

ARD SGOIL A'PHLUIC/PLOCKTON HIGH SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER—Week ending 7th March 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We celebrated Seachdain na Gàidhlig (World Gaelic Week) recently with primary pupils and pupils in S1 – S3 involved in a variety of activities encouraging their use and understanding of Gaelic. There were classroom experiences in Gaelic singing with Deirdre Graham, podcasting with Robert MacInnes from Radio Skye and map-making in the Assembly Hall with a giant map of Scotland. Listen again to the Radio Skye Seachdain na Gàidhlig special (first broadcast on Mid Morning at 11am on 27th February) to hear our pupils.

S2 pupils enjoyed a cultural excursion to Eilean Donan Castle and primary and secondary pupils welcomed members of the local community to a Gaelic coffee afternoon mid-week. Everyone had the chance to get involved on Latha an Abairt na Gàidhlig /Say a Gaelic Phrase Day on Thursday – see our facebook page for footage of some of these. The whole week was rounded off on Friday with a ceilidh for primary pupils in the morning and for S1 – S3 pupils in the afternoon, featuring live music from Music School. Mòran taing to colleagues involved in organising the week and to everyone who came in to the school to support us to take part in Seachdain na Gàidhlig.

The Senior Charities Group had the great idea of having a Spring Clean Day last Friday 28th February which included a dress down day and the opportunity to get involved in tidying up areas of the school. The day included an invitation to 'spring clean your mind' by leaving your phone at home for the day. This is part of our focus on encouraging awareness of the impact of phone use.



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As I write, we have a group of pupils and staff who are currently taking part in The Global Day of Unplugging (Thursday 6th March from 1.10pm to Friday 7th March at 1.10pm). We had a significant number of pupils who were willing to unplug and leave their devices for 24 hours and we are looking forward to hearing their reflections on their experiences.

Finally, you may recall that Storm Éowyn prevented Music School students from travelling to take part in a performance at Celtic Connections earlier this session. John Swinney, First Minister of Scotland, was one of the disappointed audience members on that night so we were delighted that he came to visit the school and the National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music earlier this week. Music School students provided Mr Swinney with a guided tour of the Music School and spoke with him about the value of their experiences as students of traditional music and the visit finished with a special performance of part of the set which should have been performed at Celtic Connections.

On the last three pages of this newsletter there is a reminder of our school values; our classroom code and our mobile phone policy. These are displayed in classrooms throughout the school and referred to by teachers to support positive engagement.

Le dùrachdan

Jo Scott-Moncrieff



Plockton High School Spring Clean Day

The Senior Charities Group are being proactive to improve our environment and organised a whole school spring clean on Friday 28th February. There's a host of opportunities to get involved, and to gain house points too.

Big shout out to Caleb, Jamie and Thor who, ably supported by Mr McGrath and Ms Jones, tidied up the flowerbeds at the front of the school building.

We are also looking for YOUR help. We want to freshen up some of the communal areas and are looking for (safe) mirrors – *not* glass, battery operated strip lighting, paint, gardening equipment, bedding plants. We are also looking for some outside seating options!

Finally, did you get a present that you know you're not going to use? Maybe some toiletries, gloves or hats that's just not quite you? Send it in to us and we will make sure it goes to someone who will really appreciate it as part of our 2025 Blythswood Shoebox Appeal.



Attendance

Reasons for absence

We really appreciate early communication when your child is absent from school so the quick phone calls in the morning are very helpful. Please make sure you include in your voice message or email the reason for your child's absence.

This needn't be a lot of detail – just making it clear if it is illness, an appointment etc.

Concerns about attendance

If you do need to discuss reasons for absence or have concerns around your child's attendance then please email or arrange to speak with your child's Pupil Support teacher so we can work together on that.

Survey on attendance

Finally, just a reminder that the survey on attendance is open until the 14th of March so there is still time to contribute to that:

Please find below a link to an important survey regarding school attendance. Specifically, we would like to hear from parents and carers who struggle to get their children to attend school regularly. If this has been your experience then it would be really helpful to hear from you.

