

The Royal High School: Enhancing Student Safety

The Royal High School wins School Safety Award at the 2025 National Education Business Awards

At The Royal High School, we've taken a big step towards improving student safety by installing vape alarms in our toilets. This decision came after feedback from pupils in focus groups and questionnaires, where they shared concerns about feeling uncomfortable using the main toilet blocks due to vaping. We wanted to make sure that every student feels at ease when using these essential facilities, and the impact has already been positive.

Vaping in school toilets has been an ongoing issue, often leaving students feeling uneasy or avoiding the spaces altogether. However, since installing the vape alarms, we've seen a noticeable change. These alarms detect vaping and immediately alert staff, discouraging the behaviour and helping to create a safer environment for everyone. If the alarm sounds, staff take swift action, and pupils caught vaping are also given support to make healthier choices moving forward.

In addition to the vape alarms, we've introduced a QR code system in all toilets, allowing students to report issues directly to the business manager. Whether it's a maintenance problem, vandalism, or behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable, pupils can quickly and discreetly raise concerns. This system has given students a stronger voice in maintaining a safe and respectful school environment.

One of the most significant impacts of these changes is that students now feel they've 'taken back control' of their space. With improved monitoring and an easy way to communicate with school staff, pupils no longer feel the need to avoid the toilets due to safety worries.

This initiative is a reflection of our school motto, 'We Belong Here.' By addressing these concerns, we've not only made the school safer but also encouraged a culture of responsibility and collaboration between pupils and staff.

**Pauline Walker, Head Teacher
The Royal High School**

Our Cycling Initiatives at Kirkliston Primary School

Kirkliston Primary School is committed to developing cycling skills among our pupils. We received generous funding from the Tesco Community Grant and the Airport Community Fund which allowed us to purchase a fleet of 16 bikes. The bikes are used throughout the year for a variety of purposes.

Pupils in P5–P7 benefit from Bikeability training, learning essential cycling skills that promote safety and confidence on the road. For those who have not yet had the chance to learn how to cycle, our PE specialist offers one-to-one lessons to ensure every pupil can develop this valuable skill.

Our PE specialist has also completed Group Ride Leader training, enabling us to take groups of pupils on cycling trips to Queensferry High School for swimming sessions and transition events. This initiative has proven to be educational, environmentally friendly, and cost-effective, as it significantly reduces the need for bus transport.

During school holidays we lend the bikes to families who may not have access to cycling equipment, ensuring that more pupils can enjoy the benefits of cycling outside of school hours. This initiative has greatly enhanced our community spirit and provided a lasting impact on the physical activity opportunities available to our pupils.

**Rebekah Smith, PE Specialist
Kirkliston Primary School**



Marseum 900 Exhibition at Portobello High School Attracts Record Community Engagement

Portobello High School celebrated the success of its inaugural 'Marseum 900' event on Friday, 21 March, welcoming over 700 visitors from across the community. Inspired by Edinburgh's city-wide 'Edinburgh 900' celebrations, this interdisciplinary initiative saw over 300 learners creatively showcase Edinburgh as a city of leisure, culture, and celebration through imaginative storytelling and visual exhibits.

The project, led by enthusiastic S6 'Astronauts,' was significantly supported by the successful funding bid made by a dedicated team of S5 and S6

learners in September, who secured £2,500. These funds allowed young people to produce over 300 innovative shoe-box exhibitions and stage a vibrant, large-scale community event.

Donations received during the exhibition will support future initiatives, helping sustain the momentum created by Marseum 900.

Portobello High School extends heartfelt thanks to all involved for their outstanding contributions.

Greg McDowall
Headteacher
Portobello High School



Marseum 900 Exhibition



Marseum 900 Exhibition





Community Eid Celebration

The fifth Gracemount Learning Community Eid Festival was held at Gracemount Primary School on Thursday 27 March. The festival exemplifies a significant journey from a modest outdoor gathering during lockdown to a vibrant, inclusive celebration that fosters cohesion and cultural understanding within our school communities.

