



# **KILMARNOCK ACADEMY**

## **SPRING NEWSLETTER**

### **Head Teacher's Message**

As I write to you we are nearing the end of another rewarding term. Traditionally Term 2 is an exceptionally busy time in a secondary school and this one has been no different. We have forged forward in our quest to achieve true equity and excellence at Kilmarnock Academy. I would like to thank the exceptionally hard working team of teaching and non-teaching staff for their dedication, commitment and resilience this term. Together we have strived to ensure all young people fulfil their potential academically whilst providing a huge range of wider achievement opportunities.

There have been many highlights this term and I will mention but a few. On 8<sup>th</sup> February P.C.McGinn, our Campus Police Officer, presented to all S1-S3 pupils raising awareness of internet security. I am sure you agree Social Media is something that has tremendous benefits, but there is also a need for caution and vigilance. We then hosted an East Ayrshire Modern Languages Business Day on 11<sup>th</sup> February with over 250 young people learning about the benefits of modern languages. Pupils from the Rights Respecting Schools' Group led our Holocaust Memorial Day this year which I am delighted to report contributed to the school achieving our Certificate of Level 1 commitment.

We have now secured over 15 Business Partners to enhance our curriculum and extend opportunities for young people as we take forward the government's "Develop Scotland's Workforce" recommendations. Our business partners and many more contributed to an excellent Entrepreneurial Day for all S3 pupils.

We also re-instated the Kilmarnock Academy Burns Supper which was my first at the Academy and was up there with the best I have been involved in. A great evening was had by pupils and staff alike and finished with a ceilidh led by our very own outstanding band. Thanks to Mr Gus Kerr and the S3 caterers for their contribution on the night.



I wish to pay tribute to our S6 Young Enterprise group who have established their own company, "Horizon Pages". The extraordinary S6 team have created a product which helps prepare primary pupils for secondary school. Impressively, the team pitched the product to Sir Tom Hunter and our own Marie Macklin, CBE, who have both sponsored the company. The team will later compete in the Ayrshire Awards and will receive a Young Enterprise Scotland Award.

We continue to review our strategies for engaging with our parent partners. We have made changes to the way we communicate about a parents' evening and also the organisation on the night to better meet parents' needs. These changes have been positively evaluated. In addition, at a recent S4 parents' evening we consulted on input you would like to support your young person's learning. As a result, a parent workshop on managing stress took place on 14<sup>th</sup> March and prefects prepared a presentation on study skills to be delivered at school assemblies. Your parent council continues to play an integral part in both challenging and supporting the school. We really value the vibrant monthly meetings.

As you should now be aware we will become a cashless school on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2016. You will have received correspondence regarding "ParentPay" via school bags (if you did not receive this please contact the school office). Pupils will hear about the cashless system before the spring break and have their biometric scan taken (or PIN issued) on 20<sup>th</sup> April. This will make scrambling about for dinner and trip money a thing of the past for parents.

As always I would encourage you to look at our school blog regularly and follow us on twitter. Those that do will know that works have started on the new Kilmarnock Academy in New Farm Loch with an expected opening date of April 2018. I will post information on the blog as I receive it.

At Kilmarnock Academy we continue to engage with a wide range of partners. Staff at the school worked with Vibrant Communities to host a series of workshops for S4-S6 pupils relating to the Scottish Parliament elections and also provide an opportunity to register for voting eligibility. I would remind you that 5<sup>th</sup> May is now an in-service day for staff as opposed to 27<sup>th</sup> May which is now a normal school day. This is a change to previous correspondence.

Our S4-S6 pupils are working hard towards their national examinations. We are supporting them through general supported study, targeted supported study, Easter School sessions, Masterclasses during the exam diet (more information to follow) and a series of "dealing with exam stress" workshops. Pupils are also encouraged to utilise Scholar and the other useful websites listed in this newsletter. Study leave will commence at 2.45pm on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April with S4 and S5 pupils returning at 8.44am on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June. Please note all pupils using the school during study leave, including for exam purposes must wear school uniform for identification and security purposes. Candidates are welcome to use the school as a place to study during

exam leave. If you feel we can assist further in any way, please do not hesitate to contact the school. We wish all those about to sit their exams the very best of luck.

