



# Preston Lodge High School

## Christmas Newsletter

December 2008

### Dear Parents,

The Christmas Holidays are almost upon us as the Autumn Term draws to a close. There is much to report in the life of Preston lodge High School.

### Staffing:

There have been a number of staff changes since the start of the session in August:

- In October, Mr Iain Stewart retired from his position of PT Science Development following some 35 years service in education including 5 years in Preston Lodge HS.
- Mr Gareth Evans, formerly PT Chemistry, was appointed PT Science Development taking the place of Mr Stewart. Mrs Jennifer Allen was appointed PT Biology following Mr Evans appointment to bring the Science faculty to full strength.
- Ms Kate Fenton also retired in October following 35 years teaching Art & Design in Preston Lodge. Mr Ronnie Fulton, Art & Design teacher and expert Ceramicist takes Ms Fenton's place in the art department.

- Our School Business Manager, Mrs Helen Findlay took maternity leave on 26 November: she gave birth to a healthy baby boy the following week. Mr Peter Luke takes Mrs Findlay's position as Business Manager during her leave of absence.

- A number of Newly Qualified Staff (Probationer teachers) joined Preston Lodge at the summer. These include Ms Dods (English), Ms Johnson (RME), Mrs Kazimoglu (Art & Design), Mr McGregor Tompkins (Chemistry) and Ms Osborne (Drama).

- Other recent teaching appointments include Mr Ramsay and Ms Jegat in Modern Languages, Ms McKendrick and Ms Pique in Science, Ms Henderson in English, Mr Dorrian in Maths and Ms Strachan in Pupil support.

- Non-teaching appointments include Mrs Forlow and Mrs Wilson in the school office.

We wish all these staff - new ones retired or promoted happiness and success in the future.

### Special points of interest:

- *Young Musician of the Year*
- *Sporting Achievements*

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## Attainment Progress 2008

Our attainment gains in the 2008 were substantial. In fact 2008 was our best performance in many years.

Reported 5-14 attainment levels remain robust in that the three-year trends in Attainment with the percentage of the cohort reaching Level E are as follows:

	2008	2006-2008	2005-2007
Reading	63.2	68.3	67.7
Writing	60.6	59.6	58.2
Mathematics	58.5	61.4	61.7

Reported 5-14 Three Year Average Attainment has made small but consistent improvement over 5 years.

Over 10 Years, Reported Three Year Average 5-14 attainment in Reading has doubled with Writing and Maths making almost as robust improvement. Reading recovery programmes (Accelerated Reader) are having impact on Reading skills in S1/2 with anticipated positive outcomes for Literacy across the curriculum.

These results continue to be consistent with current and previous 3-year samples within a 5% tolerance.

**SQA 2008** (pre-appeal) data confirmed improvement in performance on a number of fronts:

The fraction of the cohort gaining 5+ SCQF Level 5 Awards (Credit Level Standard Grade or Intermediate 2 National Qualification) increased by 10% to 37% (our best performance in FIVE years) with both boys and girls performing substantially better and girls outperforming boys by 10%!

The 5+ at Level 4 (General Level Standard Grade or Intermediate 1) also improved to 74% (up 3% on the previous year and our second best performance in 5 years). 5+ at level 3 remained consistent with previous years. The data confirms that there were a greater number of higher achieving girls than

boys.

Most subjects at Standard Grade matched or outperformed the MidYIS prediction, though only Administration, Business Management, Home Economics and German were statistically significant in relative performance.

Over the most recent five year period of S4 attainment at 5+ level 5, the 2008 performance eclipsed our best previous performance in 2004, though incremental improvement has been made, year on year. Since 1993, headline attainment at S4 as almost tripled.

At S5/6 the school pre-appeal performance, 31% of S5 students gained 1+ Level 6 (Higher), a slight drop from last session. The 3+ Level 6 improved by 5% to 18%: this is within 1% of our best performance in the last 5 years. 5+ Level 6 were broadly comparable with previous years with 5% of the original cohort gaining 5 Higher awards. In fact three pupils gained 5 A passes at Higher. These are our best results in recent years.

Girls and boys performed similarly at 3+ Level 6 and 5+ level 6.

Level 7 performance is comparable with previous years with 4% of the cohort gaining 1+ Advanced Higher award.

Over the most recent five year period of S5 attainment at 1+ level 6 and 3+ Level 6, have been inconsistent with +/- swings year on year. However, since 1993, headline attainment at 3+H (A-C) has doubled during that time.

