



Christmas Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

December 2001

Rector's Note

At the end of this first year of the 21st century all will have their own thoughts. None of us will forget this year, the vivid horror of September 11th and the international human tragedy that followed. Three months on we are realising that a fundamental change has taken place, that fear and doubt now threaten trust and confidence at a global level. A big task for us all, teachers, parents and pupils, is to ensure that we do not become inward-looking, cautious or negative. It is worth remembering that 70 years ago, at the very depth of the Great Depression in the USA, when the stock market had crashed and the productive industry of the strongest country in the world had collapsed, President Roosevelt went on the radio to say that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself".

So when the traditional Christmas songs tell us to be of good cheer we should take particular note this year.

One good consequence of the evil and misery we have just seen may be that the conscience of our society is awakened, that politics becomes seen as a necessary way of changing or improving our community, that concern for others in worse conditions than ourselves is heightened. Perhaps the citizens of today's Madras and tomorrow's Scotland will have a fuller understanding of our global village and the interweaving of politics with religion, wealth and power. Perhaps the strength of Amnesty work in both junior and senior buildings is a positive indication.

The pages which follow will map out some of the landmarks in a busy term. One interesting perspective on current concerns and activities has recently been provided by a collection of letters written by a former pupil, Joseph Hargraves between 1847 and 1854. Miss Rust who has just retired after 14 years assisting in the Office and the school Archive came across this collection in

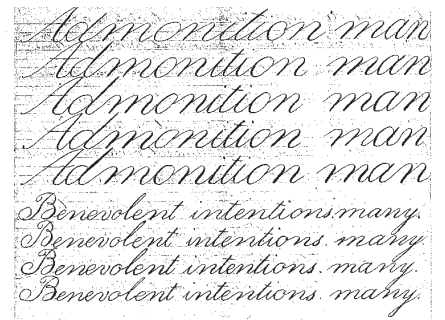
the National Archives of Scotland. Below you can see a photograph of Joseph and some examples of his work in those days. We think that the photograph must be one of the very earliest taken of a school pupil anywhere and we know that St Andrews was a centre of early photography. Joseph's letters are mostly about people he knows, about successes and disappointments in classwork, about his free time, and about the plans for seeing his family and friends. He was a boarder in Mr Young's house (possibly the present Music House).

We are given an insight into a life of seeming simplicity, orderliness, a sense of the rightness of things and trust in the structures of society. Even so it was far from inward-looking as the letters cover contacts in the East Indies, Hudson's Bay and London. There was a global village of sorts even then, courtesy of the British Empire. Joseph's delight at the present of buffalo tongues and cranberries say it all.

Joseph's letters describe his feelings about everything he sees and does, heightened perhaps by the unnatural life

away from his family, but still making the best of a unique experience in what his mother (writing from London in 1847) describes as "one of the best seminaries for children which our country contains". Not bad for a school only founded 14 years previously.

We shall be making a small publication of this interesting correspondence. Meantime let us resolve that 150 years on someone somewhere will be able to learn about good things happening in our times at Madras.



I have now joined the classes of Mr Inceaton the Arithmetic master,



I have gone over a bit of Palestine but I was put back to Scotland with the whole class again -

Staffing Changes

The term has seen more changes than in the recent past.

In September Miss Rust retired after 14 years' service in the Office and the school Archive. Mrs Milne was appointed as Library Assistant.

In October Mrs Campbell left her post of Acting Principal Teacher of Learning Support to take up a permanent appointment in St Andrew's High, Kirkcaldy. Mrs Gourley took over our Acting Principal Teacher post. Mrs Hamilton replaced Mrs Rennie as Clerical Assistant in the Support Centre. Miss Lister was appointed as Auxiliary in the Office. Mrs Neilson, Mrs Smith and Mrs Richardson were appointed as Auxiliaries for Special Educational Needs.

In November Miss Watkins was appointed to a permanent post in the Classics Department. Mr Austin was appointed to a permanent post in the Design and Technology Department. Miss Ednie replaced Mrs Cox as temporary Classroom Assistant. Mrs Dougall was appointed as Home-School Link Officer.

We also welcomed Fraulein Irnstorfer and Mademoiselle Mortolini our "assistantes" this session in Modern Languages.

