

LETTER FROM THE HEAD TEACHER

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How to contact us



0141 577 2300
08:20am - 4:30pm
(3.15pm Fridays)



0141 577 2314



Dear Parents/Carers

I can hardly believe that we are approaching the end of another session, my second as Head Teacher at Mearns Castle. This session seems to have gone quicker than my first so the maxim 'time flies when you are enjoying yourself' certainly applies in this case. Again I would like to take this opportunity to thank the pupils, staff and parents for another wonderful year in the school.

As you can see from the Newsletter this term has continued in the same vein as the rest of the session with a range of interesting and exciting activities for our pupils and yet more excellent achievements in a wide range of different fields.

You will recollect from my previous Newsletter in April that I told you that as a Cluster, along with our partner nursery and primary schools we were reviewed by the Local Authority's Education Department's Standards and Quality Review team. The final reports echoed the verbal feedback at the time confirming that the educational provision both in Mearns Castle and across the cluster was 'very good'. We are delighted with the reports, however, we still feel we have some areas for development and we will continue to strive to become excellent in every dimension of the educational experience we provide for your children.

To address these areas for development we are currently finalising our School Improvement Plan for next session based on the self-evaluation carried out with staff, pupils and parents earlier this session. The draft plan is currently available on our website and I would welcome any comments you have to make on it. As always I am also delighted to hear any feedback you have on the Parents' Newsletter and this can be done via the return slip on page 14.

We recently said farewell to our S6 pupils at an excellent Prom and we wish them well for the future. We are now looking forward to next session. The timetable has now changed for the new S2 to S6 pupils and we are very much looking forward to welcoming our new S1 pupils in August.

As you would expect pupil changes affect the composition of our Parent Council and PTA and some members, like their children, have now left. We thank them very much indeed for their excellent contribution to the school over, in some instances, many years. We are now, however, looking for new members. If you are interested in joining either of these important parent groups please either contact the school or turn up at the Parent Council meeting on Monday 31st August at 7.00pm or, even better do both.

In addition to pupils and parents leaving some staff are also leaving at the end of this session. I would like to thank Mrs Lindsay (PT Geography//History), Mrs McCabe (Moderns Studies) and Mrs Jenkins (Bilingual Support) for their excellent contribution to the school and wish them well in their forthcoming retirement. I would also take this opportunity to welcome Mr Steven Sorley, who recently joined us as Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for the new S5 and also Mr Steven Hale who will join us as Principal Teacher of Social Subjects in August.

P.T.O continued....

Contd.....

As our thoughts turn to the new session can I draw your attention to my comments on school uniform below. As I have said it is my ambition that our school is excellent in every dimension and school uniform has a part to play in this. We cannot achieve excellent school uniform without your help and support. It would be very helpful therefore, if you could ensure that when your child returns in August they are wearing appropriate school uniform and that they continue to wear it throughout the session.

As always I have included a calendar featuring some of the key events for next session on page 12 of the Newsletter. I would draw your attention to the fact that we will be continuing with a formal diet of examinations for S3 pupils following the Spring Break. In addition we are introducing Tracking Reports for all year groups to allow us to monitor pupils' progress more closely. These reports will be shared with parents at appropriate times during the session. I would also commend the School Website to you at www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.sch.uk/mearnscastle for regular updates.

Finally school closes for the summer holiday at 1.30pm on Friday 26th June. We re-open for pupils at 8.45am on Monday 17th August. I hope you and your family have an enjoyable summer holiday.

Dean Smith
Head Teacher

End of Term Arrangements

The arrangements for Friday 26th June, the last day of term, will be as follows:

The school dining hall will only provide cold lunches on this day — Pupils having lunch in school should buy their lunch at the morning interval from the dining hall — Lunchtime will begin at 12.45pm at which point pupils will be able to eat their lunch in the dining hall — The school buses will be available at 12.45pm for pupils who travel home by bus — Lunchtime will run from 12.45 — 1.30pm — The school will close for the Summer holidays at 1.30pm.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

By Mr D Smith Head Teacher

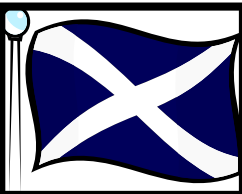
I am sure you agree that it is vitally important that all of our pupils are dressed in a manner that reflects the high standards associated with our school. I am writing, therefore, to ask for your support in ensuring that as we prepare for the new school session your child attends school wearing appropriate school uniform at all times.