I hope that you agree that the school has made substantial gains in pupil attainment over time. I applaud the hard work of pupils and staff for this longitudinal improvement.



# Destinations 2008



## Leavers' Destinations

Leavers' Destination updated at October 2008 (for the 189 pupils leaving between May and September 2008):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| • Higher for Further Education                    | 41.8% |
| • Training  | 1.6%  |
| • Employment                                      | 38.1% |
| • Voluntary Work                                  | 0.5%  |
| • Unemployed seeking                              | 14.3% |
| • Unemployed not seeking (healthy, pregnancy etc) | 3.2%  |
| • Not Known                                       | 0.5%  |

Clearly some 42% of leavers make the positive step towards Further and Higher Education (same as the most recent report for the previous year's leavers), while 38% make the successful transition to the world of work (greater than before). 4% fewer pupils than last report are Unemployed and Seeking Employment. This is a most encouraging picture for our leavers with positive destinations for the vast majority. The significant difference of our leaver destinations compared with neighbouring schools is the high percentage of pupils 38% who gain employment on leaving school.

## School Website

School website [www.prestonlodge.net](http://www.prestonlodge.net)



Our school website continues to be the main organ of communication to our parents and wider community. There are a wide number of contributors across the school - subjects, S6 students, Duke of Edinburgh group, ELPS group etc. Mr Calum Stewart, Depute Head Teacher, manages the complexity of the blogging software to ensure that a very dynamic presentation of school achievements is displayed to include digital video clips and still photography showing our pupils at there best!

Summary of Events and Achievements from our school website:

### • The Christmas Concerts 2008

Two fantastic evenings at Preston Lodge  
The Annual Christmas Concert took place on the evenings of the 9th and 10th December. Once again the musical talent of the young people of Preston Lodge was on display. To a packed house, the singers, dancers and musicians of all ages entertained us with a variety of acts [...]

### • East Lothian S6 Challenge 2008 - PLHS triumph again!

The annual East Lothian Outdoor Education S6 challenge was held on 28th November at Yellowcraigs. Following the tremendous success of the Preston Lodge teams in the 2007 challenge the pressure was on the current sixth year to rise to the challenge. Rise to the challenge they did and for the second consecutive year the Preston Lodge [...]

### • East Lothian Food Festival - Winners again!!

Congratulation to Ashley Buchanan and Christie Sinclair on winning the East Lothian Food Festival "Young Chef of the Year" on Friday afternoon. They worked extremely hard and thoroughly deserved their win. This is the fourth year in a row that Preston Lodge have won the competition. The Home Economics department is really proud of their achievement. Well done!

### • Artistic Success

Preston Lodge makes headlines again this week: Emma Porteous, 17, S6 2008, won the first prize of art supplies vouchers at East Lothian Child Protection Committee's (ELCPC) art and design competition. Congratulations!

### • PL's Health Promoting makes Headlines

**IT'S** official - Preston Lodge High School is the healthiest school in the county... Preston Lodge High School's success in achieving Level 2 accreditation in the Health Promoting Schools Award scheme has made it to the papers. You can read the full article here.



## School Updates

- **More artistic Success**

Alexandra Singh received special praise from SQA for the high quality of her Art & Design work that was presented at last year's S4 Intermediate 2 Examination. Well Done Alexandra! Alexandra's work is being shown at People's Palace, Glasgow 1st December 2008—16th January 2009 and National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh 27th January—19th March 2009.

- **Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions during this term**
- **Photographs of our Christmas concerts**
- **Former Pupils' achievements and destinations**

## Parent Council



Following on from the successful establishment of the Preston Lodge High School Parent Council, last session, the Council continues to go from strength to strength. Meetings are well attended and school senior staff have presented information on Curriculum for Excellence, School Attainment, Consultation on New National

Qualifications and school budget issues. The partnership between Council and school is excellent. The membership of the Parent Council includes:

Mrs M Gilroy; Mrs H Paterson; Ms M Stuart; Mrs L Morgan; Mr J Berg; Mrs L Robertson; Mr J Tait; Mrs A Black; Mr M Forsyth; Mrs C Turner; Mr R Devine; Councillor P McKenzie; Councillor M Libberton; Councillor W Innes; Councillor S Currie; Mrs J McWilliam (Co-opted Community Council Representative); Ms Angus and Ms Carson (Teacher Representatives) and Mrs Dunlop (Clerk).

My thanks to Mrs M Gilroy who chairs most effectively the Parent Council meetings.

