

GALASHIELS ACADEMY

STAFF INFORMATION SHEET

17th January 2005

Dates for the Diary

Wednesday, 26th January
Thursday, 3rd February

PTs' meeting (SQA)
S1 Parents' Evening

Calendar change

Will staff please note that, because of the holiday on Friday, 25th March, there has been a change to the date planned for the Easter concert. The concert will now take place on Wednesday, 23rd March and not Thursday, 24th.

S5/6 Prelims

Study leave will take place from 16th February – 2nd March 2005. Draft calendar of exams has been issued and will be finalised in week beginning 17th January 2005.

Press

The deadline for sending the School News to the Border Telegraph has changed. We now need items by Thursday morning if they are to appear in the following Tuesday's edition.

We will presume that any items of news which appear in the Daily Information Sheet can be used by the Press Committee for the School News.

Members of the Press Committee are keen to get more news about the junior pupils – they will be coming round staff, especially those who run clubs, to ask you for news items! They will also offer to take photographs. Thank you in advance for your time.

Lisa Catto

S6 – Visit to Scottish Parliament

All S6 students have started a 4 week Social Education programme on Citizenship. This involves them learning about how to become more involved in their own communities at both local and national levels. On Thursday, 27th January during Social Education time representatives from the Community Police, Lifelong Learning, Scottish Enterprise and the NHS will field questions from the students. Those students who have SE on a Wednesday have permission to join the Panel on Thursday.

The programme ends with a visit to the Scottish Parliament on Thursday, 3rd February. After a tour of the building, Jeremy Purves, our MSP, will meet with the Galashiels Academy students for an informal discussion on a variety of issues. This pilot has been funded by the Borders Voluntary Youth Work Forum and may be rolled out to other Borders secondary schools next year.

On Thursday, 3rd February all S6 students – unless they choose not to go – will be absent from school all day. We apologise for the inconvenience of this so close to the prelims, but it was felt that this was an excellent opportunity which should not be missed.

Lisa Catto

SMT MEETINGS

Tuesday, 11th and Friday, 14th January 2005

Present: K Angus, M Bell, C Brown, B Kelly

Apologies: R Angus

1. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

2. Course choice sheets (a) S2 - S3; (b) senior course choice.

Final discussions took place. Copies of the draft course choice sheets will be issued to departments by Wednesday, 19th January. Any comments to be returned to M Bell/K Angus by 26th January 2005.

We have tried to introduce some flexibility into the S2/S3 course choice and have cut back somewhat on the variety of different courses on offer to S5/S6.

3. School Improvement Plan for session 2005/06

A great deal of discussion took place on this matter. Initial ideas were:

- (a) Curriculum – expansion of curricular flexibility; this will include looking at
- links with Borders College;
 - Telford College – open learning;
 - broadening senior options, i.e. increased personal development time for S5/S6.

(b) Attainment:

- faculty system needs to be developed in line with the checklist of review matters already issued for consultation.
- strategies for ensuring consistency across departments will be issued before the February inset day for consultation.

- Development of standard letters across all departments.
- Improving monitoring of attainment and reporting.

Learning and Teaching

The work of the development group will be extended (including the development of formative assessment techniques and the use of pupil questionnaires).

New homework policy to be developed.

Support for Learning

The main thrust here will be Study Skills.

Ethos

A number of matters under this heading were discussed:

- further consolidation of procedures relating to attendance, punctuality and dress.
- consultation with pupils
- consultation with staff

Resources

Rationalisation of room use will be a key priority for next year.

K Angus has already invited staff to participate in identifying school improvement priorities for next year. Volunteers to join this group should register interest by Wednesday, 19th January.