

Outstanding Achievements

Education, Children's & Adult Services Committee: 26 January 2017

Joni Baikie

Joni Baikie, formerly of Wick High School, has won the prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry prize, after producing the best advanced higher chemistry project. The project involved the synthesis of a chemiluminescent compound and spectral analysis of the light it produced. He performed the synthesis at school, then analysed the compound, which produces light in a similar way to glow sticks, using the facilities at a local company which also supplied the chemicals. Joni was also awarded the Ackergill Tower prize, for best performance in advanced higher.

Bridge to Employment Programme.

Over 40 applications were submitted to the Johnson & Johnson Charity - The Corporate Citizenship Trust - across the worldwide organisation. Johnson & Johnson staff voted for their favourites to be judged by the Trust for Gold, Silver & Bronze awards. This is the first year that the Highland scheme was eligible to enter, and it won the Silver Award, along with 5,000 Euros for the programme.

The Highland scheme has been led by LifeScan Scotland in a partnership with Highland Council, SSE, Highlands & Islands Airports and Capgemini. Hundreds of pupils have been supported to become engaged in the development of employability skills in science, technology, engineering and maths.



Eilidh MacPhee and Alix Aburn

Two pupils from Inverness Royal Academy won the 2016 National Schools Gaelic Debate competition. The final, took place at the Scottish Parliament between Inverness Royal Academy and Glasgow Gaelic School, on the topic that Donald Trump is 'exactly what the world needs at this time'. Eilidh was also the recipient of the BBC Shield for Best Speaker.

Highland Deaf Education Service

Highland Deaf Education Service at Dingwall Academy has had further success in a major award ceremony. The school won the Lifelong Learning Initiative for a sense of community, where "by taking collective responsibility, pupils and staff have the opportunity to achieve extraordinary things." It was the runner up in the Children and Young People Achievement, for the "new innovative Deaf Studies course enabling the hearing and D/deaf communities to come together, giving equality and empowerment through shared learning."

Sharon Holloway

Sharon Holloway, the Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership Development Manager, has been awarded a Governor in Charge Commendation by the Scottish Prison Service. This is the first time SPS has given the award to someone from out with their organisation. It was awarded to Sharon in recognition of the significant contribution she made to the implementation and facilitation of the SMART Recovery programme.

Inspection of Hostels

Formal feedback from inspections of Plockton, Portree and Ullapool Hostels, indicates that 'Very Good' grades have been awarded across the board. The Care Inspectorate commented favourably on the care and commitment of the staff, the evidence of "nurturing" of the young people in their care, good communication with parents and school staff, and the high level of appropriate training offered to the staff teams. They also commended the young people for their openness and sense of humour.

Inverness Polish School

Young people at the Inverness Polish School, were recently presented with A level certificates by Highland Council's Head of Additional Support. These students can find it difficult to achieve National 5 and Higher qualifications, but one achieved Grade B GCSE, and nine achieved A level Polish (6 with grade A).

Lochaber and Skye Police

A Police Scotland Twitter account run from the Highlands has been recognised at the UK-wide Police Tweet Awards. @LochabSkyePol was named the best tweeting corporate police account.

The account is used by officers in Lochaber and Skye to post community safety messages, and it is well-known for cheeky tweets including one about US hip hop artist Kanye West's visit to Skye: *"Out in your #Kardashin around #Skye this summer? We'll be #KeepingUp with you so #Kanye please drive sensibly? #OpRoute #HipHopCops"*.

A few months earlier, @LochabSkyePol tweeted a warning to an alleged offender which read: *"If you get back to your house tonight on #Skye and realise your cocaine is missing - we have it in the police station #WeNeedAWord."*