

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024



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Cover photo:
Pupils from Hillhead HS

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EDITORIAL

MUZAKIRA FARID & ALICE FREEMAN
PROJECT AND EVENTS COORDINATORS



大家好,

Welcome to the Summer 2024 edition of the CISS newsletter. At this busy time of year, we hope you've been enjoying the sun (on the days it's been out) and are looking forward to the summer ahead.

This first half of this year has been one of changes as we said goodbye to some of our incredible colleagues and welcomed new members of the team, such as ourselves! Our trips to China are also running for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic, with the upcoming Learner Immersion Trip, Scholarship with Tianjin Normal University, and the Headteachers' trip due to run in October. Up ahead, you'll find some articles from our Scholars reflecting on their expectations for the year ahead in Tianjin.

While preparing for our upcoming AGM on June 14th, we have been reflecting on a successful year of our projects and events so far. The Virtual Exchange Teachers and Eco Learning Partners programmes continue to go from strength to strength, as well as the Discovering China programme, which is set to have the highest number of participants ever in its next iteration.

We're also looking forward to welcoming a new Mandarin teacher to help deliver the Discovering China programme next year! In February, we hosted our Professional Learning day for teacher of Mandarin and were delighted to have such a turnout from teachers and CETs alike to hear from our wonderful speakers. Additionally, the Eric Liddell poster competition saw an incredible amount of submissions from across Scotland, highlighting Eric Liddell's sporting victory and connections between China and Scotland.

We will be sad to say goodbye to some of our Chinese Exchange Teachers this summer as most of them return to Tianjin and Chengdu after either one or two years teaching in our schools. This newsletter includes articles written by our CETs, so read on to hear from them. We also look forward to welcoming our biggest group of CETs for the 2024/25 session after the summer.

Having newly joined CISS, the last 6 months have been quite a whirlwind and we've been busy getting up to speed with all of the exciting projects that CISS has to offer. We are excited to continue working with you all to build upon Mandarin learning and teaching opportunities throughout Scotland.

We wish you a healthy, happy, and relaxing summer holiday!

Muzakira & Alice

CISS PROJECTS AND EVENTS

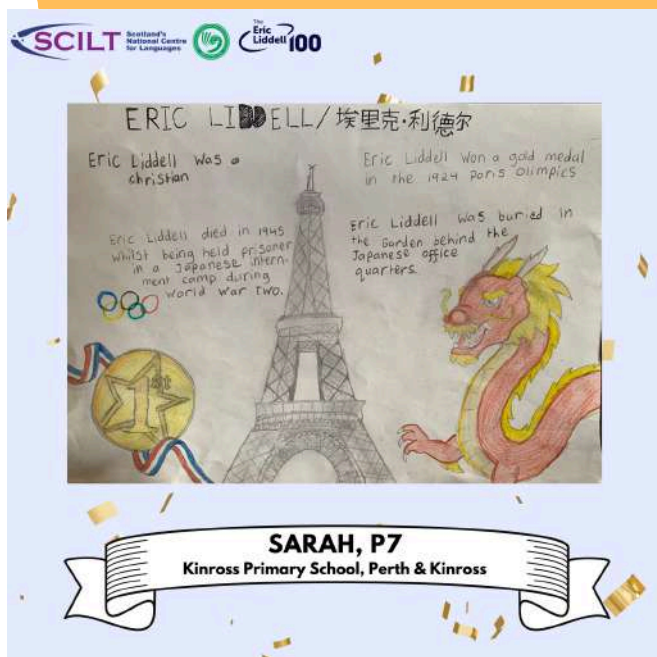
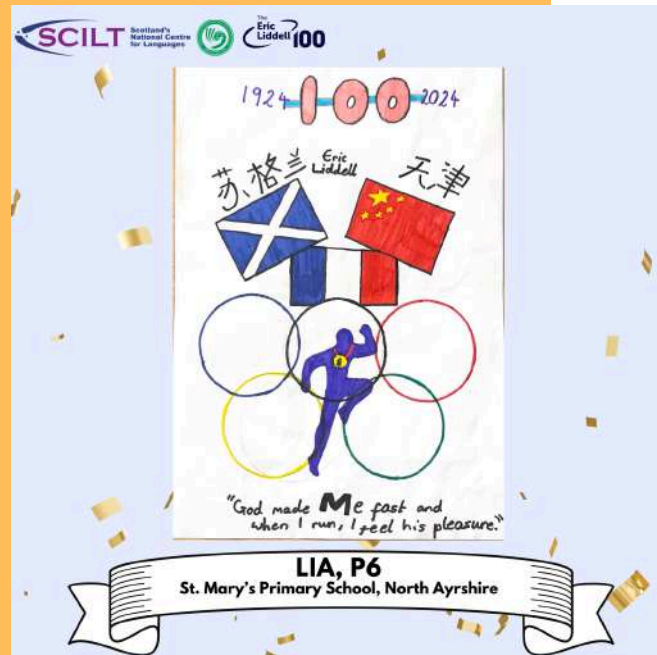
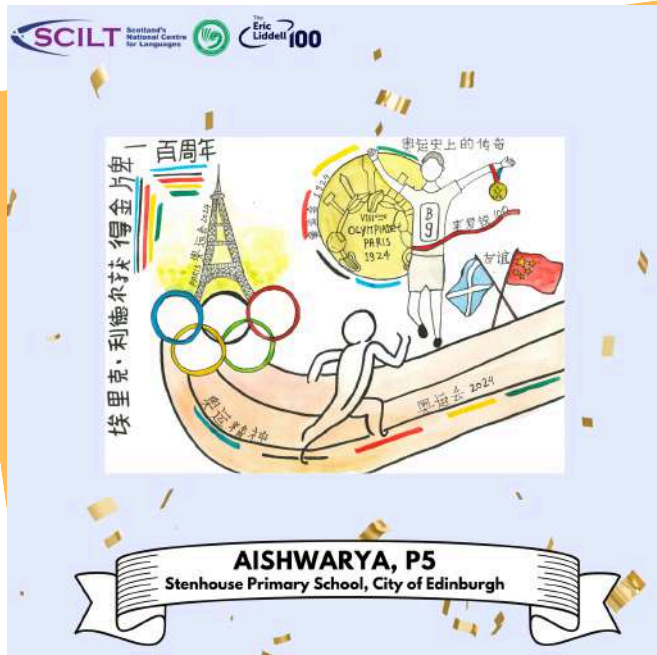
ERIC LIDDELL POSTER COMPETITION

Kicking off 2024, we were delighted to collaborate with The Eric Liddell Community on a poster competition to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Eric Liddell's win at the 1924 Paris Olympics. Pupils were tasked with designing a poster to commemorate Liddell's win, which had to include references to the 2024 Paris Olympics, centenary of Eric Liddell's gold medal, and feature connections to China and Mandarin Chinese language characters, given Eric Liddell's links to both China and Scotland.

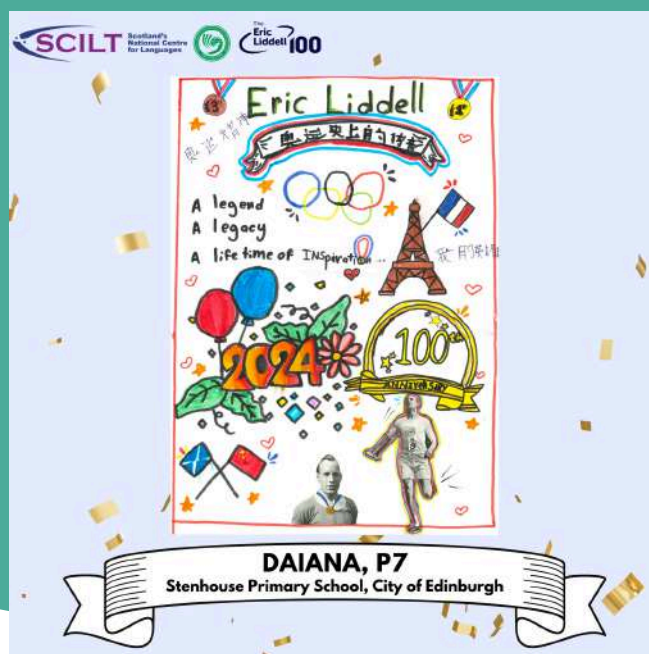
Open to primary schools across Scotland, the competition saw a remarkable amount of over 750 final entries from over 40 schools. Here are the winners:



CISS PROJECTS AND EVENTS



CISS PROJECTS AND EVENTS



Thank you to all pupils who submitted an entry. You can see the posters that we felt deserved an honourable mention on our website.