As you are aware Mearns Castle school uniform consists of the following:-

- ◇ Black blazer and badge
- ◇ School tie – appropriately tied
- ◇ Shirt or blouse – white
- ◇ Pullover or cardigan – black, v-necked
- ◇ Trousers – black (not black denims or cargo pants) – belt, if worn, must be black with an appropriate buckle.
- ◇ Skirt – black (extremes of fashion should be avoided when purchasing either trousers or skirts)
- ◇ Shalwar Kameez – black
- ◇ Headscarf – black
- ◇ Shoes – black shoes should be worn (trainers are not permitted)
- ◇ Scarf – is available in school colours
- ◇ Jacket – must be black and should have no obvious logo or advertising. Outside jackets should be removed in the school building.



Thank you for your support in this matter.



Celebrating our Scottish Heritage

Mrs Z Nicklin and Mr S Gooch PTs of Development

With the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns and the Scottish Homecoming celebrations this year, we decided to celebrate all things Scottish!

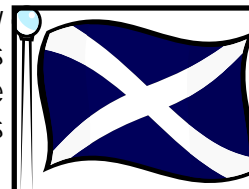
During the final 2 weeks of the autumn term S1-S3 pupils experienced activities across the school that celebrated living in Scotland today. Each subject area incorporated part of their curricular expertise in supporting this activity – a first step towards the interdisciplinary aspects of A Curriculum for Excellence! This included: looking at Scottish history, celebrating Scottish success – film, literature and inventing, as well as past times and food! There were quizzes in tutor groups and in assemblies!

In addition to the Celebrating our Scottish Heritage event, there have been various whole school and department led activities this year which have encouraged pupils to explore and celebrate Scotland's great contributions to the world.

As a result of all of our celebrating Scottish Heritage events we decided to nominate the school for a Scottish Education Award. In April the school received a visit following a successful application and we are delighted to say that we were short listed for 'The Homecoming' award. At the ceremony on the 16th of June Mearns Castle were runners up in this category.

We would like to thank all staff, pupils and parents for their efforts as we prepared for the visit and for all the work done during the year. There is no doubt that the judges were impressed by the pupils and staff they spoke to and made particular mention of the excellent wall displays that they visited throughout the school.

They felt that the pupils had a real ownership of the work displayed and were able to speak very knowledgably about the topics they had covered in class. These opportunities give our pupils such wide ranging experiences and there is no denying the benefits of their achievement and the contribution it makes to our very positive school ethos. We are hoping that as a result of its success this will be the first of many cross curricular activities at Mearns Castle.



P7 Welcome Booklet

In May S1 pupils were actively involved in producing the Welcome Booklet for the Primary 7 pupils coming to Mearns Castle next year. This was an enterprise and citizenship project carried out in Tutor Group lessons. S1 pupils this year have been looking at what it means to be British and part of a community, and then what it means to be part of a school community as an S1 pupil.

The pupils took responsibility for planning the booklet and made their own decisions on what should be included in the booklet and how to present their work. They have been further developing their problem solving, decision-making, communication and presenting skills.

The booklets were given out to the P7 pupils on their visit to Mearns Castle recently. The booklets looked very professional and will help the pupils with their transition to high school – so well done and thank you to all S1 pupils for their input and hard work!

Official opening of the Mearns Castle Training Room



Glasgow Entrepreneur, Satty Singh (left) with East Renfrewshire Provost, Alex Mackie and Deputy Head Girl and Boy, Natalie George and Adam Hunt beside a plaque marking the opening of the new Training Suite.

Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice

By Miss A Borland

Wednesday 22nd June was a very important date for Mearns Castle High. It was the day when all the fundraising for the Hospice became a reality with the official opening of the Mearns Castle High Training Suite.

The training hub has been named the Mearns Castle High Training Suite, in recognition of the fundraising efforts of student, teachers and parents who collected £15,000 over the past three years to help with refurbishment costs.



The Performing Arts department were delighted to be asked to take part in the celebrations and provided music for the ceremony. Seona MacKenzie accompanied by Miss Borland and Euan Ferguson performed a variety of pieces on Flute and Piano and the String Ensemble, directed by Miss Baillie entertained the invited guests with a wonderful selection of Scottish music.



P7s GOING INTO S1 Information

By Mr J McKenna

Primary Induction Days

On 27th and 28th May, Mearns Castle welcomed Primary 7 pupils who will join us in August as our new S1. The pupils enjoyed a range of lessons and had the opportunity to meet new classmates and Sixth Year pupils who will support them during their transition to secondary school.