Commendable

At the recent Awards Committee Meeting, Achievement Awards went to Roger Carter (S3) and Ian Robertson (S5) who won the Scottish Schools' Sailing Competition at Lochearn Sailing Club; to Victoria Bowdidge (S3) for her Gold medal victory in the Under 15 Scottish Schools' Trampoline Competition; to Lindsay Forbes (S1) who represented Scotland in the Junior Home Counties Table Tennis International Weekend; to Ben Hann (S4) and Seth Thomson (S5) for representing U16 Scotland at American Football. This is indeed an impressive set of National successes!

E-Mail

enquiries@madras.fife.sch.uk

Website

www.madras.fife.sch.uk

Praise Where Praise is Due!

The major whole-school focus, this session, has been to reward positive pupil behaviour. To this end, subject departments have been working hard to develop systems of rewards for all year groups. These include the use of incentive stickers on work completed, approval recorded by stamps issued via the Pupil Planner, displays of work and of-course, verbal praise and commendation. As the session progresses, we hope to be – will be even more creative!!!

When the session began, the intention across the school was to increase the use of the Pupil Commendation – a form that has been in existence for several sessions. A new element this session has been the Certificate of Commendation created so that pupils have a tangible sign of their success and so that, as parents, you have an opportunity to share that with them and indeed, us. Our pupil grapevine tells us that these have been framed, stuck on fridges, used as bribery and generally well received!

Comments overheard in lunch queues, locker areas and corridors have given

School Snippets

School Book Club: Cover-2-Cover leaflets were issued to all pupils in Kilrymont Road. Many thanks to the many parents who ordered books for Christmas through the school. Pupils get the books they really, really want and the English department boosts its Third Year classroom book boxes with the free book commission. Leaflets go home every few months with the latest teen reads, CD Roms, audio books and stationery. Look out for the next one in January/February!

Due to pupils handing back their empty Walker Crisps packets to the school Tuck Shop and parents handing in tokens from home, the school has managed to collect 92 free books so far. The scheme has started up again this December so remember for you crisp packet: Don't put it in the bin, hand it in!

staff their chance to experience a warm and positive glow!!!

A Behaviour Management Working Group, convened last session and continuing this, has been instrumental in managing and monitoring the developments going on in this area. The In-Service Day on 15th November was given over to Dr Geoff Moss, a national authority in behaviour management in schools. His purpose was to focus on classroom management or, as Dr Moss put it, ways of 'surviving and succeeding in the classroom'. His input, while reassuring, was challenging, enlightening and throughout the day, entertaining!

And so the work to sustain a positive learning environment goes on. Next term, pupils will be consulted about the developments. Ideas for doing this will be taxing minds over the Festive Season!!!

Poets in School

Stanza, the St Andrews Poetry Festival, attracts poets and performers from all over the world each October, and for the second year in succession, the English department has had the opportunity of inviting some of them into school to work with the pupils. This year, Jill Pirie offered workshop sessions to a number of first year classes. In a series of workshop sessions, she was able to impart her love of language to these young pupils. A range of senior classes had the privilege of welcoming Kate Clanchy, who read some of her work, and was able to answer at least some of the questions which arise from these all-too-brief sessions. Both visitors spoke highly of the pupils, and very much enjoyed their visits.

With each passing year Stanza enhances its reputation, and is rapidly establishing itself as one of the major venues where established authors can rub shoulders with those who are relatively new to the craft. The committee has announced its intention of broadening its links with the school, and next session's poetry week should be very exciting - watch this space!

Tales from Abroad

Great Valley High School, Pennsylvania, USA Exchange. Ashley Greenhow has just returned home to the USA having spent 4 months attending Madras and living with a host family in St Andrews. By all accounts she has had a great time in Scotland and her "family" have thoroughly enjoyed her company. Her host and exchange partner, Sian Inch (S6), will travel to America at the end of January, spending a similar length of time attending Great Valley. Sian is really looking forward to staying with the Greenhows and experiencing an American way of life. Recruitment for the 2002-03 exchange which is open to all S5 pupils, will take place after the prelims, in February.

Fourth, fifth and sixth year pupils took part in a very successful visit to Loches (St Andrews' partner town) during the first week of the October holiday. Useful contacts were made with the local school, the Lycee Alfred de Vigny, and we hope to follow these up with some form of exchange visit. During the week, our pupils spent two days in school and sampled, apart from classes in several subjects, the excellent food in the school canteen. Visits were made to the surrounding area and a day was spent at the science-based theme park, Futuroscope. Loches itself is now very familiar!

