



St Kentigern's Academy

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Head Teacher:

Mr Andrew Sharkey

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Monday, 22 January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope this letter finds you well.

This letter contains a lot of information on things that have been happening and will be happening in the school, and is a follow up to our previous communication at the end of November 2023. So I would ask that you take five minutes to read it and to familiarise yourself with its content. There is information about:

- Heating Issue
- Building Update
- PE and Active Schools
- The British Education Awards
- S4/5 Options Information Evening
- S2 Options Information Evening
- Head Teacher Drop In
- Calendar
- Parent Council
- Partnerships
- Skills Development Scotland
- Upcoming Key Dates

Heating Issue - as you will be aware, the school had to remain closed on our first day back after the Christmas holiday due to issues with the boilers. As per my message on the day, this has been resolved, and we have additional heaters to give an additional boost if required.

Building Update - we are making good progress with our building programme, whilst continuing to ensure that our school is safe, open, and fully operational. A new School main entrance will be open after the February break at the bottom of the main car park. Please follow the signs when visiting and bear with us whilst we upgrade this new space.

Learning and teaching continues in the main building and in our state of the art temporary teaching units. Our first window of prelim exams was completed before Christmas with the ongoing second window currently proceeding without any disruptions. As we progress, preparations are underway for the May 2024 SQA Exams, which we plan to hold between the school and the Blackburn Partnership Centre.



We are very conscious of the need for more social spaces whilst the building works are ongoing and plans are in place to open the middle courtyard area fully to students to offer some outdoor space.

As part of our P7 Transition programme, Laura Lawlor (DHT) and Sally Cameron (QIO) have been visiting all our associated primary schools to engage students in discussions about their Transition Mission including exploring the concept of sustainable buildings.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding the building work or its impact on the school, please feel free to email Sally Cameron at sally.cameron@westlothian.org.uk.

PE and Active Schools - we are continuing to work closely with other schools, local community partners and venues to ensure all one-off performances and dance routines can be conducted as required in an appropriate and timely manner. Our extra-curricular programme is in full swing and there are a range of activities to engage all of our young people such as such as table tennis, football, gymnastics and dance. We also continue to participate fully in the full programme of West Lothian Secondary Schools sports events.

British Education Awards – We heard today that one of our S5 students, Zachary, is a finalist in the British Education Awards for the highest levels of attainment in S4 in Scotland. This remarkable accomplishment is especially noteworthy as the award encompasses both private and state schools, making Zachary's placement in the top 3 truly exceptional. The winners will be revealed at a gala ball in Manchester on February 9th, and we wholeheartedly extend our best wishes to Zachary on this well-deserved recognition.

S4/5 Option Information Evening – The option information evening for parents & carers of students in **S4 and S5** will be held on the **31st January at 6pm**. The evening is online and will provide information on pathways through the senior phase, the many opportunities available both in-school and with our partners and some information about University and College options. Skills Development Scotland will also be present and sharing the most up-to-date information on workplace intelligence. The meeting is accessed via the following link. <http://tinyurl.com/54hh6m8k>

S2 Option Information Evening – The option information evening for parents & carers of students in **S2** will be held on the **7th February at 6pm**. The evening is online and will provide information on the options process for our students as they move into S3, explaining the process, subjects available and other enhancements available, including Friday afternoon West Lothian College options. Skills Development Scotland will also be present and sharing the most up-to-date information on workplace intelligence. The meeting is accessed via the following link. <http://tinyurl.com/5n79ww5x>

Head Teacher Drop In – The Head Teacher Drop In sessions will begin again next Wednesday, 31st January. These popular sessions are from 5 till 6pm and allow parents to speak directly with myself about any issues or concerns they wish to raise. To help with the organising of the sessions a booking form is now available at <https://forms.office.com/e/9favUasywA>

Calendar – A reminder that the parent calendar for the upcoming year is available on the school website at [School Calendar - St Kentigern's Academy \(westlothian.org.uk\)](http://westlothian.org.uk). Please take a moment to review it and note the key dates relevant to you for the coming year.

Parent Council - On Wednesday, 24th January we will have our next Parent Council meeting. This meeting is taking place at the school. The agenda includes an overview of learning & teaching, our ongoing building works, thoughts and feedback on our curriculum review, as well as a number of general items. The minutes of previous meetings will be going onto the website and I will share the link as soon as this is completed. Finally, new members are always welcome and if you are interested in attending this or a future meeting please email stephen.young@westlothian.org.uk

Partnerships – Over the next few Head Teacher updates we will be bringing you news on some of our partnership work. The first is about our newly established partnerships with Heron Bros and BDP Architects, aiming to provide students with valuable educational opportunities in the workplace. Collaborating with Heron Bros, students will contribute to creating environmentally friendly products that enhance aesthetics during our construction as well as being involved in Eco activities helping to promote wildlife benefits. Staff representatives from Heron Bros will also engage with students, offering insights into the construction industry, fostering awareness of potential employment and training opportunities.

At the same time, discussions are underway with BDP Architects, who have been awarded the contract for the new building's design. Two S6 students with a passion for architecture will have the chance to visit the BDP Architects studio in Glasgow, gaining first-hand experience, learning from the team, visiting completed projects and possibly completing a work placement with them.

These partnerships aim to enrich our students' understanding of the Construction and Built Environment industry, opening doors to practical learning experiences and potential career paths.

We are always looking for these sorts of partnerships so if you think you can help please email Mr Swan Charles.Swan@westlothian.org.uk to start the conversation.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Parent Feedback - SDS are trying to capture feedback from Parents and Carers and they have asked that we share the following link with our community and encourage our parents and carers to take a moment to complete it. - [Parents & Carers Voice 2023/24 Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](https://survey.monkey.com/survey/organization/sds-parent-feedback)

Upcoming Key Dates:

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Parent Council | 24 January 2024 |
| • Booster Inoculations | 30 January 2024 |
| • S4 / 5 Online Options Evening | 31 January 2024 |
| • S2 Online Options Evening | 7 February 2024 |
| • S5 Learner Review | 26 - 28 February 2024 |
| • Mock Interviews | 29 February 2024 |
| • S4 Learner Review | 1 - 3 March 2024 |
| • S2 Learner Review | 4 - 5 March 2024 |
| • S3 Learner Review | 6 - 8 March 2024 |
| • Parent Council | 21 March 2024 |

I hope you have a good week, and thank you for taking the time to read this update. Should you have any comments, suggestions or feedback on this update please can you add them to our feedback form at <https://forms.office.com/e/806yx7X0hX>

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Sharkey
Head Teacher