

Makar's Poetry Prize

Edinburgh's Makar, Michael Pedersen, together with the Super Power Agency ran a series of workshops under the theme of 'Friendship' and invited S3-6 pupils to write poetry in response, looking at what friendship means to them. The competition was launched

at schools across Edinburgh and all the top prizes were awarded to pupils in Craigroyston Community High School.

1st Place – Maria Olasek

2nd Prize – Kayla Hughes

3rd Prize – Matylda Momola

Highly Commended – Joshua Oturu

**Cat Grant, CL English and Literacy
Craigroyston Community High School**



Photo: Michael Pedersen, Edinburgh Makar and Poet & Maria Olasek, S3 Pupil & 1st Place Winner

Digital Schools Award Scotland

As Digital Coordinator at James Gillespie's Primary School, I am delighted to announce that we received the Digital Schools Award Scotland, on Wednesday 13 November 2024. This prestigious award is recognition of the hard work and dedication of everyone in our school community towards teaching and learning in digital literacy.

We are proud to create digital resources that can be edited, modified, and shared with staff and learners. Our digital strategy and online planners ensure for curriculum accessibility and smooth planning for transition. Staff have opportunities to share their digital practice with others through monthly 'Digi

Hits.' Learners can revisit resources through online spaces and there is a consistent approach to sharing achievements across the school. Learners are highly motivated, exercise choice and interact well with technologies.

Staff use digital tools for formative assessment and work collaboratively to give feedback through quizzes, audio files, screen share and learning journals.

At James Gillespie's Primary School, we have a clear outline of digital expectations where learners understand the rules and how to demonstrate cyber resilience and internet safety.

The pupil leadership group, school community and I now strive to achieve the health and wellbeing, coding, and European Award.

Robyn Rutherford
James Gillespie's Primary School



Sean Connery Foundation Literacy/ Dyslexia Support Team

It has been another successful term for the Sean Connery Foundation Literacy/ Dyslexia Support Team, working in another eight schools who have made the very most of this training and support opportunity.

In October, one of these schools, Roseburn Primary, also welcomed Jenny Gilruth MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. Ms Gilruth visited to find out about this life-changing programme for learners with literacy difficulties/ dyslexia, funded by the three-year grant from the Sean Connery Foundation.

Also visiting were representatives from the Sean Connery family, including Sean Connery's granddaughter Samara. Samara noted: 'Today's visit was truly inspiring. Having faced the challenges of dyslexia myself, I know firsthand how transformative tailored education can be. Specialised teaching took me from being afraid to step foot into a classroom to discovering a genuine love for learning.'

During their visit, they heard firsthand about the meaningful difference that the programme has made to more than 800 learners and their families and, the over 1100 teachers who have had training from the team since the SCF L/DSTeam teachers and PSAs began the SCF work.

Roseburn Primary is now one of 45 schools in the City of Edinburgh Council area who have benefitted so far from this groundbreaking programme of teacher training and support, which continues to June 2025.

Hilary Aitken, Lead teacher, Literacy/ Dyslexia Support Team (Edinburgh Learns)



Autumn Animation

As winter approached and the nights grew longer and darker, Edinburgh Learns Digital found a delightful way to lift our spirits and bid farewell to autumn.

On 20 November they ran an Autumn Animation live lesson for second level learners across the city with 1 to 1 iPads.

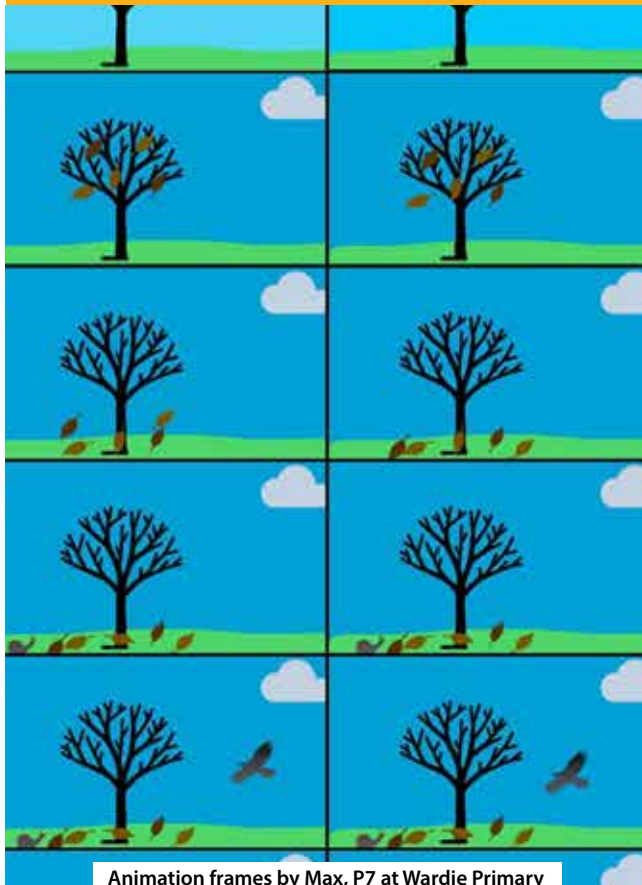
Over 1,000 enthusiastic learners joined us from their cosy classrooms to craft their own autumn animation masterpieces.

