

Renfrew High School News



December 2015

Welcome to the Christmas edition of our newsletter. Looking back over the past term, and indeed the past year, in school we have much to be proud of. As ever the wide range of school and individual activity and achievement is testament to the skills and hard work of our pupils, staff, parents and partners. You can read about some of this inside this edition, which has been redesigned by some of our talented pupils.

I wish you and your families all the very best for Christmas and the New Year ahead.

Billy Burke

Head Teacher

Head Boy and Head Girl Winter Update

This has been a busy yet enjoyable one for us. Working with the S6 House Captains we have been organising our many Prefects to help out during the school day and at the various evening events which have taken place. The Pupil Leadership team have been meeting with Mr Burke regularly to discuss our ideas and to plan ways of adding to pupils' experiences at Renfrew High. We were honoured to represent the school on Remembrance Sunday at the event in Paisley.

This year's S6 group have bonded really well and everyone enjoyed our team building day at Go Ape! Our new social room has given us a great place to talk, study and relax.

We are thoroughly enjoying our role as Head Boy and Girl and are looking forward to next year. Good luck to all S4-6 who are sitting examinations in January, and we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kyle Fleming and Eve Thomas



Charity Update

Between August and December the Charities Committee has facilitated various events to support and raise funds for various organisations. Some of the charities we have supported include MacMillan Cancer Support, Save the Children, Classrooms for Malawi, Jeans for Genes, The Calman Centre, Renfrewshire Foodbank and The Anthony Nolan Trust. Most recently we organised a clothing appeal for the Syrian Refugee crisis in conjunction with Glasgow – The Caring City. Well done to Alex Jack in S6 for making the link with this charity.

We thank all pupils, parents and staff who have contributed to any of this work. So far this session we have raised approximately **£3000** for these different causes.

The Charities Committee



St. Andrew's Day

This year, in celebration of St. Andrews Day, some of the new teachers at Renfrew High School decided to organise a day of exciting activities for the new 1st years. The theme of the day was “Are You A True Scot?!”. The idea behind the day was that each of the 1st year classes would take part in a number of Scottish themed tasks, rotating every period onto something different. By the end of the day all the classes got to try 5 different tasks, including: Build the Forth Road Bridge with Mr Beattie; Make your own Haggis with Miss Gardner, Design a Postcard in a Period with Mr O’Neill, St Andrew’s Day Scottish Quiz with Miss Eades, and The Highland Games with Mr Dougall. At the end of the day all the classes were then gathered to find out who the winners or “True Scots” were! To be a “True Scot” you had to have the “Winning Tartan,” and to get the winning tartan, your team had to be the best at all 5 of the Scottish Tasks throughout the day (or the closest to this!)

At the end of each task, the teachers leading them assigned the different teams a colour. Different colours represented how well they did in the task, but the classes didn’t know which colour represented what until the very end!

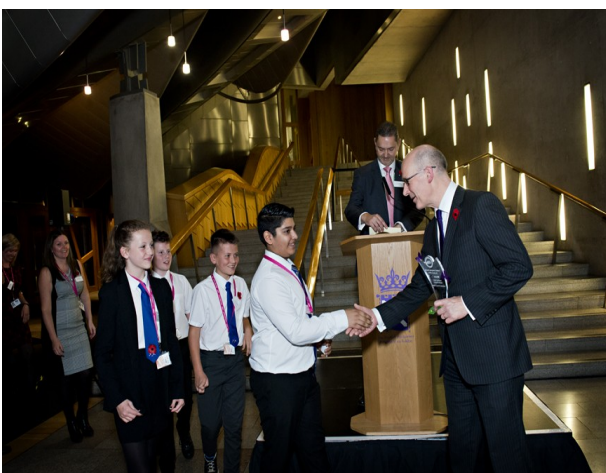
After completing all 5 tasks, each team of 1st years had a collection of 5 different colours noted. They were then given a blank tartan template, which they had to colour in accordingly with the colours they were assigned. Once complete, the “Winning Tartan” was revealed to everyone, and the team who came closest to replicating this tartan were crowned as the “True Scots.” Everybody did fantastic on the day, however it was a very close call between 2 great teams, and a tie-breaker question was needed! In the end one teamed came out on top... Congratulations again to the winners: Olivia Officer, Rachel Walker, Max Bulloch, and Dylan Taggart! The truest of true Scots!