### S2 Team

## Extra-Curricular Sport

Mr Bennion, our School Sports co-ordinator, reports the following progress and development this session:

### Hockey

The S1 team has had a good start to Hockey this year. After a slow start trying to gather numbers they have developed into a good team and hopefully there is more to come for our up and coming stars. The S2 girls have not lost a game this year. They have had a very successful first half of the season by remaining undefeated and also winning the East Lothian Core Programme 8-a-side Tournament, with only 7 players. The Senior hockey team is relatively young with some S3 players playing but they have adapted well and are enjoying their hockey.

### Rugby

#### Under 15's

The U15 school rugby team scraped through to the next round of the Scottish cup in dramatic circumstances. Going into the final 10 minutes Preston Lodge looked comfortably in the lead but suddenly the boys from the south-west burst into life and cut the PL lead to 3 points. Preston Lodge had scored four fantastic tries, the pick of them being a length of the pitch effort by centre and star player Blair Robertson but the final quarter was dominated by the boys from the South West. The last play of the match was a penalty attempt from Douglas Ewart which sailed over to level the scores at 22 all. However competition rules stated that the team which scored the most tries were awarded the tie which meant Preston Lodge went through. After coming so close to going out of the cup at such an early stage the under 15 side have trained harder and have produced some much better performances, they play the next round on the 12th of December away to Craigmount. Best wishes to them for that.



# Sporting Success Continued

The S2 team have continued their efforts from last season winning almost all their games comfortably, the boys play a brand of rugby that most professional teams would be proud of! Stand out players this session have been Douglas Horne, Jamie Halverson and Joe Brown.

## S1 Team

The S1 team have improved their performance steadily and are always increasing their numbers which is encouraging. With a little more concentration these boys could become a force to be reckoned with. Stand out players have been Michael King, Dale Muir and Lewis Jarron.

## Calcutta Cup

On Wednesday the 17th of December the Calcutta cup is coming to Preston Lodge High School! The cup is presented to the winner of the annual Scotland Vs England rugby match of which Scotland are the current winners. The cup is one of the oldest and most prestigious sporting trophies in the world dating back to 1878, any pupils wishing to have their picture taken with the trophy are welcome after school on the 17th for £2, all profits will go to helping with extra curricular activities in the school.

## Football

### Under 16's

The season started with the U-16s having a team for the first time in 2 years and Mr Bennion and the players were not sure of what to expect. The season started off with only 11 players turning up for a game against an undefeated Musselburgh side and there was a bit apprehension before the game. The boys who turned up did the school proud winning 4-0. The competition over the season has become stronger and stronger and our team were unlucky to be knocked out of the Scottish Cup in penalties. There is hope to sealing a league title for the school this year. The team still has a number of games to play and the players are a credit to the school everywhere they go and are a great group of kids who give 100%.

### Under 14's

The U-14s have also had a stop start to the season, which peaked against St Kentigrans when the team was 4-0 down after 10 minutes. Some harsh words at half-time and a bit of heart back into the team the boys came out fighting winning the game 6-4. This has been a team that has promised so much since first year and hopefully with a few breaks and the team believing in themselves they could win the league this year. They have always been near the top of the league with a second place finish last year losing the league by a point. Hopefully this year it is there time.

## Girls Football

The S1-S3 girls are having a good run at the moment, in the Scottish cup they are into the next round (don't know what round they are in) after going up to Craigmont and winning 7-1 5 goals from S Cunningham and one each for K Henderson and A.J. Russell gave them a great win as the rest of the team worked really well together considering they had just met up that day for the first time. In the football first tournament the girls taking part were twice at Ross High and when it was held and PL and both time the girls won the round robin that included Ross High, Musselburgh, Dunbar and Knox's. Hopefully they keep it up and we can have a good run in the Scottish Cup.

My thanks go to Mr Bennion for this summary of

Also a special mention must go to Taylor McKillop and Reece Cochrane who have been representing the School at Mid-East Lothian level and have been extremely well behaved and played to their full potential in every match. Another is Matthew Banks who was put into The Edinburgh and Lothian Schools trial late as they never had a goalkeeper and now finds himself at the Final trial to represent Scottish Schools. Well done to these three boys the school is proud of you.

team success this year.



## Transition Programmes and Out of Hours Learning

Transition Programmes and Out-of-Hours- Learning:

### Primary 7 into S1 Summer Programme

Twenty eight pupils from our cluster primary schools took part in the 4-day programme from Monday 4 -Thursday 7 August. The aim of the programme was to ease the transition from primary to secondary by allowing pupils the opportunity to make new friends, learn more about their new school and develop personal skills including raising self esteem, problem solving and teambuilding. Activities included a drugs workshop, problem solving and teamworking activities. Trips included a visit to Vogrie Country Park, the cinema and the Time Capsule to enjoy swimming and skating. The culmination of the week was a presentation by pupils to their parents/carers to find out first hand about the adventures of the week and the benefits gained.

