



HEADLINES

December 2009



Principal's Introduction

Our school has continued to be a busy place. By now all our Sixth Formers have completed their university applications. Some have already received offers while others are in the process of preparing for interviews. To support them, we ran a very successful Interview Skills Day and a number of pupils have undertaken mock interviews. We are indebted to many professionals from the wider community who have contributed to these valuable activities. In support of the wider Careers Education programme, Employability Days are planned for Year 11 before the end of term. A group of young engineers are taking part this week in a "Sentinus Team R and D" residential in Belfast as they continue to develop their knowledge of this profession.

It has been encouraging to see our Year 8 pupils settling well into school life. Already competitive rugby matches for U12's have taken place. The energy and enthusiasm of the lads on the pitch is a delight to see and the girls look forward to their first hockey matches.

Sport throughout the school contributes much to the personal development of our pupils. Football, netball, rugby and hockey matches have taken place in all weathers. The 1st XV had a superb win against a very strong Ballymena Academy and in hockey the 1st XI has now qualified for the quarter finals of the Schools' Cup, having dismissed Royal School Dungannon and Down High School. We were proud to host a Victorian (Australia) Schools' Rugby touring squad during what was its only fixture in Northern Ireland as part of a UK and Ireland tour.

The School production this year was 'Our Town'. Much hard work led to excellent performances in front of two full houses. Thank you, well done and congratulations to all involved.

Special Assemblies during November and December focused on Key issues of Anti-Bullying and Human Rights. We were delighted to welcome Mark Carruthers (BBC) to host a 'Let's Talk' inter schools event as part of our Citizenship Programme.

Our school musicians made an excellent contribution to the Community Carol Service and I look forward to you all joining with us on 21 December at 7.30 pm for the School's Carol Concert which promises to be an excellent evening.

Of course the academic aspects of school are paramount. To support curriculum changes, a number of staff have undertaken INSET for GCSE and A-Level courses and I trust you found the opportunity to meet with teachers of Years 8, 13 and 14 beneficial.

School examinations are in January; I hope that having had a rest over the holidays, all our pupils will focus on their learning in order to do themselves justice.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Blessed and Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Prosperous New Year.

End of Term: full attendance at school is required each day until the end of term. Important preparation for the January examinations will continue on Monday 21 and Tuesday 22 December. All pupils are expected to be in school until the end of the school day (12 noon) on Tuesday 22 December. Authorisation for **EMA** payment may be withheld from students who fail to attend on the last day of term. School will end at **12 noon on Tuesday 22 December**. Buses for pupils along the Londonderry route will leave LGS at 12 noon. **School reopens at 8.55 am on Tuesday 5 January 2010.**

Mr N Handforth

French Debaters Off To A Flying Start



Trying hard to retain the title of Northern Ireland French Debating Champions, our all-new team of Emma McM., Laura R. and Kristoffer W. (Year 14) and Daniel S. (Year 13) are off to a winning start. Drawn against St Columb's College and given the task of defending the motion "*La télévision apporte plus de bienfaits que d'inconvénients à notre société*" (Television brings more benefits than disadvantages to our society), our team held their nerve and put in a stirring performance to win what proved to be an eventful debate.

Particular congratulations go to Emma who was judged best overall speaker and best wishes to the whole team as they progress to the latter stages of the competition.

Mr I Sampson

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Mr S Bogle (Teacher-in-charge of Duke of Edinburgh's Award) and Mr N Handforth (Vice Principal) congratulate J. McCloskey, C. Keys, E. Gonzalez, and J. Robb each of whom has completed the Silver Award. They also congratulate A. Wilson who has completed his Gold Award.



Mr S Bogle

The following draft policies are available for consultation by parents:

- Mobile Phones Policy,
- Attendance Policy.

Please contact the Principal's Secretary if you wish to contribute to the consultation exercise.

Charity News

Here in Limavady Grammar School we believe that it is important to teach our children to consider others less fortunate than themselves in the hope that they will grow into caring and responsible adults when they leave. We continue to support our sponsored child, Brima Kadija, in Sierra Leone through our Friday charity collections. We ask that each child should make a small contribution to this cause on a weekly basis.

At the beginning of November we collected 150 shoe boxes filled with small gifts for the Operation Christmas Child appeal and would like to thank everyone who donated a shoe box to this worthwhile cause. We also collected £150 for Children in Need and would like to thank everyone who contributed.