The survey is part of a Highland wide initiative to understand and respond to the dip in attendance in schools since the pandemic.

It is anonymous and will run from Monday 24 February until Friday 14 March 2025.

Here's the link to the parent survey on attendance: <https://forms.office.com/e/vYZvATHXtC>

Thank you for your time. Your responses will help us to review how we support a high attendance rate both here in this school and more widely across the Highland Council area.



100 CLUB DRAW

1st Prize: Joanne Cumine
2nd Prize: Shona McGuinness
3rd Prize: Joy Matheson







S1 Self-portraits

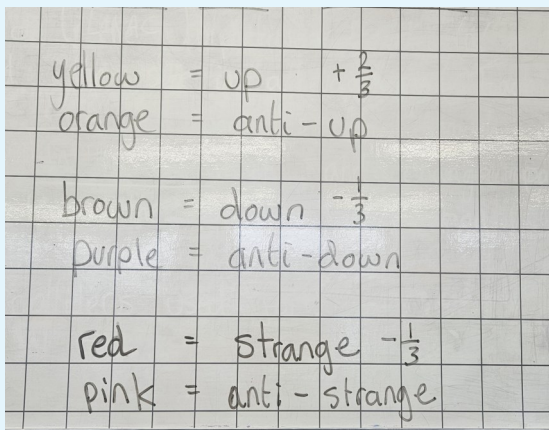


Women in STEM!

There are lots of events on a lunchtimes, but sometimes our pupils want to challenge themselves a little bit differently.

A group of junior girls decided to REUSE some of their plastic bottles to build an incredibly high, and unsupported, tower!

Well done for them beating their record of 5 to make it 6....Can they go higher?



The Higher Physics students were learning about elementary and composite subatomic particles this week. They successfully "made" Mesons and Baryons - the smarties represent different quarks. They combined the quarks/smarties together on a cupcake to create composite particles known as Hadrons (think Large Hadron Collider LHC).

Can you name the Hadrons they made by using the colour code?

| Mesons | | | | | | Baryons | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Meson | Symbol | Baryon No. (B) | Charge (Q) | Strangeness (S) | Quark Structure | Baryon | Symbol | Baryon No. (B) | Charge (Q) | Strangeness (S) | Quark Structure |
| kay-plus | K ⁺ | 0 | +1 | 1 | u \bar{s} | neutron | n ⁰ | 1 | 0 | 0 | udd |
| kay-zero | K ⁰ | 0 | 0 | 1 | d \bar{s} | proton | p ⁺ | 1 | +1 | 0 | uud |
| kay-minus | K ⁻ | 0 | -1 | 1 | s \bar{u} | delta-plus | Δ^+ | 1 | +1 | 0 | uud |
| phi | ϕ^0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | s \bar{s} | delta-zero | Δ^0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | udd |
| pi-plus | π^+ | 0 | +1 | 0 | u \bar{d} | delta-minus | Δ^- | 1 | -1 | 0 | ddd |
| pi-zero | π^0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | u \bar{u} or d \bar{d} | lambda | Λ | 1 | 0 | -1 | uds |
| pi-minus | π^- | 0 | -1 | 0 | d \bar{u} | sigma-plus | Σ^+ | 1 | +1 | -1 | uus |
| | | | | | | sigma-zero | Σ^0 | 1 | 0 | -1 | uds |
| | | | | | | sigma-minus | Σ^- | 1 | -1 | -1 | dds |

Each meson has a corresponding anti-meson, with opposite charge and quark structure.

Each baryon has a corresponding anti-baryon, with opposite charge and quark structure.

The antiparticle is opposite in charge and is represented with a line above the quark.

An up quark = u and an anti-up quark = \bar{u} .

All particles have an anti- particle.

A neutron = udd and an anti-neutron = $\bar{u}\bar{d}\bar{d}$.

Hope you have fun naming the Quark Cupcakes!



