

HT speech Celebration of Achievement Tuesday 21 June

Good evening everyone and a warm welcome to our annual Celebration of Achievement. Thank you to our musicians for such a lovely start to the evening.

I took up post as Head Teacher at Drummond 3 weeks ago and am delighted to be here. My background was at Dunfermline High School for the past 12 years as a Teacher of History, Curriculum Leader of a History faculty then a Depute Rector at Dunfermline High School for 4 years. I live in Edinburgh and it's great to be working back here and in such a beautiful part of the city. I have been meeting staff, pupils and parents every day over recent weeks and have made to feel very welcome by the school community. I am impressed every day with the team work ethos, how committed my colleagues are to Drummond, and to providing all young people in our school with such a positive experience and that they go the extra mile as a matter of course.

Sue Cook, who is a guest with us this evening and who will be presenting the Senior awards, told me that I would enjoy Drummond and as well as the fact that she is absolutely right about that, the successes we are celebrating tonight were achieved under Sue's Headship.

It is also lovely to see such positive relationships between young people and staff as these are a fundamental part of a school's success. Aspiration and hard work are also key to achieving your goals and our prize-winners this evening are pupils who have demonstrated these values both inside and outside the classroom. My vision for the school is to build upon its many current successes and to work with all young people, staff, parents and the wider community to take it from good to excellent.

It is a real pleasure and honour to begin my time at Drummond with this evening's celebration of all the fantastic things that these young people have achieved.

Staff at Drummond continue to offer a **wide range of opportunities** in school outside the classroom to develop young people's achievements and leadership and a few examples of these are the Career Ready Academy offered to S5 pupils; the S1 residential trip; football coaching; Rotary Young Chef competition; the opportunity to be a prefect in S6; lunch time and afterschool clubs across many curricular areas; creativity in events such as dance and drama productions and events like the sell out Diversity evening in March which was a community event in the truest sense

of the word with our primary schools, business partners and whole community; charity engagement through non uniform days and other fund raising events led by both junior and senior pupils with staff support, which have raised a combined total of almost £2000 for Mercy Corps Refugee crisis, Children in Need, Sport Relief and Cancer Research; and the Youth Philanthropic Initiative.

It must also be recognised how well staff adapted to the recent building challenges to continue with high quality learning and teaching for pupils in recent months and we are all looking forward to having the whole building back to full use in August.

I would also like to thank the **Parent Council** whose tireless and enthusiastic support of the school through fundraising and publicising our successes is not just very much appreciated, but demonstrates how important the school/ parent partnership is. And of course, their thoughtful provision of tea and coffee for staff at Parents' Evenings. The school really does value the engagement and support of all our parents and we would love to see you at Parent Council meetings- please see me, or David or Edmund for more information about this.

Our **attainment** continues to show a year on year improvement with S4 National 5 results, as does our number of S6 pupils leaving school with 5 or more Highers and 1 or more Advanced Highers. In addition, our positive destinations for leavers have also increased with students going on to a variety of interesting and successful vocations and Higher Education courses such as Photography, Astro Physics, Architecture, Art & Design, Chemical Engineering to name but a few, in universities across the UK. All in all, there is a great deal to be proud of at Drummond.

We continue to develop our **partnership working with primary schools, businesses and Lothian Equal Access Programme for School**, known as LEAPS. Student develop their leadership in taking responsibility for highly successful weekly PE activity sessions for our P5/6 students from Leith Walk Primary. They also went on 2 placements across the City and worked with secondary students with Additional Support Needs. All our National 5 Retail students once again passed with flying colours and had a wonderful graduation ceremony at John Lewis where they complete a 6 month placement. A close collaboration with a local law firm provides work experience and mentoring, and LEAPS provides our main Higher Education support.

I would now like to share the highlights of this past school session with you:

Mohshin Syed in new S5 really put Drummond on the map and in the news when he was one of ten international students selected from thousands of applicants for The Junior Academy, part of the prestigious New York Academy of Sciences, and met Bill Gates. I think some female colleagues were perhaps more interested in his meeting with Hugh Jackman!

Drummond's **sporting achievements** continue with our senior 3v3 female basketball team winning 2nd place in the Edinburgh Schools 3v3 tournament in March 2016. Diste in S2, won Gold at the Edinburgh Schools Cross Country Championships in March 2016 and 4 members of our Rio Beach Games team won silver and bronze medals for tennis in June 2016. As from this Friday a number of senior pupils have been selected to represent Drummond as part of the City's Young Sports Ambassadors' team.

Inclusion is a feature of Drummond that all staff and pupils are rightly proud of and this year saw Liam Steel in S5 become the Pupil Inclusion Ambassador for the whole of Edinburgh - he has now met the pupil representatives from all other councils in Scotland 3 times to examine issues that impact on how pupils access their education.

Drummond kept a very **high national profile with the Arts** this year and continued to build on the links with the National Galleries of Scotland that were first established in 2014. From the end of January to the start of May, artwork created by a number of pupils, predominantly Michael Paterson, Owen Simpson, Jamie Taylor, Roddy Devlin and Jasper Williams, starred in the Bad Entertainment exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery. The exhibition was a huge success and parts of the exhibition are currently on show in Irvine with the possibility of touring the north of the country later this year. Furthermore, the work of Michael Paterson, Owen Simpson and Nasur Ahktar that was created over 2 days during the Easter break at the Gallery of Modern Art will appear at the British art show in the next few days.

As part of the **Art department's** ongoing collaborative project with St. Andrews University and Edinburgh Printmakers Workshop, our S6 Masterclass pupils exhibited their Leonardo inspired prints in Cesena, Italy and at the Byre Theatre in St. Andrews. S6 Masterclass pupils and S2 Art pupils have secured funding from St

Andrews University to exhibit their photographs at the Glasite Meeting House in the last week of August 2016.

Interdisciplinary learning, or IDL in teacher jargon, is a strong feature in Drummond and S3 Art and Geography students worked across these disciplines in an exciting project which made connections between Art and cartography to create a collection of screenprints now on permanent display at the SNIPEF's Bellevue offices. Contemporary Photography Project.

The STEM IDL- standing for Science Technology Engineering and Maths, also goes from strength to strength, with Drummond teachers and pupils taking the lead across the city in this area.

Maths celebrated a number of triumphs with teams at both junior and senior levels at various competitions this year too, such as Enterprising Maths in the Lothians, The Scottish Maths Challenge and UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge.

This year we also have a number of **staff leaving us**. Claire Thomson in Pupil Support has been at Drummond for 11 years and takes up post at Portobello High School in August. John Jennings, Teacher of RME and Psychology, moves to James Gillespie's High School in August after 6 years here. Dr Penelope Marks, Teacher of Biology for 11 years, moved to Forrester High School in June. Beata Figueira Teacher of Modern Languages moves to the Royal High School; Angela Mcloone, Teacher of Music to Portobello High School; and Dawn Taylor, Teacher of Drama takes up post at North Berwick High School. I would like to thank all of these staff for their hard work and commitment throughout the years to the school and pupils, and behalf of all staff, pupils and parents of the school, wish them well for their future.

It is of course the young people we are honouring this evening who are the stars of the show and such positive role models in our school. They represent the values of ambition, effort, commitment and tenacity across a range of areas and activities such as academic achievements, sport, the Arts, Community Service, Enterprise and Citizenship. We are all very proud of them and delighted to recognise their achievements publically tonight.