

Outstanding Achievements

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee – 20 January 2016

Action for Children

Having celebrated the organisation's 60th birthday at the Inverness Town House, Action for Children held a reception at the Scottish Parliament, which involved leading roles for four local young people alongside the Minister, MSPs and many other dignitaries. This included a drama presentation, prepared that day, which delighted the assembled guests. Rachael Mitchell of Culloden Academy led the presentation, which also involved:

- James Mitchell – Nairn Academy
- Mikey Gregory – Inverness High School
- Siobhan Milne – Inverness High School

Lynda Banks

Lynda Banks is the Head Teacher at Strathdearn Primary. Committee has previously been informed about her achievements in powerlifting. She travelled to Vancouver in December to represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Powerlifting Championships. There were over 500 lifters from across the world, and Lynda won 3 gold medals and 1 silver medal – silver for squat and gold for bench press and deadlift - and she was the overall Commonwealth Champion in her weight/age class. She also gained a Commonwealth Record for her 140.5kg deadlift.

Fearn Bishop

Having already gained an HND in Classical Music and First Class Honours Degree in Music Computing, Fearn Bishop who is a former looked after child, has gone on to be awarded a Master of Science Degree with Distinction in Human Computer Interaction by St Andrews University. Fearn has recognised the support of the University, Highland Council and Barnardo's in her blog, and in an article she has written for the Scotsman newspaper, saying: "It's been a long journey to get here, and I know I couldn't have done it without all of their help".

Freya Boyd

Freya is a P6 pupil at Resolis Primary School, and a member of Highland Budokan judo club (Sensai Robert Inglis). She also trains with Alness and Evanton judo club (Sensai Peter Foster). Thanks to the incredible amount of hard work and training she put into her Judo, she is now the current Scottish Judo Champion for the under 36kg A Band. That means that she scored most points in her weight category in all the Scottish competitions she took part in over the course of the 2014/15 competition year.

Paul Davidson

Paul Davidson was educated at Drummond School, where he says he was 'encouraged to try everything by my PE teacher.' He has been selected for the GB Athletics Talent Development Squad, having previously been selected to compete in the Anniversary Games at the Olympic Park in 2015. He hopes to be selected for Rio 2016.

Andrew McFarlane

15 year old Andrew McFarlane from Inverness and who is home-schooled, is a multi-talented athlete with considerable success across numerous events. As last year's reigning Octathlon Champion, Andrew moved last year to Indoor Heptathlon where he won a Silver medal at the National Championships, and to outdoor Decathlon where he won a Bronze medal at the Scottish Championships and came 5th in the English Championships (and was the youngest athlete in the competition). The 2015 U17 SATS Challenge ranks all Scottish athletes based on performance, and Andrew is placed 8th across all athletics events.