



LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

How to contact us

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

Please note that the school office is manned each day throughout the summer holidays. It is advisable, however to phone in advance of going to the school.



0141 577 2314

School Website:

www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/mearnscastle



I can hardly believe that we are approaching the end of another session. This session seems to have gone even quicker than my previous two so the maxim "time flies when you are enjoying yourself" certainly applies in this case. Yet again I would like to take this opportunity to thank 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 fields. As I write, over 700 pupils are preparing to go out of school on a variety of UP-BEAT trips ranging from World Team Challenge to Malawi to Watersports in the South of France to cycling in Millport and just about everything in between. A fabulous end to a busy session.

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.

You will hopefully be aware from earlier newsletters that as a school community we have been involved in an extensive consultation to develop a shared Vision for our school. As a result of this consultation we have now agreed a statement of our shared Vision, Values and Aims for our school which is set out on page 3.

It is my intention to formally launch the agreed Vision, Values and Aims with our school community at the start of next session. Thereafter I will put in place arrangements to further publicise the information around the school and in appropriate school documentation.

The next stage in the process will be for us to ensure that our shared Vision, Values and Aims are effectively directing the work of our school. I will publish more information as the next steps in embedding our Vision, Values and Aims in the life of the school in due course. Thank you very much for your contribution to this process.

More excitement lies ahead next session. As you know we have now launched our School House system. Thereafter we are looking forward to developing our House System into an exciting and vibrant part of life at Mearns Castle. I have re-published the letter issued to parents earlier in the session as the House System on pages 13 & 14 for your information.

As you would expect pupil changes at this time of year 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 Anne Beattie in the school office or turn

up at the Parent Council meeting on Monday 30 August at 7.00 am 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 Mr John Strathdee (PT Art and Design), Mrs Linda Gordon (PT Pupil Support Behaviour), Mr Stuart Mitchell (Media Studies/English), Mrs Lynn Johnston (Maths) and Mr Derek Gordon (Senior Technician) for their excellent contribution to the school and wish them well with the next stage in their life after Mearns Castle. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Ian Cairns (formerly PT Computing) who was recently appointed to the post of Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for the new S5 and Mr Ian Macfarlane (formerly teacher of Learning Support) who was recently appointed to the post of PT Pupil Support Behaviour. Finally I would like to welcome Mrs Stephanie Lightbown who will be joining us in August as PT Design with responsibility for Art and Design and Technical subjects.

As our thoughts turn to the new session can I draw your attention to my comments below on school uniform. 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 to school in August they are wearing appropriate 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 15 of the newsletter. I would also commend the School website to you for regular updates on school events.

www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/mearnscastle

The arrangements for the last day of term, Friday 25 June, are 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 12.45 pm at which point pupils will be able to eat their lunch in the dining hall. The school buses will be available at 12.45 pm for pupils who travel home by bus. Lunchtime will then run from 12.45 pm to 1.30 pm. Finally school closes for the summer holidays at 1.30 pm.

We re-open for pupils at 8.45 am on Monday 16 August. I hope you and your family have an enjoyable summer holiday.

Dean Smith
Head Teacher

SCHOOL UNIFORM

- ◇ Black blazer and badge with braiding, if appropriate
- ◇ School tie - appropriately tied, Colours tie, if appropriate
- ◇ Shirt or blouse - white
- ◇ Pullover or cardigan - black, v-necked - hooded tops are not permitted
- ◇ 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.

Mearns Castle High School

Servitium

Our Vision

The Mearns Castle High School community will work together to sustain a safe, inclusive and high quality learning environment that enables us to develop fully our capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society.

Our Vision, based on our Values, will be realised through the achievement of Our Aims

Our Values

Respect:	show self-respect and be considerate of the needs, wishes and feelings of others.
Inclusion:	treat all people fairly and enable them to feel included.
Integrity:	be honest and sincere.
Responsibility:	be accountable for your actions and make a positive contribution to society.
Ambition:	show a pride in your school and have high expectations of what you can achieve.
Achievement:	be enthusiastic and show a determination to succeed in all you do.

Our Aims

We will be motivated and enthusiastic in our learning and teaching and determined to reach the highest standards of attainment and achievement.

We will be confident and ambitious, build positive relationships and pursue a healthy and active lifestyle.

We will show initiative and be enterprising, creative and responsible citizens.

We will show respect for others, care for our environment and make a positive contribution to society.