Using Keynote, students were guided through the process of creating a setting for their animations. They then followed a step-by-step tutorial to produce a frame-by-frame animation depicting leaves falling from a tree in autumn.

Finally, they transformed their creations into animated GIFs to share with their classmates.

A great task combining digital literacy and expressive arts!

**Kenny Hunter, Development Officer
Edinburgh Learns Digital**



Animation frames by Max, P7 at Wardie Primary

The Liberton Learning Festival

The inaugural Liberton Learning Festival, held on 21 October 2024, brought together 200 colleagues from across the learning community. This event offered a variety of workshops inspired by the key HGIOS quality indicators: 1.4 Leadership and Management of Staff, 2.2 Curriculum, 2.3 Learning, Teaching, and Assessment, and 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion.

The day began with a welcome in the assembly hall, followed by three interactive workshop sessions, each with a wide range of options within for colleague to choose from, totally over 30 different workshops. A highlight was the 'Dyslexia-friendly classrooms' session, which provided practical strategies to support dyslexic learners, fostering inclusion and equity in education. Other workshops explored the purposeful use of technology, learner participation, emotional wellbeing, and wider achievement, with sessions such as 'Differentiation with an iPad' showcasing practical ways to use iPads to support the diverse needs of our learners.

The festival encouraged collaboration and reflection, with workshops like 'Planning a successful primary-secondary transition,' which facilitated dialogue on improving transitions. Themes of mental health support, coaching, and restorative practices highlighted the commitment to positive relationships and resilience within the community.

The Liberton Learning Festival provided an opportunity for collaboration and professional development, enabling colleagues from across the learning community to share ideas, explore new approaches, and enhance their practices with a focus on inclusive and effective teaching.

**Jennifer Skene, Acting Depute Head
Liberton High School**



Celebration of Culture

Our whole school focus this session at Pilrig Park School is the Celebration of Culture. In November, to show case our interdisciplinary learning fortnight, we held a 'Celebration of Culture' parental engagement cinema event.

We were delighted to welcome many families to school on the afternoon of 6 November and share with them the learning activities which had taken place in classes over a two-week period. The school hall then turned into a cinema, and we all enjoyed watching four short films from different countries, whilst eating some tasty world biscuits.

Throughout the curriculum each class learnt about a particular country. In home economics, pupils enjoyed making a variety of foods from across the world, including curries, pizzas and noodles. Pupils learnt how to do a beautiful Spanish dance in PE. In the art room, classes produced Maasai Warrior jewellery, Indian elephants and some Italian maps made of pasta! Melodies from several countries could be heard from the music room as the pupils enjoyed exploring different cultural rhythms.

We even had a clothing shop where pupils could try on saris and other traditional costumes from around the world. A few pupils learnt how to say hello and goodbye in Chinese.

We are continuing to celebrate culture throughout the session, with a cultural café planned for next term!

Steph Morrison, Class Teacher
Catriona Ferguson, Principal Teacher
Pilrig Park School



Celebration of Culture



Celebration of Culture



Creative Careers Event

Gracemount High School hosted DYW's first Creative Careers event in the local authority, which we believe to be the first of its kind in Edinburgh.

Senior pupils in the expressive arts faculty were invited to learn about the diverse careers in the creative arts industries, by industry professionals from John Lewis (interior design), Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Lyceum Theatre, Capital

Theatres. They were joined by freelance artists in fashion styling, illustration, bagpiper, DJ representative. This event was curated by Nina Boyd (DYW School Coordinator) and Jonathon Kilday (Music and Career Ready Teacher) to bridge the gap between school and creative careers. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who gave up their time to provide information on career pathways in the arts. The feedback from pupils was positive, and there are plans to expand on this further next year.