It was a really positive start to their time at Mearns Castle and I received many encouraging comments about the pupils throughout their two day visit. I look forward to welcoming our new intake on 17th August. Pupils are reminded that our day starts at 8.45am in the Main Theatre.

I hope our Primary 7 pupils enjoy their last few weeks at Primary School followed by a great summer holiday before joining us in August, fresh and enthusiastic for their first session at high school!

P7/S1 Transition Sports Day

By Barry Cook

Senior Active School Coordinator

On Tuesday 2nd June P7 pupils from all cluster primaries who will attend Mearns Castle after the summer break, participated in a sports morning. Mixed in teams with their future class-mates, they took part in football, hockey, athletics relays and javelin throwing.

In the fantastic weather all 240 pupils, split into 12 girls teams and 12 boys teams, worked hard to do their best and score as many goals and points as possible. Overall the competition was fierce but friendly with the 'sky blue' team topping the leaderboard just ahead of the 'white' team and the 'navy blue' team.

The winners received a certificate and a gold medal whilst all children got to keep their coloured T-shirts as a souvenir. Due to its success we hope that this will become a permanent fixture in the calendar of transition events in the future.

Thanks go to all the primary staff who helped on the day as well as Mr Giles, Mrs Little, Mr Gibson and Mr McKenna from the PE department.

Glasgow School of Art Success!

Mrs T Campbell

Jamie McGarvey of S6 has received an unconditional place to study Textiles at Glasgow School of Art. This year Jamie has been working extremely hard on his Advanced Higher Fashion Design portfolio and truly deserves this much sought after place. We wish him all the very best for a future full of further success.

Garments made by Jamie McGarvey



Glasgow Bar Association Debating Competition 2009

By Mr J McGowne

Congratulations go to Megan Daly and Stephanie Ross of S3 who recently won the Final of the Glasgow Bar Association Debating competition at Glasgow Sheriff Court. Mearns Castle had two teams in the six team final. Both teams had already won through from an earlier heat held at Bearsden Academy. The motion on the night was *"This House would rather not vote"*. Both Mearns Castle teams competed against debaters from St Columba's, Kilmacolm, Abronhill High School of Cumbernauld, St Andrew's Secondary in Glasgow and Douglas Academy in Milngavie. A special mention also to Claudia Kirkwood and Gabriel Ross who also competed very well as the second opposition team. The Judges commented that it was a very close decision in the end.



LIBRARY NEWS

By Miss K McEachern

Carnegie Award Book Group

The Carnegie Book Award is presented every year to the most outstanding book written for young people last year. A short-list of seven nominated books was chosen recently and the eventual winner will be announced on June 25th 2009. Schools around the country are encouraged to shadow the award and read and discuss the books on the short-list.



The MCHS Carnegie Book Group is doing just that! Twenty pupils from S1-S4 have been busily reading, discussing and reviewing the nominated books with myself (Librarian) and Mrs McMahon (English). On June 18th we visited Williamwood High School to meet up with other East Renfrewshire schools shadowing the award for a morning of book-based fun! We took part in the Big Carnegie Quiz and voted for our favourite book. I wonder if the East Renfrewshire favourite will match up with the overall winner? The nominated books this year are:

The Knife of Never Letting Go - by Patrick Ness

Cosmic - by Frank Cottrell Boyce

Creature of the Night - by Kate Thompson

Ostrich Boys - by Keith Gray

Bog Child - by Siobhan Dowd

Black Rabbit Summer - by Kevin Brooks

Airman - by Eoin Colfer

My First Year at Mearns Castle

By Mr Andy Davis School Campus Officer

As your school Campus Police Officer I would like to take this opportunity to let you know how my first year has gone at Mearns Castle High. Can I begin by saying that I am thoroughly enjoying my role here and I am looking forward to spending the foreseeable future here as the Campus Officer.

What has my role entailed as Campus Officer?

Well first and foremost I am a Police Officer and as such I will deal with / have dealt with matters of a police nature, however if my remaining time here is as trouble free as my first nine months I will be absolutely delighted. I can honestly say that I have had to put on my "polis hat" on very few occasions and for relatively minor occurrences.

What talks and presentations have I given to the students?

- ◆ All students, S1 - S6, have received Drug & Alcohol awareness inputs that were appropriate to their year group.
- ◆ S3 students received a comprehensive four period programme on Alcohol Related Personal Safety.
- ◆ S4 students received a comprehensive (and hard hitting) programme on Violent Crime.
- ◆ S1 and S2 students have had Q&A sessions with myself regarding the duties of the Police in Scotland.
- ◆ S5 students received an input on the dangers of Drug Assisted Sexual Assault incorporating Personal Safety

What meetings and school based events have I attended?