Congratulations to our S2 pupils who were recognised at the Scottish Parliament for the work they did when at Arkleston Primary.

Arkleston Primary School Resident Nail Bar is a social enterprise business created to improve the lives of vulnerable citizens in our community. Working in partnership with Renfrew Care Home, our Nail Bar profits are reinvested in activities which support the social, emotional and physical well being of residents suffering from dementia. Training in therapeutic practices and dementia care from our business partners ensure children approach their work with an existing skills set. Further transferable skills are developed which empower children in identifying their strengths.

Jack Arbuckle, Abdullah Aziz & Rachel Craig



Mr Stepney has started a Junior Pupil Sports Council for S1-S3 pupils. This is to ensure that the young people are provided with the opportunity to 'have their say' in the PE department with regards to activities, extra-curricular clubs, sporting events and trips. Congratulations and thank you to the list of pupils below who have volunteered to represent their classes' voice at regular meetings.

S1 representatives

Emily Thomson
Ryli Malcolm
Penny McNamara
Cameron McMillan
Joel Sarka
Abby McCall
Cara Nish
Aaron Yuille
Jack Arbuckle

S2 representatives

David Smith
Skye Docherty
Alastair Hamilton
Alisha Haider
Kyle Campbell
Cameron Lamont
Kirsten Officer
Ellie Proctor
Mirren Harkins

S3 representatives

Emma Kinnaer
Matthew Preston
Melissa Roberts
Morgan Speirs
Nathan Smith
Nicole Robson
Chloe Charles





2015/16 “Mon Passeport” Competition winners

Back in August, a new year in Modern Languages meant it was time for our new first-year pupils to take part in our annual “Passeport” competition – a fun summary of words learned in Primary, complete with stylish pictures to try and sway voters and claim one of the prizes! Once again, the quality across all classes was great and our worthy winners are as follows:

1C1 – Roslynn O’Neill and Jennifer Lee
 1C2 – Kara McMillan and Ross Stewart
 1F1 – Milly Mitchell and Fraser Rundell

1F2 – Erin McConnell and Kammy Shafique
 1T1 – Eilidh Franklin and Matthew McLean

Bistro Beaumartin

In early December, S5 and S6 pupils at Renfrew High School who are learning French took up the chance to visit “Le Bistro Beaumartin”, an authentic French restaurant, allowing them to explore the exciting tastes of France right in the heart of Glasgow. With many feeling like celebrities doing a bush tucker trial, they braved the frog’s legs and snails, which, to their surprise, were enjoyable. Along with the more unique foods, they were able to try authentically cooked meat or pasta, along with vegetables. Afterwards came an assortment of cakes, fruit, and fondant dip for dessert. Despite many pupils’ reservations, the food was delightful, and many vowed to return again, with family! After the hearty meal, everyone got the chance to mingle with ambassadors from the University of Strathclyde, students and lecturers, and ask necessary questions about their very possible future in the

languages department at the university. Overall, everybody had an enjoyable (and tasty!) afternoon, leaving with full stomachs and their fears or worries about continuing French at university settled, which everyone could completely agree was time well spent.
 Lisa Rhodes (S6)



Debating

Renfrew's debating club have had a very successful year so far, with students representing the school at four prestigious competitions since September. Our S5 team of Rebecca Lay and Aminah Chaudhary have proceeded to round two of the English Speaking Union's national school's mace tournament. Our S3 team of Thallia McGowan and Graham McCormick are also through to round two of the junior version of the same competition. Other students have also represented the school in regional heats, and demonstrated some very impressive public speaking skills!

