

QUEEN MARGARET ACADEMY

Newsletter

June 2026

Our Values and Aims



Our Skills Framework





Message from our Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of another busy and successful summer term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support throughout the year.

I am incredibly proud of all our pupils for the positive attitude they have shown towards their learning. Across the school, we have seen high levels of engagement in lessons, with pupils demonstrating enthusiasm, resilience and a genuine desire to achieve their best.

It has also been very encouraging to see such strong attendance this session. Regular attendance plays a vital role in a young person's progress and wellbeing, and we greatly appreciate your partnership in supporting this.

Our pupils have represented the school wonderfully, both in the classroom and during wider activities and events. They have shown responsibility, respect and a strong sense of community, and they should be very proud of their achievements.

As we head into the summer break, I hope you all have the opportunity to rest and enjoy time together. We look forward to welcoming everyone back for the new session, refreshed and ready for the opportunities ahead.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support.

Mrs Schlesiger

INFORMATION

2026–2027 Dates for your Diary

School Holiday Dates

Tue 18 August – Inservice Day

Wed 19 August – Inservice Day

Thu 20 August – Students return

Fri 18 September – Public Holiday

Mon 21 September – Public Holiday

Mon 12 October to Fri 16 October – School Holiday

Mon 19 October – Inservice Day

Tue 20 October – Students Return

Parents Evening

Tue 6th October – S1 Parents Evening

Report Cards

Mon 14th September – S4/5/6 Tracking reports issued

Mon 5th October – full S2 report issued

Mon 19th October – S3 Tracking report issued

School Events

Tue 25th August – PARENT Council Meeting

6th –12th September – France trip

Tue 15th September – Prize Giving

Wed 23rd September – Careers Fayre

Thur 1st Oct – BAE Roadshow

5th–9th October – S6 Work Experience

Immunisations

Fri 28th August – HPV/MMR, DIP/TET/Polio
and MEN ACWY absentees

Value of the Month

Value of the Month May – Community

At Queen Margaret Academy, we have been celebrating our value of Community by coming together as a whole school for Sports Day at Riverside Arena. It was fantastic to see pupils supporting one another, showing teamwork, and enjoying the sense of belonging that makes our school community so strong.

Value of the Month June – Ambition

In June, Queen Margaret Academy has been focusing on our value of ambition. With the introduction of a new timetable, pupils have embraced a fresh start and the opportunity to experience new subjects and challenges. It has been encouraging to see so many learners setting goals, trying new things, and aiming high as they continue their journey through the school.

Skill of the Month

Skill of the Month May – Literacy

In May we focused on developing literacy skills across Queen Margaret Academy. During this time pupils are encouraged to build their confidence in reading, writing, listening, and communication in all subjects. By strengthening these key skills, we aim to support learners in expressing their ideas clearly and effectively, helping them to achieve success both in school and beyond.

Skill of the Month June – Working with Others

This month, we are focusing on the skill of working with others. With the introduction of a new timetable, pupils are meeting new classmates and teachers, providing valuable opportunities to build relationships and develop teamwork skills. We are encouraging all learners to communicate effectively, support one another, and work collaboratively as they adapt to new routines and experiences.

House System

Our house system plays an important role in encouraging a strong sense of belonging and teamwork across the school. Pupils can earn points through house competitions, demonstrating our school values in the classroom, and celebrating success both in and out of school.

We encourage pupils to share their achievements with their Guidance Teacher or House Ambassador so that these can be recognised and rewarded. Alternatively, parents and carers can email the school to let us know. We are keen to celebrate all successes and recognise the efforts of our young people.



Contact Us

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QMAOfficial



Our Pupil Leadership Team

We are delighted to announce the
School Captains and House Captains
for 2026/27.

School Captains

Anna H
Annabelle W



House Captains



Amelie W
Alyssa D



Anwen M
Dillon R



Joshua F
Evie McW



Alessia D
Caitlin H

Here's to an exciting year ahead. We know that you will inspire others and
make a positive difference across our school community

School uniforms help to make children feel like they belong to a school community.

twinkl.scot

School Uniform

We would like to remind all pupils and families about the importance of wearing full school uniform everyday.

Wearing school uniform shows pride in our school community, helps create a positive learning environment and plays an important role in keeping everyone safe by ensuring pupils are easily identifiable.

Below is a reminder of our school uniform.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our young people take pride in themselves and in our school community.