CISS PROJECTS AND EVENTS



The winning entries and honourable mentions are now featured in an exhibition at the Eric Liddell Community Hub in Edinburgh, and will also be showcased at the Eric Liddell Exhibition opening reception at the British Ambassador's residence in Beijing.

VIRTUAL EXCHANGE TEACHERS (VETS) UPDATE

The Virtual Exchange Teacher Programme is one of our online Mandarin programmes and has gone from strength to strength since its inception in 2020. Running for the 8th time, what started out as a response to the pandemic, and the lack of Chinese teachers 'on the ground' in Scotland, has become a successful programme of international cooperation and cultural exchange, meeting a growing demand for Mandarin learning, helping schools to meet 1+2 requirements.

The programme runs for two 8-week blocks each year, from October to December, and April to June, with Scottish classes receiving weekly lessons from postgraduate education students in South-West Jiao Tong University in China. The students use resources created by CISS, aligned with CfE experiences and outcomes, and the Scottish curriculum. We now have 3 levels, so classes can continue their learning. The numbers continue to grow, and this year we have delivered lessons to 61 classes in 26 schools across Scotland, in block 1, and 40 classes in 20 schools in block 2, covering schools from Aberdeenshire to the Western Isles to the far south in Dumfries and Galloway, to Falkirk in the central belt, we have reached around 2500 learners the length and breadth of the country!

The Virtual Exchange Teachers themselves are given a full induction by our professional development officers at the start of the year, to ensure they understand the differences between the Scottish and Chinese education systems, and how we teach here in Scotland. Following the induction week, they receive fortnightly professional learning sessions throughout each teaching block, discussing aspects of teaching including formative assessment, engaging learners, teaching talking skills and many more.

This partnership between CISS and South-West Jiao Tong University has been mutually beneficial and ensures we are meeting the demand for quality Mandarin language learning in Scotland.



'CHINESE BRIDGE' SUMMER IMMERSION

After a pause of 5 years, due to COVID-19 and the subsequent travel restrictions, CISS is delighted to once more be welcoming back learners from Confucius Hubs on a two-week Immersion visit to Tianjin and Beijing, China in July. This visit, aimed at young people currently in S4 and S5 will undoubtedly be a life-enriching opportunity, and will open a world of new possibilities to them. Having run successfully for 10 years until 2020 and having previously given nearly 1000 young people the opportunity to discover for themselves, China's rich culture and immerse themselves in its fascinating language.

Learners from 6 local authorities within the CISS network will be accompanied on the course by local authority and CISS staff where they will take Mandarin lessons at Tianjin Normal University, and participate in Chinese cultural workshops including Kung Fu, paper cutting and many more. In addition, they will visit many famous sights in Tianjin and Beijing, including a trip to the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, and the Birds Nest Stadium. On completion of the course, all participants will be presented for the SQA China Bridge Award at either level 3 or 4, so that they will have an SQA qualification as evidence of their studies. Participants will also have the unique opportunity to visit a Chinese school and spend time with a Chinese family in their home, where they will experience the real Chinese daily life and have the opportunity to use their newly acquired language skills.

Participants will get to experience the student life, staying in the university residences and enjoying the brand-new facilities on campus whilst making new friends and developing important life skills. This really is a wonderful opportunity for Scotland's young people and we are so excited to have the programme up and running again.



CISS SCHOLARSHIP

We are also delighted to re-launch the CISS Scholarship this year, for the first time since the pandemic. Running since 2014, the scholarship is aimed at S6 school leavers and grants them the opportunity to study Mandarin at Tianjin Normal University in China, for 9-months. The opportunity is the only one of its kind offered to schools in Europe by our Tianjin partners and is highly competitive. The Scholarship includes tuition fees, shared accommodation costs, monthly food allowance, and one HSK test.



Over the years we've seen hundreds of students from local authorities with a Confucius Classroom Hub undertake this opportunity, and this year's cohort of 19 Scholars will leave in September for a life-changing year of study in Tianjin. We were lucky enough to catch up with Kima Meijer, Niamh McCabe, and Leah McMorran, who are part of this year's scholarship cohort. Here, they write about how they ended up applying for the opportunity and their thoughts on the year ahead.

I've always been interested in the way the world works, particularly in philosophy and language – how do people conceive things differently? Every language is a different toolbox with its own way of thinking about things and explaining them, and its own structures for turning a concept into words.

In S6 we had a chance to do an extra subject and as a lover of language I was immediately drawn to Mandarin as it's a language I had been looking for a way in to study. One day the head of the Languages Dept came in and asked if I wanted to apply for a scholarship to learn Mandarin in China! At first, I was a bit stunned, and overwhelmed, wondering whether I really have what it takes – I can't speak Mandarin! I'd only been taking that course for a month and half. It's a bit terrifying to think of being in a different culture without the language.

But I'd been dreaming of travelling and taking a year away from Scotland to see how different the world can be and experience different ways of doing things. I'd been planning to live and work in Spain as I've been studying Spanish, but this scholarship fitted everything I wanted to do. I live by the Gaelic phrase 'gabh an cothrom', meaning 'seize the chance'.

I'm really looking forward to trying the food! I love spicy food and strong flavours. I'm mostly vegetarian at home but I realise I won't always know what I'm getting or be able to communicate what I'd rather not eat! I'm also looking forward to seeing and taking part in Chinese festivals and culture. I can't wait to see who is in my class, realising I'll be studying with other people who are learning Chinese and could be from anywhere in the world...



Kima Meijer

CISS PROJECTS AND EVENTS



Niamh McCabe

Being in China, studying Mandarin is definitely not something I thought I would see myself doing, especially this soon after leaving S6, but this is the opportunity of a lifetime. Last September I heard about this fantastic opportunity through my Mandarin teacher at school, and I decided to just go for it, I mean what was there to lose?

I've been learning Mandarin for a few years now, and I thoroughly enjoy it, so this scholarship will be a tremendous opportunity to broaden my knowledge, not just of the language, but also of China itself. Coming back from China and being able to speak Mandarin will be incredibly beneficial for me in the future, no matter what I end up doing.

This year abroad will be an opportunity to immerse myself in Chinese culture. I can't wait to take part in festivals throughout the year, especially Chinese New Year. I have learnt a bit about the festival in school but the ability to witness it first hand will be phenomenal. When in Tianjin, I would love to take the opportunity to visit my partner high school in China, and learn more about the city and life in China from people who are my age.

This scholarship is a great way for me to gain my independence, needing to navigate a colossal new city, and arrange things for myself using my Mandarin knowledge. Having to adapt to the climate, language, and culture in China will be a definite challenge at the start but I am sure it will definitely be worth the hardship.

Hello! I will be studying Mandarin in Tianjin for one academic year starting September 2024. This came as an excellent opportunity to take a 'gap year' that would actually be useful for my future career. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do when I left school, when my Mandarin teacher showed me a poster advertising the scholarship I thought "Why not?". I never really believed I would receive the scholarship when I applied, it was like putting on a lottery and hoping, but knowing you probably wouldn't win. I'm extremely glad that I did!

I have met with the other scholars and everyone seems like genuinely lovely people and I can't wait to spend time with them in Tianjin. The thing I am most apprehensive about is leaving my family/ friends behind, since this is a much longer time to be away than I've ever been, and I can't just nip back home if I'm feeling homesick and need a hug from mum. However, this feeling is overshadowed by my excitement to stand on my own two feet and learn a beautiful language in the country it is spoken.

I am particularly looking forward to trying lots of new foods, as I'm told once I eat there I'll never want to come back! Also, after meeting the other scholars and the CISS team I'm confident that I will have a support network to keep me motivated and feeling safe throughout the time away. I'm also looking forward to living in dorms, I think it'll be a really nice experience to live with people my age who I can relate to and share interests with.