Finally there has been a few staffing changes to inform you about. We say goodbye to Mrs Johnstone in physics and we wish her every success in her new post at Hillhead High School. I also wish to express my sincere thanks to Ms Pryce who has been acting Depute Head Teacher since January, for her hard work and enthusiasm. We again wish her every success in her future career. We welcome Mrs Andrea Mossie to the school on 19<sup>th</sup> April who will take the post as our new Depute Head Teacher.

I wish to finish by thanking you for your continued support of our school and wish you all an enjoyable spring break.

David Rose  
Head Teacher

The following is just a sample of all the learning and activities taking place at Kilmarnock Academy.

More information can be found at:

<http://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/kilmarnockacademy/>

You can also follow us on Twitter: @kilmarnockacad

### **Important Dates**

- S1 - S3 change of Timetable – 3<sup>rd</sup> May
- ParentPay goes live – 3<sup>rd</sup> May
- In-service day 5<sup>th</sup> May
- Normal school day 27<sup>th</sup> May
- Quiz Night 22<sup>nd</sup> April - £30 per team of 6 (max) or £15 for pupils per team – tickets available from the school.
- “Roon The Toon” 12<sup>th</sup> June – 10K race (see EA website for more details)

## Modern Languages Department

The Modern Languages Department here at Kilmarnock Academy has been very busy since the start of term promoting language learning and doing our best to encourage every pupil to continue with their study of a foreign language.



### Languages Work!

On 11<sup>th</sup> February Kilmarnock Academy hosted most of the other Secondary schools in Ayrshire at a Languages Business Day. We had three workshops; the first gave pupils a taste of the Welsh language, the second explained the many advantages in the world of work that the knowledge of a foreign language can bring and the third consisted of groups of pupils who worked together to produce an advertisement for “Articulate” – a company which organises language camps for children. There was also a “Marketplace” where pupils could talk informally with various business people who used a foreign language every day in their working life.



### German Language Adventure Day

S1 pupils have had the opportunity to learn some basic German and S2 pupils have had the choice of German or Spanish as an additional language. Those learning German recently participated in the German Language Adventure run by the Goethe-Institut who came to the school for the day. This was a wonderful opportunity for pupils to learn German phrases and vocabulary as well as more about German culture through fun and engaging activities.

Pupils had to complete as many tasks as they could in an hour and each activity station was named after a German city. Teams had to use a map of Germany to navigate their way round the stations, collecting points as they travelled. Everyone particularly enjoyed dressing up as crazy German football fans! It also allowed pupils to apply team work and problem solving skills.

S2 pupils Alex Cree and Adam Hood gave an excellent presentation about German football to 1S followed by a quiz. They spoke to the class about the popularity of football in Germany and Alex even received some free football accessories after contacting German team Bayer Leverkusen. Both boys put a lot of effort and hard work into this activity.



### Business Brunch

Ten S3 pupils accompanied by Mrs Smith and Isabelle, our French-Canadian language assistant went to Strathclyde University to find out more about the variety of careers and employment opportunities that are open to people who can demonstrate language skills on their CV. The young people found it inspiring and worthwhile and these are some of the comments from pupils who attended:-

*"I now know more about jobs involving languages."*

*"I have decided to continue with French in S4 as I realise how important it could be in my future career."*

*"It was really interesting to talk to someone who uses a foreign language every day in their job."*

## Rendez-vous avec les canadiens

The culmination of this very busy term was an amazing opportunity for 38 of our pupils in S3/4/5/6 to meet a group of 42 French-Canadian pupils and their teachers who were visiting the UK for 10 days. The rendez-vous was arranged by Isabelle Rivard, our French-Canadian Language Assistant, Mrs Stables Principal Teacher of Modern Languages and Nancy Bédard, the lead teacher for the Canadian Group.