The Concern Fast took place on Thursday 3 December this year. Approximately 80 very enthusiastic volunteers took part in this fast to raise money for those in need in the Third World. It would be very much appreciated if all sponsor money could be returned to Mrs Mills before the end of term.

Every year we donate a number of Christmas Hampers to the Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal. These hampers are distributed to families coping in difficult circumstances in our local area. To enable to do this we request that each child should bring either £1 or a non-perishable food item to their Form Teacher on, or before, Wednesday 16 December. We would like to thank everyone once again for their support in this venture.

Mrs J Mills

Car Parking

Parents are asked to use the rear car park only to collect children after school. Please use the rear exit on to Roe Mill Road when leaving the car park.

Parents are kindly requested not to park cars in the area of the Boys' Pavilion or on the road leading to it. This area must be kept clear for emergency vehicles. This applies to after school and at weekends. Your co-operation in this will be greatly appreciated.



Mr R Wilson (Principal)

The Annual Board of Governors Report for 2008-2009 is available on the school website: www.limavadygrammar.org.uk or on request from the office.

Key Dates

School Examinations

Year 12:	11 January – 25 January 2010
Other Year Groups:	18 January – 22 January 2010
Open Night for prospective Pupils:	1 February 2010
Year 12 Parents' Information Evening (AS Choices):	11 February 2010
Half Term for Pupils:	15 February – 17 February 2010

Rotary Youth Leadership Competition

Congratulations to M. Pratt who won the town section of the competition beating off some 15 other competitors. Michael is pictured receiving his certificate from Mrs Henry, Vice Principal. Now he goes on to the regional round where we hope he will again be successful. Michael is currently Chair of the Limavady Youth Council and is actively involved in the local community through leadership, training programmes and volunteer work.



Ulster Grammar Schools' Swimming Gala

Congratulations to all the following pupils who took part in the Ulster Grammar Schools' Swimming Gala on Saturday 21 November at Larne Leisure Centre:

Boys:

Alex McLaughlin	Year 9
Craig McAuley	Year 9
Evan Donnell	Year 10
Carl Mulholland	Year 13

Girls:

Anna Stewart	Year 8
Zoe McSparron	Year 8
Lynsey Brown	Year 8
Naomi Stewart	Year 10
Zara Brown	Year 10
Cara McLaughlin	Year 11
Becky Coulter	Year 14
Jenny Thompson	Year 14

Jenny Thompson and Becky Coulter qualified for the finals of the senior girls' 50 metre Breaststroke and 50 metre Butterfly respectively. The senior girls' Freestyle relay won a bronze medal and several PBs were achieved.

This was a long but worthwhile day and all students' behaviour and performance were outstanding. They were excellent ambassadors for our school. Well done to all and a special word of thanks to Miss C Johnston for all her help on the day. It is greatly appreciated.

Miss M Doherty

Parents' Association – Craft Fair

Thank you to all who supported this event. To date £1,178.02 has been raised. This money will be used to support pupil activities in school.

A special thank you to the small, but committed, Parents' Association committee for all its efforts.

Mr R Wilson

Bring IT On



This photograph shows our Year 12 GCSE ICT Students at the Bring IT On Event at the Everglades Hotel in Londonderry, on the 22 October 2009. Also pictured is a representative from Momentum NI (the ICT Federation). Pupils participated in interactive quizzes, a programming challenge and a question and answer session with academics from QUB & UU and industry representatives from various ICT companies in NI. Students found the event particularly beneficial and are now aware of the numerous different career opportunities available within the ICT sector.

Mrs V Campbell

Year 10 Science Careers Conference

On Thursday 19 November, Mrs Duffy accompanied 14 Year 10 students to Lumen Christi College for the Seagate Real World Science Conference. The students were joined by over 300 other Year 10 students from all over the North-West and people from various diverse Science and Technology Careers including the Ambulance Service, the Fisheries Service, Rocket engineers, Invista and of course, Seagate.

The students enjoyed an opening explosive demonstration by Professor Chris Hardacre from QUB School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering and then enjoyed three different hands-on workshops, to give them a flavour of the various careers represented. Our own Aaron McKenna and Chloe Curry, who attended the Rocket Workshop held by Ash McFadden from Greencastle Maritime Museum, were involved in the finale of the day, seeing the launch of the rockets, which rose between 100 and 200 feet in the air above the college grounds.