Over the years, the event has grown in momentum, becoming a key annual occasion that unites families from Muslim and non-Muslim

backgrounds through shared food, festivities and cultural exchange. This celebration not only reinforces pupils' sense of identity and empowerment but also promotes inclusivity, respect and mutual understanding among diverse groups, strengthening community bonds and highlighting the importance of cultural heritage in fostering a harmonious and engaged community. We owe a huge thanks to Unity, the Edinburgh-based charity, for their invaluable contribution to the success of the event, demonstrating their dedication and support for local community initiatives.

We are excited to announce that next year's Eid celebration will be hosted at Frogston Primary School, and we warmly invite everyone to join us for a wonderful event filled with delicious food and community spirit as we continue to celebrate and promote inclusivity and togetherness.

**Pamela Kirkmali, Principal Teacher
Gracemount Primary School
Rob Hart, Pupil Support Officer, Gracemount
High School Learning Community**

Community Eid Celebrations



Community Eid Celebrations



Digital Schools Award Scotland

Tollcross Early Years Campus

Tollcross Early Years Campus received the Digital Schools Award Scotland on Monday 31 March 2025. This is a recognition of rich child-centred digital pedagogy evident throughout our spaces, interactions, and experiences for all our learners. We were delighted to hear that The Digital Schools team recognised our collaborative work at all levels which has enhanced our teaching and learning and overall communication with all stakeholders. Learners can access a range of resources both indoors and outdoors to extend their learning and build on curiosity. The Digital

Schools team recognised that we have ambitious and dedicated staff who work hard to uphold our vision: children are supported to be active leaders in their learning. We continue to do this by providing learners QR codes, iPads, literacy and numeracy websites and apps, cameras, torches, walkie talkies, printers, and voice recorders. We utilise resources to support online safety and digital resilience. Digital resources have positively impacted children's transitions and our EAL learners and families. Learners experience daily opportunities to experiment with 'unplugged computing science' across all our curricular areas. We are now working to extend our support for children with additional support needs using language and communication aids, accessibility tools and assistive technologies. Thank you to everyone who has been part of our journey.

**Kelly Walsh, Head of Centre
Tollcross Early Years Campus**



Pilrig Park School Celebrates Silver Level Achievement in Visual Supports Project



Pilrig Park School has reached an exciting milestone in its commitment to inclusive communication by achieving Silver Level in the Visual Supports Project (VSP), in collaboration with the Speech and Language team. This accomplishment highlights the school's dedication to enhancing communication and learning through visual aids. Our assessor, Jenn Currie Speech and Language Therapist, states the impact of the

initiative has been profound: 'The implementation of visuals has been very valuable for all children and young people. Staff now have a greater understanding of visual supports and their importance.'

Staff at Pilrig Park School have played a crucial role in planning, goal setting, and developing visual tools, integrating them seamlessly into everyday routines. Ann O'Hagan, Head Teacher, emphasised the significance of the structured approach provided by the project, stating: 'The Visual Supports Project has provided a good framework to steer this initiative. Without it, the success we see today may not have been possible.'

The school continues to foster creativity, finding new ways to utilise visuals, including gathering student's views to include them in planning for their own learning and achievement. Pilrig Park School proudly flies the flag for visual supports, paving the way for even greater achievements in inclusive learning. Next goal is GOLD!

Ruth McLarty , Principal Teacher of Support for Learning and Year Head for S1 & S2 Pilrig Park School



It's Time to Talk!

A new collaborative called 'Time to Talk' has been nominated for an award for its approach to improving young people's mental health, across Edinburgh.

'Time to Talk' has been established by youth work organisations (The Junction, Granton Youth, Wester Hailes Youth Agency, Canongate Youth, and 6VT Youth Café). The collaborative has an ambitious goal to improve young people's mental health and provides one-to-one support for young people in local communities. Its innovative approach involves delivering brief interventions in NHS emergency settings and the collaboration is piloting new approaches to engage with parents and carers.

Its commitment to improving the lives of young people has been recognised by Youth Link Scotland, with a shortlisting for a National Youth Work Award in the Health and Wellbeing category.

'The approach fosters trusted relationships and creates safe spaces for young people to access support. By uniting five youth work agencies and the NHS, it bridges clinical care with community support, ensuring timely interventions. It makes mental health support more accessible and enables young people to thrive.'

