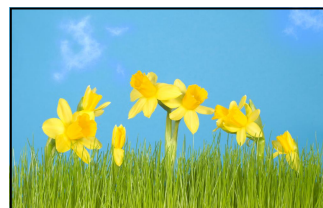


HEADLINES - MARCH 2008



Cricket Honours at Limavady Grammar School

Two Limavady Grammar School boys have been honoured by being selected to represent Ireland U15 cricket side in a tournament in the West Indies. P. Moon who plays his club cricket for Limavady and S. Olphert from Eglinton, will travel as the two wicket keepers in the Irish party who will play Pakistan, West Indies and England in the tournament in Barbados that starts on 15 April.

Both boys were selected on their past form and their performance in Irish nets during the winter. P. Moon represented Ireland at U15 level last summer whilst S. Olphert will make his international debut on the tour.

One Grammar School cricketer to lose out on this trip of a lifetime to the West Indies is J. Magee, who is on standby for the tour. J. Magee, on the other hand, is not too disappointed as he has been selected to attend a NICA squad session in Spain over the Easter holidays!



*Mr N Handforth (Teacher-in-charge of Cricket),
P. Moon, S. Olphert and J. Magee*

Four Limavady Grammar School boys have been selected to travel as part of the NICA coaching squad to Lords Cricket ground in London this weekend. The boys C. McGregor, L. Ritchie, R. Allen and A. Pierce have represented the North West at U11 level and are part of the talented under age group identified by NICA. The three days of intensive coaching will help to kick start the season for the boys who aim to represent the North West and perhaps Ireland during the summer.



*Mr K Mawhinney (U12 Cricket Coach),
Mr N Handforth (Teacher-in-charge of Cricket),
A. Pierce, C. McGregor and R. Allen.
L. Ritchie was unavailable for the photograph.*

Parents Please Note:

School closes for **Easter on Friday 14 March at 12.30 pm**. Buses along Londonderry route will leave school at **12.30 pm**—all other routes, buses will be at normal time.

Summer term commences on Monday 31 March at 9.00 am.

Year 11 Parents' Meeting: Tuesday 8 April from 4.00-6.00 pm

Exceptional Closure Dates: Thursday 22 May and Friday 23 May 2008.

Senior French Exchange

On 5 February, thirteen pupils from both Years 13 and 14 left from the Grammar School to spend ten days in Cluses in the Haute-Savoie region of France.

We arrived in the evening and faced perhaps the most daunting part of the trip being introduced to our host families! But after our first French meal and a good night's sleep, we got up bright and early, ready to face our first full day in France, (mind you, for those of us who had to get up at 5.30 am, it was a bit of a shock to the system)!

On the first morning, we took part in a treasure hunt around the town centre, so that we could learn more about the town and also get to use some of those good old French phrases that we had learnt for GCSE.

The following day, we had a tour of our host school, the *Lycée Charles Poncet*, with its many flights of stairs and, throughout the week we attended some classes with our partners getting the feel of the French school system, which is quite different from our own.

From visiting a local restaurant and factory, bombarding the owners with questions (in French, of course) to having a picnic on the shores of Lake Geneva, the activities were many and varied and gave us many opportunities to experience French culture and the beauty of the country.

The tour of the United Nations building in Geneva was very interesting (when we got through security) but the highlight of the exchange, many thought, was the whole day excursion to Chamonix when we visited *La Mer de Glace* and went up nearly four thousand metres in a cable car to the top of the *Aiguille du Midi* – the views were absolutely amazing, definitely not something you see everyday!

The weekend contained many different activities with our partners and their families, from skiing to visiting the beautiful city of Annecy to spending a quiet evening in an Irish pub – everybody enjoyed their weekend.

On our final day, we set off with our partners to the ski resort of *Praz de Lys* where we engaged in an afternoon's sledging, or *faire de la luge* as the locals say. We all had a great time, especially Mr Sampson (allegedly!).

The trip was a very enjoyable and educational experience and we are all now looking forward to the return visit of our French partners in April.