- Joint Support Team Meetings every Tuesday period 5.
- Young Persons Referral Group Meetings representing the school and students when required.
- Every year group's Parents' Evenings.
- Every year group's social events (Christmas parties / dances).
- Parent Council Meetings on request.

I am now looking forward to the new school year when I will continue to be a member of the Mearns Castle High School staff and to delivering talks / presentations to the students which will include Internet Safety and Cyberbullying amongst other things.

Urban Soles

S6 Young Enterprise

By Mrs L Johnston



**Urban Soles
Mearns Castle S6 Young Enterprise Team 2009**

Urban Soles is our S6 Young Enterprise Team – you may well have bought a pair of our designer shoes! After an extremely busy year which saw us create from scratch a highly professional company, organise – and enjoy thoroughly – a Halloween Ball, display and sell our unique wares at Braehead – gaining critical acclaim from Ugg boots no less! - AND win the first prize overall at the Renfrewshire Finals of Young Enterprise, held at the University of the West of Scotland, we have just taken part in the Scottish finals held in the City Halls in Glasgow. At this event, YE teams from every region in Scotland give a business presentation, produce and discuss a professional Company Report and display their product or services on a stall of their own design.

The Apprentice it isn't - we are proud to work as a team. However, it was a little daunting to stand before so many important business men and women and try to convince them of the reasons why our company has been so successful. No, we did not win—our shoes looked great and we received many compliments and took many orders, but we were up against the beautiful garden furniture designed and made by Farr High School in Highland Division and we consider them worthy winners and wish them luck in the UK final in July.

However, winning is not all. By taking part in the YE scheme, we have widened our S6 curriculum and learned so much about what makes a successful business — perhaps very timely information in the current economic climate. We also learned the importance of asking for and acting on advice and who better to give this advice than our Business Advisor, Sandy MacNiven. Sandy has worked patiently and intensively all year to help us get to the Final and prepare us for our future careers. We have also been very lucky to have had so much help and support from the staff - teaching and non teaching - at Mearns Castle.

As we leave the school for the last time, we can all think back to what we have learned this year—about accepting responsibility, about meeting deadlines, about resilience when the going gets tough, about satisfaction which comes from a job well done, about working as a team, about others and about ourselves. Young Enterprise has been a very worthwhile addition to our curriculum – and our CVs! We cannot recommend it too highly.

Schools Fantasy League

By Miss A Thomson

The School's Fantasy League has come to a close for another season. The trophies and medals were handed out at an awards ceremony in June.

Overall winner this year was Alan Jacobson (new S6). His team "We All Love Mendes" gained 423 points in total. Ludovic Picard (new S3) took the silver medal with his team "Frenchies". Ludovic also took the medal for winning the FA Cup competition. In bronze medal position for the whole school was our only female pupil manager this year Amanda Hamilton (new S5). Her team "Hamilton United" gained 404 points across the season.

Medals were also given out for the top managers for each year group Andrew Mullen took the S1 medal, Ludovic Picard triumphed in S2, Gabi Banks was the top S3 manager and Amanda Hamilton won the S4 prize. The staff competition was very close but Mr Hutchison (Geography) emerged victorious in the end beating Mr Macfarlane (Support for Learning) by only 9 points. Mr Calder (Modern Studies) took the booby prize, for the second year running, as his team "Charlton Asthmatics" remained glued to the bottom of the league for the whole season gaining a rather dismal 121 points!

We also had some very creative team names this year and the following managers deserve a special mention - Craig Lambie (new S4) with "Bayern Bru", Guy Benshetrit (new S5) with "Guy-atasary" and Frazer Robertson (new S2) with "Hotenham Totspur". The league has been very competitive this season and hopefully there will be even more managers in 2009-10!

NATIONAL CONCERT BAND FESTIVAL – APRIL 2009

By Mrs G Hamilton

For the second year running Mearns Castle High Senior Concert Band has taken the top Gold Award for Great Britain in the School Wind Band Class of the National Concert Band Festival, which was held this year at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff.