Some of the participants in the Home Economics Department ready to create some refreshments for our visitors.



A reunion was held for pupils and many positive comments were received about the positive start participants received to life at Preston Lodge.

Preston Lodge also ran a one day programme for all pupils starting at the school during the last week of the holidays. Over ninety students gave up a day of their holidays to learn more about life at PL and have fun! The programme was run by PL staff and senior pupils.

Funding available to repeat these programmes - if you have a child in primary 7 watch out for further details.

### Out-of-school-hours Activities

Preston Lodge High School offers an extensive range of out-of-school-hours activities ranging from digital photography, hockey to subject-based homework clubs. All pupils should have received a list of these activities. A copy can be found on the school website. Please encourage your child to sign up.

### Ready, Steady Cookery Programme

Pupils from our cluster primary schools are taking part in an after-school healthy eating project which aims to provide selected primary 7 pupils with the opportunity to ease the transition to secondary school through working at Preston Lodge on a cookery programme.

### S4 Residential Weekend

A group of 14 S4 pupils are taking part in a Residential weekend at Lagganlia beside Aviemore. Working in groups with their instructor, pupil's practice thinking and acting co-operatively, helping, sharing and looking after one another. As individuals and as members of a group they set their own targets and grow together as they celebrate their shared success.

### S4, S5 and S6 Easter Revision Programme

Preston Lodge High School will again be offering a wide range of subject-based revision classes for pupils in S4-S6. Please encourage your child to raise their attainment in their SQA exams by attending these classes.

### Meet the Entrepreneur - Napier University

Fifteen senior pupils had the opportunity to learn first hand about starting their own business from Young Entrepreneurs who explained the challenges of being their own boss. Pupils also had the opportunity to tour the Craiglockhart campus and visit the Centre for Entrepreneurship.

### Credit Crunch and Crash - Heriot Watt University

A group of Economics Students will be visiting Heriot Watt to hear first hand the reasons for the current economic crisis from Economists from the Banking Sector.

My Thanks, to Mrs Scott for coordination and delivery of these programmes.



## Term Events

### **S6 Outdoor Challenge Winners—Dec 2008**

Preston Lodge S6 entered two teams into this year's East Lothian Outdoor Challenge, which took place at Yellowcraigs, near North Berwick. The PL S6 team won the trophy for the second consecutive year.

### **Friday 7 November - Remembrance Service**

Our traditional Remembrance Service conducted by our S6 students supported by Mrs Christie took place.

### **Sunday 9 November: The Royal British Legion Remembrance Service in Prestonpans**

The school was represented by our Head Girl, Rosie Smith, Head Boy, Calum McCombs and myself at this moving event.

### **School Concerts 9/10 December**

Our Christmas concerts this year were nothing short of outstanding. Our Big Band now has competition from our school orchestra, violin group and guitar group. Our Pipes and Drums under the tuition of Colin Pryde and supported by Angus Tulloch continue to go from strength to strength.

The Christmas Concerts were nothing short of outstanding. Of particular note were Megan Rourke and Dominic Tartaglia, who reprised their entries for 'Young Musician of the Year' (when they represented the school in the Regional Final), to a standing ovation from the audience.

The pipe band merged wonderfully with our Big Band to present Highland Cathedral. The quality of rendition was simply wonderful. The quality of singing, musical performance and dancing was excellent. The two performances were a sell-out.

Our assembly hall each year is decorated to a very high standard using designs selected by our seniors

and, with the help of Mr Cramb of our Art Department, these artistic works of art are displayed with great pride.

### **Senior Citizens' Concert**

The Senior Citizens' concert on Wednesday of last week captured many of the features of our Christmas Concert. Our senior guests from local residential homes enjoyed the entertainment for the afternoon. My dancing partner of the previous year made her presence known to me in the hope that we might compete in 'Strictly...' It was a great afternoon complete with music, Santa himself and a splendid lunch. My thanks to colleagues in the Music and Home Economics departments for their sustained efforts through the festive season.

### **Young Musician of the Year**

Megan Rourke (vocalist) and Dominic Tartaglia (Instrumentalist) were placed first in their respective sections of the 'Longniddry Rotary Club Young Musician of the Year Competition'. They both went through to the regional final at Heriot Watt University.