Aithisg air Seachdain na Gàidhlig 2025

(Report on Gaelic Week 2025)

Seo feadhainn de na rudan a rinn na clasaichean ann an Àrd Sgoil a' Phluic airson Seachdain na Gàidhlig 2025

(Here are some of the things Plockton High School classes did for Gaelic Week 2025)

Pupils in S1 made new door signs for all their teachers using Gaelic for their names and their subjects.



Miss Shankland, our Music Teacher, made phrase cards for all staff using Gaelic, phonetics, and English translations - they were very well received and it was lovely for us all to be able to speak some Gaelic together! They even had a QR code - giving us access to even more phrases!

|  FACLAN FEUMAILE <i>Handy Phrases</i>  | | |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Madainn Mhath | Mah-deen vah | Good Morning |
| Feasgar Math | Fesskar mah | Good Afternoon |
| Is mise... | Is meesh-e... | My name is... |
| Ciamar a tha thu? | Kimar a ha oo | How are you? |
| Tha gu math | Ha goo ma | I am good |
| Tapadh leat | Tapa lat | Thank you |
| Bi sàmhach | Be saa-vuch | Be quiet |
| Sgoinneil! | Skunya! | Great! |
| Tioraidh | Cheerie | Goodbye |

On Monday 24th February, we were very fortunate to have a visitor to the school who taught us Gaelic songs for Gaelic Week and here's the evidence!

Diluain 24 An Gearran - Deirdre Graham - a' seinn leis a' chiad bhliadhna!



On Tuesday 25th February, Robert and Sadie from Radio Skye came to the school to lead a podcasting session with S1 - S4 pupils, all of whom learned some great new skills from this experience.



Alongside the podcasting, Mrs Lander ran a 'Design a T-shirt competition' for Seachdain na Gàidhlig 2026 - all entries had to be in by Thursday lunchtime. Congratulations to Millie Morrison in S2 for winning the school's house competition with her t-shirt design.



Pupils in S2 visited Eilean Donan Castle on Wednesday 26th February after working on Na Seumasaich (The Jacobites) as part of an interdisciplinary project between History, Gaelic and Music. Here's what one S2 class had to say!



Eilean Donan Castle report:

On the 26th of February the S2s took a trip to Eilean Donan Castle for Seachdain na Gàidhlig week to learn all about our culture and a famous time in history - the Jacobites. We had already learned a little bit about the Jacobites in our Gaelic and History classes and played some of the Jacobites music in our music class - that we all have once a week. We had a tour guide called Susie for the majority of our time there. Susie also told some of us about which side our clans were on which was very interesting.

We started off the 2nd period when we left the school at 9:45 am and later arrived at 10:15 am at the Castle. Though we learned about the Jacobites in school, it was nice to get some extra information and visual examples of how it was back then. We got to hold one of the bombs that was fired in one of the many battles that had happened involving Eilean Donan Castle, and when we were in the Banqueting hall, we also got to hold one of the swords. We had a look around the castle and then headed back to the bus where most of S2 ate their snacks. Bha an t-acras oirnn! We then left the Castle at about 11:55 am and made it back to the school at about 12:20 where we headed to Gaelic before going to our period 5 class.

Thoughts from some of the S2s on the trip:

Here are some words used to describe our trip: *Fun *Fantastic

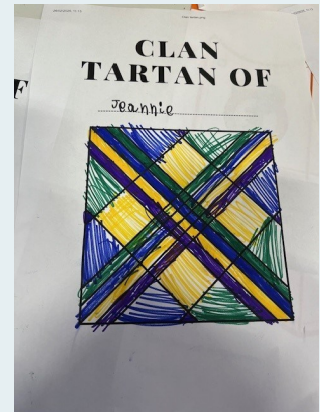
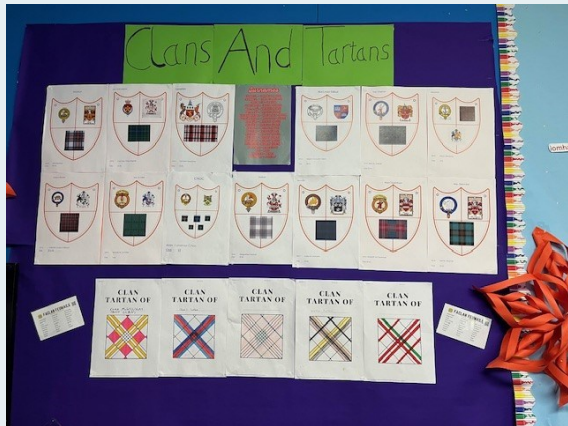
*Interesting

