

Mearns Castle High School

S5 & S6 Curriculum Information Evening
18 August 2026

Mutual Respect



Equality



Ambition



Resilience



Nurture



Sustainability



Welcome

Mr Clark
Head Teacher



2025-26 SQA

Results

Results 25-26

- S4 – Best ever S4 results – best ever % pupils achieving at least 5N5s, 8N5s and 8N5 As. Over 90% achieved 5N5s and over 40% achieved 8 As.
- S5 – One of our strongest results. Just off best ever % 5Hs, Almost 1 in 4 pupils achieving straight As. 1+ & 3+ strong.
- S6 – Highest ever % of pupils achieving at least 1 Advanced Higher and best ever 5Highers by end of s6.
- Wide range of individual achievements.

S6 Experience

Mr McGarry
S6 Depute Head Teacher

Purpose of S6

- Transition year to adult life
- Get Qualifications
- Have fun!
- “Give back”

Subject Choices

- Up to 5 timetabled subjects (based on advice)
- N5 to Adv. Higher subjects available
- Vocational Programme
- Leadership Opportunities (House Capt, Comm Inv.)

Challenges of S6

- Reduced timetable
- Juggling!
 - focussed academic learning vs. other various commitments
- Maintaining the level of focus and studying demonstrated in S5
 - upgrading subjects
- Conditionals for University/College

And the positives?

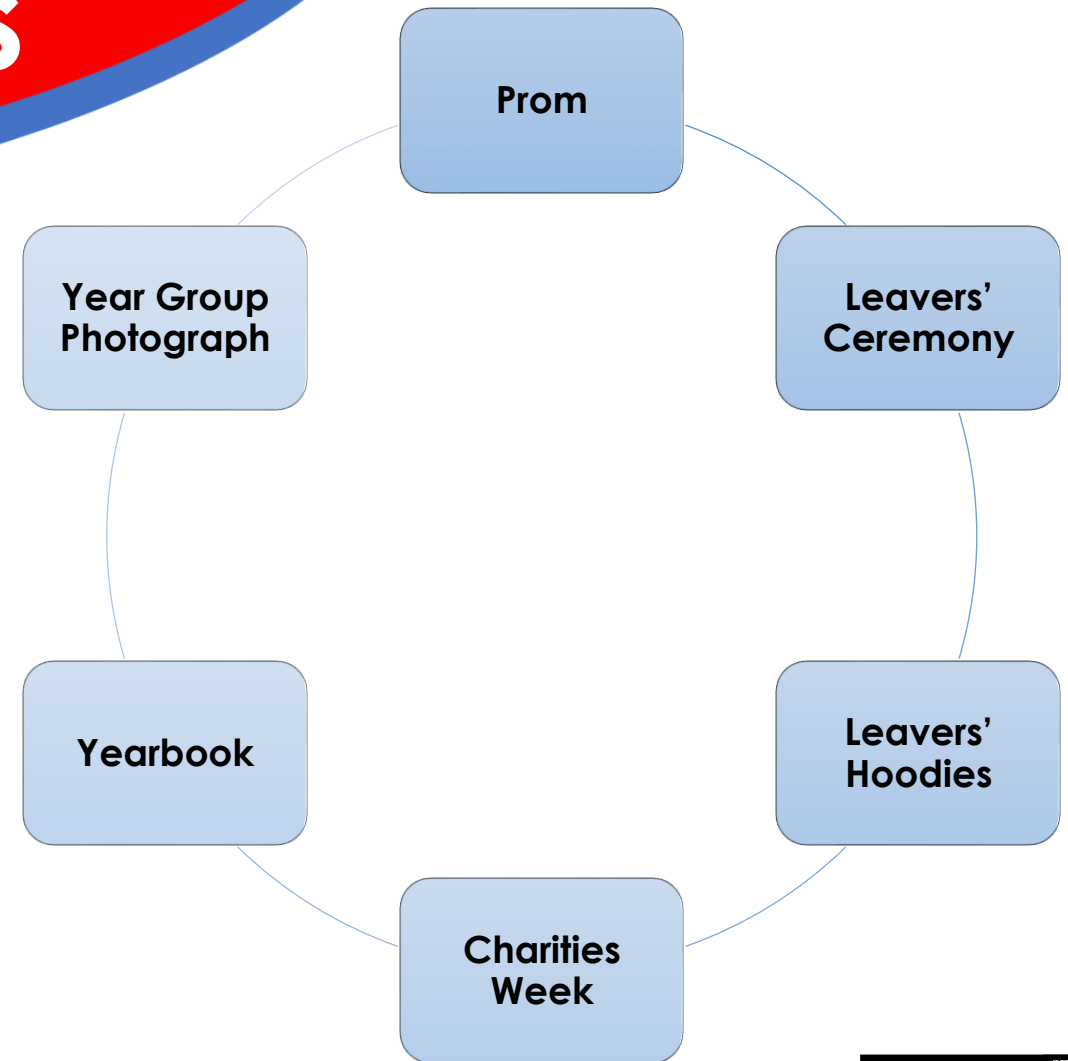
- “Buddying and working with the younger year groups.”
- “Being trusted with completing tasks and building a different relationship with my teachers.”
- “Community Involvement.”