Overall, I understand that the time away will come with difficulties. However I think there will be many more positives than negatives.



Leah McMorran

CISS PROJECTS AND EVENTS

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY

Every year, our Chinese exchange teachers follow a comprehensive, year-long programme of professional learning, delivered by the CISS professional development officers, and invited guest presenters. Most of it takes place online, in the form of recorded videos, half-day online workshops on a theme of the month, and monthly follow up discussion sessions, where the CETs share what they have learned that month and discuss the issues around an aspect of teaching.



Once a year, we invite everyone for an in-person day of learning, which is a chance to meet with colleagues, network and do some activities that can't be done online. This year, we combined this day with the in-person professional learning for our network of GTCS registered teachers of Mandarin in our Confucius hubs.

The day followed a conference-style format, with a welcome and keynote from our director, Fhiona Mackay, followed by 4 workshops throughout the day, from which attendees could pick from a choice of two each time. We finished the day off by sharing our learning together with a plenary. The themes covered allowed for teachers to have personalisation and choice in what they learned, taking into consideration their own professional needs and interests. Themes included artificial intelligence, building positive relationships, social and emotional learning, planning for progression in the BGE, teaching of pinyin, the multilingual classroom and teaching of culture.

We are very grateful to all the presenters from SCILT, University of Strathclyde and SOAS, University of London who gave up their time to lead workshops. Everyone learned a lot and really enjoyed the day, especially the choice aspect and meeting up with colleagues. One teacher said normally they didn't want the day to end! Thanks to its success, we are planning to make this a yearly event, so watch this space!

ABERDEENSHIRE

ELLON ACADEMY

This year we have been working on an IDL project about Eric Liddell, and of course we have also celebrated Chinese New Year with the help of some special visitors!



CET REFLECTION

HOW'S THE LIFE IN ABERDEENSHIRE? RURAL PLACE WITH RICH EXPERIENCE!

Xiaoyan Zeng, Chinese Exchange Teacher in Aberdeenshire

What's your first impression of Aberdeenshire? Far northern place? Cold place? Rural place? Well, that's all true, but it's not the whole picture. When I first heard I was going to Aberdeenshire based in New Pitsligo, what I heard from others about this place were all these descriptions which made me feel a bit worried and anxious. But after living here for more than 8 months, I gradually fell in love with this place and decided that I must give it a proper name based on my actual experiences.



I work in five different schools, so I am in a different place every day, but I feel welcome and like a part of the school every day. Especially in my base school, New Pitsligo and St John's Primary School. I'll never forget the warm hugs and lovely song they gave me when I first arrived. This enthusiastic vibe continued all the time and never disappeared. I was invited to share what happens in China when it is Mid-Autumn Festival at the school assembly; I was invited to see the school Christmas show at night; and I was invited to be the audience of their choir. I feel so warm-hearted when the pupils say my name and greet me with *Nihao*, even though they are so young to be having mandarin lesson.

ABERDEENSHIRE

The schools here are very separated which makes my commutes quite tricky because there is no direct bus to the schools. To deal with this issue, my mentor Gillian managed everything very well and all my schools found local teachers to give me a ride. So every day I can meet with different teachers and talk with them on the road. They are very kind and friendly, generously sharing their teaching experiences, considering my life here, recommending fun places to go on weekends. Picking me up is not their duty but they are all fine and happy to take on this task. I feel so thankful for their time and work and I have to say my listening and speaking improved a lot because of them, which I really appreciate!



My P7 class has asked for a school trip to China at least 3 times! So I can see how much they like China and how confident they feel about their Mandarin. I'll never forget the proud and satisfied feelings I had when they were making progress and achieving higher levels. The images of us talking about different foods, different school life, different festivals and decorating the class with the atmosphere of Chinese New Year are so vivid, as if they are right before my eyes. I just can't believe how time flies so fast and there is not much more time left with them. I will miss all of them and cherish my rich experience in rural Aberdeenshire for my whole life!

BEATTOCK PRIMARY

P4-7 pupils in Beattock Primary School, Dumfries and Galloway, performed 'How the Dragon was made' by Scottish Opera to all pupils in the cluster as well as families. This school assembly showcased the pupils' learning in Mandarin and encouraged audience participation with aspects of the language.



The pupils then invited their families back to the classroom for a family learning event to celebrate Chinese New Year. Each pupil had written a report on Chinese New Year which they shared with their parents as well as showing their artwork, for example dragon kites. The pupils and parents then enjoyed a rotation of activities, such as: making calligraphy paintings on rice paper with the characters for birth year animals; writing numbers and having conversations with prompt cards. The pupils enjoyed a prosperity salad and fortune cookies. The pupils enjoyed sharing their learning and work with their families and peers.



GRANGE ACADEMY

LUNCH CLUBS

At Grange, pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of activities during our Lunch clubs. Pupils learn about different aspects of Chinese culture and traditions.



Pupils regularly enjoy sampling Chinese tea while they play Mahjong.



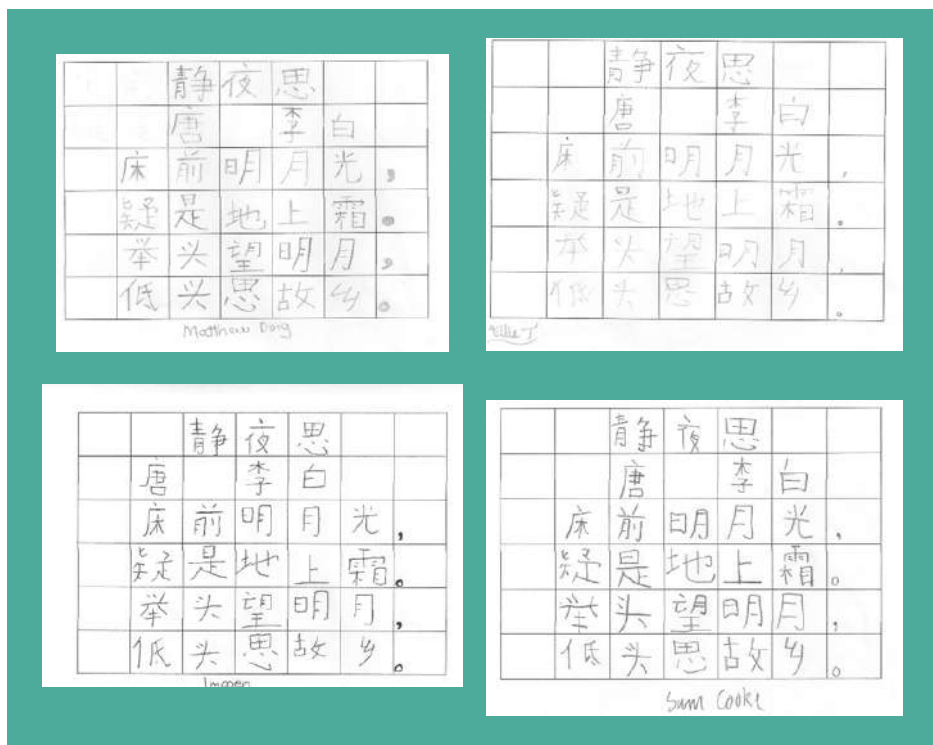
During the Mid-Autumn Festival, pupils learned how to make Oreo Moon Cakes. The Moon cakes were delicious and everyone had great fun making them.



EAST AYRSHIRE

COMPETITIONS

S2 pupils are currently taking part in a Chinese poem calligraphy writing and reading competition.



SENIOR CHINESE SUPERMARKET TRIP

Every year our senior pupils enjoy their trip to the Chinese supermarket in Glasgow and to a traditional Chinese restaurant. They always enjoy tasting authentic Chinese food!



CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

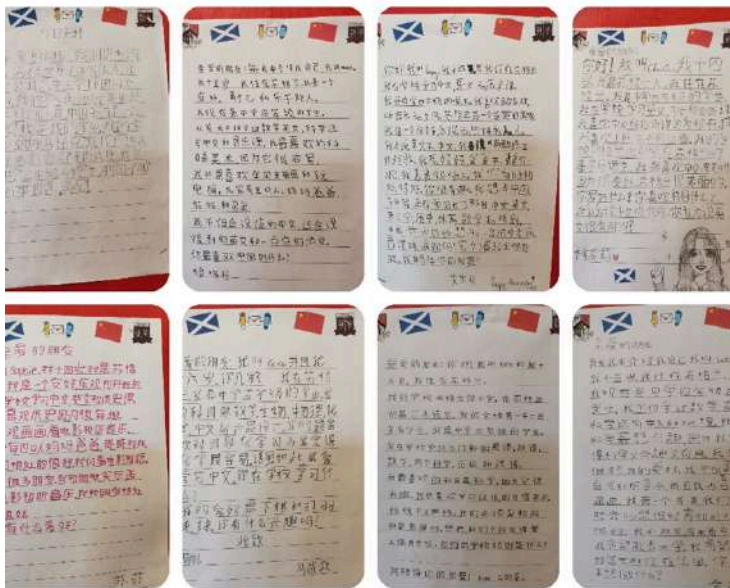
Pupils enjoyed taking part in a carousel of different activities during our Chinese New Year celebrations: they had to learn to use chopsticks, they had to practise kicking Chinese shuttlecocks, they got to try intricate paper cutting and they all had a chance to dress up wearing traditional Chinese dress. Some also took part in Kung Fu. Pupils really did have great fun!



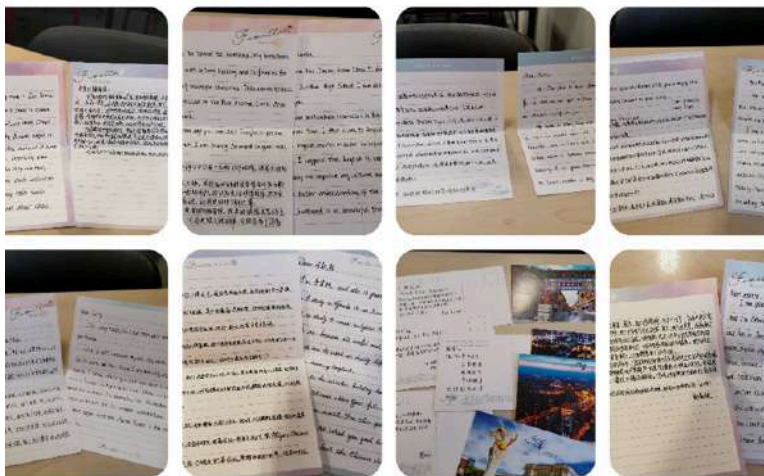
EAST AYRSHIRE

PARTNER SCHOOL PROJECT

We are currently building a close relationship with our partner school in China. We post gifts, Christmas cards and pen pal letters to them and have received Chinese New Year decorations, post cards and reply pen pal letters back from them. We hope this link will continue.



Our senior pupils also had opportunity to face-time with our partner school when they were having a dumpling making workshop. They enjoyed the interactions online and learned some useful tips about making dumplings!



ST. NINIAN'S HIGH SCHOOL

EXCITING CELEBRATIONS MARK CHINESE NEW YEAR 2024 AT ST NINIAN'S HIGH SCHOOL, KIRKINTILLOCH



In a vibrant display of cultural appreciation, St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch ushered in the Year of the Dragon with a dazzling array of activities and workshops, bringing the spirit of Chinese New Year alive throughout the school.

Students from every grade participated in a host of traditional festivities, showcasing their enthusiasm for Chinese culture. From Kungfu fan dances to calligraphy, the school was alive with the energy of celebration.



EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

One of the highlights of the event was the Chinese New Year workshops organized by the School Skills Academy in collaboration with our Mandarin teacher Mrs. Liu. Students from S1 were particularly enthralled, engaging in spirited games of table tennis, mastering the delicate art of Paper Cutting, and crafting vibrant Red Envelopes and Chinese dragon Lanterns.



On Friday, February 9th, 2024, the culmination of the festivities reached its peak with a Chinese New Year show, spearheaded by Mrs. Liu and Mandarin students spanning from S1 to S6. The school social area reverberated with the melodic strains of Chinese songs such as "Gongxi Gongxi," "Super Idol," "High Song," and "Big Fish." Pupils were in resplendent Chinese costumes and adorable Panda suits danced and sang their hearts out, igniting a sense of joy and unity that resonated throughout the school community.

As the festivities drew to a close, students departed with hearts full of memories and a deeper appreciation for the beauty and richness of Chinese culture, marking the occasion as a resounding success and a testament to the school's commitment to fostering cultural harmony and understanding.

EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

CELTIC CHINESE GROUP VISIT

On May 3rd, 2024, St Ninian's High School, Kirkintilloch had the pleasure of hosting a visit from a Chinese group after the request from the Celtic FC. The group consisted of children and two teachers from the Yunan Youth Football Campus. Head Teacher Mr. McLaughlin, Mandarin Teacher Ms. Liu, and several Mandarin-speaking students accompanied them for a tour of the school. During the visit, Ms. Liu delivered a presentation highlighting our school and our partnership with Celtic. The group thoroughly enjoyed their visit and were impressed by St Ninian's achievements.



EAST RENFREWSHIRE CONFUCIUS HUB 2023-24

MEANWHILE IN OUR PRIMARY SCHOOLS...

We have had another successful year in our primary schools which include L3 Mandarin as part of their curriculum. Yet again, flexibility and partnership working have been at the heart of the excellent experiences on offer. It has been a privilege to work with Wu Laoshi in her first year of "real" teaching and her in-person lessons have been supplemented by the VET programme as well as our GTCS secondary colleagues. This hybrid approach has allowed us to reach P5-7 in 14 primary schools, across our 4 clusters with Mandarin pathways. 2023/24 highlights include pupil led learning, family engagement and participation in the ELP programme.



MEARNS CASTLE

FAMILY LEARNING SESSION

Our Introduction to Mandarin Family Learning session took place in one of the evening in term one. Pupils from our school attended with their parents and younger siblings from our cluster primaries and participated in activities together.



CHINESE CLUB

Every Thursday lunchtime in Chinese club, pupils can experience difference activities which they could choose such as watching Chinese films, using chopsticks, playing Chinese shuttlecock and Chinese Checkers etc. In February, pupils in Chinese club have enjoyed making their own red packages filled with Chinese sweets and writing Chinese New cards to their parents.



CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION



For Chinese New Year we made dumplings in Home Economic department. They were so delicious. I will be honest it was quite hard to make into the correct shape but it was still very fun!

Written by Sophie

It was so exciting to see the process of making dumpling and learn how to cook a simple yet delicious meal. I really enjoyed cooking with my friends and eating the dumpling with them afterwards.

Written by Maia



We had a Lion dance at our school in the middle of our open area where we all sit to eat and many people gathered to watch. The lion dance was so good and my favourite part was when it threw lettuce on us.

Written by Lexie

In order to raise CNY cultural awareness S1 pupils in Art design department enjoyed making paper dragons.



In order to raise CNY cultural awareness S1 pupils in Art design department enjoyed making paper dragons.

ST NINIAN'S HIGH SCHOOL

S2 CHINESE NEW YEAR POSTER DESIGN

This poster design was an opportunity for the S2 Art and Design class to learn about Chinese New Year - the Year of the Dragon that symbolises power, good fortune, and strength. The project was an opportunity for pupils to get involved in the wider life of the school and find out about different cultural traditions. Pupils demonstrated their skills in drawing, painting, stencil making and collage. The designs created were displayed at the Chinese New Year party in February. Well done to the S2 class who created beautiful and totally unique designs!



2024 CHINESE BRIDGE MANDARIN SPEAKING COMPETITION



On 20th, 21st and 22nd March, Penny, S2; Osman, S3; Maria, S2 took part in an intense online competition! Well done to our students, Osman and Maria made it through to the 2024 Final of the Chinese Bridge Mandarin Speaking Competition for UK Schools. They represented St Ninian's High School to compete in the final competition which will take place on 9th May at SOAS, University of London.

CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

This year to celebrate the Year of the Dragon, we hosted an event for pupils and their families to attend on 16th February. During the celebration, our pupils and Chinese community spoilt us with numerous great performances, including story-telling, violin and piano playing, Chinese dancing, singing, S2 presentations, and speeches. We were also lucky enough to be treated to some Chinese food at the end.



Through the event, our pupils combined their Mandarin and English skills to create a wonderful experience. At the end, our Head Teacher, Mr. O'Neil, thanked everyone in Mandarin for their brilliant efforts. This event was a positive and fun representation of the Chinese culture within our school.



HILLHEAD HIGH SCHOOL

EXPLORING CHINESE CULTURE: A JOURNEY AT HILLHEAD HIGH SCHOOL

At Hillhead High School, pupils don't just learn about Chinese culture from textbooks; they immerse themselves in its richness through hands-on experiences and engaging activities. Recently, our pupils embarked on a vibrant exploration of Chinese customs, cuisine, and traditions, leaving an indelible mark on their understanding of this ancient and diverse culture.



For our S1 pupils, the adventure began with a tantalising taste of Chinese snacks, igniting their curiosity and anticipation for what lay ahead. Their journey continued as they ventured to a local Chinese supermarket, practicing Mandarin while gaining insights into the diverse array of ingredients that form the backbone of Chinese cuisine.

Meanwhile, our S4 and S5 pupils delved into the world of Chinese hotpot and barbecue, daring to sample exotic delicacies like chicken feet and cow tongue, broadening their culinary horizons and fostering a deeper appreciation for global gastronomy.



GLASGOW

As the Lunar New Year approached, our school buzzed with activity. Pupils crafted Chinese dumplings in Home Economics and designed vibrant Dragon Year posters in Art class, infusing every corner of our school with the spirit of celebration.



In Mandarin class, pupils honed their language skills while engaging in cultural activities such as traditional fan dances and calligraphy. A heart-warming gesture saw Mandarin pupils creating bookmarks adorned with blessings for every staff member, spreading joy throughout our community.



To culminate the festivities, pupils immersed themselves in Chinese film, deepening their appreciation for the richness of Chinese culture. They also explored Chinese attire, donning clothing representing different dynasties, marvelling at the exquisite craftsmanship.

Through these experiences, our pupils have expanded their cultural horizons and forged lasting connections with Chinese heritage. As they continue their journey of discovery, we look forward to fostering deeper cross-cultural understanding within our school community.



JORDANHILL SCHOOL

NOTES OF GRATITUDE

Mandarin department at Jordanhill School

To practise school ethos 'gratitude', pupils of Mandarin wrote a 'thank-you' note to every member of staff of Jordanhill School, be whatever capacity they work in and be they part-time or full time. Staff loved the beautiful 'hongbao', lucky red envelopes, and appreciated the words of gratitude from pupils. Well done to all pupils of Mandarin involved!



MANDARIN IN P6

Ruaridh Miller on behalf of P6A pupils

Learning Mandarin in P6 was a fun experience which we all enjoyed. On the first week, we learned how to pronounce tones and learn words, like colours. Initially, it was challenging but I soon got to grips with it and our teacher, Mr. Guan, was very patient with us, especially helping with written work. In weeks 3-8, we had lessons associated with Chinese New Year and in week 6, I particularly enjoyed making a poster based on Chinese Culture. My classmates and I learned lots including the 12 animals of the Chinese New Year. Week 9 focused on study ahead of our Mandarin test which took place in the final week and involved writing, reading and talking. I was nervous but it went well on the day! We are very fortunate to have such a super Mandarin department at Jordanhill School and I look forward to my p7 block!

Hunter, P6B

My mum comes from Guilin, a city in southwest China. So it's an important time in our house. This year I really enjoyed drawing a poster showing the brand-new year of the dragon. My poster features a dragon soaring above China's most famous landmark the Great Wall. I hope to visit the Great Wall one day especially since my Chinese name is dragon. The poster also features fireworks exploding in the midnight sky. Fun fact fireworks were invented in China. During Chinese new year people exchange red pockets with money inside. I really enjoyed making my poster, gong xi fa cai - wish you a lot of fortune!



MANDARIN IN S1

Harry Tinkler on behalf of S1 pupils

During our year of learning in S1, we have learned to greet people, introducing oneself and other people. We also did a food topic in which we learned to talk about food, and later with the help of teachers of the HFTT department, we learned to cook stir-fried chicken or vegetable chow mien. It was delicious!

In December we chose two famous people of our own liking, and this was for a Chinese character writing competition, of which the 6 winners out of 99 pupils won a certificate and mini, stone, Chinese, opera acting masks as a reward.

Overall, the year 2023/2024 has been an amazing year for the Mandarin S1 classes.



MANDARIN IN S2

S2 Pupils of Mandarin of Jordanhill School

To further practise the language that we have learned in the classroom, and to send off the Year of the Rabbit and welcome in the Year of the Dragon, the students of Mandarin in S2 and S3 visited Sichuan House on 8 February 2024.

On entering the restaurant, we were greeted and taken to our tables by the friendly service staff. The restaurant was pleasantly decorated with special Chinese features. We were seated at two large round tables. This type of table is called a 'Lazy Suzy', which has a large circular moveable 'plate' or rather a smaller round table, in the middle of giant table. We learned that the purpose of this 'Lazy Suzy' is to make the sharing of food easier at mealtimes in China. Sharing plates of food is a large part of Chinese culture.

The menu had a wide selection of tasty-sounding dishes.

We chose from the more familiar ones such as spring rolls and chicken-fried rice to the less familiar ones such as cumin beef and aubergine pepper rice. The food was delicious, and the ambience was even better. All pupils tried their best to order in Mandarin. The teachers and the waiters seemed genuinely impressed by how well we could speak the language. Way to go, everybody!

We were all glad that we had the opportunity to delight or challenge our taste buds. Trying to use chopsticks to pick up food was fun. Some of us were more skilled at it than others. We have all agreed that Chinese cuisine uses a lot more spices than Scottish cuisine. There is one thing though, we were all very surprised to get our starters after our main courses!

All in all, we had an educational as well as a 'delicious' time! It was a fascinating learning experience!



MANDARIN IN S4-S6: PALLAS'S CAT PROJECT

VOICE RECORDINGS

Ever heard of the Pallas's Cat? It's grey and has a long fur coat, a stripy tail and a fierce face. This year, for the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland's (RZSS) 'Beyond the Panda' project, S4 and S6 Mandarin pupils made voice recordings of themselves speaking in Mandarin. These will be used in games and teaching resources for Primary schools, which combine learning about Chinese language and learning about wildlife.



A vocabulary list with words and phrases about the cat was written and divided up, with each pupil having a different section to record. As these recordings will be heard in classrooms all over Scotland, it was important to ensure pronunciation was as good as possible. Everyone took time to practise the pronunciation, especially focusing on the tones of the words, which if wrong can drastically change the meaning of words. The RZSS are the organisation who run Edinburgh Zoo, and as a reward for our work on this project, we have been invited for a private tour of Edinburgh Zoo.

BOARD GAMES

Oliver Hicks and Anna Hazard on behalf of S4 and S6 Pupils

In addition to working on recording our sound files, the other element of this work experience was to create a board game for use in Mandarin classrooms in schools across the country. We began to formulate ideas as a group, aiming to include aspects of both Chinese language and culture in our final product. We based the design of the board off the 'Pallas's Cat', the animal that our sound files described.



In our first meeting, we discussed how the board would look, how to incorporate language-learning into the game, and how to make it appeal to primary school students. We all contributed ideas and came to the conclusion that we would create two prototypes. At our next meeting, we took it in turns playing both games to gauge their flaws their strengths. Both games turned out to be great fun, and we ultimately made the decision to send off both prototypes. Both sporting attractive designs, the games test students on the vocabulary from our recorded sound files, whilst also sharing facts about Chinese culture and language. We're all very excited to see our work being used in primary schools, and also very excited for our trip to the zoo!