The School and Its Community

An Anti-Littering Initiative has been in operation this term to try to reduce the amount of litter dropped in and around the Kilrymont Road building. A committee of staff and pupils has been set up to look at the problem of littering. Miss Stewart of the Art department and S3 pupils have been busy creating posters to draw pupils' attention to what we can do to reduce litter; the janitors in liaison with Mr Latona of the Computing department and another group of S3 pupils have been regularly informing us in graphical form of how much litter is being put in the new bins and how much is still being dropped. The statistics make interesting reading. To date, certain areas of the building are looking better but others still need attention. We shall introduce a pupil reward system if we can keep litter to an acceptably low level into February. It is here that we would appreciate your help in supporting us in our campaign to reduce litter by discussing the matter with your children.

A Road Safety Programme was presented to S1 and S6 pupils by the Baldie Bain Theatre Company last term. This focussed on road safety issues and driving respectively. The performing group was very well received and was very complimentary about the pupil response to them.

Due to the variety of fundraising over the last few sessions, a Charities Committee, composed of staff and pupils from S3 and S6 has been formed. The

main event so far has been the "The Mad(ras) Hatters Day" which raised £1,000 for the BBC Children In Need Appeal. Pupils and staff in assorted headgear presented their cheque at the Byre Theatre on the day of the appeal. The photograph in the local press gave an indication of the enjoyment there was in being involved in such a worthy cause. Cancer First Aid will receive nearly £400 by Christmas and other charities who have been supported since the beginning of the session are The Scottish Poppy Appeal, Arthritis Research Campaign, AIDS Awareness Fife and The Red Cross.

All S3 pupils have recently undergone training in Heartstart during their Social Education classes. This has been kindly given by Dr H Tait and his team of helpers. Twin-site co-operation also took place with S6 pupils ably assisting the younger pupils to learn this vital skill.

Severe Weather Procedures

The Council is preparing leaflets for all parents outlining new procedures for giving information about any school closure arrangements that become necessary owing to severe weather. We shall pass the documents to you as soon as they become available. We understand that the new procedures still involve communicating information to parents via radio stations.

Focus on Art

This year's St Andrews Week celebrations involved Madras pupils in a number of artistic events.

At the start of the week land artist Jim Buchanan worked with S3 and S6 pupils. Jim explained his work to the pupils which centres around his interest in labyrinths and their role in cultures around the world. The pupils were able to walk around one of Jim's labyrinths, based on the labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral in France.

The S6 pupils were particularly interested in the fact that instead of drawing with a piece of charcoal like most artists, Jim uses a rotavator! (Substitute field outside Fort Augustus for the normal sheet of cartridge paper.)

Jim then went on to install his "light-labyrinth" in the grounds of St Andrews Cathedral as one of the main events of the celebrations.

Madras pupils also had art work and photography on display in the fourth annual St Andrews Week Exhibition in the Memorial Hall.

The exhibition is in two parts. The first focuses on traditional artwork including oil-painting, watercolour work, printmaking and drawing by adults and children. Awards and certificates for the work were presented by Ruth Walker, a well-known local artist. The award for the best artwork in the junior section went to Krystin Ingram (S4) for her superb self-portrait. Arran Howie (S3) was highly commended for her painting.

The second part of the exhibition features photography with prizes for chosen work donated by Boots the chemist. All 4 junior prizes were taken by Madras pupils. In the St Andrews theme first prize went to Katie Kendrick (S6) and Andrew Aiton (S4) was highly commended.

In the open theme, first prize went to Brenna O'Rourke (S6), and Ellen Mason (S6) was highly commended.

The winning photographs will be on display in Boots in the new year.

Barcelona 2001

Vibrant! Bhenian! Cosmpolitan! Lively! Dynamic!

Yes, once again the Art and Design department decided to leave the Fife high life behind and head for the sunnier climes of Barcelona. A myriad of visual encounters awaited the pupils in the Catalonian capital with sweeping boulevards, extravagant Gaudi architecture and the meandering and colourful streets of Barcelona's old quarter. There were a few surprises as well, including accomplished oil paintings so realistic you could almost here the figures breathe! These were not by an old master, of course, but by the 14-year-old Picasso. There were more questions than answers at the bizarre and theatrical Salvador Dali Museum in Figueras. Even more challenges to mainstream perception were encountered at the Miro Foundation, housing mystical and whimsical giant canvases. But it was the city itself which took centre stage with a cacophonous medley of traffic, tourists and street musicians. Some tested their vertigo to the limit and climbed the spires of the Segrada Familia. Others took in the ambience of Barcelona street life both in photography and drawing, enjoying respite from the crowds in a church cloister protected by geese! Staff were impressed by the quality and quantity of sketching by pupils who appeared to relish the vibrant atmosphere of this Mediterranean port as well as the unusually hot weather. The pupils' recollections will no doubt vary, whether it be relaxing in Gaudi's Park Guell, watching Rivaldo in training, the hair-pin bends on the road to Dali's house in Cadaques or the ladies rest-room facilities on our first overnight stop through France!

A good time was most certainly had by all!



Soapbox Speechmaking Competition

For the first time the school entered a Soapbox Speechmaking Competition, sponsored by Edinburgh Solicitors Property Centre, Central FM and The Stirling Observer. The competition is open to pupils from Falkirk, Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Fife. The emphasis is undoubtedly on fun! The Madras team of Julia Higgins (S6) as Chairman and Thomas Foster (S5) as Speaker won the Fife round, with Thomas talking on the topic, "I'm Not Uniform". In the final, held in Stirling Castle, the team argued against the idea that everyone should be forced to attend the University of Disney. To the delight of parents, staff and pupils who accompanied the duo to the final, Julia and Thomas were placed first in a unanimous decision by the judges. Prizes included a glass trophy, £100 for

each team member and £500 to be used to further the use of communication and speech within the school. Central FM have recorded the competition for broadcast during the Christmas period.

AMNESTY CLUB

The Amnesty Club is going from strength to strength with a flourishing group in Kilrymont Road and a new seniors' group starting in South Street. The juniors have shown great enthusiasm and commitment in creating entries related to "A Fairer World" for a national Amnesty International Competition. The seniors have made contact with the Student Amnesty group in the University of St Andrews and have already arranged some meetings.

PTA

• Teenage Trials and Triumphs

This meeting, held on November 8th, began with a role-play demonstration.

A group of pupils S4/5 and Mrs Bletcher, Principal Teacher, Support Centre, took the roles of parents, their daughters and friends in a short play about a typical day in the life of a teenager. This brought some surprises for the parent audience, demonstrating, in a lively and amusing fashion, the difference between adult and teenage priorities. Thanks go to Mr Dewar, Principal Teacher of Drama, for his assistance in the preparation of the presentation: the play was very well acted and much enjoyed.

After it, the cast joined the audience in small group discussions, where expertise and advice were shared. All left feeling they had participated in a most purposeful and interesting meeting. It was just a pity, given the hard work of preparation, that more parents were unable to find the time to attend.

• Next Meeting: Curriculum Matters

Tuesday 5th February

7.30pm, Kilrymont Road

This meeting is timed for Course Choice to bring parents up to date with subject developments and help them support their children in making their choices. The evening is additional to the Parents' Evenings for specific year groups and offers an opportunity to gain general information and ask questions. Please do try to make time to attend if you have children at this stage.

Pick-Up-A-Pen

The "Pick-Up-A-Pen" Creative Writing Club (S1-3) is alive and well, with pupils entering a poetry competition last term (results are expected in March). The main event this term is the Pushkin Prizes Competition open to all Scottish schools - last year you may remember that a Madras pupil (Roisin Kearns) won one of the runner-up prizes. This year Ms Nothias and Mr Hynes are aiming for the big one! First prize is an all-expenses-paid trip to St Petersburg!

Subjectively Speaking

Shona Leenhoots, Sarah Dunn (S3), Heather Barnes and Toby Gilbertson are through to the semi-final of the Chemistry Top of the Bench Competition after a fine win against Kirkcaldy High School.

In the Enterprising Mathematics Competition the team of Ian Brodie, Natalie Jackson (both S4) and Sarah Dunn, Jillian Sneddon (both S3) won the Fife round before going on to achieve 10th place out of 32 teams in the Scottish contest. The whole day event (the final was held in Northern College, Dundee) was a very intense, tiring but fun time for the pupils who also came 3rd in the poster competition.

The UK Senior Mathematical Challenge is an annual Maths contest run by the UK Mathematics Trust. This year there were 53,810 entries from over 1,360 schools from all parts of the UK. The contest was held on Tuesday 6th November with 70 of our pupils participating. Awards are set nationally. This year the top 6% gained Gold, a further 14% gained Silver and 20% gained Bronze. Our results were quite exceptional this year with 4 Gold, 11 Silver and 17 Bronze awards. Three of our candidates achieved sufficiently high scores that they qualified for the prestigious British Maths Olympiad. This was held on Wednesday 5th December. They were David Stephens (S6), Joe Neilson (S5) and Dorothy Winn (S5).

The Drama department have been extremely busy this session. The fourth years have been giving lunchtime performances of dance routines created by themselves. In fifth and sixth year Intermediate 2 and Higher pupils have presented productions for parents and friends as have the Advanced Higher group. Pupils from S4 took centre stage for the PTA evening on "Teenage Trials and Triumphs". There were theatre visits to "The Seagull" at Dundee Rep, "The Messiah" at the Theatre Royal in Glasgow and "The Bondagers" at the Byre. However, the showpiece so far has been the performances of "Midsummer Night's Dream" directed by Miss Dewar. Despite the cold weather, the school's Quad Theatre played host to capacity

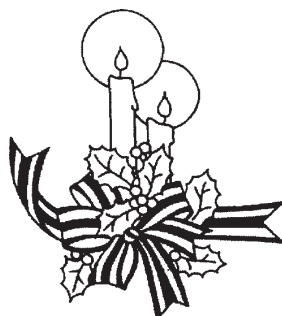
audiences for this production of Shakespeare's enduringly popular comedy. It may have been chilly and miserable outside, but the moment the actors took the stage, a warm magic began to assert itself. All parts were magnificently played with Oberon's Puck full of athleticism and verve and Titania's troupe of fairies energetic and delightful. The Mechanicals' performance of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe* had the audiences rolling in the aisles. The warm applause was well deserved. Well done to producer Miss Dewar and her assistants. We went out into a dreich and dark St Andrews night, but somehow the weather didn't matter any more: the spirit of midsummer was with us all.

DEBATING

The varied forms of Debating at Kilrymont Road are well to the fore this session. The full programme has included Instant Debates, an excellent Balloon Debate with Christopher Columbus steering the balloon to safety. "Hippies versus Yuppies", "Animal Testing" and "Whether Santa Is A Fat Cat Or Not" provided food for thought and loads of entertainment. On the competition front Claire Field and Lindsey Forbes, both S1, put up an excellent performance in the Courier Debate, narrowly missing going through to Round 2. Michelle Thaddeus and Anna Wovk in third year progressed to Round 2 of both the Courier and English Speaking Competitions.

Greek Club

The Greek Club running every Thursday lunchtime with 20-30 first year pupils are thoroughly enjoying their classics video and Greek language sessions.



School Board Members

Chair

Prof P McKiernan 01334 476965

Vice Chair

Ms E Atkins 01592 712812

Clerk

Mrs M J Wilson 01334 412500

Parent Representatives

Mrs C Dunn 01334 473086

Dr I Falconer 01334 478507

Mr D Macgregor 01334 474282

Mr C Palmer 01334 840507

Mrs E Rogerson 01382 542794

Teacher Members

Mrs M Brown 01334 412500

Mr C Jessop 01334 412500

Mrs S Thomson 01334 412500

Co-opted Members

- Pupil Representatives

Ms P Iannetta (S5) 01334 412500

Ms J Higgins (S6) 01334 412500

In Attendance

Mr L S G Matheson, Rector

Councillor W Brooks

Councillor J A Liston

Upper Arlington Exchange 2001-02

A group of 5 Madras College Sixth Formers chaperoned by Mr and Mrs Bennett travelled to the birthplace of Jack Nicklaus during their October vacation. This is part of a cultural link between the two communities and the second time senior pupils and staff have benefited from living with families in very different settings and education systems.

"11th September 2001" was predominant in all conversations. The Americans were pleased the Scots had come and this was especially shown by the turnout at the Student Exchange Dinner celebrating the event. After the American students had made statements about their visit to St Andrews, Adam Young described what the Madras pupils gained from their American experience. "Key to the City" pins were awarded to pupils Jennifer Duck, Laura Gilman, Jennifer Gilruth, Christopher Seenan and Adam Young and to the chaperones.

