

GROVE ACADEMY PARENTS NEWSLETTER – CHRISTMAS 2013



Dear Parents

As another term and indeed 2013 draws to an end, we can, at Grove, look back on a very successful year. Our pupils are achieving better with regard to qualifications, achievements and experiences and that is hopefully set to continue in 2014! As usual we are issuing just a brief paper newsletter and are referring you to our website: <http://grove.ea.dundee.sch.uk/> where you can obtain details of most of the recent successes and achievements of our young people. It makes for some stunning reading. They include:

- Callum Duffy (S4) publishes his book "To Kill The Truth"
- St Stephen's Church - Christmas Sale and Meru Beads.
- Rotary Club of Abertay -Young Chef Competition 2014 – winner Nathan Graham (S5)
- National Enterprising Mathematics Competition 2013
- Grove reporters at the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) Conference
- Dundee Cyclathon Schools Challenge Cup
- Grove Bring and Buy Sale
- Dundee City Council Presentation of Awards Night 2013
- S3 pupils helped Susan Pringle with her PhD to obtain information on how teenagers use the roads.
- S6 pupils Lesley Nicholson and Justine McCluskey reach STV Independence Referendum National Final

Events still to come this term include the S6 Winter Ball on Tuesday 17th December and the eagerly waited Christmas Music Concert on Wednesday. Senior Citizens from the Ferry are being invited to attend a special concert on Tuesday afternoon, in which our Hospitality students will provide the fare! This repeats the special Afternoon Tea we held for Ferry Senior Citizens in September.

School closes for the Christmas Holidays at 11.50 a.m. on Friday 20th December and reopens to everyone on Monday 6th January 2014 at 8.45 a.m.

Staff News

This term we welcomed Ms Lisa Adair back to Modern Languages. Ms Adair taught at Grove a few years ago and this is a very welcome return. We also congratulate Mrs M Berry in her promotion to Principal Teacher-Improving Learning and Teaching. Mr Dillon and Mr Robertson were both confirmed to the permanent posts of Principal Teachers of RMPE and Modern Studies respectively. Mrs Linda Marshall was also confirmed as the permanent Administrative Officer at Grove, leading the support team in the office. In the New Year we shall welcome Miss Alice McCall back to the English department in a permanent role and Ms Jenny Christie as a temporary Pupil Support Worker. We also bid farewell to Ms Gillian Holman, General Assistant, and wish her well.



Timekeeping

I am pleased to inform you that the vast majority of Grove Academy pupils arrive on time each day to take the best advantage of the learning and teaching opportunities delivered to them throughout the school day. There are however a small number of our young people who, from time to time, miss out on their educational entitlement due to late coming.



Late coming interrupts learning, whether at Tutor Time, first thing in the morning or during subject time.

The school is about to launch a new initiative to curb late-coming amongst pupils. As you will appreciate, punctuality is one of the basic skills required for successful learning, life and work. This is particularly relevant given the current climate, where young people are increasingly in competition with others to gain college, university places and employment opportunities. It is vital that we prepare our young people as best we can for life beyond school.

It is vital that young people who do regularly arrive late to school understand that this issue will be reflected in any reference requested by college, university or employers. Young people need to learn that late coming is not acceptable.

In order to address this issue of late coming the school has put in place a system as follows:

- The doors will lock directly after the bell at 8.45am.
- If a young person is late for school (i.e. arrives late to school after the bell at 8.45am), they will be asked to complete a form at the office asking for their name, class, the reason they are late and to identify the learning they are missing.
- School Support staff will thereafter contact parents / carers to alert them that their child has not arrived to school on time and to be informed of the general reason for lateness that day.
- Pupils whose parents/ carers have not provided a legitimate reason for lateness will be asked to report for a 15 minute morning interval detention that same morning. It is hoped that this immediacy will deter young people from late-coming and therefore support them to make every effort to attend school on time in the future.
- Any pupil who fails to report for 15 minute interval detention the day they are late will then receive a 45 minute lunch time detention and a text message will be sent to inform parents.

The above system will operate from 6 January 2014 onwards. All pupils will be informed of this, so that everyone is clear on the expectation of the school and the amended procedures in place. This system will be evaluated in due course.

School Charity

The School Charity this year is Mercy Ships. This charity was chosen by the pupils through a vote where they had a choice of four different charities. Each charity was presented at assembly by a supporter who gave details of each charity's work.



So what is Mercy Ships about?

Imagine a ship crewed by doctors, nurses, water engineers and agriculturalists visiting some of the world's poorest countries. Now imagine their life-changing services offered free of charge...

Right now, dedicated volunteers from around the world are bringing hope and healing to thousands of people who could never have believed it possible. Welcome to Mercy Ships, a compassionate response to a world where many have lost hope.

Uniform

Can I ask parents to ensure in the New Year that their young people are coming to school suitably dressed in school uniform? Our uniform improvements have been noted across the city and it is vital that we continue to see improvement. I expect all pupils to wear the school tie and blazer as part of their uniform and I again stress that hoodies of any colour, denim and leather jackets are not appropriate dress for our school.

Traffic before and after school

Can I again encourage parents who drop their young people off at school each morning not to do so in the school grounds? Congestion both before and after school is increasing and parents are asked to drop their children off in Davidson Street, Ferndale Road or Albert Road, rather than enter the school grounds at Claypotts Road. I would also ask parents to desist from parking in the Car Park area in front of the main entrance at the end of the school day, as this is also causing major congestion and it has resulted in several unfortunate incidents.

Can I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support this term and to wish each and every one of you – pupils, parents and staff - a very happy Christmas and all the very best in 2014.



Yours

Graham W Hutton

Rector

Dates for Your Diary

Monday 6 January	School re-opens
Friday 10 January	S4 National 5 Prelims begin (No Study Leave)
Monday 13 January	S2 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 15 January	S3>S4 Course Choice Information Evening 7pm
Tuesday 21 January	Careers Convention at Grove 6-8pm
Thursday 23 January	Senior Course Choice Evening (S4/5 > S5/6)
Thursday 30 January	S3 Parents' Evening
Monday 3 February	S5/6 Prelims begin
Tuesday 11 February	S4 Parents' Evening
Thursday 13 February	In-Service Day
Friday 14 February	} Mid Term Holiday
Monday 17 February	
Friday 28 March	End of Spring Term
Monday 14 April	School opens for Summer Term
Friday 18 April	Good Friday – school closed