If anyone would like to engage with next year's Creative Careers event, please contact Gracemount High School via email: admin@gracemount.edin.sch.uk

Emma Whyte
Gracemount High School

Prestigious Digital Schools Award Achieved by Balerno High School Learning Community



Balerno High School, Ratho Primary and Dean Park Primary School and Nursery have become one of the first school learning communities in Scotland and the first learning community in Edinburgh to attain Digital Schools Award status through collaborative efforts.

Balerno, Ratho and Dean Park Primary School and Nursery have received the nationally recognised education award via a learning community initiative

that distinguishes schools that set out to share resources, mentor and guide each other.

The successful schools implemented an innovative learning community strategy that set them apart. Their approach featured:

A strong strategic vision and effective Digital Strategy embedded across the learning community.

Evidence of technology being used to effectively enhance learning, teaching and assessment across all settings.

Effective use of technologies to support learners with Additional Support Needs.

High Quality Staff Training in Digital Learning.

These initiatives have significantly enhanced the digital learning experience for students across the learning community. The award is testament to the collaborative approach taken by schools across the learning community and through their work with the Edinburgh Learns Digital Team.

Lynsey Binnie, Depute Head Teacher
Dean Park Primary School

Celebrating Our Pupils' Success: An Afternoon Tea for CHAS

On Thursday 30 January, the senior Skills for Work Hospitality pupils of Gracemount High School showcased their incredible enthusiasm and customer service skills by putting on an afternoon tea event at Fairmilehead Parish Church, in support of Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) and their dedicated volunteers. This event was a testament to the hard work and commitment of our young people, reflecting our commitment to care and excellence.

CHAS provides essential care and support for children with life-shortening conditions and their families. Throughout this event, our pupils developed vital skills such as teamwork, organisation, and strengthened their ties to the local community. The efforts of our pupils, combined with the supportive spirit of our community, made the event a resounding success.

We are incredibly proud of our pupils and deeply grateful for everyone's support in recognising the important work of CHAS. Special thanks to Sarah Dannfald, Wendy Paterson (Inside Out Chef), Fairmilehead Parish Church, Greggs, The Chocolatarium and Mimi's Bakehouse for their generous contributions.

Miss Krampf, Teacher of Health and Food Technology
Gracemount High school

CHAS afternoon tea – Serving our guests



CHAS afternoon tea – creating a memorable experience



Celebrating Our Pupils' Success: An Afternoon Tea for CHAS

Rights Respecting School at Oaklands Special School

At Oaklands Special School pupils are working towards gaining the school's Silver Rights Respecting School Award. Seven pupils from across our school meet once a month to work on spreading the word about our RRS journey and to raise awareness of the UNCRC within the school and our wider school community. The sessions provide great opportunities for learning and are, most importantly, lots of fun!

This term we are focussing on articles 12 article, 13 and 14 which focus on the right to make choices, and to hold views and opinions which are listened to. We started the year by undertaking a scavenger hunt around the school looking for pictures that had

some of the UNCRC articles on the back (opportunities for making choices, matching, fine and gross motor control, using communication systems). We then used what we had found to create some new year's resolutions. We have also created posters to display around the school reminding people to listen to us, no matter if we have a voice or not (opportunities for choice, art and design, fine motor control, communication).

We hope it won't be long until we are ready to apply for our next award.

Clare Warwick, DHT, Oaklands Special School



RRSG scavenger hunt showing Karen Flockhart PSA supporting Eve Paisley P6 to find matching pictures.

Rights Respecting School at Oaklands Special School



Listen to me poster and example of one of the posters made by the group.



Resolutions the Rights Respecting New Year's Resolutions that the group came up with which are displayed on our RRSG board in the school foyer.



RRSG Resolution activity showing L-R Josh Mackay PSA, Leon Moffat-Young S3, Karen Strathmore NN, Lachlan Galloway P7, Helen Jack PSA sharing the rights they had found on the scavenger hunt.

Active Schools Annual Review 2023–24

The Active Schools Annual Review 2023–24 highlights some of the fantastic work the team achieved with the young people and partners they work with. The Active Schools team offer a universal service to all schools, but the stories and impacts in this review reflect the benefits of taking a more targeted approach to engage those who face more barriers to being active.

Active Schools in Edinburgh, and nationally, is based on a volunteer led delivery model, and is supported by a new partnership agreement with Edinburgh College which we hope to see the benefit of going forward.

We hope you enjoy the read.