Getting ready for an afternoon's sledging



Enjoying a quiet moment at the Lycée Charles Poncet

Naomi Canning (Year 13)

'Rock Challenge 2008'

Many of you may be aware of a dance based production which will be taking place at the Waterfront Hall in Belfast on 1 April 2008 starring our very own Genna Logue from Year 12. In conjunction with the Limavady Partnership: St Mary's Limavady, Limavady High School and Limavady Grammar School have joined together to enter the 'Rock Challenge 2008' competition, with a production entitled 'Challenging Stereotypes'.

The 25 pupils from Limavady Grammar School must be commended for their hard work and dedication over the past four months. Demanding choreography, make up, costume design and stage design are just some of the challenges faced by this enthusiastic group of young people.

It would be great to have as much support as possible at the 'Rock Challenge 2008' competition, so please come along and support Genna and all the other pupils from the Limavady Partnership. Tickets are priced at £10.00 each and can be purchased from www.ticketmaster.co.uk

Miss M Geach

Music News

Congratulations to Naomi Given, Year 12, who has been awarded the Philip McHaffie Memorial Organ Scholarship at St Columb's Cathedral Londonderry. As one of the Cathedral's organ scholars Naomi will have lessons with the Director of Music, Mr Ian Mills, and will be playing the recently completed half million pound new Wells-Kennedy organ: the largest and most significant instrument in the Province outside of Belfast. Competitive auditions were held for this scholarship and we wish Naomi every success in her playing.

Dr D Collins

Argentina/Chile 2009

As part of the fundraising campaign for the hockey club tour to Argentina and Chile, a Spring Ball is being held on **Friday 25 April 2008** in the Radisson Hotel.

Tickets priced at **£35.00** each for this black tie event can be purchased from the school.

On the same evening there will be a unique opportunity to take part in our exciting auction. Items include:

- VIP Week-end for 2 at a Super Bike Round of your choice, courtesy of Marty Nutt Racing (includes crossing, one night's hotel accommodation, free week-end pass, entry to hospitality area and paddock).
- Barbeque Equipment
- Painting by Hazel Johnston
- Framed Photographic Print by W Hutchinson
- Ulster Rugby Shirt signed by Ulster Squad
- Irish Rugby Shirt signed by Andrew Trimble
- Newcastle United Shirt signed by Squad
- Derry Gaelic Football Shirt signed by Squad
- Hockey Stick signed by Ireland Womens' Hockey Squad
- Case of Gin

Bids can be placed prior to this event by contacting either **Mrs S Moore** or **Mrs J Higgins** at Limavady Grammar School.

Mrs J Higgins

Higher Education

Year 14 - Replying to Offers

UCAS does not ask students to reply to offers until they have received decisions from all their choices. Students who receive all their decisions by the end of March must reply to offers by 5 May. If students fail to reply to their offers UCAS declines them on their behalf. The best way for students to reply to offers is by using Track on www.ucas.com. After accepting offers, students should always look at Track to check their status. Those without offers or who decline all offers are eligible for "Extra" which enables them to choose one more course sequentially until an offer is made.

Student Finance

What are student loans?

Student loans are provided, while you are at university or college, by the governments of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to help with your living costs - accommodation, food, clothes, travel, and so on. Loans are available to cover the costs of university tuition fees. School will provide students with the loan form before Easter but you can also apply online at www.studentfinance.ni.co.uk. Parents may wish to view the form at this website and get more information about the process. Students will attend a Finance presentation on Thursday 13 March and will be given the application form, notes and a letter to parents explaining the process and how parents can get answers to their questions.

Year 13 - Higher Education Application

Entry into higher education is an exciting and yet daunting journey for our young people. It is also just as challenging for parents when they play a key role in supporting and encouraging their children on this journey. UCAS has developed a new dedicated section on their website, www.ucas.com/parents, where parents can access information on a range of topics from the application process to financial guidance.

Open Days - www.opendays.com

Visits will help students to make informed decisions. The end of June or early July are good times for students to visit potential choices.

Medicine and Dentistry

UK Clinical Aptitude Test - You must visit the website: www.ukcat.ac.uk

Registering for the UKCAT

Registering to take the UKCAT does not constitute an application for admission to any of the participating universities. In addition to registering to take the UKCAT candidates will need to submit an application to UCAS in the normal manner.