We first met the group outside Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow and before the museum opened, pupils had time to find their “twin” and to start to get to know them. In the museum we all took part in an “ice-breaker” activity to encourage pupils to get to know each other. We then had time to look around the museum before lunch. The Scottish pupils brought a packed lunch for their Canadian “twins” and our visitors got the chance to taste some Scottish specialities – mostly Irn Bru and tablet! The visiting teachers received gifts of a Scottish mug, some shortbread and some fudge. In return the Scottish teachers received a large tin of maple syrup, a bottle of “cidre glacé” made from frozen apples, a key holder and a phone holder. All the pupils also received a tin of maple syrup and everyone got a pin of the Scottish and Quebecois flags.

Before we said our farewells, pupils got to choose either a Snowball, a Teacake or a Caramel Wafer, generously donated by Tunnocks of Uddingston.

Pupils were sad to leave their new friends and the Quebecois said their thanks and farewells with a song! Both groups of young people had a wonderful and very special day and we hope that they will continue to keep in touch with their “twin” and take the opportunity to practice their French with a native speaker. The pupils from Kilmarnock Academy were fabulous ambassadors for the school: their behaviour was exemplary, they left no litter, they were polite and pleasant at all times. Days like this make you glad to be a teacher and to have the privilege of teaching such wonderful pupils!



## Mathematics Department

Our senior classes are now at an extremely important time in the school session and we are all working very hard to make sure everyone gets the best possible Maths award in August. There have, however, been some lighter moments for our junior classes.



We couldn't let Pi day pass by without at least a little Maths Party! In one of our S3 classes, each pupil adopted a famous Mathematician's name (Kilmarnock Academy's very own famous Mathematicians were included!) which corresponded to a number. They were then given 2 minutes to introduce themselves to as many Mathematicians as possible and record their names and numbers.

They then worked in groups to solve a sheet of problems - but the sheet contained no numbers, only names!



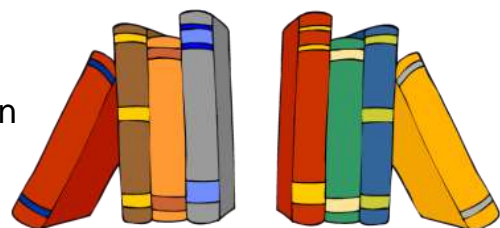
On the run up to Sports Relief we teamed up with the P.E department to do some interdisciplinary work. Mrs Tweedie's S2 class were taken to the playground and asked to measure out a running track. The pupils were then timed as they took it in turns to run the length of the track.

When they returned to the classroom they used the Distance, Speed, Time triangle to calculate each individual's average speed. We also used these statistics to calculate the mean, median and modal speed of the class. The class were very good cheerleaders and were very supportive of one another as they raced.



## Library News

As you may already know, it was World Book Day on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. This means that lots of library events took place throughout the month to encourage our pupils to read more books.



Members of our S1 book club visited the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow to attend the award ceremony for the Scottish Children's Book Awards. Our pupils heard the nominees talking about their books and also had the chance to meet the authors and get books signed. Find out more and see photos from the ceremony here:

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/blog/teachers-librarians/2016/03/scottish-childrens-book-awards-the-ceremony>

All of our S1 and S2 pupils recently took part in the first round of the Readers' Cup quiz. This book-related quiz has been run by school librarians in East Ayrshire since



2005. The competition is designed to raise the profile and status of reading in our schools and to reward our pupils for reading widely.

All nine E.A. secondary schools are invited to enter a team for the quiz final in June. Kilmarnock Academy is the reigning champion having won the competition last year.

School librarians have also been busy organising the annual Spring Read book festival. This year, two authors visited East Ayrshire schools to talk about their books, the writing process and their inspiration. A group of S2 pupils went to see Cathy Forde at Grange Academy and Ross MacKenzie spoke to S1 pupils at Kilmarnock Academy. In preparation for the visit, S1 classes took part in an illustration project run by the library and the art department.