S4 Work Experience 4th - 8th October 2010

Your son/daughter in S4 should be currently preparing for their pending S4 Work Experience placement next session. Mearns Castle High School has been allocated the time noted above and we aim to ensure all pupils are allocated a placement for the given week.

Many of our pupils arrange their own Work Experience posts and your son/daughter has been given a peach coloured Proposed Placement Form that can be handed to any company or employer, who may offer a suitable placement. Placements can be found through family contacts, checking the yellow pages or local knowledge of businesses, then a letter, telephone call or personal request should be made to the employer. It is important that these forms are returned to the school as soon as possible, the initial deadline for proposed placements is Friday 18th June 2010.



For those pupils who are unable to secure their own placement, the school will also have a database with a variety of opportunities that have been sourced by Gateway and your son/daughter will be able to apply for these limited posts in September. However, I have to stress that these posts are limited and as such should only be used as a last resort.

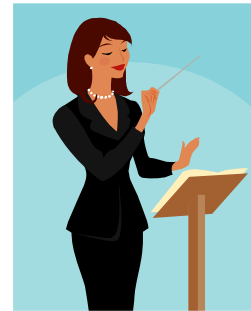
The school's yellow coloured Parental Consent form for Work Experience has also been issued today and we would ask for this to be returned as soon as possible.

Work Experience is a very valuable week for S4 pupils and we appreciate your support in helping your son/daughter to meet deadlines and return paperwork.

If you have any questions please contact the school and ask to speak to Mrs McKenzie in the school office or Mr Cairney.

Senior Concert Band

By Mrs G Hamilton



The Senior Concert Band has once again had considerable success both nationally and locally by achieving a Gold award for Great Britain in the School Wind Band Class of the National Concert Band Festival and being given the East Renfrewshire Outstanding Achievement Award for Creativity.

The Festival took place at the Birmingham Conservatoire during the school's Spring Holiday with the 45 band members foregoing part of their holiday in order to represent Scotland by participating in this event. Despite the distance, a large number of family and friends also attended the Festival and their support of the band on this occasion was greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank members of staff who also sacrificed part of their holiday to accompany the pupils. Special thanks are given to the sixth year band members who have given dedicated and committed service to the band throughout their six years and I wish them well in their future careers.



LIBRARY NEWS

By Miss K McEachern

Carnegie Book Group

The Carnegie Book Award is presented every year to the most outstanding book written for young people. A short-list of eight nominated books was chosen and the eventual winner will be announced on June 24th 2010. Schools around the country are encouraged to shadow the award and read and discuss the books on the short-list.

This is exactly what we have been doing in the Mearns Castle Carnegie Book Group. Twenty two eager readers from S1-S3 joined the Book Group this year and have been busily reading as many of the nominated books as they can. The group meets regularly at lunchtime to discuss the books and review them online. We will also be taking part in the Carnegie Award Activity Morning on 18 June when we will travel to Eastwood High School to meet up with book groups from other East Renfrewshire secondary schools. We will have a morning of fun book-based activities including a Carnegie Quiz, performances of dialogues from the books and voting for our overall favourite.

All the books on the short-list this year have been challenging, thought-provoking and enjoyable titles, written by some of the best authors for young people. They are:-

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson
The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman
The Vanishing of Katharina Linden by Helen Grant
Rowan the Strange by Julie Hearn
The Ask and the Answer by Patrick Ness
Nation by Terry Pratchett
Fever Crumb by Philip Reeve
Revolver by Marcus Sedgwick



The Carnegie Book Group is always good fun and we wait with baited breath to see who wins on 24th June.

Happy Summer Reading everyone!



Sporting News

By Mr C Giles



Mearns Castle Sports Days

It's been a busy Summer term for our athletes this year. For the first time, the S1 and S2 sports day competitors were joined by the rest of their year group to enjoy a day of Novelty Events. The PE department, along with some fabulous volunteer staff, took over 200 pupils out each day. The Novelty Competitors enjoyed a variety of events including Tug of War, Sack Racing, Javelin Throwing, Obstacle Course, Egg (Golf Ball!!!) and Spoon Race and Wheelbarrow Racing.

After coming through the qualifying rounds the week before, all the athletes were geared up and ready to go. In the end though, the talented Sarah McDonald came through as S1 Athletics Champion for the girls and Max McPhail for the boys. The S2 girls' competition was taken right down to the wire between Rachel Woodhouse and Helen Wilson and it was Rachel that powered through her 100m final to be crowned champion. Michael McDonald showed impressive ability in several events which saw him win the S2 boys' championship.