Play up, Play up

S1 rugby had an excellent start to the season, having played 10 Saturday games and won all, averaging 9 tries per game and playing extremely attractive rugby. There is tremendous competition for places as over 30 players per week attend practices. The team were runners-up in the Midlands Tournament and will go forward to the National Finals next term. Ninety pupils and 10 staff successfully negotiated 3 return trips in 3 weeks to Murrayfield to watch Scotland play Tonga, Argentina and New Zealand.

First Year football has been equally popular with the school able to field 3 7-a-side teams on occasion. To date the teams have won 33, lost 7 and drawn 8.

Remarkably, the senior footballers won the Fife Schools' 5-a-sides for the sixth consecutive year, defeating Woodmill High School 2-0 in the semi-final and Queen Anne High School 5-1 in the final. This has never been achieved before by any Fife school. The Under 14s were narrowly defeated by Kirkcaldy High School 1-0 in their final.

This year has seen the biggest turn-out of runners at lunchtimes. Up to 23 pupils have regularly attended. In the Fife Schools' Road Relay Championships the First Year Boys' Team (Frankie Scott, Craig Moir and Keith Simpson) came first winning the shield and gold medals, with Frankie Scott winning the individual lap gold medal. The Girls' Over 15 team (Joanna Wilson (S3), Hannah Bredin (S4) and Alison Rowe (S5) also came first to win gold medals. The Under 15 Girls, all second year, came second as did the Over 15 Boys, all fourth year. In the Scottish Championships the S1 Boys team came fourth and the Medley Girls team came seventh.

The girls' hockey teams - first, second and third year and seniors - have had a full fixture card since September with very few matches being cancelled because of the weather. Although they have had mixed results, the girls' enthusiasm has never faltered. The senior girls' squad won the Fife Schools' Tournament and have qualified for the Scottish Indoor Finals by coming second in the Midlands Tournament. We wish them good luck for the tourney in January. Individually, Alison Bell (S6) has been

selected for the Midlands and Scottish Under 18 training squads: Helena Bateman (S4) for the Midlands Under 16 and Samantha Sangster (S4) for the Midlands and Scottish Under 16 squads.

In swimming the school has never fared better in the Fife Schools' Championships winning the cup for the Best Secondary School: David Taylor (S5) was first in the Breaststroke and in team events Keith Simpson, David Littlejohn, Jonathan Watters and Stuart Fitzpatrick were first in the 12/13 Freestyle Relay while Andrew Littlejohn, Sanjee Jayasekera, Steven Paul and John Fraser took the honours in the 14/15 Freestyle Relay. This was an all-round magnificent achievement.

Congratulations go to Steven Birrell (S1), Julie Brown (S2) and Michelle Thaddeus (S3) who have been selected for the Junior Fife Schools' Badminton team to compete in inter-area competitions and to Tim Weir (S3) for being selected for the intermediate age group.

Chris McCall (S1) has been representing the school in the Scottish Schools' Fencing Championships coming fifth in the Foil and seventh in the Epee. He has twice qualified for the Under 14 group at the British Championships, gaining third in the Under 13 Leon Pauls event.

The Quad Fund

The Quad Fund Committee is pleased to report that the fund now stands at over £29,000. The first phase of work on the columns to the north side of the quadrangle is nearly completed. Parents are welcome to inspect what has been done at any time. Mr Watson the stonemason hopes to start the west side of the quad in the new year. Further donations towards the target of £60,000 are very welcome, and information leaflets about the project are available to parents and pupils from either school office.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The rector and staff wish to thank all parents for their support and encouragement during the term and to wish all a very peaceful and relaxing festive season.

Dates for Your Diary

HOLIDAYS

Christmas

Monday 24th December 2001
to Friday 4th January 2002

February

Thursday 14th February 2002
and Friday 15th February 2002

Spring

Friday 29th March 2002
to Friday 12th April 2002

May Day

Monday 6th May 2002

June

Monday 3rd June 2002

Summer

Monday 8th July 2002
to Friday 16th August 2002

Autumn

Monday 14th October 2002
to Friday 25th October 2002

IN-SERVICE DAYS

Monday 18th February 2002
Friday 3rd May 2002

PARENTS' EVENINGS

S1

Wednesday 5th June 2002

S2

Monday 4th March 2002

S3

Thursday 9th May 2002

S4

Tuesday 19th February 2002

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Thursday 31st January 2002
Thursday 21st February 2002*
Wednesday 27th March 2002
Thursday 27th May 2002
(Tayport Primary School)
Wednesday 26th June 2002*

* To be confirmed