A big thank you to Mrs Grant, Miss Shankland and Mrs Lander, who took us on the trip and helped organise and direct us. To Susie - who showed us around the Castle and told us facts about the Jacobites and the castle.

And finally, thank you to the public who were at the castle - for putting up with us during the time we were there! Tapadh leibhse!



S3 - Cinnidhean 's Breacain



S3 & S5 aig Feasgar Cofaidh na Bùn-sgoile

Pupils in S3 & S5 helped out at the Primary School Coffee Afternoon by hosting stalls for our members of the community and there was something for everyone.

S3 Cinnidhean 's Breacain



S5 Fileantaich le faclan Scrabble



Thursday 27th February - Mapa na h-Alba le Spòrs Gàidhlig



With the help of Spòrs Gàidhlig, pupils in S1 & S3 completed a massive jigsaw puzzle of the Map of Scotland in Gaelic. This was a lot of fun! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed finding out the Gaelic names for different places and trying to translate them in order to find where they were on the map.

Alongside the Maplands event, Mrs Lander gathered some Gaelic phrases from staff, visitors and pupils for Latha Abairt na Gàidhlig! Our new Gaelic yoga club also took place at lunchtime.

Seachdain na Gàidhlig was finished off on Friday 28th February with a Cèilidh for pupils in S1 - S3 who were very lucky to have the Music School Cèilidh Band provide the music for them!

Our young people thoroughly enjoyed ending the week with a ceilidh. Here are some of their reviews:

“Brilliant band!”

“Great music & we danced a lot”

“There were good dances that we all knew!”





We are:

Kind, Respectful, Resilient, Hard-working

Plockton High School Relationships Policy - Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils:

- Use words and actions to help others
- Respect: others and themselves
- Engage: with their learning- ask for help and keep going when faced with challenges
- Work Hard and Contribute: positively to the school and wider community

Staff:

- Meet and greet pupils at the start of each lesson
- Follow the Plockton classroom code and mobile phone policy
- Refer to the expectations for all young people – **Kindness, Respect, Resilience, Hard-work**

PTs Curriculum:

- Meet and greet pupils into the department and be a visible presence to encourage appropriate conduct
- Support staff through Faculty Meetings and with discussions with young people
- Monitor any Faculty Target Sheets

PTs Pupil Support and SfL:

- Have an overview of a young person's progress and identify appropriate support
- Will work closely with the young person, family, staff and partners
- Play a pivotal role in ensuring clear communication