Congratulations to all who took part and many thanks to all the staff who helped the days be a real success.

East Renfrewshire Sports Day (S1-S3)

The week after our own sports days, our athletes had to make their way back to Linwood Sports Centre to compete against the other 7 schools in the authority. Despite relentless rain throughout the day, the pupils were a credit to themselves and to Mearns Castle in both their conduct and competing.

The pupils won a total of 19 Gold (G), 14 Silver (S) and 9 Bronze (B) medals making it a hugely successful day. Please see the list below of medal winners and the event it was won at:

100m - Max McPhail (S), Sarah McDonald (G), Scott Rutherford (G), Calum Firth (G), Jhon Villaber (S), Laura McCracken (G)

200m - Max McPhail (B), Sarah McDonald (G), Scott Rutherford (B), Rachel Woodhouse (B), Calum Firth (G), Stewart Woodhouse (S), India Love (S)

400m - Ryan Mackie (S), Andrew Hume (B), David Johnson (G), Jamie Gemmell (G), Calum McWilliams (S)

800m - Matthew Thomson (S), India Love (B)

1500m - Kirsty Miller (S), Ryan Stirling (S)

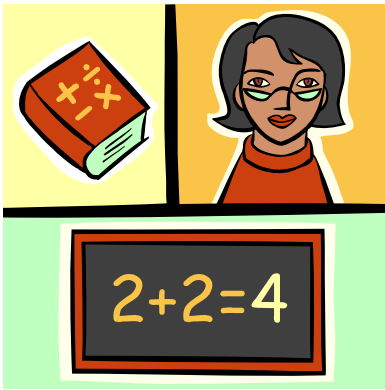
Long Jump - Dylan Powell (G), Sarah McDonald (G), Nicola Williamson (S), Stewart Woodhouse (G), Laura McCracken (G), Gayle Haig (S)

High Jump - Fraser Gilchrist (G), Jane Connelly (B), Jamie Gemmell (G), India Love (S)

Shott Putt - Marcel Gautier (B)

Relay - S1 Boys (S), S1 Girls (G), S2 Girls (B), S3 Boys (G)

A fantastic effort by all the pupils and an incredible achievement from all concerned with the athletes and the school - Well done!



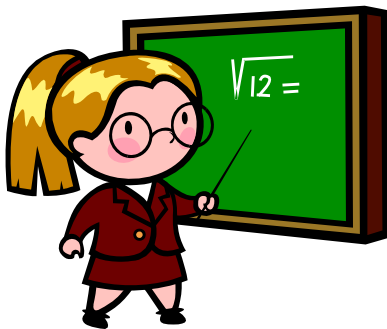
Maths Matters

By Mrs E Gibson

Here is a brief summary of the successes enjoyed by pupils in the Maths Department during the session:

- ◆ 104 certificates awarded for the UK Maths Challenge - 15 Gold, 35 Silver, 54 Bronze
- ◆ Christopher Russell (S4) invited to spend a week at the UK Maths Challenge summer school at Queen's College, Birmingham, as a result of his excellent performance in the Intermediate Maths Challenge
- ◆ Both S4 and S5 teams reached the final top ten of the Mathematiques sans Frontieres competition
- ◆ Hannah Dodds (S1) was a worthy winner in the "Who Wants to be a Mathonaire" competition
- ◆ 150,000 questions answered correctly during the World Maths Day Challenge

Congratulations to all pupils who have taken part in the competitions!



Marketing Society Scotland Awards

By Mrs A Hamilton

A team of pupils from S4 Business Management classes were awarded the Marketing Society Scotland Award in the Schools category for devising a marketing campaign for MacDonald Aviemore resort.

The team worked tirelessly for over a month to research and design a campaign which included a TV advert, a re-designed website, press adverts and a detailed marketing brief. Later, the team worked with Radio Clyde and The Bridge Marketing Agency to design further creative materials and win the top award at the annual Marketing Society Scotland Awards on 21 May.

The original team were Gabriel Ross, Claudia Kirkwood, Ailsa Stephen, Sam Rosenbloom, Adam Wallace, Fraser Proudfoot, Sam Morris and Jamie Ockrim.



Claudia Kirkwood, Gabriel Ross, Denvir Marketing Rep, Sam Rosenbloom, Ailsa Stephen

**Celebrate
your
success**



**Fill out a form and
let us know**

What are you good at

- Sport
- Music
- Drama
- Helping others
- Dancing
- Charity Work
- Community Work
- Organisations/Groups

Get your form from Miss Oram ... Pupil Support Base

What have you achieved ?

