



School closes at 1200 on
 Thursday 22 December 2016
 Pupils Resume on Tuesday
 10 January

Wester Hailes Education Centre News

WHEC Careers Pathway Fair

The Career Pathway Fair took place on Wednesday 23rd November 2016. The aim was to engage and raise aspirations of students relating to the opportunities and pathways to the world of work allowing them to make informed choices as they move onto employment. Students from S1 to S6 attended the fair and were given the chance to have meaningful discussions with prospective employers. The Fair was a great success and here are some comments about the event:

"I never thought that I would be interested in working in a bank" (S4 student)

"It was great to be able to find out about the options that would be available to me when I leave school" (S5 Student)

"I am interested in becoming a writer/ journalist so it was good to talk to the local newspaper Wester Hailes Digital Sentinel" (S2 Student)

"What an amazing school you have! You should be proud of your young adults! They will go far" (QA Apprenticeships)

We would like to thank all 18 employers / training providers who attended our Careers Fair: Lloyds Banking Group, Edinburgh Airport, NHS, Prospect Housing, EDF, Wester Hailes Health Agency, Tesco Bank, Police Scotland, Careers Development Scotland, EDETA Training, QA Apprenticeships, Companynet, The Core WHEC, Royal Navy, Local Library, Street League, Scotland's Rural College and Screen Education Edinburgh.



WHEC - enabling all pupils to achieve successful outcomes regardless of ability or background.

As Headteacher I want to set out my vision statement for WHEC as I believe that as a Centre we have the staff, pupils and partnerships to achieve this. I have been very impressed with the wide range of opportunities that have been made available to our pupils since August 2016 and I'm sure you will enjoy reading about them... as well as looking out for your son/daughter in the pictures.

Of course we are only halfway there in the school session and next term is where we need your collective support to help pupils achieve successful outcomes. I look forward to hearing your views as well as sharing more about what's going on at WHEC.

David Young - Headteacher

WHEEA Update

Wester Hailes Educational Enhancement Association was founded in 2004 to enhance opportunities for the students at WHEC. The WHEEA Committee is drawn from staff right across the Centre including retired Deputy Head Teacher, Sheila Cornes. Over the last 6 months WHEEA has supported many projects including trips to the Edinburgh Fringe and Book Festival; an interactive experience from Zoolab in the Geography Department and Debate Mate which builds communication and interpersonal skills through debating competitions. In June 2017 20 students are going on an educational tour of the Battlefields in Belgium which WHEEA has raised funds for in the form of a grant from The Russell Trust and a donation from the Nancie Massey Charitable Trust. All of these projects aim to broaden horizons and increase the expectations and ambitions of our young people.



Wester Hailes Education Centre visit - In Euler's Footsteps

On Tuesday 22 November, Donna Heritage, Curriculum Leader for Maths, Numeracy and Technologies at Wester Hailes Education Centre (WHEC) and 40 WHEC pupils (aged 14-17) visited Heriot-Watt University. They were led on a tour of the campus, including campus accommodation and Oriam, by current students and enjoyed a bespoke lecture by Professor Mark Lawson on the mathematics behind Eulerian trails. Professor Lawson said:

'Many people think that mathematics is about numbers probably because much of the mathematics we learn in school is about numbers. But this is far from the truth. The goal of this lecture was to introduce some mathematical ideas that are rarely encountered in school, have important applications but which do not involve numbers and also require no particular background in mathematics to understand and appreciate. The basic problem is easy to describe: given a road network, when can you make a round trip that starts and ends at home that uses every road exactly once. The goal of the lecture was to figure out when this is possible and why. This problem has real-life applications that range from engineering to the study of DNA.'

Following the visit, Ms Heritage said 'It was an excellent trip and the students (and teachers!) really enjoyed themselves'



Young Ambassador Conference 2016

The National Young Ambassador Conference 2016 took place at the Edinburgh International Climbing Centre (Ratho) and Wester Hailes Education Centre was represented by Adam Pearson and Jordan Meechan, S4 pupils, who are our new appointed Young Ambassadors for the School.

This was an exciting day for them as they met other Young Ambassadors from across Scotland and also got to work alongside some well known athletes and Rio Olympic medal winners!

The conference was opened by Olympic swimmer Robbie Renwick winner of three silver medals in Rio! They also met Caitlin McClatchey (Swimmer), Colin Gregor (Previous rugby 7's Captain and current coach) and Gemma Fay (Women's Scottish Football team Captain and Goal Keeper).

During the conference Adam and Jordan attended various workshops to assist them in their first year's journey as Young Ambassadors.

Please feel free to approach them or Ricky Karoyan, (Active Schools Co-ordinator) if you have suggestions as to how we could improve our sport programme and also if you would like to volunteer with us.