So what's different about S6?

- PLT, School and House Captains – applications by Fri 21 August for House Captains
- Community Involvement – see Mr Kyle in Pupil Support
- Subject Ambassadors + Peer Tuition – see Mr Kyle in Pupil Support
- STEM Leaders/Young Enterprise/Sports Leaders Qualifications
- Successful Academic Family
- Most S1 pupils have a Buddy
- Still recruiting!

Events for S6 pupils

For those pupils who fully embrace the S6 experience across the full year then the school will help to mark their achievements and their hard work in S6 through various celebratory events.





Mrs Hamilton – PT Pastoral Support for all of S6.



UCAS 2027

UCAS

All students applying to university for 2027 entry should register ASAP if they have not done so already. The website is www.ucas.com

Presentations used in PSE classes pre summer to show how to do this now posted on S6 Google Classroom

The Process.....

- Personal research into courses and universities
- Registration (online application)...online account created
- Check for any relevant Admission Tests
- Apply for up to 5 courses, not necessarily at the one time, you can choose 4 then later before the deadline add another one
- Application checked by PT Pupil Support
- Payment made online direct to UCAS of £34.50
 - If in receipt of free school meals you child does not need to pay
- Application sent to school through UCAS account
- School will add a reference
- Referee sends completed form to UCAS
 - Mock interview if appropriate
- Vital to check your UCAS Hub regularly, do not want to miss messages!

Personal Statement - 4,000 characters

- **Question 1:** Why do you want to study this course or subject?

Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

- Include interests, experiences and abilities, details of jobs, experiences, work experience, voluntary work and achievements
- Links to Personal Statement Advice from UCAS on Google Classroom

It is important to note that...

Our deadlines are earlier than those published on UCAS because of the volume of references and applications we check before sending.

- Last year 143 students applied via UCAS – 143 forms checked and references written.
- Please support your young person to meet deadlines!

Parental Involvement

- Please get involved in the process
- Support your child
- Ensure deadlines are met
- Be aware of course choices. (Do they have the minimum requirements? Is their choice of university feasible?)
- Ensure your child applies for funding through SAAS – from April 2027

Advice for Parents, Carers and Guardians

Home > Discover > Advice for parents, carers and guardians ...

Clearing 2026

Advice for parents, carers and guardians

Everything you need to help your child decide on their next steps.

Early Applicants

- **Medicine**
 - **Dentistry**
 - **Oxford**
 - **Cambridge**
 - **Vet Medicine**
 - **Vet Science**
 - **Conservatoire (1st October deadline courses)**
- Online form (MS Form to name your Referee) to be completed by **Monday 14 September**
 - Personal Statements: **Monday 21 September**
 - Forms completed and fees paid: **Thursday 24 September**
 - (Conservatoire Monday 21 September)
 - **UCAS deadline for submission 15 October 2026 - no later than 1800h.**
 - All forms must therefore be sent by school in advance of the school holiday week

All Other Applicants

- Referee Form - **Monday 5 October 2026**
- Personal Statements Final Draft – **Monday 19 October 2026**
- Forms completed and fees paid – **Monday 23 November 2026**
- **Mearns Castle target is to have all application forms completed and sent by early December 2026.**

Decision Process

- Pupils can track application electronically on UCAS
- May be invited for interview if applicable
- Mock interviews available in school
- Offers/Rejections made by universities/colleges

A BACK UP PLAN IS ESSENTIAL!

Back up Options

- It is **really** important for all young people to have more than one choice when making their decisions.
- UCAS Statistics
 - St Andrews University received over 21,000 applications for 3,800 places
 - Edinburgh University received over 65,000 applications for 7,200 places
 - Strathclyde University received over 24,000 applicants for 4,355 places
- Your young person should apply to more than one course at university and/or college.
- **They should keep their options open.**

Alternatives- Plenty of Other Great Options....