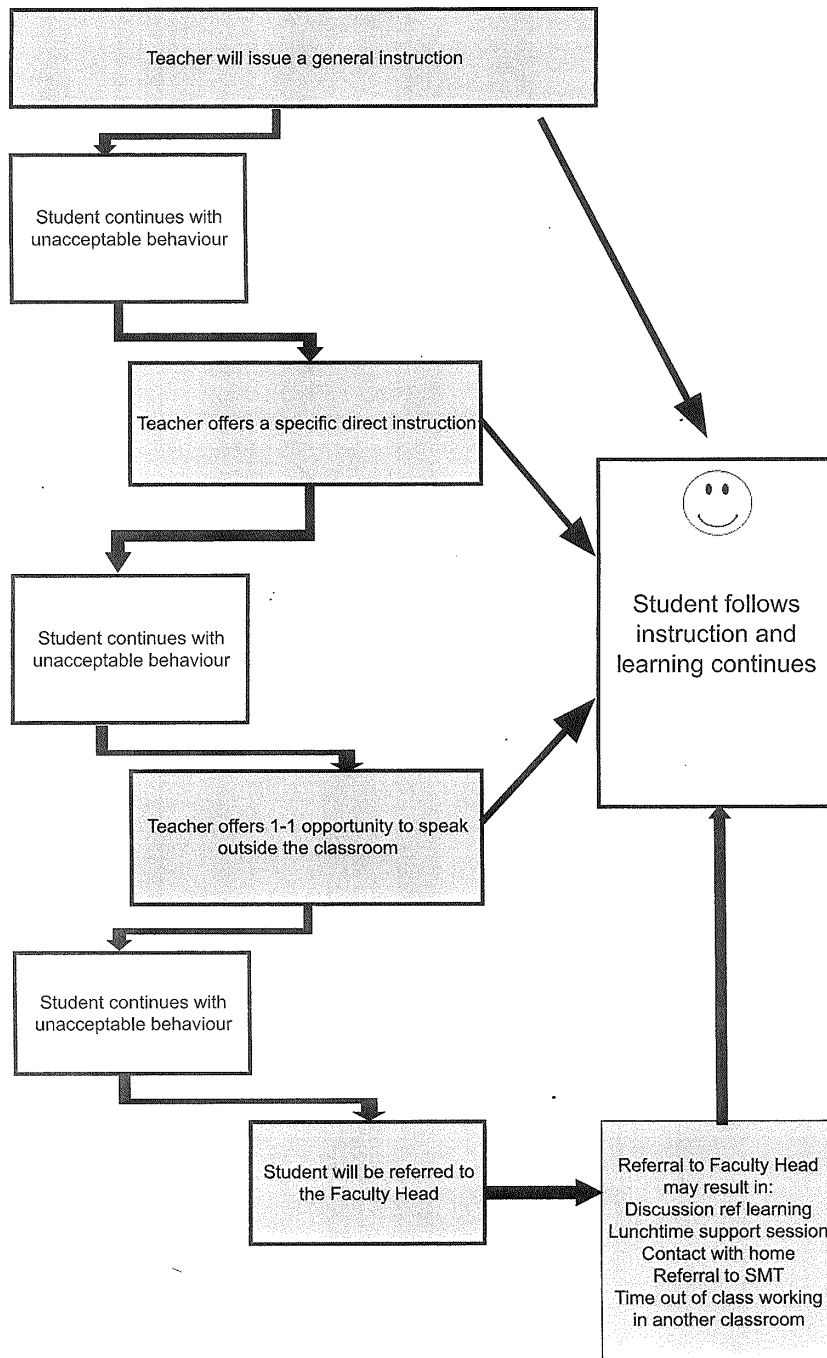
SMT :

- Meet and greet at the start of the day and be a visible presence at key times of the school day.
- Support staff in working with young people who have complex needs.
- Use data to analyse the impact of key interventions.

Parent/Carers:

- Support their child in being respectful to others and themselves.
- Communicate any information with school that may impact on their child's learning.
- Engage their child to take an active part in the Plockton High Community.

How to follow the Classroom Code



Mobile Phones Policy

During the school day phones should be on silent & headphones should not be on display. They should be kept in a school bag when:

In the classroom

Going to the toilet

Moving between classes

The only exception is when a teacher allows the use of phones in the lesson

If a phone is confiscated, it will be referred and sent to the PT for collection at the end of the school day

You may use your phones safely and responsibly in school:

Before registration

During break

During lunch

Rationale

1. To enable the school to develop an ethos of digital citizenship that leads to safe and responsible use of mobile technology.
2. We want to positively embrace mobile technology whilst helping protect staff, partners and young people from possible harmful consequences of misuse.
3. We believe that we should be preparing young people to use modern technology in a safe and responsible way, therefore there is not a complete ban on mobile phones.