Peers in Schools Visit from the Earl of Kinnoull 18TH November 2016

Wester Hailes Education Centre hosted a talk from a member of the House of Lords on Friday 18th November to encourage students to become more engaged with the political and parliamentary process. The Earl of Kinnoull met with modern studies students for an hour to talk about the work and role of the House of Lords. This was followed by a question and answer session on various aspects of the parliamentary process and life at Westminster.

Stuart Sinclair - teacher of Modern Studies at Wester Hailes Education Centre said, "This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to interact with someone who knows the parliamentary system inside out, as it can sometimes seem far removed from their daily lives."

The visit was arranged through the Lord Speaker's "Peers in Schools" programme, which has been running across the UK since 2007 and has so far involved around 75,000 young people. This continuing outreach programme sends members of the House of Lords into schools/academies and colleges across the country to give talks in support of the citizenship curriculum.



Rock Trust Sleep Out November 2016

A huge well done to Amy, Ms MacLennan, Tiegan, Alyssa, Arrice, Nicole, Tiegan, James, James, Mr Burge, Brandon, Shannon, Natilie, Sean, Mr Young, Elle, Kyra, Hannah, Amy, Miss Dancer and Emma for their enthusiastic participation in Rock Trust Sleep Out!

From 7pm Friday night to 7am Saturday morning we slept on the (very) cold and (exceedingly) hard pavement of George Street to raise funds to help homeless young people in Edinburgh.

We have raised over £1,400 to date. A magnificent achievement. Congratulations all.



Procurator Fiscal Mini Trials

Nine senior students from Wester Hailes Education Centre participated against other Edinburgh schools in the Procurator Fiscal Mini Trials Competition held on Saturday 8th October.

Our young people worked very hard in the weeks leading up to the event and prepared their own speeches and arguments. On the day our prosecuting team won their trial and were congratulated by the judge.

This was an excellent opportunity for our young people to experience the Scottish legal system in action as well as visiting all parts of the Sheriff Court (including the cells!).

Well done and thank you to all the participants for their hard work and enthusiasm.



First Ministers Questions at the Scottish Parliament

S3 Modern Studies students were recently able to attend First Ministers questions at the Scottish Parliament. They listened to First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, debate issues and answer questions from MSPs and were grateful to local MSP, Gordon Macdonald who met up with the students and answered questions in a lively Q & A session.

WHEC students select books at Waterstones Bookshop

Thanks to the generosity of Lloyds Banking Group our students have been able to select books for our school library, again this session. A group of WHEC students, who attended Edinburgh University Widening Participation Programme last session, were granted £500 to buy books for the school library. The Widening Participation programme encourages our students to consider attending university after they have gained their school qualifications.



The discount we receive from Waterstones helps us buy more books for the school and allows the dozen students to select and keep a book for themselves! There is always an extra treat for the students in the form of a hot chocolate served on Waterstones top floor café.



International Book Festival

Once again, all of our S1 students attended the Baillie Gifford Edinburgh International Book Festival for schools. This annual celebration of books and authors, takes place in the lovely Charlotte Square Gardens, in the centre of Edinburgh. Our students asked excellent questions of the authors and enjoyed getting their books signed after the authors' talks they also enjoyed sitting outside for a picnic!



Operation Christmas Child

S3 recently planned and ran a very successful charity campaign. They were collecting items and small gifts to send in shoe boxes as part of the charity appeal 'Operation Christmas Child'. The students were very successful and collected enough donations to fill a large number of shoe boxes and in doing this they also fulfilled part of their Religious, Belief and Values Unit. The shoe boxes are now on their way to an orphanage in Romania. Well done all.

School Session Dates 2016 / 2017

Term 2

Thursday 22 December 2016 - 12pm End of term.

Term 3

Tuesday 10 January 2017 - Pupils resume

Wednesday 1-10 February 2017 - Senior Prelims (No study leave)

Monday 6 February 2017 - HPV vaccinations

Monday 10 February 2017 - Mid term break

Monday 20 February 2017 - All resume

Thursday 2 March 2017 - World Book Day

Wednesday 22 March 2017 - Senior school vaccination boosters

Friday 31 March 2017 - All break end of term

Term 4

Tuesday 18 April 2017 - All resume

Monday 1 May 2017 - Public holiday

Tuesday 2 May 2017 - Friday 2 June 2017 - SQA Exams

Thursday 4 May 2017 - School closed for pupils

Monday 22 May 2017 - Public holiday

Friday 30 June 2017 - 12pm End of term

Final Thoughts

It is often at this time of year when we feel most thankful for those we have around us. We reflect on the year that has elapsed and the people we have shared this time with. We also, with a sense of optimism, plan the New Year ahead and think of what we can achieve and what is possible. Achieving what is possible is no easy task however by doing the repetitive daily habits well:

- Attending Regularly in Uniform
- Engaging in Learning
- Completing Homework/Study Support

You can achieve your goals and make 2017 your best year yet !

Have a great festive period.

David Young - Headteacher