To round off an excellent term, Renfrew were one of only 24 schools in Scotland to be invited to take part in the English Speaking Union's annual St Andrew's day debate, held in the Scottish parliament. Students were involved as speakers, judges, chairs and observers. Sherzah Jamal said "the best thing about the St Andrew's day debate was getting to see how debates are judged. The whole day was a really fun experience."

Third year debater Graham McCormack said people should join debating because "it's fun, everyone's really nice, and it's good to be able to get your point across in a constructive way." We are always on the lookout for new members of all year groups, and meet after school on a Tuesday in Miss Eades's room.

Children in Need

As part of Renfrew High School's commitment to charity work and promoting health and well-being, the PE department hosted a number of fundraising events.

The money raised was part to the school's efforts to raise money for Children In Need.

The events included a *Sports Challenge Afternoon* where pupils from S1-S6 were encouraged to come along and pay a donation of 50p to take part in competitions such as: 'beat the goalie', 'crossbar challenge', 'basketball free throw competition', and a 'beat the teacher press up challenge and plank challenge'. Pupils from all year groups rose to the occasion and helped create an electric atmosphere as the competition intensified. But most importantly, everyone enjoyed themselves and were proud to be part of a successful event which raised awareness and money for a good cause.

The highlight of the fundraising efforts was Thursday's sponsored run which aimed to achieve the distance between Renfrew High School and the Children in Need studios in London. It involved young people from all year groups coming out of class in 15 minute time slots to run as far as possible. The pupils demonstrated resilience and determination to rack up a total of 380 miles over the course of the day. Unfortunately we were 35 miles short of our 415 mile target; however, the young people who signed up performed excellently and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Finally, on Friday at lunchtime, the PE department hosted a 'Staff vs. Pupil Dodgeball Game'. This was a battle of the titans as the staff challenged S6 pupils in a duck, dip, dodge, duck and dive showdown. To the delight of the pupils, the S6 walked away victorious during all 3 games. Again, this event was enjoyed by all involved and was a great way to create a positive ethos in the department.





Snowboarding Club

The Renfrew High Snowboarding Club has got off to a roaring start and no serious injuries! With members ranging from S1 to S6 we hit the slopes for five weeks before the Christmas holidays. Our already experienced boarders Nathan Hand and Georgia Smith (and occasionally Mr O'Neill and Mr Beattie) were the role models for those who were starting out! Ellie Cowley, Adam Fraser, Kaleb Hand, Linda Lay, Caitlin Munro, Veronica Notman and Matthew Watson completed their series of 5 lessons with the majority now cleared for snowboarding unsupervised. We're already looking forward to being back on the snow in January. Look out for more from us in the New Year!



Open Mic Night



On a cold, dark wintery November's evening, the school was transformed into gig heaven once again and came alive with the melodious sounds of many live musical performances.

Our very talented bunch of pupils warmed our hearts and made us proud with their renditions of many classic tunes at our very own 3rd Open Mic. Event. It was tremendous to see such a wonderful turn-out from staff and family members who came to participate and support. I spoke with many of the pupils after the event and all agreed it had been a really: 'fun, exciting night' with an: 'amazing atmosphere'.

James Park, an S3 pupil from our school, demonstrated his amazing talent for the first time in front of a live audience on the night and sang: 'Stay with Me' by Sam Smith.

James told me later:

' although I was really nervous, I loved the atmosphere and the applause. Everyone really supported me and helped me to do it. It was a real big challenge for me but I felt great after doing it. I'm definitely going to do it again and because of the experience of singing at the open mic. night, I'm now singing at the Christmas Concert. Although I'm still nervous about performing, I'm really looking forward to. This time I'm going to sign 'All of Me' by John Legend and Mr Price is going to play the piano'.