MANDARIN IN S6

MY EXPERIENCE LEARNING MANDARIN

Anna Hazard of Jordanhill School

To be able to build a life and career off of a hobby is a great privilege. Within one year of studying Mandarin in secondary school, I realised I had the chance to do just that - and firmly decided that Chinese was the area of study I wanted to pursue. My initial interest can be owed to the kindness of my teachers and class environment, and the rest is history - literally. Through my language studies I developed a deep interest in Chinese political and cultural history, fuelled on by my passion for debating. Viewing Mandarin class as a hobby rather than a requirement gave me the motivation to plunge myself into my studies and gain all the benefits the department has to offer.

Our school is incredibly lucky to quality of teaching that we do in the Mandarin department. I've always felt supported and encouraged in class, and Mrs Fortune has truly gone above and beyond in terms of her dedication to her students; preparing extensive resources and revision materials for us, and organising external trips such as our yearly excursion to Manchester Grammar for the Swire Language Foundation Conference. We have also been fortunate to have the chance each year to be taught by student teachers from China, who provide one-on-one additional speaking practices all year round. These sessions have been invaluable to me in terms of allowing me to confidently converse in Mandarin and gain a deeper understanding of Chinese culture in today's digital age.

Through studying Mandarin, I've been presented with so many valuable opportunities: participating in language exchanges, winning a number of prizes competing as a solo speaker and as part of a group in the British Council Mandarin Speaking Competition (and getting to travel to London for free as part of it), being able to meet the host of my favourite podcast on Chinese affairs, and winning a full scholarship to study at Tianjin University as an international student. I'm incredibly excited to be continuing my language learning journey this year at St Johns College, Cambridge, where I've been offered a place to read Chinese studies. For me, Chinese has offered a gateway into diplomacy and global affairs - allowing me to pursue my dream career while enriching my cultural understanding of one of the world's most complex nations.



Anna pictured with journalist and host of the podcast 'Chinese Whispers', Cindy Yu

CET REFLECTIONS

COLOURFUL MEMORIES IN SCOTLAND

Yujing He, Chinese Exchange Teacher in Midlothian

THE BEGINNING

The glittering night view of the city gradually came into view as we finally arrived in Glasgow. With excitement and joy, we were about to start our Mandarin dream journey here.

When we landed at Glasgow International Airport, we met the Chinese Dean, Yanyan Zhao, and Lisa Hanna, who came to welcome us. We received a gift prepared by the Confucius Institute for Scotland Schools, which made us feel at home with their warmth and kindness.



The day after we arrived in Glasgow, we started our three-day intensive teaching training, and it was not until this moment that I really realized that I was about to go from the VET screen to the real classroom, with a little bit of anticipation and a little bit of nervousness.



After completing the training, we all set off to our respective schools, and a Chinese proverb came to mind: "*Gathered as a ball of fire, dispersed as a sky full of stars.*" In the coming year, the volunteers will do their best to brighten up their own part of the sky and make the flower of Mandarin bloom in every corner of Scotland.

As time passed, the train was about to arrive at Edinburgh Waverley railway station, and as soon as I left the ticket gate, I saw my mentor, Colin, who was greeting me with anticipation.

As soon as I saw him, I felt a touch of warmth even in this strange city. He was very nice and a gentleman, helping me to rent an apartment, showing me around the school, inviting me for coffee as well as helping me with my lesson plan, and so on. The most touching thing was that he and Rosemary celebrated my birthday together. Everything he and Rosemary did for me made me feel at home.



TEACHING TIME IN MANDARIN CLASS

After a week of orientation, I entered the Confucius Classroom in Midlothian. I teach at four primary schools in the Midlothian area, and I am mainly responsible for teaching Chinese to the P6 and P7, and I go to one school every day to teach Mandarin to the pupils. When I walked into Loanhead Primary School for the first time, the students prepared a simple welcoming ceremony for me and presented me with welcome cards made by themselves. The friendly class teacher and lovely students made me feel very good and full of self-confidence and enthusiasm for teaching Chinese in the future.



In the next Mandarin class, we learned about colors, animals and other thematic content together, made panda paper cut-outs; learned how to say numbers in Mandarin, how to play shuttlecock, how to count in Mandarin, and got to know the Chinese RMB.



When learning about the Chinese zodiac as a teaching theme, the children were particularly interested and were eager to raise their hands to tell me their Chinese zodiac and what their favourite zodiac was; the Chinese characters became concrete and vivid on their Mandarin jotters.



In time for the most celebrated festival of the year here (Christmas), we learned vocabulary and then worked in small groups to make Christmas trees, with great engagement from the pupils. Each pupil crafted a hand-made Christmas tree.



In honour of the Chinese New Year, the Year of the Dragon 2024, we learned about Chinese New Year related customs and legends, read and spoke Chinese New Year vocabulary, watched a video of a dragon dance and made a "dragon" together. Some children even performed a dragon dance in the classroom with a dragon in their hands



The children were engrossed in creating the Eric Liddell posters and it was commendable that Savanna and Isla from P5B class were awarded the prize for the best work out of over 2,000 posters from across Scotland.



In the week before the Easter holidays, the pupils made their much-loved Bunny boxes.



At the end of each term, I always receive gifts from my pupils, perhaps this is their way of showing that they like me and their Chinese lessons, which is both heart-warming and wonderful, and will give me even more motivation to finish the rest of my work in Mandarin teaching.



LIVING AND TRAVELING IN SCOTLAND

Amazingly, I have been in Midlothian for close to a year now, and it has been full of freshness and challenges. I have experienced many "firsts": the first time I cooked, the first time I lived alone, the first time I faced close to 400 students.



In my spare time from work, my footprints have walked in all corners of the UK. Walking in the rain in Edinburgh, the fog hid Edinburgh Castle and shrouded it in mystery; in the vast and magnificent Highlands and Skye, I embraced the nature, I appreciated nature's ingenious craftsmanship; standing at the top of the Calton Hill, watching the sunset and the clouds in the sky; in Oxford and Cambridge, I appreciate the charm of the world's top academic institutions; the depiction of Cambridge in Chinese language books was given life here; as Big Ben, London Bridge, and the London Eye that I had seen in my English books came into my eyesight, I took in the evening breeze along the River Thames to appreciate the charm of London; the sea breeze of the Seven Sister Cliffs and the waves of Newcastle are in my memories.



It's springtime and the sun is shining, and the flower of our Mandarin teaching in Scotland continues to blossom, and it will bloom in every corner of this place.



MORAY CONFUCIUS HUB 2023-24

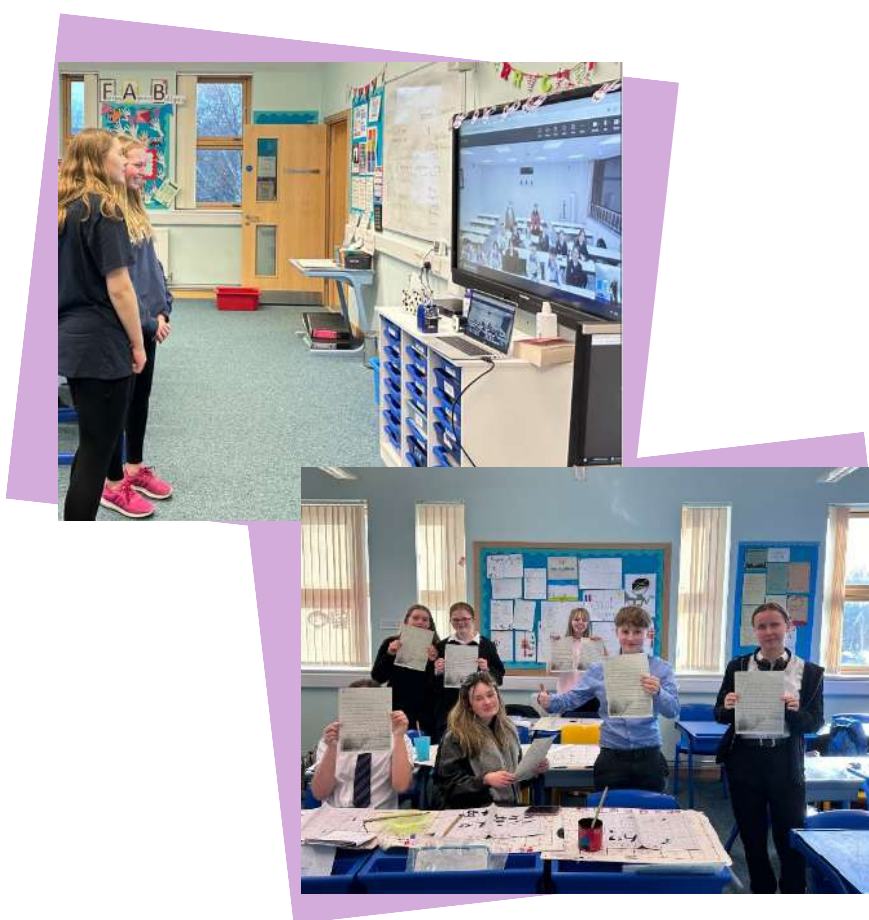
We were delighted to welcome our new CET, Jenny, in August! Jenny has been working with pupils in a variety of primary schools as well as pupils in Forres Academy.

