

World's largest schools piping and drumming competition



A piper practices in the corridor

The world's largest schools piping and drumming competition will take place at James Gillespie's High School next month.

The Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships take place on 12 March 2017 and will have entries from 120 schools including George Watson's College, Fettes College, Stewart's Melville, George Heriot's School, James Gillespie's High School and The Edinburgh Academy.

Around 800 young people will take part in the Championships split into seven categories so that each and every band can find one suitable for them. There is also a freestyle category encouraging more modern and up to date music.

Cameron Drummond, Master in Charge of Piping and Drumming at Fettes College, said: "We at Fettes College are very excited at the prospect of in the Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships.

"We know that the standards of musicianship will be very high across the categories, but we have been busy rehearsing over the last few weeks to do our best to bring home success to the school.

"But whatever happens, we will ensure we both enjoy and learn from the experience of performing at such a prestigious competition – and for the band and our young musicians to continue their love of piping and drumming."

Alexandra Duncan, Chief Executive of The Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust (SSPDT), said. "We are delighted to see so many schools represented for the first time.

"The whole purpose of this event is to encourage the formation of pipe bands in state schools and to put our national instruments on a par with other music provision in the classroom.

"Since the creation of the schools Championships, and the formation of The Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust, there has been a considerable increase in the provision of in-school piping and drumming tuition across Scotland.

"We work in partnership with local authorities and others to try and see as many schools as possible offer piping and drumming tuition and eventually form bands bringing real opportunities for the players.

"Currently we support the delivery of piping and drumming tuition to over 1600 young people in programmes the length and breadth of the country and we are very keen to see that number increase rapidly.

"We welcome approaches from local authorities and others who need funding to get tuition going where currently there is none, or who want to introduce drumming to existing piping tuition so that bands can be developed, and we can often draw in other funders to help the process and make the projects sustainable in the long term."

The charity SSPDT funds tuition for pipes and drums in schools across Scotland and will invest £500,000 this year.

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