Tammy McKinlay, Active Schools Manager
Marianne O'Brien, Active Schools Coordinator
Lauren Gibson, Active Schools Coordinator



Creative Thinking Qualification – Drummond Community High School

The Creative Thinking Qualification is a project-based course which celebrates the importance of creativity, problem-solving and critical thinking. Key skills highlighted by the World Economic Forum as necessary for a future workforce. Drummond has been at the forefront of delivering this exciting qualification with student work showcased across the UK and internationally.

The course was created by Daydream Believers and is designed by industry experts, teachers and lecturers. It is delivered at Level 5 and 6, credit rated by Napier University and aims to engage students in real-life challenges.

Our projects this year are:

#Get on with it – Design an environmental campaign with a call to action to save our planet.
Music of your soul – Develop a concept for an interactive, immersive experience to communicate the music of your soul.
Forestopia. Create an immersive experience in a theme park inspired by nature's wisdom.

The 5 learning outcomes include **Research, Concepts, Failing and Fixing, Communication and Evaluation**. Students can communicate their concepts by using sketches, 3D models, Minecraft and other digital tools. Our class have displayed high levels of engagement to produce beautiful concepts that inspire positive change in the world.

Philippa Drummond
Drummond Community High School

Safer Internet Day Assemblies

With Safer Internet Day falling on the February break for Edinburgh schools, the team at Edinburgh Learns Digital wanted to make sure that learners had the opportunity to join in by organising a live assembly for the P1–3s and the P4–7s. With 200 classes signing up across 64 schools, over 5500 learners were able to celebrate together.

The theme this year was 'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online!' This year, Safer Internet Day focused on the issue of scams online and for young people, how to protect themselves and others, as well as what support is available to them. To help learners to understand this, they followed the experience of Blue the Bird who found himself in a tricky situation when a pop-up appeared on his tablet tempting him to share his personal data in exchange for free seeds.

With guided conversation and plenty of opportunities to interact, learners from P1–7 were

able to think about the theme and how it might impact their own online lives. The feedback from both teachers and learners has given the team lots of ideas for future assemblies.

**Dana Henderson, Development Officer
Edinburgh Learns Digital**





New Film and Screen Education at Drummond Community High School

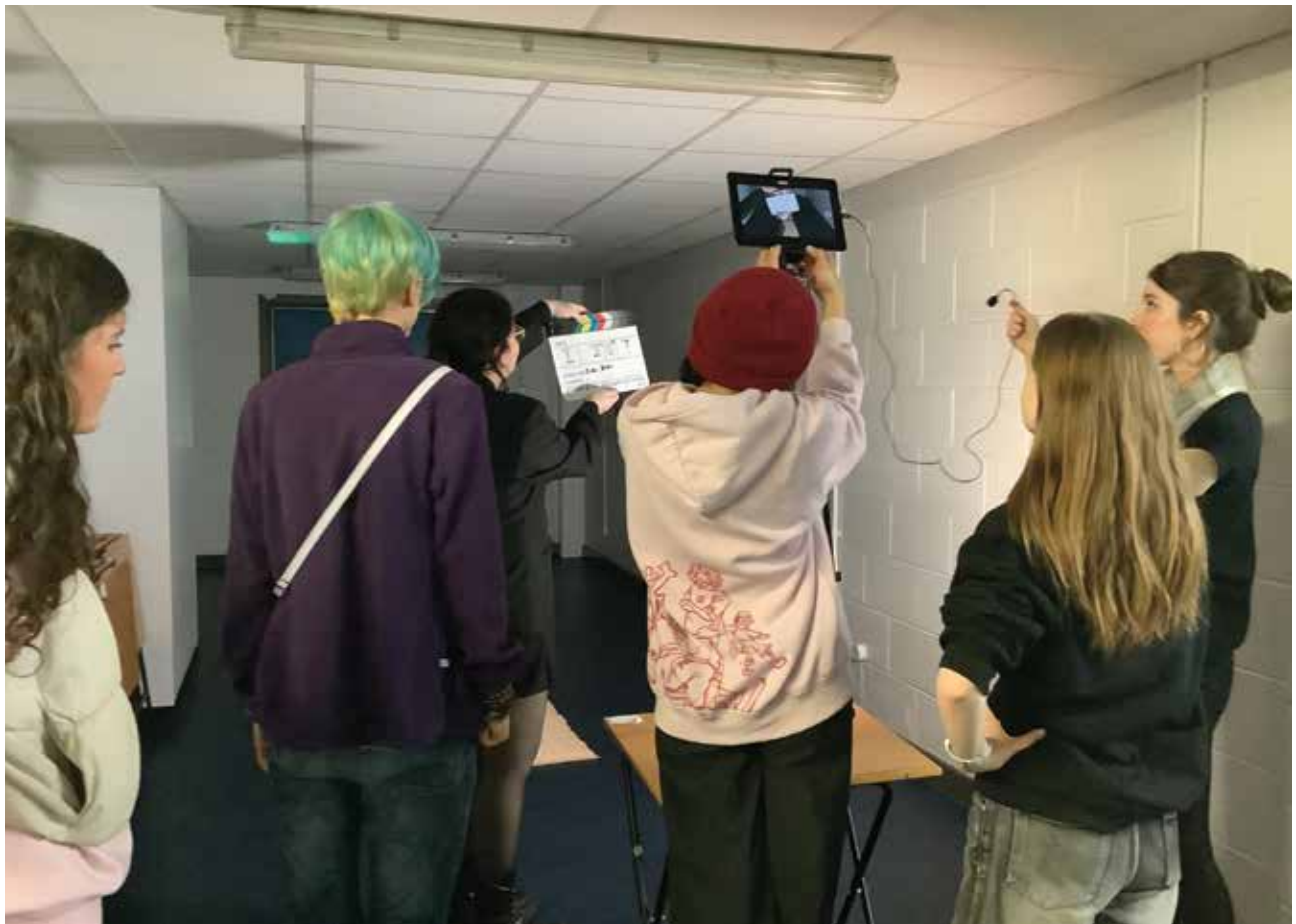
Drummond Community High School are in the second year of their pilot of the new Film and Screen Education curriculum, currently being developed by Screen Scotland with Education Scotland and SQA.