We want to celebrate all your achievements. We know about what you have achieved in school....what about outside school. Have you won any awards, passed exams or participate in a worthwhile activity or hobby ?



Tell us about it at..

School
Mearns Castle High School
Be all you can be:
Responsible /Confident /
Successful/ Effective



Mearns Castle High School

Be all you can be:
Responsible/Confident/Successful/Effective

Name _____ Date _____

Recognising Achievement Outwith School

Year Group _____

Area of success (ie Sport)

Please return your completed
form to Miss Oram / Pupil
Support Base

Details of Achievement

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please let us have your comments on this newsletter

Department of Education**Director: John Wilson BSc (Hons)**

Council Offices, 211 Main Street, Barrhead, East Renfrewshire G78 1SY

Mearns Castle High School**Head Teacher: Dean T Smith MA**

Waterfoot Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire, G77 5GU

Phone: 0141 577 2300 Fax: 0141 577 2314

e-mail: schoolmail@mearnscastle.e-renfrew.sch.uk**Our Ref: DS/CW****Your Ref:****Date: 10 May 2010**

Dear Pupil/Parent/Carer

You may be aware that during last session and this session our School Improvement Plan has featured a target relating to the establishment of a House System in the school. You may also know that in both sessions a School Improvement Team was established to take the matter forward.

The rationale for this work is based on the view that a House System would allow pupils a further level of affiliation with the school. Also that it would contribute to encouraging an increased level of vertical cohesion across the year groups. In short, it would allow us to further improve our already impressive school ethos.

I am delighted to report that following appropriate consultation it has now been agreed that we will establish a House System in the school and we are now moving forward with the arrangements to ensure that it is in place and ready to be introduced from June this year.

Mrs Eileen Crilley, PT Pupil Support has been leading our Pastoral Team in the development of the House System and in that role has conducted an extensive consultation with pupils and staff on House names. That consultation is now complete and I am delighted to announce that our House names will be based on Scottish Tartans.

Simultaneously, in order to provide the highest quality of support for our pupils, Mr Harry Cairney, PT Pupil Support, has been leading our Pastoral Team in a review of pupil caseloads.

This review is now also complete and a decision has been reached that, in order to achieve a greater degree of equity in caseload numbers, pupils with surnames starting with the letter 'O' will move from Miss Roseann Cartledge to Mrs Emma Gordon and pupils with surnames starting with the letter 'J' will move from Mrs Caroline Goodwin to Mr Harry Cairney.

Pupils with the surnames beginning with the letters 'O' and 'J' will therefore be contacted by their new Pastoral Support Adviser in the near future. In addition parents will have a similar opportunity, if appropriate, in due course. If parents whose child or children are affected by this change have any concerns about the arrangements they should contact Ms Anne Lewis, Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for Pupil Support.

Cont/..

- 2 -

Following the caseload review the Pastoral Team chose a name for their House starting with a letter in their caseload and based on the name of a Scottish Tartan.

Our House System arrangements will, therefore now be as follows:

PT PS Pastoral	Caseload–Pupil Surname	House Name
Mr Cairney	A, C, J, Mac	Caledonia
Ms Cartledge	L, P, Q, T-Z	Wallace
Mrs Crilley	B, D, E, F	Balmoral
Mrs Goodwin	G, H, I, K	Gleneagles
Mrs Gordon	M, N, O, R	Ramsay
Ms Oram	Mc, S	Sutherland

The formal launch of our House System will take place in June based on the following timetable:

Thursday 3 June	-	House Assemblies S1 – S3 pupils
Monday 7 June	-	House Assemblies new S5/S6 pupils
Wednesday 9 June	-	Non-uniform day based on House colours. Money raised distributed to House charities
Thursday 10/Friday 11 June	-	P7 Induction Days – House Assemblies
Thursday 10 June	-	P7 Parents Meeting – House information
June date tbc	-	P7 Sports on a House basis

Some minor aspects of our House System have still to be finalised like House colours, noticeboards and S6 positions of responsibility. These will all be decided before our formal launch in June and more information about these arrangements will be communicated in due course.

This is the start of an exciting journey and our House System will develop as benefits our school over the coming months and years. If you have any thoughts on the direction our developments should take we will be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Dean Smith
Head Teacher