QMA School Blazer

QMA School Tie (S1-3 Junior tie/ S4-6 Senior Tie)

Black school skirt or black school trousers

White shirt

Black cardigan or school jumper

(without any logos, hoods or branding and with school tie clearly visible)

Black shoes or trainers



LOVE AWARDS

LIVING OUR VALUES EVERYDAY

QMA takes pride in encouraging its young people to Live Our Values Everyday.

With Equity as one of our school values the LOVE award system includes every member of the school community and has regular re-sets so that no one is left behind.

At the end of each teaching period teachers identify pupils who have demonstrated a value and record this through the house point system. At the end of each week pupils who have reached the threshold score receive a congratulatory text home. We call this a House Point Hero and there have been over 600 of these this year. Pupils can also earn house points for actions across the school, for example helping a new pupil, representing the school in an activity, regularly taking an active part in a group such as The Rights Respecting Schools group or participating in a community event such as our chess competition.

At the end of each month pupils who have consistently demonstrated our values earn a LOVE award certificate. We hope that pupils will aim to collect all 6 of these in their time at QMA, one for each of our values. So far this year there have been over 200 LOVE awards issued. Every 2 months these pupils gather to celebrate their success. This year's LOVE award rewards have been hosted by Art, Modern Languages, Social Subjects, RE and Drama.

In conjunction with the St Vincent De Paul society and to encourage a feeling of pride in our community young people are awarded bronze, silver, gold and platinum tie pins. These are a visual reminder that our values are at the centre of our school community.



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

Our young people and school community have had an inspiring and action-packed year, taking part in a wide range of activities that have helped them grow, shine and make a real impact. From creative projects and performances to community events, leadership opportunities and moments of personal achievement, they've shown enthusiasm, resilience and a genuine commitment to one another. This is just a snapshot of everything they've been involved in, but it captures the spirit of a year filled with progress, pride and plenty to celebrate. More 'life at QMA' can be found on our socials.

Welcome Father Benjamin

Queen Margaret Academy is delighted to officially welcome Fr Benjamin Mkeri of Our Lady and St Cuthbert's Parish as our school chaplain. Although only recently joining us, Fr Benjamin has already become a huge hit with both staff and students alike. His warm personality, enthusiasm and genuine interest in the life of the school have made an immediate and lasting impression.

Fr Benjamin plays an active role in the spiritual life of Queen Margaret Academy, celebrating lunchtime Mass each Thursday and supporting our school community during key feast days and liturgical celebrations. His presence provides opportunities for prayer, reflection and faith development for both pupils and staff.

He has also been fully involved in many aspects of school life beyond the chapel. This year, Fr Benjamin supported our highly successful Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) competition as a judge, helping to recognise the outstanding social awareness and presentation skills of our young people. He also accompanied students during their Generation Hope residential week, offering encouragement, guidance and spiritual support throughout the experience.

More recently, Fr Benjamin played an important role in our S1 Retreat, helping our young people reflect on faith, friendship and community as they continue their journey through secondary school. His contribution helped make the retreat a meaningful and memorable experience for all involved. His support helps ensure that faith remains at the heart of our community and that our young people continue to grow both spiritually and personally.

We are incredibly grateful for Fr Benjamin's support and look forward to working closely with him in the years ahead.

Welcome to Team QMA, Fr Benjamin. We are blessed to have you with us!



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

Staff Wellbeing

This year our staff have been embracing wellbeing through a range of activities including a pumpkin carving competition and a step challenge. These events provide a great opportunity to connect with colleagues, have some fun and promote healthy habits.

Prom

We celebrated the class of 2026 on Tuesday 2nd June at the Brig O'Doon House Hotel. It was a fantastic evening filled with laughter, memories and friendships made over the past six years. We wish the class of 2026 every success and happiness for the future.

Ballet

Pupils enjoyed a trip to the ballet to see The Snow Queen at the Citizens Theatre (and a delicious Italian meal!) was enjoyed by S1-S6 pupils in January.

Nativity

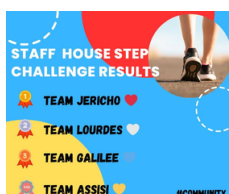
Miss Drever and Mr Harcourt's phenomenal S3 Drama pupils went on tour with their own Nativity plays in December. They visited our cluster primary schools to give an insight of the very best of QMA.

Ayrshire Music Festival

A number of our musicians took part in the Ayrshire Music Festival as soloists or with an ensemble. We are pleased to say that QMA pupils won a number of trophies at the festival. Our newly resurrected Wind band were awarded 2nd place in the band class. We are very proud of all their achievements.