This is an exciting new offer in the Expressive Arts faculty that develops skills in filmmaking. Much of the curriculum is project-based and offers fantastic opportunities for leadership of learning.

In the BGE, learners have been creating a variety of film and screen products, including adverts, music videos, and documentaries. The Film and Screen Education curriculum also includes an SCQF course at Level 5 and Level 6 where learners develop their knowledge and skills. The seniors have just wrapped up their main film projects (a fiction film and a reality TV parody); this is an engaging and creative way for learners to showcase their skills and to work together as a crew, giving real life insights into potential future positive destinations.

Learners from S1–S6 have been enthusiastic about the learning offered by the course. The Film and Screen Education curriculum offers young people a curriculum and pathway with links to the creative industries while being an exciting and accessible space for learners to work collaboratively and creatively.

Bethany Davis, Teacher of Film and Screen Education
Drummond Community High School





Edinburgh's Early Learning and Childcare Academy's Qualification Verification Report

EELCA – Edinburgh's Early Learning and Childcare Academy has received the latest Qualification Verification Report from the SQA, with High Confidence in all areas of the report.

This builds on 10 years of receiving consistent, high confidence gradings in resources, candidate support and internal assessment and verification. The report highlighted the bespoke approach to training and delivery being key to the successes of candidates achieving their qualifications.

The centre provides vocational training in Social Services Children and Young People qualifications at SCQF Level 6 for existing EYA staff and at Level 7 for Modern Apprentices training to be Early Years Practitioners.

The delivery of the Foundation Apprenticeship qualification for Social Services Children and Young People through a partnership approach of working with secondary schools in Edinburgh has returned.

The academy celebrated 10 years of operating in August 2024.

Amanda Godsell
Operational Support Officer for EELCA

Seasons Greetings' Artwork Competition – December 2024

The annual Seasons Greetings' artwork competition, organised by JCDecaux UK in collaboration with CEC, marked its eighth year in December 2024. This event gives talented individuals the exciting opportunity to showcase their designs on digital screens along Princes Street.

Budding artists from primary and secondary schools across Edinburgh were invited to enter the competition by creating imaginative festive card designs. Among the entries, 12 winners were chosen, including the top three, who joined the Lord Provost, Robert Aldridge to unveil their artwork at bus shelter on Princes Street.

Winners included:

Eshaal Ahmed – Drummond Community High School

Elsie Smith – Bruntsfield Primary School

Lilia Walas – Braidburn School

Lily Stokes – Parsons Green Primary School

Suri Pirani Carrasco – Drummond Community High School

Mark Downie – Pilrig Park School

Leo Stojicevic – St Mary's Primary school, Leith

Chimamanda Umezuluike – St Augustine's RC High School

Richard Nwokocha – Gorgie Mills

Calum Laing –Nether Currie Primary school

Ellie Glegg – Nether Currie Primary school

Mohammed Morol – Dalry Primary school

Keep an eye out for an email in August/September with this year's entry form.