### **Enterprising Links**

Following our Enterprising Links with John Lewis, Edinburgh, the senior pupils sang Christmas Carols to the enthrall of the customers. We hope to be able to repeat the event in future years.

### **Benmore Trip**

Mr Kidd also organised and accompanied a number of our S6 to a weekend of Outward Bound at Benmore Lodge. Mr Kidd is full of praise for the commitment and maturity shown by our seniors.

Mr Kidd reported the following:

A fantastic weekend of outdoor activities including night walking, kayaking, caving, mountain biking, rock climbing/abseiling and gorge walking was had - bringing the absolute best out of the pupils, giving it their all! The weather was flat calm and very cold, but did not deter them from throwing themselves into every activity.



The caving activity involved abseiling down into a deep pot-hole and being left to their own devices to find their way out. Many overcame fears of claustrophobia and rallied together as a team to find their way to daylight! Another of the caves involved a tight squeeze through a very narrow, Tobelerone shaped, long tunnel deep inside a hillside. Too small for Kidd and Frost's ample frames, to their embarrassment, but all the rest forced their way through.

Kayaking was taken to like ducks to water! Despite the near freezing temperature of the water, a great time was had paddling down Lock Eke and playing a game of kayak polo. As expected, there was the usual rivalry between the polo teams, which resulted in several players experiencing water temperatures never felt before. Never before had a mug of hot chocolate been so welcome!

#### Seniors Concert

The Senior Music Pupils are holding their 2nd annual concert at Longniddry Parish Church on Friday 30th January 2009 at 7.30 pm. This is a chance for the Senior pupils to practise their performing skills before their SQA exams.

Tickets (Adults £ 3) are on sale through the Music Department in the School.



**Don Ledingham**  
Acting Director of  
Education &  
Children's Services

**Preston Lodge High School**

Park View  
PRESTONPANS  
EH32 9QJ

Telephone 01875811170  
Fax 01875810060  
E/Mail Address [admin@prestonlodge.elcschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@prestonlodge.elcschool.org.uk)  
Web Address [www.prestonlodge.net](http://www.prestonlodge.net)

Another highlight of the weekend was the gorge walk: A trip up the side of steep mountain, climbing up a fast flowing burn filled with melt water from the previous week's snow. Caution was thrown to the wind and pupils and staff just got on with the task. With excitement at an all time high and confidence brimming over, the gorge was conquered, the Africa stone tamed, and the huge water slides enjoyed!

The disco/karaoke on the Saturday night was another highlight of the weekend. Many pupils toiled to get the microphones off the staff, who are seasoned veterans of karaoke! Singing and dancing went on 'til the wee hours of the morning, yet all were up for the hearty breakfast that set us up for the day ahead!

Benmore staff praised the way the pupils conducted themselves over the weekend, and have welcomed us all back next year. In fact, next year's trip has already been booked for the 11th December 2009 - bring it on!

## Urgent!

### Diary Dates

Thursday 18 December 2008  
Friday 19 December 2008  
Friday 19 December 2008

Senior Dance Evening  
PL Talent Show am  
School Closes at 12.00

Monday 5 January 2009

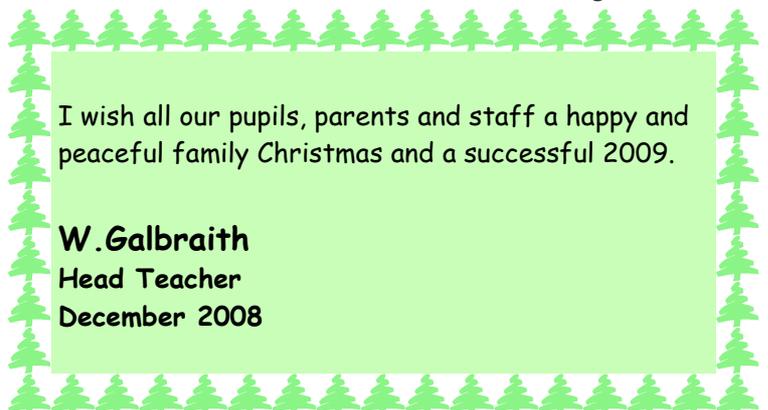
School re-opens for pupils  
and staff at 8.39 am.

Wednesday 14 January 2009

S3 Parents  
Consultation Meeting

Tuesday 27 January 2009

S4 Parents  
Consultation Meeting



I wish all our pupils, parents and staff a happy and peaceful family Christmas and a successful 2009.

**W. Galbraith**  
Head Teacher  
December 2008