The band has received five Gold Awards in the Scottish Regional finals and are the only Scottish school band to have received a Gold Award for the past two consecutive years in the British finals. The Festival took place at the end of the school's spring holiday with the 53 band members foregoing part of their holiday in order to represent Scotland by participating in this event. The band included in their programme a very ambitious work for wind band called "Spirit Of The Falcon" by the American composer Richard L. Saucedo; 'When The Spirit Soars' by Philip Sparke, and 'Into The Storm' by Robert W. Smith.



In spite of the distance, a large number of family and friends attended the festival and their support of the band on this occasion was greatly appreciated. The Festival was adjudicated by the Head of Woodwind at the RWCMD, Mr John Reynolds and the international percussionist, Simone Rebello. They both commented on the outstanding musicianship of the band. This was a tremendous achievement for the school, East Renfrewshire and Scotland.

Thanks are also extended to Miss Borland, Mr and Mrs Ferguson, Mr Hamilton, Mr Muir and Mrs Wilkinson who accompanied the band on the trip. This year 14 sixth year band members will be leaving and I take this opportunity to thank them for the commitment, hard work and support they have given to the band and the school over the past six years. We all wish them well in the future.

Law Society of Scotland Donald Dewar Debating Competition - 2009

By Mr J McGowne

On 11th June, Alasdair Clarkson and Tahleel Lateef of S5 competed in the Final of the Donald Dewar Memorial Debating Competition in the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. A group of around 50 supporters, including pupils, staff, family and friends also made the journey to encourage the team. Also competing in the final were Glasgow Academy, George Heriot's School, Edinburgh and Madras College from St Andrews. The motion on the night was *'This House believes that the babies of 1999 are reaping the benefits of devolution.'* Tahleel and Alasdair debated to their usual very high standard on the night but narrowly missed out on the top prize. This was their first attempt at this competition and they were a credit to the school. Great credit is also due to the many pupils from Mearns Castle who contributed to the floor debates. The eventual winners were Glasgow Academy.

Finally, a huge thanks not only to Tahleel and Alasdair, but to Imran Ahmed of S5 and Lauren Daly, Natalie George and Kirsteen McPake of the outgoing S6, who all helped out at Junior Debating Club and who offered support and encouragement to the younger debaters for the whole year.



Alasdair Clarkson & Tahleel Lateef (S5)

Pupil Council**CITIZENSHIP MATTERS****Scottish Climate
Champions**

Our school Pupil

By Mrs J Herald

Council has had another busy session. Members from S1, S3 and S6 have attended East Renfrewshire's Director's Pupil Council and contributed to ERC discussions. In school, members took part in an exercise to ascertain the vision and values that we share for Mearns Castle. They also completed a survey which was part of our school audit on behaviour management.

Once again the Council consulted with pupils and made decisions about the distribution of the money raised at Charities week. The following Charities have benefited from the money we raised.

- ✦ Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice £2600
- ✦ Meningitis Fund £1300
- ✦ Teenage Cancer Trust £1950
- ✦ Yorkhill Hospital £650
- ✦ Make Wish Foundation £975
- ✦ UNICEF £325
- ✦ Hospital Radio £200

The total money distributed from Charities Week was an amazing £8,000.

We have also donated £2000 to East Renfrewshire's Malawi Fund which demonstrates our commitment to assist with global as well as local and national issues. The Pupil Council says a huge thank you to everyone who took part in all the events to benefit all these organisations.

Thanks

By Mrs J Herald

Mr John McGowne has coached all pupils again this session. His enthusiasm and expertise in debating has been an inspiration to all pupils from S1-S6 who meet every week. This was evident when we witnessed our pupils having the confidence to participate in the floor debate in the Scottish Parliament. The pupils' knowledge of debating etiquette was a real credit to Mr McGowne.

Congratulations to Emily Wolfson and Rory Buchanan, both S3, who were successful in becoming Scottish Climate Champions for their eco-friendly projects on the environment. The British Council were so impressed with both pupils' projects that they gave them both the award of Climate Champion. Emily has subsequently attended a conference in Birmingham and then at the beginning of May she spent 5 days working in China whilst Rory is presently working with Busby Primary school on his market garden project.

East Renfrewshire recognised Emily and Rory's achievement by presenting them with a plaque at their recent Education Committee Meeting. On Wednesday 3rd June, Emily and Rory went to the British Council offices in Edinburgh to take part in a video conference with the Mexican Climate Champions.

Eco- Schools

On behalf of all pupils and staff at Mearns Castle, I would like to thank Miss Fiona McCormick for the wonderful work she has done this session in leading our Eco-schools group. Her drive and enthusiasm has resulted in a greater awareness of the need to protect our local, national and global environment. We wish her well when she leaves us at the end of June.

