

For immediate release

Inspired pupil Ross Laird from Gryffe High School wins 1st Prize Silver in Commonwealth Games inspired project.

Major Commonwealth Games educational project inspire>aspire inspires 36,000-plus pupils in Scotland to use the learning opportunities from the Games to commit to their vision for a better world.

National finalists were honoured at the inspire>aspire National Awards in the Bute Hall at The University of Glasgow on Monday June 16th. National prize winners were awarded their gold, silver and bronze placed medals by BBC Correspondent and Adventurer Mark Beaumont during Primary and Secondary ceremonies.

Ross Laird from Gryffe High School won 1st Prize Silver at the ceremony and he chose Dalai Lama as his inspirational figure as part of his work during the Legacy 2014 project.

Explaining the reasons for his choice, Ross said: "I admire him deeply as he is exiled from his country for no plausible reason and he stays calm, condemns violence & asks peacefully for Tibetan Independence."

During Mark Beaumont's keynote speech, he encouraged pupils to: "Make the most of the celebrations that are coming to Scotland this summer. Now you've been a successful part of inspire>aspire and drawn your posters and are here to celebrate it, go out and find out what other people have written, the world they live in and what they are aspiring to be."

Cabinet Secretary for Commonwealth Games and Sport, Shona Robison, said: "I warmly congratulate the winners, and finalists, from the inspire>aspire awards. Indeed, a big 'well done' goes to all the 36,000-plus children in Scottish schools who have participated in this educational 'Global Citizens in the Making' programme.

"Offered through Game On Scotland, this Supporting Legacy 2014 Project uses the 2014 Games as an inspiring springboard to encourage children to develop personal action plans based on Commonwealth values.

"By enabling children in Scotland to establish sustainable partnerships with peers from around the Commonwealth, and helping them to share their values, aspirations and visions for the future, it is to be highly commended for empowering young people to become responsible global citizens.

"inspire>aspire is thus a valued partner in supporting our Legacy ambitions, to create a lasting and positive Games Legacy which places young people at its heart."

With 36,000-plus pupils participating in the programme from Scotland this year it was a truly notable achievement for the 220 Primary and Secondary finalists. Participation from England, Northern Ireland, Wales and 42 of the 71 Commonwealth Nations and Territories took overall participation numbers to 56,000 pupils.

Ross explained how much of an impact participating in inspire>aspire has had on him: "I feel I have learned more about myself in the sense that I needed to think carefully about my answers and how I thought of myself."

The National Awards culminated what has been a successful year for inspire>aspire with participation in all 32 local authorities achieved for the first time in the projects 7 year history (previously operating as Learning for Life and Olympic Values).

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

Please contact Alex Gregg, inspire>aspire Operations Executive on 01334844900, 07931906920 or alex.gregg@inspire>aspire.org.uk for further information. Professional photographs available upon request.

**inspire>aspire: Global Citizens in the Making is a Legacy 2014 Project which allows young people to use a unique poster format to lead them through a structured process of self-reflection and self-discovery that helps to transform their inspiration into aspiration. This activity also supports the educational offering of the British Council's 'Commonwealth Class', Education Scotland's 'Game on Scotland' and the Scottish Government's 'Support a second team' initiatives.*

inspire>aspire is a project of the educational charity Character Education Scotland registered charity no. SC040962