It is hoped that these events not only inspire our young people to read, but also to write their own stories. All pupils have access to library reading lists with book suggestions on the library's Glow pages.



## Support for Learning

Our first year pupils have been working very hard this term through our “Closing the Literacy Gap” programme. This is an intensive literacy programme which sees pupils reading aloud and being assessed on this reading every time we see them. Pupils also carry out activities relating to their reading such as questions, close passages, sequencing exercises and writing tasks. Additionally they complete “Units of Sound” spelling programme each period.



This term, most of our pupils have completed the reading scheme and are now in the process of being assessed. So far, they have made fantastic gains on their reading ages with one pupil achieving a gain of 4 years and 9 months in their reading comprehension!

Pupils have been very positive about their experiences and feel that their reading, spelling and confidence have all improved.

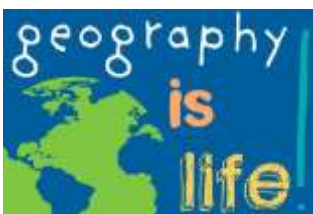
## Science Faculty



This session our focus has been on completing coursework with junior and senior pupils and offering a wide range of extra support to help raise their attainment.

We are also in the process of visiting the Primary schools in our Learning Community. There we are working with our Primary colleagues to deliver enjoyable transition science activities to their primary seven pupils.

## Geography



The Geography and Biology departments recently secured a grant from the Ernest Cook Trust. The money awarded will go towards enhancing the outdoor disciplinary learning already taking place within both departments and look to provide more outdoor learning opportunities in with other departments in the future.

## **Hospitality Cake Craft**

The S5/6 Cake Craft class have now completed their final cakes.



As you can see the cakes are all very different and display skills of a high standard.

Our pupils always come up with a wide variety of original designs and put into practice the skills they have developed over the session.

A SQA verifier will be visiting the school in April to verify cakes and folios.

Pupils are now capable of designing and making celebration cakes for all occasions.

## **P.E. Department**



It has been an extremely busy term in PE since returning from the Christmas holidays.

Our Sports Panel and Young Ambassadors had the opportunity to attend an Olympic Legacy training day at Grange Academy to give them information and resources to set up their own project for their schools. The workshop was run by the Get Set for Community Action group in light of the up-coming Olympic Games.

A group of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year girls and boys attended East Ayrshire's Giant Heptathlon at the Ayrshire Athletics Arena. Here, they competed in a variety of athletics events including sprints, hurdles, triple jump, shot put, endurance challenge, step-up challenge and standing long jump, competing with other schools in the area.

On Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of March, the school took part in a 'wear your sports kit' for Sport Relief to raise money, along with various activities taking place in the PE department and across the school.

Mr Stevenson and a group of S1 and S2 boys also attended the 'No Knives Better Lives' Rugby tournament at the Rugby Club.

Kilmarnock Academy has also received a Bronze Sports Award for the PE Department! The school completed an assessment to gain this award but we have the opportunity up-grade to a Silver or Gold award in the future.

"On Thursday the 10th of March we had a very special guest in the PE department. Paralympic Boccia player Scott McCowan visited Miss Donald and her S1 girls as part of the build up to Sports Relief 2016. Scott told us about Boccia and his busy schedule ahead of Rio. Scott also did an excellent question and answer session with the girls before giving them a go of Boccia. It was a fantastic visit and we will be keeping a close eye on Scott's performances at the upcoming Paralympic Games."



## People and Society



This year People and Society travelled to the Crawick Multiverse in February as part of their studies into renewable and traditional fossil fuel energy sources.

Crawick Multiverse is a major land restoration and art project in [Dumfries & Galloway](#), utilising landscape art to transform a former open cast coal mine into an outdoor space that can be enjoyed by future generations. In their studies they have to make a decision as to whether they would want to live beside a windmill Farm, an open cast mine or a shale gas mine. What would you choose?



## Modern Studies

### S4-S6 Voter Registration Workshops



On Friday 11 March, all pupils in S4-S6 who will be 16 or over on 5 May, the date of the forthcoming Scottish Parliament Election, took part in an awareness-raising session in relation to voter registration organised by an organisation called Vibrant Communities. The pupils concerned seemed to enjoy the activities and I am sure their creative and progressive policies would give some of our existing politicians a run for their money.

## Personal & Social Education

During PSE classes our students have received various presentations and talks from guest speakers. These include Teenage Cancer Trust, Meningitis Trust and The Blood Transfusion Service to name a few. There have been many great speakers and the pupils have enjoyed interacting with them. Our S6 students also attended a “Reckless Driving Wrecks Lives” presentation at Ayr which is opportune timing for those learning to drive or have only just passed their tests.



## Duke of Edinburgh Awards

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of March pupils from this year's Duke of Edinburgh Award group travelled to the Greenock Cut. A cracking day out was had with views over the Southern Highlands. They are now entering their final expedition training which all being well will lead to them achieving their Bronze Award. This section will give them some of their most memorable experiences! All that remains is their practice and a qualifying expedition. An adventure from beginning to end!



## English Department

Mrs Dunsmuir's first year English class has been going round in circles recently – Literature Circles!

A Literature Circle is just like a Book Group. Pupils choose a book then get together with others who've chosen the same book. Together they decide on a reading target for the week then they get to discuss their reading, make predications, talk about characters or work out the hard bits! Literature Circles encourage and support everyone in their reading.

Meanwhile . . . Mrs Thomson's S2 class has been researching and writing about famous Scots to develop their awareness of their own culture. They are now working on converting this information into a solo talk to allow then to share their learning with the rest of the class.

## KA Burns Supper and Ceilidh

Our Burns Supper and Ceilidh was held on Thursday 4th February, 2016 and a great night was had by all. Both pupils and staff enjoyed the songs and clatter and were impressed by the speakers who made them laugh – and think!

The following is an extract we would like to share with you – taken from the closing speech given by pupils:

“Let's say thank you to this school, this building, this place. Kilmarnock Academy has been sited here for over 100 years. The school exists to bring us an excellent education and provide a sense of power to the community. It has stood proud in an ever-changing society and I for one will miss it.”



## KA Technical Department

The Technical Department have been working hard all year in Graphic Communication, Design and Manufacture, Metalwork and Woodwork. Examples of all their hard work is available for viewing on the school blog <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/kilmarnockacademy/>

### S2 Administration visit to Kilmarnock Football Club

On Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March, S2 Administration class visited Rugby Park to hear how Kilmarnock Football Club uses IT in their day-to-day business. The group, photographed below, learnt that the skills they are learning in class can be



transferred to the working world. Brian Sproul, Youth Coach and Education Manager, explained how he uses IT in his job. This includes Excel spreadsheets to keep registers and performance records of players; Word to create coaching session plans; PowerPoint presentations with nutritional advice and motivational sessions for players; various apps that let the coaches analyse games and performances. The hard working ethos was described; and the expectations of players

were explained, perhaps leaving pupils thinking they have it easy at school!

### Meeting with Sir Tom Hunter

Horizon Pages, which is the trading name of KA's S6 Young Enterprise team were set a proposition by Marie Macklin on her recent visit to the school. The aim was to meet Sir Tom Hunter and pitch their idea in the hope of some advice, feedback and sponsorship. After some emails back and forward, the team's persistence was rewarded and they got the opportunity to meet Sir Tom in person at his Dundonald base. Sir Tom thought it was an excellent idea and was very impressed with the layout of the product and that it was very user friendly to children. Subsequently, he agreed to sponsor the business and offered support on a variety of aspects. All in all, a very good afternoon's work and an experience pupils will remember for a long time!



*Kilmarnock Academy wishes all its readers  
a very happy Spring break!*