use of SEEMIS for monitoring and tracking of attainment and achievements, supporting improvements in learning, and for producing pupil reports.
- Integrated Children's Services continuing to develop joined-up services for young people, with GIRFEC and Aberdeenshire's Integrated Assessment Framework as central components
- Responding to findings from self-evaluation and building on emerging good practice