**Queens Park Rotary
Essay Competition**

Congratulations to Tahleel Lateef of S5 who won 1st Prize in the Queens Park Rotary "Towards Harmony" essay competition. Tahleel wrote an essay on the issues surrounding global population and fought off strong competition from Hutchesons' Grammar and Woodfarm High School pupils to come first. He received a cheque and certificate from the President of the Rotary Club.

I am sure you will agree that our pupils are developing in to responsible citizens who take an active interest in the wider world.

Youth Citizenship Conference

Alasdair Clarkson and Tahleel Lateef, S5, were invited to attend the Youth Citizenship Conference at Hampden Park on Thursday 18th June. Both boys were representing East Renfrewshire at the conference. We are sure they found this a stimulating and enjoyable experience and conveyed the thoughts and opinions of young citizens in a confident and assertive manner.



S4 Work Experience 2009

By Mrs E Gordon



Preparations are already underway for the new S4's Work Experience from 5th to 9th October 2009 and pupils should now be organising their own placement with an employer. They have been issued with orange placement forms which are to be completed by their employer and returned to the school as soon as possible. I would really appreciate a prompt return to allow a company called Continuing Education Gateway to begin to make checks on employers over the summer break. Yellow parental consent forms should already have been returned. Both forms are required in order that health and safety regulations are met. Spare forms are available from our school office.

Work Experience gives pupils a great opportunity to develop skills and learn knowledge from spending a week in a real workplace. Many pupils use work experience to see if they are suited to a particular job. For some careers and courses, pupils are expected to carry out appropriate work experience. Others choose a placement to help them to gain part time employment or because it is one of their hobbies e.g. a sport or music. (Some primary schools would prefer not to have former pupils.)

Pupils should go about gaining a placement in the same way as someone would look for an actual job e.g. internet – yell.com, make telephone calls, write letters or make personal visits in order to secure a placement. Of course, family contacts can also be really useful – although I feel that pupils get more from their week if they are not directly with a parent. Due to the current economic situation, it has been fairly challenging for some of our pupils to get a placement in their preferred job sector and I would be very grateful if there are any parents who would be willing to take on an S4 pupil for the week, especially any dentists, graphic designers, architects or lawyers.

Pupils will be given assistance with any specialist safety clothing which they require. Plus they can be given travel expenses of up to £15 for the week. It is possible for pupils to carry out work experience outwith the Glasgow / Newton Mearns area but they would need to make their own accommodation / travel arrangements.

Pupils will also have various tasks to carry out in PSE and will be required to return a report from their employer.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

For any queries or assistance please ask for Mrs E Gordon (PT Pupil Support)

S1/2 Stairways to Success Enterprise Group

By Mrs J Herald

The Stairways to Success group attended East

Renfrewshire's Award Ceremony on Thursday 11th June and we are delighted to announce that they were extremely successful. Our group won the award for the "Best Product" and also the "Overall Winner" when looking at all categories. Congratulations to all pupils involved. They were invited to attend the dinner to celebrate the Scottish Final of the Young Enterprise Scheme on Wednesday 17th June. Thank you to Mrs McKeeman and Mrs Martin who have guided and supported these young people throughout this session.

Careers Fair

By Mr H Cairney

Our annual Careers Fair will take place in mid October (date tbc) from 6pm to 8pm.

If any parent would like to volunteer to talk about their occupation or organisation then please contact Mr H Cairney on:

0141 577 2300

SPORTING NEWS FROM MEARNS CASTLE

By Mr C Giles

SPORTS DAY

school. Pupils who achieved medals are listed below:

S1 Boys – Scott Rutherford (Silver 100m), Michael McDonald (Gold High Jump and Bronze 800m), Gil Banks (Bronze 1500m) + Scott Rutherford, Michael McDonald, Drew Lorimer and Ross Wilson took Bronze in the Relay

S1 Girls - Kirsty Miller (Bronze 800m), Jane Connolly (Silver High Jump), Sophie Garden (Bronze Shot Putt)

S2 Boys - Jamie Gemmell (Bronze 100m, Silver 200m, Gold High Jump), Callum McWilliam (Bronze 200m), Craig Morrison (Bronze 400m), Ryan Magowan (Bronze 1500m), Neil Marshall (Bronze Triple Jump), Omar Villaber (Silver Shot Putt) + Jamie Gemmell, Callum McWilliam, Stewart Woodhouse and John Planas took Gold in the Relay