Laurene Edgar (LAYC)

The work has been made possible through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (City of Edinburgh Council), and with support from NHS Lothian and Northern Star.

Cara Spence (The Junction – Young People's Health & Wellbeing)



UNICEF at Leith Academy

Young People 1st discussed changes they would like to make or see globally – discussing topics such as War and Climate Change. Discussions were entirely pupil led, with young people talking openly about how they feel watching current news affairs.

Staying in their groups young people 'conga lined' around the drama studio, learning about various 'change makers', past and present. S3 Leith Academy pupils delivered these sessions to primary young people.

Young learners then put together their own dramatizations and presented to peers.

Throughout the day we had a 'constant working document' young learners were able to write down any ideas they had regarding making changes within their own setting and city.

A delicious lunch put on by our very own Home Economics department, allowed all young learners to relax and chat over home-made delights.

After lunch young learners talked about Positive Affirmations, writing their own and attaching them to birds that the hung along the 'main street' of the school. P7 leavers in particular were excited to know they would see their works of art again during the three-day visit.

Lastly young people spent time in one of our beautiful glasshouses, planting seeds.

**Blair Connor, House Head (PSL)
Leith Academy**



UNICEF at Leith Academy



Digital Discoveries Week (#currieddw25)

For the second year in a row, Currie has held a Digital Discoveries Week (#currieddw25) for all S1 to S3 students. The aim of the week is to encourage the discovery of how technology can be used in everyday learning, life and work. The week is made up of a rota of activities for each year group and half-day immersive experiences that students sign up to, that involves working with partners from outside of the school, eg Skills Development Scotland.

DDW is organised and led by student Digital Leaders from across S1 to S4, delivering to their peers in their own or other year groups. The leadership skills demonstrated by the leaders show their enthusiasm about technology and shaping student learning, while demonstrating a range of digital skills (logo created by them) and a developing confidence to lead sessions that may not have before. Our Digital Leaders thoroughly enjoyed the experience and allows them to work towards achieving a Level 5 Leadership Award for their role throughout #currieddw25.

Our Digital leaders planned the rota of activities including the resources to support each. These activities are open for all students and some examples are 'How to Rob a Bank' for coding, artificial intelligence, Minecraft, Drones, e-Sports, ClickView, Internet of Things (IoT), iPad maintenance amongst

others. Staff facilitated sessions, while digital leaders delivered others. I will let you guess which ones were the most popular! 61% of all S1 to S3 student said the opportunities were good to very good, compared to last year.

As part of the week's activities, we also organised half-day immersive experiences, out of school, for S1 and S2. Students engaged with partners such as Hearts Innovation Centre and Edinburgh University – Informatics department. Students explored technology and how these impact Cyber Security.

Below you can see what some of the students thought, along with the Digital Leaders ...

'I really enjoyed experiencing new technology we have not used in school before, like drones and e-sports, that I did not know a lot about'. (Student)

'It was fun leading and teaching the future generation how to use technology properly and efficiently'. (Digital Leader)

'It was really fun and enjoyable. I learnt about different technologies that I did not think were around or couldn't use for example How to Rob a Bank and e-sports'. (Student)

We look forward to providing this opportunity again in March 2026, in our new school, with a range of creative spaces to facilitate even more discovery and enjoyment of technology.

**John Schmidt, Empowered Learning Lead
Currie Community High School**



Digital Discoveries Week (S1-S3)

#currieddw25



Edinburgh Marathon Festival: Broughton Primary School

At Broughton Primary, for around the last ten years we have participated in the Edinburgh Marathon Festival. Each year a small group of parents promote EMF across our school community to encourage as many pupils as possible to sign up for one of the junior races on the Saturday of the Edinburgh Marathon Festival. Prior to the event parents runs training sessions for children at Pilrig Park each Sunday morning from Early March.

This year, on Saturday 24 May at Holyrood Park we had two staff members and seventy four children from nursery to primary 7 running in the 10k, 5k, 2k, 1.5k and 1k. This is always such a fun day with many of our parents also running in events.