What more can I say folks? Congratulations to everyone for your outstanding performances – and for showing commitment and courage to stand up there and just do it! Thanks also to all staff and family members, and the PFA Committee for supporting our pupils on another very successful night! Remember to look out for posters advertising our next event!
Mrs Lockhart :)

The School Choir

The choir has had a busy time this year in the lead up to Christmas and have been performing within the community. They started at West College Scotland in Paisley, singing for the students and staff during their lunch. Next, was a an informal service at the Paisley campus of UWS, a little different from many previous years. This was followed by a concert at intu Braehead where they sang and collected donations for the Ronald McDonald House charity. They are also looking forward to the imminent Christmas concert on Monday 21st December.



Coca Cola Factory

A few weeks ago, S4 visited the Coca-Cola factory in East Kilbride. It was interesting to hear about but unfortunately, the production line wasn't working. We were surprised when we found out about other drinks that Coca-Cola produce and how they are distributed around Scotland. The factory was highly secretive and they go out of their way to stop rivals from getting any information. We were led around by Johanna, the education manager. At the end, we were given a Capri-Sun and a free pen.

Craig McLelland (S4)





Duke of Edinburgh First Aid

Well done to the 26 S4-S6 pupils who completed an Emergency First Aid at Work course as part of their Bronze Award. Look out for pictures of the S3 group after Christmas!



To celebrate young people's hard work, excellent behaviour and their positive attitude across the school, the PE department organised a reward and praise trip to Airspace Trampoline Centre in East Kilbride. The event was attended by 48 young people, who have excelled in their studies this session. This was an opportunity for the pupils to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing. The pupils had the opportunity socialise with peers, make new friends from different year groups and build positive relationships with staff. The event was a massive success, pupils represented the school fantastically well. A great day was enjoyed by all involved!

Mr Stepney

Farewell and Welcome

Very best wishes to Mrs Cockburn (Music), Mr McGarvey (Physics) and Mrs Graham (English) who moved on from Renfrew High this term. Special thanks to Mrs Whyte (Head of Science), who retires at Christmas, for all her work at Renfrew High.

We also send our best wishes to those of our pupils who leave us at Christmas to take the next steps into work, training or education.

And a warm welcome to Mrs Forrest (Head of Science), Ms Monks (English) and Miss Kourepini (Physics).



This term has seen a very high level of participation in all sports teams and extracurricular clubs at Renfrew High School. We would like to congratulate all those pupils that have taken part in activities throughout the term and would also invite any pupils interested in taking part to attend



Football

All 5 of the school football teams that participate in the Renfrewshire Schools league have performed well. The **S1** team are sitting in a good position in their league after a couple of good victories early in the campaign. The **S2** team have played some fantastic games, scoring 30 goals in 4 games, most recently progressing to the next round of the St Mirren Cup with an excellent victory away at Dunoon Grammar. The **S3** team have been flying high in the league, beating a number of opponents by a large number of goals before coming up against a very good Gryffe team last week. The **S4** team have also made a good start to the league campaign, edging to victory in some thrilling games. The **S5/6** team have struggled for numbers on a couple of occasions but have put in some excellent performances in the league. Girls football has really kicked on this year at Renfrew High with girls teams from the junior and senior school given the

opportunity to play in monthly fixtures held at the Johnstone Hub. The girls have represented the school and themselves extremely well and we are sure they will continue to do so in the fixtures in the new year.

Badminton

A number of pupils from the school took part in the Renfrewshire schools badminton qualifier event this term. The standard was extremely high and 2 of our pupils managed to win all of their matches and progress to the regional tournament. Congratulations to Ellie MacDonald and Emma Arbuckle and best of luck in the regional event.

Highlights

There have been a great number of activities put on for our pupils through extracurricular clubs throughout the term. The Air Space trip which was run in conjunction with the gymnastics and trampoline club. The Manchester City football trip was put on by the PE department. The gymnastics club attended the gymnastics world championships at the SSE Hydro.

We would like thank all staff and pupils involved in all sports teams and extracurricular activities. We hope next term is as successful and enjoyable as this one.