Registration and Test Dates

Candidates will be able to register to take the UKCAT in June 2008. Registration for the UKCAT will only be available online, via the website www.ukcat.ac.uk.

There will be no fixed date for sitting the exam, but candidates wishing to apply for entry to the participating universities in 2009 or intending to apply in 2008, for deferred entry in 2010, will be required to take the UKCAT before the end of September 2008.

It is recommended that candidates schedule to sit the UKCAT in July or August and register in June 2008, to ensure that places are available at their chosen test centre.

Candidates will be able to choose a date to sit the exam at a choice of over 150 Pearson Professional Centres near their home, school or college. A registration fee has also to be paid.

Mr S Robb

Mental Health Conference

On Friday 22 February, seven of our pupils were invited to attend a Positive Mental Health Conference at Thornhill College in Londonderry. The conference was aimed at the campaign "Where's your Head at?" which sets out to encourage youngsters to talk about their problems and properly express their feelings and insecurities.

Focusing on the common causes and pressures which increase someone's risk of committing suicide, we were all given the opportunity to voice our opinions and help locate where these modes of depression can arise.

Together with the help of the organisations: Latch, Zest, Foyle Search and Rescue and the Western Health Trust (represented by Barry McGale) we were quickly made aware of the boundaries which lay between being depressed for a short time and prolonged depression: prolonged depression refers to someone who's depressed for a two-week period.

Having had the opportunity to meet people from different schools such as Saint Joseph's, Oakgrove and the students from Thornhill themselves, we were given a great opportunity to hear the opinions of people from different backgrounds and see things in a whole new light.

We discussed many of the issues that tend to cause severe depression amongst ourselves and our peers. Issues such as: relationship breakdown, family feuds, bullying and pressure of exams were amongst those directly targeted.

We, as pupils, were presented as ambassadors for the pupils we represented, and so our main aim was to gather as much information as possible. We were given a sense of awareness as to how essential it is to talk to someone if you feel depressed and were also given helpline numbers to offer to those who find it hard to talk to those closest to them or who are in need of a professional opinion.

Self-harming was another problem which it was necessary to address during the conference as it seems to be drastically increasing here in Northern Ireland. Self-harm might be thought to refer to slitting wrists or taking an overdose but it also takes in other forms. These include drug abuse, eating disorders and alcoholism. Reasons for self-harming were summarised and varied from emotional pain to self-guilt.

We learned that as a community we can contribute to preventing suicide by simply recognising the signs of depression and talking with the sufferer. Signs which we concluded were most obvious were things such as: oversleeping, over or under eating, avoiding friends, feeling irritable or bad tempered and being indecisive.

The pupils also had the chance to meet with Iris Robinson MP, MLA, the chairperson of the Health Committee at Stormont, for a question and answer session. Here we were given the opportunity to question what was being done to prevent suicide in Northern Ireland and were soon assured that many measures were being taken and that she would do what she could, when she could, in order to prevent these incidents occurring in the future.

Orlagh Boyd (Year 13)

Update on Support Services Available in School

- School Counselling Team: *Staff names are placed in each form room.*
 - Pupil support noticeboard: *names of organisations and contact numbers are placed on the noticeboard in the E corridor.*
 - Contact Youth: *A counsellor from Contact Youth is in school one morning per week. Pupils may be referred by Mrs McFarland, a parent/guardian or a self referral. Their website is: www.contactyouth.org*
 - LATCH (Dungiven based): *counsellors are available to come into school when required.**
- Drug and Alcohol Youth Service: pupils may receive support/counselling if themselves or a relative has a drug or alcohol difficulty.**

* Pupils or parents may contact Mrs McFarland if they require support from these services.

Mrs L McFarland

Limavady Grammar School Parents' Association

The Parents' Association Easter Draw tickets have now been sent out to parents and it is hoped that this major fund-raising event will be supported as well as it has been in the past.

Parents are advised that the draw will now take place on Friday 18 April and not on 14 March as stated on the tickets.

The next organised fund-raising event will be a "Bag Pack" in The Limavady Tesco store on Saturday 12 April. Please let me know if you are able to help. Details were included with the Easter Draw tickets.

Peter Jack (Chairman of PA)