Feel Good Friday

Feel Good Friday raised money for the SSPCA by selling raffle tickets at break and lunchtimes. They were delighted to welcome Indie, the SSPCA's Education Dog Ambassador, to visit the group. Indie helped teach the group about animal welfare and the fantastic work carried out by the Scottish SPCA. Well done everyone!



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

Communication Friendly School

We are delighted to be recognised as the first secondary school in South Ayrshire to achieve the Communications Friendly Schools Level 2 Supportive Learning Approaches Badge. This reflects our commitment to create an inclusive environment where every pupil feels supported, understood and able to thrive.

A huge thank you to Mrs Gavienas and Mrs McCutcheon for all their hard work in helping us secure this award.

Panto

Our S1, S2, and SLC visited the Gaiety Theatre in December for the English Department's annual pantomime trip. Oh yes, we did!

Book Festival

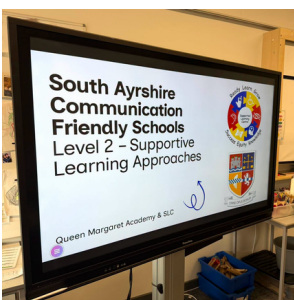
Some of our S1 pupils enjoyed the English Department's annual trip to the Boswell Book Festival - complete with an author talk, a tour, and a picnic in the beautiful gardens.

Christmas Concert

The music department showcased the incredible talents of our performers from our choirs, wind band, string group and a range of solos. The evening also gave our community the chance to join together in singing traditional carols creating a warm and joyful festive atmosphere. Guests enjoyed delicious mince pies and barista made hot drinks served by our pupils.

YPI

Congratulations to Jason and Layla on winning the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) for the Ayrshire Eye Foundation, securing £3,000 for their chosen charity. The judges praised their confidence, clarity and passionate presentation, recognising the dedication and compassion they demonstrated throughout the project. A fantastic achievement - well done!



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

Sports Day

Our School community came together for a day of Sports at the Riverside Arena. It was lovely having the full school community together, whether it was taking part or cheering everyone on.

House Competitions

This session, our pupils enjoyed taking part in a variety of House Challenges, including Hyrox, Quizzes, Escape Rooms and Duck Hide and Seek. The strong sense of house spirit on display made each challenge a great success. Bring on next session!

Sports Dinner

On Thursday 18th June 2026, we were delighted to welcome over 150 pupils, parents/carers and staff to our Annual Sports Dinner. The evening provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the outstanding sporting achievements, dedication and commitment shown by our young people throughout the year.

As well as recognising success in competition, the event highlighted our school values in action across a wide range of sporting activities. It was fantastic to reflect on another successful year of sport and to acknowledge the contributions of everyone who has supported our teams/clubs.

Congratulations to all award winners and participants. We are incredibly proud of everything our pupils have achieved both in and outside school. A sincere thank you to our staff, parents/carers and wider school community for their continued support.



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

Andy Bargh Visit

Our National 5 and Higher English pupils were delighted to welcome former Queen Margaret Academy pupil Andy Bargh back to the school on Thursday.

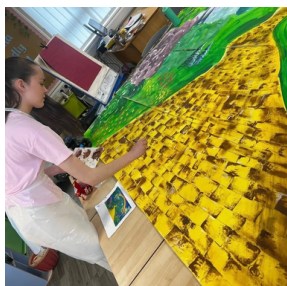
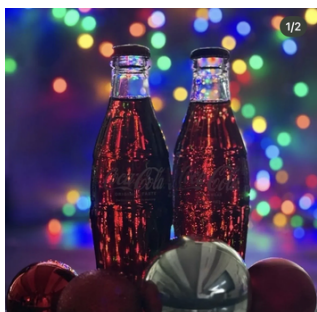
Andy spoke to pupils about the process of writing his book *A Long Time Coming*, which chronicles Scotland's journey to the FIFA World Cup. Drawing on his own experiences as a writer and football supporter, Andy provided a fascinating insight into the research, planning and perseverance required to turn an idea into a published book.

The session gave pupils a valuable understanding of the writing and publishing process while encouraging them to pursue their own interests and ambitions.



