



# BLOG

## FORTROSE ACADEMY

### Bookshelf of Reading and Research



Fortrose Academy has for, some time, been nurturing valuable connections with our local Black Isle community. We see these community connections as being absolutely central to our work, with 'the school in the heart of the community' and 'the community in the heart of the school'. This very much supports our work to develop the school values of Achievement, Respect, Inclusion, Support and Equality.

Our link Youth Development Officers (YDOs) initially set up 'Get to Know Your Techno' in 2012 as a 6 week pilot, the aim being to support older people in the Black Isle community to develop their ICT skills. Ten years on, it is still running (pandemic restrictions currently apply) and has led to other valuable and useful connections.

Activities between Fortrose Academy pupils, YDOs and the elderly were significant, even before the connection with Black Isle Cares (BIC). For example, Cookwell, sharing memories and skills, supporting with RNIB and more. Alzheimer Scotland delivered training resulting in the school becoming a 'Dementia Friendly' school.

In session 2017-18, connection with BIC became firmly established following winners of S6 Youth and Philanthropy Initiative. Pupils benefitted from work experience by assisting the work of the organisation and tackling loneliness and social isolation through the delivery of 'Meals on Wheels'. Young people helped at weekly 'Games Afternoons', and with the support of the Music Department, an intergenerational community

choir (involving nursery pupils) was established. The impact on our older generation was significant: they felt remembered by the school, and positive relationships between young and older generations were established.

During SQA study leave, a programme of work was set up, culminating in the 6 weekly lunches initiative. As well as pupils playing music to accompany the serving of lunches, food was cooked and served by BIC volunteers, Young People and the ASL department. Links with the Business Studies department and BIC were strengthened - trustees judged the annual 'Dragon's Den' competition and Young Enterprise worked with BIC to support fundraising activities and develop past-times game and dementia. All of these activities have helped our young people become more confident, respected, responsible and successful.

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