ERIC LIDDLE POSTER COMPETITION

Jenny led this competition with primary pupils from Mortlach and Applegrove Primary. The entrants were fantastic and the pupils really enjoyed learning about Eric Liddle and taking part in this competition.

PARTNER SCHOOL IN TIANJIN

We have continued our partnership with the Yaohua middle school in Tianjin. Pupils in our DYW Mandarin class have been sending and receiving letters throughout this year and we also managed to have a live meet up before Christmas! This was a great opportunity to speak to Chinese pupils and learn about them and their school. We exchanged information about Christmas and they had also learned and performed a Christmas song in English for us! We have been exchanging Christmas cards and gifts and hope to grow this partnership next session.



RSZZ GIANTS SESSIONS AT FORRES ACADEMY



We were excited to welcome Sandie Robb from RSZZ who ran her sessions with us. Our S2 Mandarin elective class thoroughly enjoyed learning about pandas and giant ant eaters and particularly enjoyed the games and bones!

SENIOR QUALIFICATIONS IN MANDARIN

Our fantastic DYW Mandarin Class have been very successful with their Mandarin for Life and Work course this year ! Fei chang hao! For the first time two pupils took on the challenge of a reading (in characters) to achieve the level 4 Mandarin for Work unit! Two of our S6 pupils, along with Miss Harris have all been studying National 5 Mandarin this session with Minrong Zhang. We have all thoroughly enjoyed our online lessons and are now revising for our final exam on the 29th April!



SCHOLARSHIP TO CHINA

We are delighted that three of our S6 pupils were successful in gaining a place for the 9 month CISS Scholarship to Tianjin starting in September this year. Ruby, Louanna and Georgia started learning Mandarin in DYW Elective last year and Ruby and Louanna have been studying National 5 Mandarin this year. We can't wait hear about their time in China!

CHINESE NEW YEAR CROSS CURRICULAR PROJECT

Forres Academy ran the now annual Chinese New Year Cross Curricular Project with S1 pupils again this year. Pupils were taught about the traditions of Chinese New Year, as well as some key phrases by Jenny during their language lessons then over the course of the month took part in various learning activities in different subjects. In Drama pupils presented the story of Mulan as a theatrical performance. They will also perform this for P7s at our upcoming Transition event.



We were happy to welcome Archie McAllan from Chanquanshu back again to PE lessons to lead some sessions in Tai Chi and Quanshu. In Home Economics pupils were able to taste some traditional Chinese food and in Music the pupils were learning about different Chinese Instruments and how to play a famous Chinese piece of music on xylophones. For the first time design and technical also took part and pupils completed a Chinese Chequers woodwork project. They designed and created their own game and also learned the names of some tools in Chinese! Well done to all staff and pupils who took part!



NORTH AYRSHIRE

CET REFLECTION

MANDARIN MOMENTS: TEACHING AND LIVING IN SCOTLAND

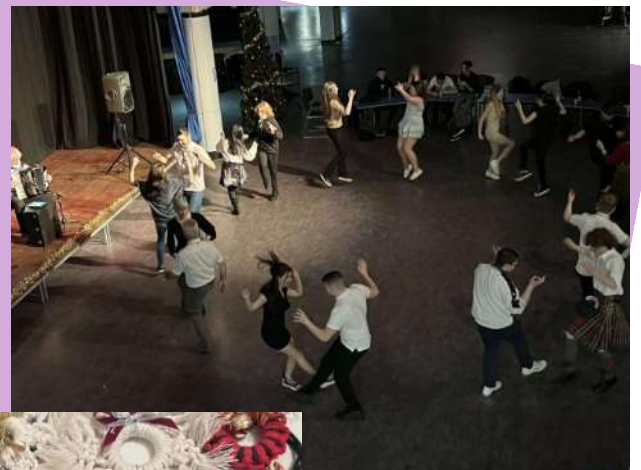
Yingnan He, Chinese Exchange Teacher in North Ayrshire

At the end of August 2023, I arrived in Scotland with excitement, ready to embark on my journey as a Mandarin teacher. With the help of Dean Zhao, Ellie, and Callum, I smoothly checked into the hotel and during the induction week that followed, gained insight into the responsibilities and duties of being a Mandarin teacher through Karen and Susan's guidance.



I was assigned to two schools in North Ayrshire. Despite the challenges of finding accommodation, I settled in the picturesque and tranquil seaside town, Irvine. Here, I witnessed breathtaking sunsets and made friends with the locals.

Throughout my work, I received support from fellow teachers and had the pleasure of meeting delightful students. I had the opportunity to showcase my skills and talents. The most memorable experience for me was Christmas. I had the opportunity to savour authentic Scottish cuisine and I was invited to the Ceilidh, where I joyfully danced to lively music with everyone. It was during the act of giving small gifts that I truly felt the essence of Christmas - the spirit of giving and love. The handmade gifts I presented were warmly received by all, and I felt immensely happy to be able to fully immerse myself in the holiday festivities.

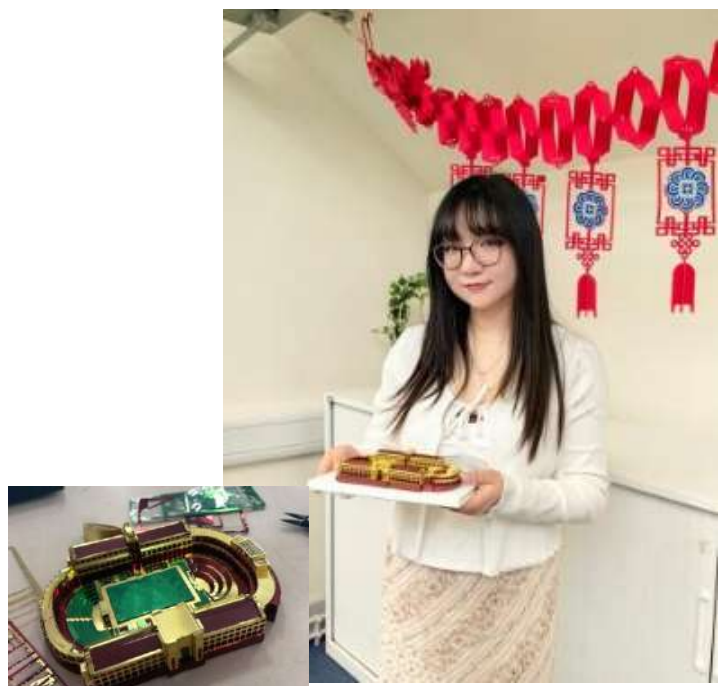


NORTH AYRSHIRE

As Chinese New Year approached, students assisted me in decorating the classroom, where I displayed numerous Chinese-themed paintings at the school entrance. The handmade cards and crafts about dragons that I led in making were well-received at the primary school. Additionally, I participated in the 2024 Spring Festival event hosted by the University of Glasgow, showcasing traditional Hanfu on stage.



During the event of Eric Liddell's 100th anniversary, I also contributed to the creation of a model of the Minyuan Square. This square, a landmark building in my hometown, was constructed with Eric Liddell's involvement, further connecting Tianjin and Scotland through his legacy. I take great pride in spreading Chinese culture and teaching Mandarin here. I have also felt the warmth and kindness of the people. I cherish every moment spent here, every second, and every minute.