Art Dept

The Art Department has had a busy year, from the inspiring trip to the Alloway Tunnel to celebrate and study the stunning murals that S3 students helped create - to opportunities like the creative internship at Beggs which pushed skills even further, while outstanding art and photography work across all year groups showed just how much imagination and dedication is thriving in the Art studios. Wishing everyone a restful, recharging, and wonderfully creative summer - you've earned it.



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

Christmas Fair

Our annual Christmas Fair was a fantastic success, raising an impressive £1700 for the school community. The event brought together pupils, staff, families and local businesses in a festive celebration filled with energy and goodwill. A large number of pupils volunteered their time and enthusiasm, taking on roles such as Santa, elves and even baristas, helping to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for all who attended. The fair also provided a valuable opportunity to support and showcase local businesses, strengthening community connections while spreading seasonal cheer. The funds raised go towards supporting pupils in need throughout the year.

Prom Dress Bank

The Prom Dress Bank is a school-led initiative designed to ensure that every young person can attend their school prom with confidence, regardless of financial circumstances. Through the generous support of staff, families and the wider community, the initiative provides free prom dresses, suits, shoes and accessories to pupils in a welcoming and discreet environment. Over the past year, it has supported more than 30 young people from across South Ayrshire and beyond, helping to remove financial barriers, promote inclusion and ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to celebrate this important milestone with pride and confidence.

Talent Foundry

The Talent Foundry offers a range of free career workshops designed to help young people identify their strengths, develop valuable employability skills and explore future career pathways. Delivered by experienced facilitators and supported by volunteers who bring real-world workplace experience, the interactive sessions provide practical insights into a range of industries. The workshops support the aims of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence by developing skills for learning, life and work, while also complementing Developing the Young Workforce priorities and helping students make informed choices about their future.



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

Supported Learning Centre

The SLC has had another busy year.

We have attended Youth Philanthropy Initiative Finals alongside Park School, Southcraig School and Girvan Academy SLC. Young people presented their chosen charity well and came close to winning.

Four young people attended the Footprint Challenge and represented the SLC and QMA amazingly.

The S6 Photography class had a fabulous day at Culzean and produced outstanding work.

We have had trips to the cinema, Dolphin House, Sports Day and SportsAbility. All enjoyed and have some special memories to take away.

Garden Cafe continues to be integral part of the SLC- involving families and friends in the life of the SLC. Our Parent Forum supports staff and families to explore issues affecting families living with a young person with additional support needs.

We have welcomed new pupils and staff who have settled well and have joined the SLC family; and we will miss those who have left- Mrs Semple, Mrs Brook, Mrs Roarty, Mr Warrander, Ms Benn and Mrs Young. They will remain a special part of the SLC.

Carbon Footprint Challenge

Queen Margaret Academy Pupils did very well in the Carbon Footprint Challenge at County Buildings. They represented the school brilliantly, showing great teamwork, confidence, and understanding of environmental issues.

We are very proud of their efforts and how they conducted themselves throughout the challenge. They were a credit to the school. Well done everyone!



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

New Beginnings - P7 retreat

Queen Margaret Academy was delighted to welcome our incoming P7 pupils for a special retreat day designed to support their transition to secondary school. The event was a tremendous success, helping pupils make new friends, learn about life at QMA and begin their journey as members of our school community.

One of the highlights of the day was the eagerly anticipated house allocation announcement, where pupils discovered which house they would belong to when they join us in August. Throughout the retreat, pupils learned about the patron saint of their house and explored the values and traditions that help shape our school community. They also created house banners and took part in activities that encouraged teamwork, friendship and a sense of belonging.

The retreat included opportunities for reflection, prayer, Mass, creative activities and friendship-building exercises, all aimed at helping pupils feel confident and excited about their move to secondary school. Students were encouraged to make new connections and consider the hopes and goals they have for their first year at Queen Margaret Academy.

What impressed staff most was the outstanding behaviour of our future S1 pupils. Throughout the day, they were polite, respectful, enthusiastic and fully engaged in every activity. They represented their primary schools brilliantly and embraced every opportunity to participate.

This transition event could not have gone better, and we are incredibly grateful to all staff, pupils and partners who helped make the day such a positive experience. Most importantly, it left us even more excited to welcome our new first years to Queen Margaret Academy.

We can't wait to welcome them in August!



OUR YEAR

Highlights of 2025/2026 at QMA

QMA Strikes Gold!

Queen Margaret Academy is celebrating after achieving the prestigious UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award - the highest level of recognition available. QMA is the first secondary school in South Ayrshire to receive this honour.