S2 Girls - Laura McCracken (Silver 100m, Silver 200m, Gold Long Jump), Nicola Shaw (Bronze 100m), Gayle Haig (Silver Long Jump) + Laura McCracken, Nicola Shaw, India Love and Gayle Haig took Silver in the Relay

S3 Boys - Alexander Taylor (Gold 100m), Chris Russell (Silver 200m, Silver 1500m), Fraser Walker (Silver 800m), Adam Gray (Silver Long Jump, Gold Triple Jump), Lee Raitt (Gold High Jump), Lewis Lyle (Bronze Shot Putt) + Alexander Taylor, Chris Russell, Johnathan Fyfe and Ryan Ward took Silver in the Rely

S3 Girls - Shona Gunn (Silver 100m), Stephanie Fairfield (Gold 800m), Jennifer Taggart (Bronze 1500m)

SKIPATHON

A superb effort from all of our new S2 pupils who took part in a Skipathon on Wednesday 10th June. All pupils got on their PE Kit and headed over to the astro turf field where there were around 200 pupils skipping to music. A big thank you to all those who managed to get sponsorship from home and bring it in. The total has still to be collated, but I know the British Heart Foundation will be extremely grateful for it.

Well done!

TENNIS

Congratulations to James Drummond S6, Gavin Hay S6, Grant Young S5 and Fraser Hamilton S4 who made it to the Semi Finals of the Scottish Schools Cup. They defeated the High School of Glasgow by 4 matches to 2. Well done boys!

First Impressions CD 2009

By Mr J McGowne

A group of eleven S1 pupils recently wrote and recorded a CD of their *'first impressions'* of Mearns Castle High School for the Primary 7 pupils. Every new pupil received a copy from the team at the end of their induction days. All 11 presenters gave an honest, entertaining and lively account of their hopes, fears, favourite subjects, achievements and successes of their first year at the school. As ever, the standard of presentation was top class and the hard work and enthusiasm of all those involved made the project a great success.

The First Impressionists

(left to right)

Steven Stewart	Max Merrill
Beth Mitchell	Olivia Gray
Hazel McArthur	Laura Young
Rosalynd Robertson	Rohan Sant
Vivek Shrestha	Thomas Clark
	Erinn O'Neill



PARENTS' CALENDAR 2008 — 2009

W/C	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	W/C	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	
10-Aug-08		Holiday		IS 1	IS 2	18-Jan-10						
17-Aug	Pupils Return 8.45am					25-Jan					S4 R Issued	
24-Aug						01-Feb					S3 TR Issued	
31-Aug						08-Feb	S5/6 Prelim Examinations					IS 4
07-Sep						15-Feb	Holiday	Holiday	S5/6 Prelim Examinations		S2 R Issued/S5/6 Prelims	
14-Sep						22-Feb		S2 OE				
21-Sep		S1 Open Eve			Holiday	01-Mar	S2 P					
28-Sep	Holiday			S4 P		08-Mar						
05-Oct				S2 TR Issued	IS 3	15-Mar					S5/6 R Issued	
12-Oct	October Holiday					22-Mar			S4 TR Issued			
19-Oct						29-Mar				School Closes 2.30pm		
26-Oct			Careers Fair		S5/6 TR 1 Issued	05-Apr						
02-Nov						12-Apr	Spring Holiday					
09-Nov		S5/6 P			S1 TR Issued	19-Apr	School Re-opens 8.45am					
16-Nov						26-Apr	S3 Examinations					
23-Nov				S3 P		03-May	Holiday					
30-Nov						10-May						
07-Dec	S4 Prelim Examinations					17-May						
14-Dec	S4 Prelim Exams				S5/6 TR 2 Issued/S4 Prelims	24-May				S1 R Issued	Holiday	
21-Dec		School Closes 2.30pm				31-May	Holiday	IS 5				
28-Dec	Winter Holiday					07-Jun				P7 PE	S3 R Issued	
04-Jan-10		School Re-opens 8.45am				14-Jun						
11-Jan				S1 P		21-Jun					School Closes 1.30pm	
IS = Inservice Day												
P = Parents' Meeting / OE = Options Evening / PE = Parents' Evening												
TR = Tracking Report / R = Year Group Report												

Catering Meal Deals



Here at Mearns Castle, our dynamic catering staff aim to provide the highest standard of food, service and also offering great value for money.