The photographs show two of our P7 runners, Marko Masic and Risay Bin Hazhatta Idaham, as they reach the finish line of the Junior 5k and a group photo of the children and staff taken in school later in the week. We are incredibly proud of this tradition and hope to increase the number of pupil participants each year!

**Maria Gowans, Head Teacher
Broughton Primary School**



Building Futures: Liberton High School's Construction Pathway

At Liberton High School, our vision is clear: Everyone Matters, and that includes every young person's chosen path. We are committed to ensuring all learners can pursue opportunities that align with their aspirations, strengths, and interests.

A few years ago, analysis of Positive Destinations data via Insight revealed a gap in how we were preparing young people for careers in the trades. Further analysis using the Data Hub showed that, each year, between 36% and 68% of our S1 boys consistently expressed an interest in construction-related careers. However, too few were achieving sustained post-school success in these fields.

Traditionally, young people could begin a college-based construction course in S4 through the school-college partnership. However, many found this transition challenging. Barriers included commuting across the city to unfamiliar campuses, limited prior exposure to a college environment, and a mismatch between expectations and the realities of working outdoors. Most young people aimed to become joiners but lacked awareness of the wide range of roles across the construction industry. As a result, many did not complete their course. We knew we could do better. Our young people needed earlier exposure to the sector to help them decide whether it was the right pathway.

This led to the creation of the Construction Pathway. The timing coincided with the planning of the new Liberton High School building. We worked closely with Balfour Beatty, who not only provided valuable insight into construction sites, industry trends, and future job roles, but also offered financial sponsorship for the pathway. Balfour Beatty engaged with their

pipeline of contractors to identify employers willing to host our young people on site during S4 as part of their weekly timetable.

In collaboration with Balfour Beatty, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), and local employers, we launched a bespoke Construction Pathway designed to provide early, hands-on experience from S1 to S4. The pathway begins on site at Liberton High School, where learners develop practical skills. In S4, they take part in work-based learning with industry partners and contribute to a local project whilst completing the Level 5 Foundation Apprenticeship in Construction.

Our current S4 cohort has participated in monthly work-based learning sessions with SIDEY and ENIGMA Scaffolding. Individual placements have also taken place with Maxi Construction and RAITT Builders. These experiences have introduced learners to the wide range of careers available within the sector and helped them develop industry-relevant skills and confidence.

We are proud to share that three of our learners have now secured employment with Enigma as apprentice scaffolders. Others are progressing to college, further training, or apprenticeships, all within the construction industry.

Looking Ahead

The next phase of our journey focuses on inclusivity. We are working to ensure that girls are not only welcomed into the pathway but actively supported and encouraged to explore careers in construction. We also aim to expand our employer partnerships to reflect the full range of opportunities within the sector and inspire more young people to find their place in the industry.

**Carrie Thompson, Depute Head Teacher
Liberton High School**



Liberton High School's Construction Pathway



Hospitality Connect programme

Gracemount High School has had the opportunity as part of the Hospitality Connect programme to work with The Scott and The Scholar Hotels part of the University of Edinburgh – Hospitality Collection. The programme aims to give pupils hands-on hospitality experience and the initiative aims to reshape perceptions of hospitality careers while providing students with real-world training in a professional hotel environment.

Since launching last November, the partnership has enabled 30 Gracemount students, aged 14 to 16, to explore daily operations at The Scholar. The initiative aims to reshape perceptions of hospitality careers while providing students with real-world training in a professional hotel environment. Participants gained practical insight into core hospitality functions including housekeeping, reception services, kitchen operations and food & beverage management.

Hospitality Connect, founded by UK Hospitality, delivers six bespoke career experiences annually, including workshops, employer-led events, and hands-on training. By connecting classroom learning with real-world industry expertise, the programme helps bridge the gap between education and employment, offering students a tangible pathway into hospitality careers.

During the School year the pupils visited The Scholar five times and this culminated on Thursday, 27th March, with a special event at The Brasserie, rebranded by the students as 'The Mount' for the day. Students took full control of the lunch service, overseeing everything from menu design and marketing to food preparation and front-of-house service. This hands-on experience not only contributed to their year-end assessments but also provided them with practical skills and a deeper understanding of the industry – an invaluable stepping stone toward future career opportunities.