KINROSS HIGH SCHOOL

FOSTERING CULTURAL COMPETENCY

At our department, we emphasize more than just grammar drills. Our focus extends to developing pupils' cultural competency, enabling them to decode communication cues and navigate through diverse cultural landscapes. The richness of understanding and immersing in various cultures is a uniquely human experience that cannot be replicated by machines through AI.

Our pupils greatly benefit from Mandarin classes that incorporate various intercultural elements into language learning.

EXPLORING CHINESE ART

During our creative painting sessions, pupils were introduced to aspects of Chinese intangible cultural heritage, specifically sugar painting. They explored this traditional art form by creating images such as dragons, butterflies, Peppa Pig, and writing their names in Chinese characters using molten sugar—a feast for both the eyes and the taste buds.



S1 pupils relished painting plum blossoms on carrier bags, gaining insight into the Chinese concept of '岁寒三友' (Three Friends of Winter - the pine, the bamboo, and the plum, associated with the ability to survive adversity and embrace revitalisation). They drew inspiration from the enduring spirit of the plum blossom through this activity.



In another class, S3 pupils delved into the Chinese poem "Spring Dawn" and then printed its verses using ancient woodblock techniques. They were fascinated by the methods of preservation and dissemination of information in ancient times.



CHINESE NEW YEAR FESTIVITIES

During the Chinese New Year celebrations, pupils participated in Kung Fu and Lion Dance workshops, experiencing the essence of Yin and Yang in movement and breath. Additionally, some pupils earned Dim Sum treats for their hard work in classes, enjoying different options throughout the festive week.



CHINESE LANGUAGE COMPETITION

Huge congratulations to Erin, Sofia, and Hadia from S2 year group who excelled in the Chinese Bridge Mandarin speaking competition. They staged a scene based on the famous Chinese mythology "Journey to the West," showcasing a blend of skills in language, acting, digital proficiency, and teamwork.



STIRLING HIGH SCHOOL

HUB NEWS

This year, we warmly welcome Ms. Huiyuan Li, an experienced teacher from Tianjin, China, as our new exchange teacher. Ms. Li will continue supporting students in the Stirling Hub.

At Stirling High School, we strive to engage the entire school community in celebrating Chinese New Year and other cultural festivals. Building on last year's success, we are excited to host a P7 transition China day, inviting all new pupils to experience Chinese culture and Mandarin learning at Stirling High School.

Additionally, we're proud to announce that one of our S6 students has successfully secured the CISS scholarship and will study in Tianjin next year.

SCHOOL COLLABORATIONS

This year, we've launched several exciting initiatives. Collaborating with the Maths department, we've integrated Chinese language and mathematics, allowing students to explore the numerical mysteries within Chinese characters and the stories of mathematicians from Chinese history.

On March 14th, we celebrated Pi Day, with students designing T-shirts featuring Pi and Chinese characters and participating in Pi recitation challenges in English and Chinese. Remarkably, two students recited 33 digits in English and 22 in Chinese, earning them the championship.



DYW EXCURSIONS

Our S3 students had the opportunity to participate in the DYW program this year. During our visits to The Balmoral Hotel and St James Quarter shopping centre in Edinburgh, staff provided inspirational opportunities for young people to develop essential skills for success, emphasizing the importance of language in the hospitality industry.

Students were captivated by the hotel's luxurious rooms and amenities, and during the shopping centre tour, staff showcased efforts to embrace Chinese customers and culture, including special decorations and promotions during the Spring Festival. We also enjoyed an exclusive observation deck overlooking the city, enriching our students' experience.



A highlight of the day was lunch at a Chinese restaurant, where students reflected on their classroom learning while enjoying the cuisine. One student remarked, "The food was amazing and encouraged me to try dishes I otherwise wouldn't have," while another exclaimed, "It was very tasty, and I was surprised I could use chopsticks!"

STORNOWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

MANDARIN IN THE SCHOOL

We continue to introduce the children to Mandarin language learning, giving them an opportunity to learn and appreciate the Chinese language and culture. Two primary 5 classes are taking part in the VET Programme where they are having lessons from a teacher based in China. We have again formed links with Alexandra Robb, RZSS Language Project Co-ordinator, who is virtually delivering a series of science-based "Beyond the Panda" lessons. We look forward to welcoming Alexandra to our school in May, where she will work with children on some hands-on activities.

By learning about Chinese culture and language, the children are not only expanding their knowledge but also fostering cross-cultural understanding and respect. The inclusion of Mandarin language learning is highly beneficial, as it exposes the children to a different language and helps them develop a broader perspective of the world.

ERIC LIDDELL ACTIVITIES

Stornoway Primary School has been actively involved in developing the Confucius Hub by paying tribute to Eric Liddell, who was born in Tianjin, China. He left a lasting legacy in the world of sport. Liddell's remarkable story has been used as an inspiration to promote perseverance and dedication.

The school enjoyed participating in Sports Hall Athletics. Every pupil participated in a series of Sports Hall Athletics sessions, getting the opportunity to try out various athletic disciplines, with a key focus on having fun and positive interactions with one-another. The upper primary participated in extra sessions, including a talk and presentation on human values such as honesty, fairness and respect, and how they can positively influence others to make sport more inclusive and fun. By emphasising these qualities, the school aims to instil important life skills in our pupils while, fostering a positive and inclusive culture.



STORNOWAY

This year's cross-curriculum work on Eric Liddell built on last year's learning about Chinese New Year, and we continue to develop the knowledge, skills, and cultural awareness required of citizens in the globally interdependent world of the 21st century.

The school also took part in the Eric Liddell anniversary poster competition, which encouraged pupils to create posters which celebrated the centenary of Eric Liddell's gold medal win. We were delighted that one of our pupils was given an honourable mention and was presented with a certificate. Our P7 class even unearthed a local connection during their research, when they discovered that Eric's mother Mary, prior to her marriage, trained as a nurse and worked for a year in Lewis.



WELCOMES

Please join us in welcoming the new members of the CISS team!

MUZAKIRA FARID



Muzakira joined the team in 2023 as a Project and Events Coordinator. After graduating from the University of Glasgow with a BSc (Hons) in Astronomy & Physics, Muzakira worked at the Institute of Physics (IOP) as Nation Support Coordinator, helping to deliver a variety of public engagement and membership events, as well as providing essential admin support to the IOP Scotland team.

Muzakira speaks Punjabi and Korean, and works on the areas of CISS hubs, CET support, the Discovering China and VET programmes, and financial and travel-related processes.

ALICE FREEMAN

Alice joined CISS in 2023 as a Projects and Events Coordinator. Having studied MA (Hons) French at the University of Edinburgh and MSc TESOL at the University of Glasgow, Alice has amassed several years working in language education, including as an Assistant Consultant for the British Council's Language Assistants team, and as a Customer Service Consultant for the language app, Babbel.

Alice speaks French and German, and works on the areas of the CISS Scholarship, Alumni, Eco Learning Partners and VET programmes, CISS newsletter, and manages CISS social media and communications.



AARON NICOLL



Aaron is the most recent addition to the team, starting his role as Professional Development Assistant in May 2024. A learner of Mandarin since his school days in the Fife Confucius Hub, Aaron gained a CertHe in Education Studies with Mandarin from De Montford University, before completing his dual honours degree in Mandarin with TESOL at Nottingham Trent University. He studied at Yunnan Normal University in Yunnan, China, on his year abroad.

Aaron is a GTCS Mandarin teacher who will be joining us from Grove Academy in Dundee. At CISS, Aaron will be working on the Discovering China programme, teaching Mandarin online.

GOODBYES

In 2023, we said goodbye to our three of our Communications and Projects Coordinators:

CALUM GIBB
ELLIE CASSEN
NATASHA BOWMAN

All three were key members of the CISS team for a number of years, and many of our friends and colleagues worked with them on projects and events. We are wishing them all the best on their new ventures!



A NEW ARRIVAL

We have been buzzing with excitement over news of another new arrival to the CISS team!

Our Professional Development Assistant, Minrong Zhang is expecting a baby in late September. Congratulations and best wishes from all the team for a healthy and happy pregnancy.



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