Not only do we have a lunch service where our menus have been nutritionally analysed to fulfill the aims of the Health & Nutrition (Scotland) Act 2007, but reflect the differing tastes and requirements of our customers. There is a breakfast service from 8.00am to 8.30am where cereals, toast, fresh fruit and hot drinks can be purchased. Further to this, morning break also offers a range of these products but also includes items suitable to be taken away, like filled rolls, sandwiches and baguettes which may be kept until lunch, to allow your child to either miss the rush or attend clubs.

Daily at lunch, we offer two choices of home made soups, of which one is always a vegetarian option; there is a selection of breads to accompany the soup. Our hot meal selections include curry, pasta, and fish to name but a few. There are many snack choices such as paninis, wraps, toasted sandwiches, baked potatoes all with various hot and cold fillings. Layered salads with tuna, chicken and cheese, complement the cold selection along with many types of bread with various fillings. Fresh fruit, fruit salads, smoothies and frozen yoghurt along with a variety of hot and cold drinks are always available.

Special dietary needs can be catered for with ease and any individual requirements will be addressed on request.

This link www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/schools-catering will allow you to access our full menu selection available until October 2009. This also highlights our Meal Deals which provide great savings and value for money. The pupil's homework diary shows a full menu, featuring choices and prices inside the front and back cover.

Our facility uses a cashless system which, with integrated use of your child's National Entitlement Card, can be used to full advantage for discounts from many retailers (www.youngscot.org/discounts/). The cashless system can be loaded with money on a daily, weekly or monthly basis and if necessary, agreed daily limits can be set. The system can be used to provide you with an overview of what your child purchases but this is confidential and should be requested via the head teacher

There are revaluation machines placed throughout the school which take cash and as a back up your child is also issued a pin number, therefore, if they forget their card they can still access their account to buy lunch or add funds. Lost cards are easily replaced by calling 577 3001 for a (free) new card which will be sent to your home address within 7-10 working days.

Often throughout the year we celebrate many events with special menus and prize draws. Please ask your child to look at the notice boards in the dining hall for information throughout the year.

We would like to hear from you about the service offered, so feel free to speak to me or the catering staff at any time.

Anne Muir

Cluster Catering manager (MCH)

Tel: 0141 577 2320

Email: MearnsCastleKitchen@ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk

PTA QUIZ NIGHT

By Mr A Sinclair

If you missed the first ever PTA Quiz Night last month, you missed a great evening.

Nineteen teams of staff, parents and friends battled through a tough contest but one team (the PTA Treasures team!) finally came out on top. The evening also raised almost £500 for school funds. It will be repeated....so next year, don't be square be there!!

Parent Council Information

By Mrs H Ormiston
Parent Council Chairperson

The Parent Council would like to extend an invitation to all parents, old & new, to find out more about the council and how you can support your children during their years at MCHS. There will be an open evening - 'Twiglets & Lemonade!' at the beginning of next term.

Further details will be made available on the school website.

Drama Show

By S.Gooch, H.Devon, G. Strang and R.Emans

This year's school production "Tell me the truth about love" held on Wednesday 17th and Thursday 18th June was a show case of the drama talent in Mearns Castle. Our school shows have always been a huge part of school life and are widely talked about in terms of their professionalism and success, and this year was no different.

Except it was different. This year we dispensed with the traditional musical and devised an evening of drama around the theme of love. Using WH Auden's poem "Tell me the truth about love" as a starting point the evening looked at all aspects of love and relationships through extracts from published plays and some devised pieces. There was an extract from Willy Russell's Blood brothers, focusing on the innocence of friendship across social classes; Margrit's Soliloquy from The Steamie took a sarcastic and honest look at a mother's love for her family. From Jim Cartwright's "Two" the mood turned serious as we eavesdropped on a very manipulative and destructive relationship and then in Brian Friel's Lovers we laughed and felt sorry for the hopeless plight of Hanna and Andy living under the control of Hanna's mother Mrs Wilson.

The devised pieces came from last year's Higher class who adapted a piece they had written as part of the Higher course; a modern day fairytale centred on a very spoilt princess and her hopeless father and stepmother. There was also a 'Melodramatic' love story with S1 and S2 pupils and no evening about love could be complete without the greatest love story of all time - Romeo and Juliet! Butchered within an inch of its life and bookending the evening there was some old fashioned and unadulterated romance.

Huge congratulations to all cast and crew for their dedication and commitment! This was really a show that demonstrated professionalism and success in what the Drama department can bring to school life.

I have received a copy of the Parents' Newsletter

Pupil's Name:..... Class:.....

Parent's Signature:.....

Comments: