



# the turret

International School Award  
Supplement

Summer 2011

Ayrshire's only Independent School

Founded 1836

## Wellington pupils spread their wings with MFL



Graduates with foreign language skills can expect to earn at least 10% more than those without. \*

In a recent European Commission survey of non-mother-tongue skills, Britain came last out of 28 countries. A report highlighting this fact in The Scotsman continued: '...language skills virtually guarantee jobs. Statistics show UK language students are behind only lawyers, medics and vets in employability.'

The latest figures show one in five Scottish secondary schools doesn't offer Higher German and one in ten doesn't offer Higher French. Yet at Wellington it is possible to do both languages to Advanced Higher Level, and pupils are not slow to take advantage of the many opportunities for improving their language skills open to them here.

In the last twelve months there has



*Air and Space Museum at Le Bourget*

been a French exchange to Paris, a trip to India, a Comenius project involving residential stays in Hungary and Germany, and a rugby Sevens tour to France. As Robert Alner, S5,

*Robert Alner, right, at the BMW Museum.*

*Robert will undertake work experience with BMW in Munich.*



noted whilst in Germany recently, 'A week staying in a foreign country is worth over a year of listening lessons at school.'

Looking forward, there will be a senior exchange and a UCAPE conference in October and the P7s and S1s will have the opportunity to visit the Institut Saint-Dominique next February during their French Trip. There will be a German exchange to Dortmund in November.

Wellington has full International School status awarded by the British Council and in the recent HMIE's Inspection Report one of the five particular strengths of the school was identified as: "The embedding of international education across all sectors and stages." The school is keen to see this continue and expand. Some of the current projects are highlighted in this supplement.

\* Source: Reed Recruitment

*Caoimhe Hunter Blair, second from left, in Weimar in April.*

*Caoimhe will study Law with French at Edinburgh University next year.*





Marie responds as the girls practise their French

## Hosts needed for International Visitors

We are contacted on a regular basis by parents in our partner schools who would like to send their children to Wellington for an extended stay, anything from a couple of weeks to a full academic year. Having pupils from abroad at Wellington enriches the educational experience of our own pupils through an exchange of cultures, language and lifestyle. We are looking for host families who would consider offering a home to a foreign guest for a couple of weeks or more. In exchange, we could offer a weekly cost-of-living allowance or the chance for your child to experience life at one of our partner schools. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the Bursar, John McColgan, on 01292 269321 or email to [jmccolgan@Wellingtonschool.org](mailto:jmccolgan@Wellingtonschool.org)

## Spoken French and German made easier by Foreign Language Assistants

In an increasingly international world, Foreign Language Assistants (FLA) provide a unique opportunity for Scottish students to experience different languages and cultures in the classroom, but the bottom line is that without an FLA pupils might spend their entire school life learning a language without ever having the opportunity to converse with a native speaker of that language.

It is true that this is hardly likely to happen here at Wellington where the opportunities for foreign travel are frequent and range from P7 right up to S6 level, but through the FLAs pupils are able to speak with a native speaker week in and week out.

Our two FLAs, Marie Morin and Jan Mehlberg, have spent every Friday at the school over the last year.

The programme that supports them is run by the British Council, but increasingly Scottish schools are finding it hard to afford the luxury of native speakers to enhance modern language teaching and develop intercultural awareness.

BBC Scotland news website reported in February that more than half of all foreign language assistants in Scottish state schools are being axed following council budget cuts and the biggest reduction is in Glasgow, where the council is to cut all 35 of its assistants.

At Wellington the programme is set to continue with two new assistants arriving in the summer. Marie, who comes from Lille in Northern France, explains that she is studying for her Masters which includes a Teaching Certificate.

Her time in the UK this year has been shared between Wellington and Hutchesons' Grammar in Glasgow and

she has previously taught in French schools and been a teaching assistant in a school in Essex.

She is very impressed with the facilities at Wellington, and likes the way the pupils listen. She comments on the high level of spoken French here and thinks this must be due to the amount of foreign travel in which our pupils participate – not just in improving their accents, but also in encouraging a real interest in foreign culture and language.

*"FLAs allow pupils to be exposed to native speakers who speak their language the way it is intended to be spoken. Learning a language is absolutely important as we attempt to grow our economy through trade with Europe and further afield."*

*The Educational Institute of Scotland*

Eve-Anne Travers and Jordan Crabb, both S5, and who have both been part of the Comenius project that Wellington has been involved in over the last two years, agree that this has helped their spoken French enormously. Eve-Anne points out that her Hungarian partner spoke little English, so French was a necessity for the week she spent there last Easter.

When asked about the value of the FLAs to them, Eve-Anne and Jordan highlight modern culture, current music and more contemporary language including texting in French as being some of the advantages of having a young native speaker in school all year. Both pupils intend to include language study in their degree courses next year.

Jan comes from Göttingen, near Hanover, and is also completing his Masters degree before going back to Germany to teach English and PE. He did an intensive language course here last year instead of doing a term at university in Germany and fell in love with the Scots people and countryside – hence his return visit.

He also shares his time between Wellington and Hutchesons'.

Jan particularly likes the small class size and longer lesson times here in Scotland and has enjoyed doing cross-curricular lessons such as PE with Marie and the Head of PE, where as little English as possible has been used. He finds that this style of learning, where action is an integral part of the lesson, works particularly well in enabling some pupils to memorise language skills.

Jan talks with the P7 boys



# New Comenius Assistant from Bulgaria

Next session's Comenius Assistant will come from Bulgaria.

Denica Mitkova has just finished her university studies and is a qualified primary and pre-school teacher.

She is looking forward to working with our pupils and to finding out about education in Scotland.

Miss Mitkova has never been to Scotland and says that she is keen to find out about our culture and history. Improving her English is one of her main aims.

Miss Mitkova will work mainly with our youngest pupils but she will also have the opportunity to teach Bulgarian language and culture throughout the school.



*East German Guard Tower at Mödlareuth*

# Comenius Project Concludes in Germany

This term our two-year Comenius Project, Through and Beyond the Iron Curtain, reaches its conclusion. Over the past two years our pupils have made friends in France, Germany, Hungary and Slovenia and as the project draws to a close pupils are already making plans to travel to each others' countries for visits.

At the beginning of May eight of the Comenius pupils went to Germany for a week. They started their visit in Berlin and were guided round the city by the German pupils. The pupils visited the Stasi Museum and met a chemical engineer who told them about life in the German Democratic Republic. This was the catalyst for discussions between pupils about the realities of life on either side of the Iron Curtain and how this has shaped life today.

From Berlin the group travelled south to Weimar, a town of great significance for the cultural history of Germany and Europe.

The next stop was the village of Mödlareuth on the former inner-German border. This village was divided by the Iron Curtain until 1989 and today has been turned into a living museum. It was an opportunity to see physical reminders of a divided Germany.

The group spent the last four days of the mobility in Munich. The pupils worked hard and played hard. In school everyone worked on the project newspaper and during their free time they explored Munich. A highlight of the visit was the party in the Edith-Stein-Gymnasium at the end of this final pupil mobility.

The project newspaper is now nearly complete and is being page-set by Mrs Parlour. The newspaper will be available to all online through a link on the school website.

*Pupils visiting the Reichstag Dome in Berlin*



*Music Room at the Jacquemart-André Museum*

# French Exchange Pupils

After the junior exams nineteen S2 and S3 pupils escaped the summer storms to the heatwave in Northern France where they spent a week with their penpals at the Institut Saint-Dominique in Mortefontaine, a small village to the north of Paris.

Their busy week started with a day in Chantilly, famous for its lace and its racecourse. In the morning the pupils visited the castle and after a picnic in the park, they visited the Musée du Cheval and saw a display of dressage.

On Tuesday the group went to Paris. At the Jacquemart-André Museum they toured the mansion which contains a rich art collection. After lunch they went to the Arc de Triomphe and then walked down the Champs-Élysées, shopping to their hearts' content until they reached the Place de la Concorde.