Gavin MacLennan, our Group General Manager, said: 'We have loved opening our operations to support students who have already demonstrated a keen interest in the hospitality sector. By providing real-world insights and experiences, we've sought to equip them with the practical skills and knowledge



required to excel in this field and to demonstrate the career opportunities it brings.'

Morven Langley, Teacher at Gracemount High School, added: 'This initiative really brings classroom learning to life. It's a fantastic opportunity for our students to see the inner workings of a busy Edinburgh hotel, enhancing their learning and preparing them for exciting career opportunities in this growing sector.'

This partnership marks the start of what is hoped to be a long-term collaboration, inspiring the next generation to view hospitality as an exciting and rewarding career choice.

**Morven Langley, Teacher of Home Economics
Gracemount High School**

Double Delight for Dalry Primary!



Dalry Primary School is celebrating a fantastic double achievement – earning their Eco-Schools Green Flag and has gained its Core Reading School accreditation!

The Green Flag award reflects the school's outstanding commitment to sustainability over the past year. Pupils and staff have worked hard

on eco-projects aimed at making our school more environmentally friendly. We concentrated on several key initiatives, including raising awareness of climate change, ways to reduce energy usage, and minimising litter and waste. From community litter picks to whole-school assemblies, all classes played a vital role in the success of our Green Flag.

At the same time, our passion for books and reading has been rewarded with a Reading School accreditation. Our Reading Ambassadors have worked tirelessly to help foster a love of reading through exciting book events, whole-school DEAR times, and the development of cosy reading spaces in classrooms that have inspired pupils to develop a love of reading for pleasure. They also worked hard to win a bursary of £500 to develop our amazing school library. Well done!

We are incredibly proud of our double achievement and are excited to continue our sustainability and reading journeys!

Jennie Ellis and Clodagh McDermot
class teachers, Dalry Primary School



Canal View Voices Podcast Series

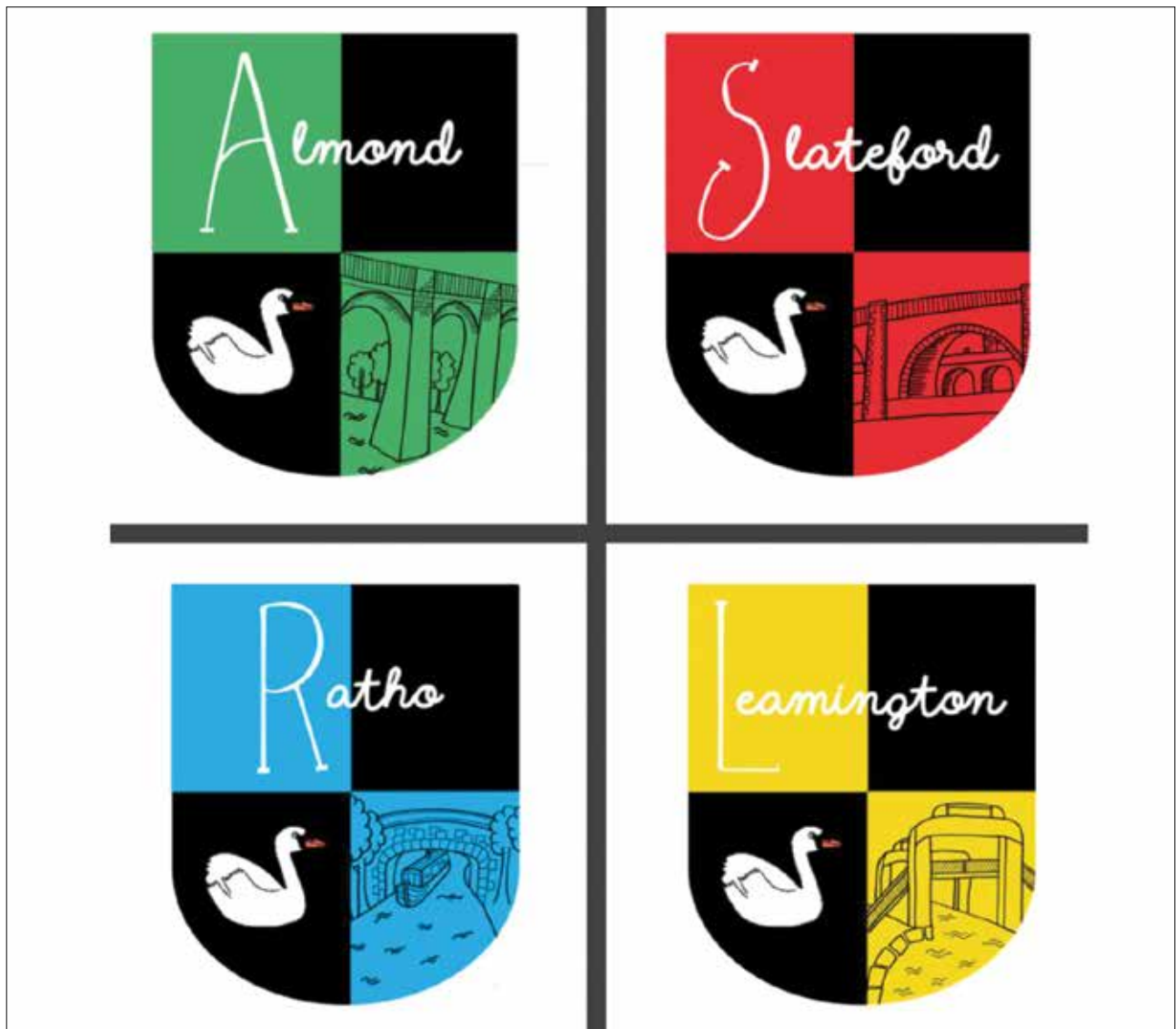
Canal View Primary School is based in Wester Hailes, just beside the Union Canal. This year the children asked that we organise the school into 'houses' and decided that the houses will be named after different points of interest along the canal – Leamington, Slateford, Almond and Ratho. The points along the canal were chosen to give the children a wider sense of place within the city – many of the children were born and brought up in Edinburgh but do not

regularly leave Wester Hailes and have little sense of the geography of their city or the way in which this area links to others.

We decided that we would like to support our learners to find out more about each of the locations along the canal and find stories of people who are connected to those locations. We made an application to Edinburgh 900 who funded the project.

Our P5 children worked with a professional storyteller – Chief Chebe – to help the learners shape the stories and writer/podcaster – Daniel Gray – to help the learners record a limited podcast series to share the stories. We are very proud of the series – you can listen to them 'wherever you get your podcasts'!

**Susannah Jeffries, Previously Depute Head Teacher
Canal View Primary School**



Oaklands School's participation in Relay Your Way

On Thursday the 5 June, the pupils of Oaklands Special School were delighted to take part in the Edinburgh leg of Relay Your Way, an epic relay across Britain organised by the charity Cerebra. The relay is championing the 1.5 million young people in the UK with disabilities and sending a powerful message that sport, adventure and play should be inclusive to all.

The day started by welcoming the runners who had come from Pilrig Park Special School to pass on the baton. We then had a wonderful parade around our school, with our participating athletes taking the lead on a variety of adapted bikes and race running bikes. From there, with their equipment, they got onto our buses and travelled across the city to the Scottish Parliament where they were joined by MSPs who had pulled on their running shoes to take part in this fantastic event.

At Oaklands we strive to ensure that all of our pupils can participate, in their own ways, with experiences and opportunities that their mainstream peers have access to. Hopefully this event will have raised this issue's profile across the UK.

Relay Your Way ends in Windsor on 6 July.

Clare Warwick, DHT
Oaklands Special School



Sharon Humble, Ade Adesida, Frankie Conroy, Karen Kenny

Oaklands School's participation in Relay Your Way



Amanda Dodd, David Niebudek



Saif Ahmad, Jack Weir, Lettie Guerrero, Kerry Brown, Andrew Donn, Gary Song

Oaklands School's participation in Relay Your Way



Marta Sanchez, Jack Hamilton, Sharon Humble



First Minister John Swinney, Logan Ruiz Aguilar, Gwen Twynam Perkins