- **College (Further Education)**

- Wealth of courses available locally!

- **Apprenticeships**

- Great opportunity to earn and learn – competitive but can provide excellent prospects

- Employment

- Volunteering

College

- Careers Fair in MCHS November 2026
- College representative from City of Glasgow visiting in early November for PSE session
- Application workshops in January when applications open (Jan 2027)
- Can apply **directly** to several colleges
- Usually 2 courses per application form
 - Student will be invited for interview
 - Mock interviews available in school

Further Advice

**Chris Doyle
School Careers Adviser
Self Referral Form on
Google Classroom**



My World of Work

- Students register to create own account and access various help sections:
 - My Strengths
 - My CV – use information from My Strengths
 - Career A to Z – research your ideas
 - Featured Articles
 - Job vacancies
 - Course search
- www.myworldofwork.co.uk

S5 Experience

Mr Donnelly
S5 Depute Head Teacher

Moving from S4 to S5

Typical S4 Curriculum

- N5 English
- N5 Mathematics
- N5 French
- N5 History
- N5 Biology
- N5 Music
- N5 PE
- N5 Business Management
- N5 Spanish

Typical S5 Curriculum

- H English
- H Mathematics
- H History
- H Music
- H Biology

Moving from S4 to S5

Typical S4 Curriculum

- N5 English
- N5 Apps of Mathematics
- N5 French
- N5 History
- N5 Biology
- N5 Music
- N5 PE
- N5 Business Management
- N5 Administration

Typical S5 Curriculum

- H PE
- L6 Sports Development
- H English
- L6 Personal Development
- H Business Management

Moving from S4 to S5

Typical S4 Curriculum

N5 English

N5 Mathematics

N5 French

N5 History

N5 Biology

N5 Music

N5 PE

N5 Business Management

N5 Spanish

Typical S5 Curriculum

H English

H Mathematics

H History

Vocational Course

H Biology

Moving from S4 to S5

Typical S5 Curriculum

H English

H Mathematics

H History

H Music

H Biology

+

Typical S5 Life

Work Experience

Volunteering

Sport Clubs

DofE Award

Dance class

Music lesson

Pupil leadership

Sample S5 Timetable

	1	2		3	4		5	6	7
Monday	Bus Man	Bus Man		History	History		PE	Maths	Maths
Tuesday	English	English		Bus Man	Bus Man		PSE	Biology	Biology
Wednesday	Maths	Maths		English	English		Bus Man	Bus Man	
Thursday	History	History		Maths	Maths		PE	Biology	Biology
Friday	Biology	Biology		History	History		English	English	

The Year Ahead....

▶ **AUGUST/SEPTEMBER**

- ▶ Curriculum Evening – Tuesday 18 August
- ▶ Senior Awards Ceremony - Thursday 10 September

▶ **OCTOBER**

- ▶ Higher Success Evening for Parents – Tuesday 6 October
- ▶ S5 Tracking report 1 – Friday 30 October

▶ **NOVEMBER**

- ▶ DYW Careers Evening – Thursday 19 November
- ▶ S5/6 Parents Evening – Tuesday 24 November
- ▶ Deadline for all UCAS applicants

▶ **DECEMBER**

- ▶ S5 Tracking Report 2 – Wednesday 16 December

▶ **JANUARY**

- ▶ PRELIMS start – Monday 18 Jan – Wed 3 February
- ▶ S5 Options Evening 18 January

▶ **FEBRUARY/MARCH**

- ▶ S5 reports – Friday 26 February
- ▶ Option choices for S6

▶ **APRIL/MAY**

- ▶ Study leave and EXAMS

▶ **JUNE**

- ▶ Start S6 timetable

Pupils' view on S5

- “The reduced travelling between classes because of the double periods is excellent. It means we get less disruption and more time with our teachers.”
- “I just don't think I realised how fast paced the Learning and Teaching had to be due to the ‘two-term dash’”.

Key Messages

- Sometimes in S5 it can take until October for pupils to fully comprehend that this is a highly challenging year
- Pupils do not have 18 months of contact (as in S3/4) but have two terms of contact. Even with increased number of periods per week and fewer subjects, pupils have to greatly increase their skills in a shorter time scale

Key Messages

- A number of assessments within a more concentrated timeframe.
- Prelims – January/February
- University/College Applications – Qualifications & Extra Curricular.

Academic Support



Thank You

Mutual Respect



Equality



Ambition



Resilience



Nurture



Sustainability