Wednesday was a school day and our pupils experienced a morning in class. They enjoyed being used as classroom resources in English lessons and having their drawing skills highly praised by the art teacher.

There are no classes on Wednesday afternoons so our pupils were with their French families. Many were taken to Parc Asterix and some were taken to Paris to

see Mamma Mia! in French followed by dinner and a tour of Paris by night.

Mr and Mrs Parlour joined the exchange for activities on Thursday and Friday. On Thursday the French partners joined the Scottish group and everyone went to the Air and Space Museum at Le Bourget. The boys and girls can all now boast that they have been on Concorde, in fact, that they have been on two of them.

In the afternoon the pupils went to the Jean Monnet House where they learned about one of the founding fathers of the European Union.

Friday is market day in the nearby town of Senlis and our pupils took the opportunity to buy last-minute presents and souvenirs. Many also bought flowers for their French mothers to mark Mothers' Day on 29th May. After a picnic and games in the school park, everyone returned to classes.

At the end of the week, Wellington pupils were disappointed that the volcano had ceased its activities and that their return to Scotland would take place as scheduled. At the airport the Wellington teachers struggled to encourage their group through security. The hugs and tears at the end of this year's French Exchange were a testament to the happy times the French and Scots had spent together.

*Outside the chateau at Chantilly*



# Modern Languages Department Planned Trips

SESSION 2011-12

Autumn Term

- 4-7 October UCAPE Water Conference in Scotland. (S4-S6)  
Participants from France, Germany, Scotland and Slovenia.
- 16-23 October Senior French Exchange  
Wellington H and AH French pupils visit Institut Saint-Dominique,  
Mortefontaine, France
- 23-30 October Pupils from Institut Saint-Dominique attend Wellington School. (S5 and S6)  
*tbc 4-7 November*
- 30 Nov-7 Dec Junior rugby players from Institut Saint-Dominique visit Wellington. (S2)  
German Exchange. Wellington pupils visit Mallinckrodt Gymnasium,  
Dortmund. (S2 and S3)
- 18-22 Dec *tbc* Comenius group in Slovenia.

SESSION 2011-12

Spring Term

- 11-16 February P7 and S1 Trip to France and Belgium.  
*tbc 14-21 March*
- German pupils from Mallinckrodt Gymnasium visit Ayr. (S2 and S3)  
*tbc 23-26 March*
- Junior rugby team visits France. (S2)

SESSION 2012-13

Next Comenius project planned.  
Junior French Exchange with Saint-Dominique. (S2 and S3)  
Senior French exchange with Saint-Dominique. (S5 and S6)  
Rugby Exchange with France.

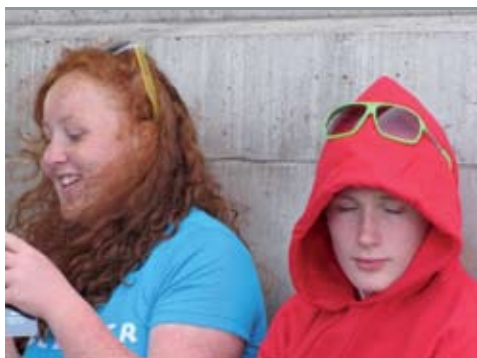
SESSION 2013-14

Continuation of Comenius project.  
S2/S3 German Exchange with Mallinckrodt Gymnasium.  
S6 Trip to India 27 December - 4 January.  
P7 and S1 visit to France and Belgium.  
Rugby Exchange.  
Senior French Exchange.

Dates for your Diary

## The Red Hoodie

The red hoodie is becoming an essential item for an ML trip, facilitating the safe movement of groups in cities and through airport check-in and security. Pupils and parents from our partner schools have found our hoodies very attractive and are likely to follow our lead. Next session all pupils travelling abroad on an ML trip will wear a red hoodie. These will be plain red and will have the school crest embroidered on the front.



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