A great day was had by all and the students then followed up with a talk to the rest of their Science classes on what they found out about the various careers.

Mrs M Watson

GCSE Home Economics Coursework Award

Louise Bonham has been awarded the British Nutrition prize for outstanding work in GCSE Home Economics coursework. Louise was the top student in Northern Ireland and one of six GCSE students in the UK to receive this prestigious award. She received her prize at a formal ceremony at The Royal College of Physicians in London on 25 November from Professor John Beddington, Government Chief Scientific Advisor. An outstanding achievement.



Showjumping

The recently formed LGS showjumping team of Hannah P., Eloise R. and Hollie H. have made a convincing start to the Ulster Schools league.

In their initial outing they were placed 3rd out of 27 teams. Round two in November saw a faultless performance from all three girls earning them 1st place. Hannah produced the fastest rounds so far in each jump off. These achievements have put them at the top of the leader board. Well done girls, excellent team work.

Rachel H. also made a convincing start in the Secondary Individual competition by winning her class. Unfortunately injury has forced her out of the competition until January.



Mrs G Lamont

'Our Town' Dazzles

Limavady Grammar School's production of Thornton Wilder's 'Our Town' was an astounding success. The talented cast invited the audience to experience the life of locals in a small New Hampshire town. The relaxed, genial presence of Chris Donnell as the Stage Manager set the tone for an 'Our Town' that reached out and drew the audience in.

The Director (Miss C Gordon) stayed true to the directions given by Wilder and presented a set which was minimal and functional. However the atmosphere was nostalgically and expertly created by the carefully crafted stage pictures, which were under-pinned by subtle lighting changes and carefully timed sound effects. The stars eluded to by the Stage Manager twinkled warmly in the night sky as George Gibbs (Andrew Paul) and Emily Webb (Naomi Given); perched on top of two simple wooden step ladders, gazed philosophically from their respective bedroom windows, contemplating an unknown future. Such images successfully transported the audience to this small American town.

There was no lack of talent on show in the Grammar School and it was clear that the cast had worked incredibly hard to produce such a slick performance. Claire Lynch's portrayal of Mrs Gibbs was particularly outstanding and the comic touches provided by the Stage Manager (Chris Donnell), Professor Willard (Emmett Luney), Simon Stimson (Matthew Alexander) and Mrs Soames (Emma Donnell) provided light relief from the more serious and contemplative scenes in the play.

What was most impressive was that there were no 'weak links'. The cast, the costumes, the make-up, props, set, sound effects and lighting worked so incredibly well that it was impossible to find any weakness at all.

Above all this production of 'Our Town' successfully provoked thought; life is for the living and at times it is important to stop what we are doing and think about life. As Miss Gordon put it in the programme, 'Today we are a society driven by constant communication – the kids are twittering, text-messaging, emailing . . . every young person is connected through the computer to the whole wide world . . . Aren't we living in an age of lost innocence? This play poignantly reminds us of the loss of "thinking time" as we rush madly though life.'

Limavady Grammar School's "Our Town" successfully cautioned us to recognise that life is both precious and ordinary, and that these two fundamental truths are intimately connected.

Contributed

Road Safety - Life Skills - Year 9 Personal Development



Pupils in Year 9 received a serious message from Constable Ian McGregor making them aware of the need to be highly visible when walking along the road.

As the Christmas season approaches, pupils need to be particularly vigilant when travelling to and from school. The limited visibility during dark mornings and evenings, coupled with the excitement surrounding the Christmas season, can result in serious and sometimes fatal accidents at this time of the year.

Mrs J McCluskey

Attendance

- (1) We are continuing to work hard in ensuring that an accurate and efficient record of pupil attendance can be maintained. Pupils should bring an absence note with them on their return to school. It is very helpful to the Form Teachers, Head of Year and office staff if notes are produced promptly, as chasing up unexplained absences is time consuming.
- (2) **Sixth Form:** unexplained absences are a particular problem in the Sixth Form. It is a requirement that all students aim for 95% attendance. Too many students appear to have single day absences. School is required to note attendance when writing references.
- (3) Pupils are asked to ensure that they follow appropriate signing in and signing out arrangements:

Late: Registration closes at 9.07 am - all pupils who arrive in school after 9.07 am must sign in at the office as they will have missed registration. Any pupil arriving at registration after 9.00 am and 9.07 am will be recorded as late (before registration closed).

Appointments: A signed note or pink form, obtainable from the office, should be presented to one of the Vice-Principals the day prior to an appointment. When the note has been countersigned by the Vice-Principal, it should be taken to the office when it will be exchanged for a **yellow** signing out slip. This slip should be handed into the office when the pupil leaves for the appointment.

For Child Protection reasons pupils should be collected from the school foyer.

Parents are asked to phone the school office **only in the case of emergency appointments**. In all other cases a note should be sent in advance.

Mr N Handforth (Vice Principal – Pastoral)

PERCENTAGE ATTENDANCE YEARS 8-14 (2 NOVEMBER-11 DECEMBER 2009)

8V	97.5	9V	93.3	10V	94.5	11V	97.0	12V	94.1	YR 13	92.5
8W	97.5	9W	94.6	10W	97.0	11W	94.9	12W	96.2	YR 14	89.9
8X	96.5	9X	95.6	10X	92.2	11X	94.3	12X	94.8		
8Y	97.0	9Y	97.2	10Y	96.4	11Y	94.6	12Y	93.7		
8Z	97.5	9Z	97.2	10Z	95.6	11Z	92.6	12Z	92.1		

Congratulations to pupils in 8V, 8W and 8Z – these form classes scored the highest percentage attendance during this period.

LGS 1ST XI Hockey Team make the quarter finals of the School's Cup

Limavady Grammar School v Down High School



On the morning of the 10 December, Limavady Grammar School's 1st XI hockey squad set off in soaring spirits for Down High School, to play in the third round of the Ulster Schools' Cup. The girls had only one outcome in mind – success. They got stuck in to warm-ups straightaway in order to prepare and motivate themselves for the game ahead.

The match began with a clever self pass from Limavady's centre-forward, Rachel McCluskey. The links worked hard to push the ball through

Down's strong defence line, but unfortunately all shots at goal narrowly missed. Despite a penalty corner for LGS, the shot on goal was slightly off target. It wasn't long before Down suffered the same fate at Limavady's end.

For the majority of the first half, play was fast and for the most part, it was fairly even on both sides. However, a lucky break from Down High brought the score to 1–0. This caused Limavady's heads to drop and the entire team's enthusiasm seemed to disappear. As a result, Down High scored their second goal of the match, just minutes before the whistle blew for half-time.

Thankfully Limavady's negative mind-set disappeared in the second half and the team came back full of energy and with their heads lifted. They immediately gained possession of the ball and managed to maintain this throughout the second half. Our captain, Lauren Butcher made several brilliant runs, as well as quick, careful passes, resulting in a goal from one of the team's youngest players, Becky McMullan. The few times when Down High managed to get the ball into Limavady's half, the strong back line of Emma Haslett, Sinead Corr and Amy-Lee McIvor made superb tackles, allowing nothing through. With only 6 minutes to go, a much needed equalising goal from Limavady was belted past the Down goal-keeper, yet again by Becky McMullan. With a 2-2 draw, extra time was declared. The Limavady girls were ecstatic at this second chance of victory.

This extra 20 minutes proved to be goal-less and so the game went to penalty strokes. The excitement and suspense was tangible. First to step up was Limavady's Vice Captain, Emma Haslett, known for her raised balls. The stroke was flawless, as expected, and gave Limavady a 1–0 lead. With Katy McKay in nets, Limavady could be confident that no ball would get through. Sure enough, she saved Down's first shot on goal. Next up for Limavady was Lisa Hartop, another of Limavady's youngest members. She brought the score to 2–0. A second save by Katy followed by an effortless goal from Lauren Butcher, meaning that Down needed to score their third stroke in order to stay in the game. The suspense from onlookers was unbearable. When Down missed their third stroke and Limavady was declared victorious, the excitement and joy from the entire Limavady squad, coaches included, was nothing short of incredible.

Limavady will now face Lurgan College in the quarter finals. A date for this match has not yet been confirmed, but the LGS squad expect a fierce battle and are training hard in anticipation. Bring it on!

Claire Lynch (Year 14)



LIMAVADY GRAMMAR SCHOOL'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT
will be held in the Assembly Hall on Monday 21 December 2009 at 7.30 pm.

Donations in aid of LGS Musical Instrument Fund.

ALL Parents and Friends are most WELCOME