The Gold Award recognises schools where children's rights are fully embedded in everyday life and where pupils, staff and the wider community work together to create a culture of dignity, respect and inclusion.

Our accreditation visit highlighted the work taking place across the school. Assessors met with school leaders, staff, community partners and pupils from all year groups to see how children's rights are woven through every aspect of life at QMA.

Over the years, our Rights Respecting journey has transformed the school. Pupils now play a leading role in shaping policies and initiatives through groups such as the RRSA Steering Group, while projects including the Blue Box Awards, Anti-Racism Film and Internet Safety Guide have demonstrated the power of pupil voice in action.

The award also recognises the strong relationships across our school community. Through restorative approaches, a clear commitment to dignity and respect, and a shared understanding of rights and responsibilities, QMA has created an environment where every young person feels safe, valued and heard.

Having achieved Gold status, QMA is now supporting other secondary schools on their own Rights Respecting Schools journeys. Staff and pupils are sharing their experiences, resources and good practice to help other schools embed children's rights and work towards achieving the award themselves. This collaborative approach reflects our belief that every young person should benefit from a rights-respecting education.

A huge thank you goes to our pupils, staff, families and community partners whose passion and commitment helped make this achievement possible. The Gold Award is not the end of our journey it is a celebration of the culture we have built together and our continued commitment to ensuring that every child's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

As the first secondary school in South Ayrshire to achieve UNICEF's Gold Rights Respecting School Award, Queen Margaret Academy is proud to be leading the way and helping other schools follow in its footsteps.

Congratulations, Team QMA - we're officially Gold!



WE ARE A UNICEF GOLD
RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

Children's rights are learned, understood
and lived in this school.



CELEBRATING

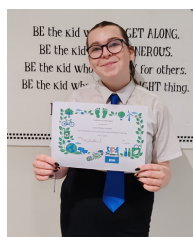
SUCCESS

At Queen Margaret Academy, we believe in celebrating success and recognising the achievements of all our pupils. Congratulations to everyone who has worked hard, shown commitment, and represented the school so positively.

We are proud of all our learners and the effort they put into their work, activities, and wider contributions to school life. Each success, big or small, helps build confidence and inspires others.

This session our young people have been successful in and out with school. Here is a snapshot of our pupil success.

We are so very proud of them!



South Ayrshire pupils pitch creative ideas in new business competition



LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

June 2026

MISS E RECOMMENDS

'Do you know me?' by Libby Scott

Tally is autistic and is tired of trying to mask it from the world. Can she be her true self and find acceptance at school and with friends? It helps children empathise with friends or family who have similar neurodiversity, and allows autistic readers to see their world reflected back at them



WHAT'S NEW

We have a new school librarian. Meet Miss Anaïs Cayzac. Miss Cayzac comes to us from Glasgow schools and brings lots of experience. She likes hill-walking, cats and reading (as you may have guessed). She's French so if you see her around say 'Bonjour!'.



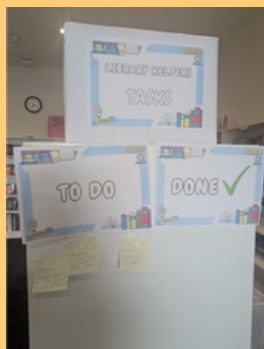
Hi!

NEW CLUBS

We have a group of keen Library Helpers who are helping us at lunch with simple library tasks such as shelving, labelling, and decorating the space.

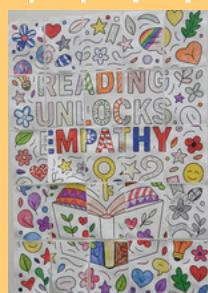
Join our popular Manga Club and explore all things manga! Take part in lively debates, fun quizzes, hot takes, creative crafts, presentations, and drawing competitions.

Curious about manga or already a fan? Come along and get involved or just ask any S1, they'll tell you how much they love it!



WE HAVE PLANS FOR MORE CLUBS NEXT TERM SO WATCH THIS SPACE!

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?



- In June we celebrate Empathy Week and Miss Cayzac has been leading lessons on empathy with S2.
- We have a special collection of Empathy books in the library, some fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels and poetry.
- Our efforts embedding empathy throughout the school won us Empathy Lab's school of the day and a super pile of free books for the school library!

EASTER SCAVENGER HUNT

S1 did a book themed scavenger hunt using egg-celent problem solving skills

Here's 2 pupils from the winning team collecting their Easter treat



WORLD CUP



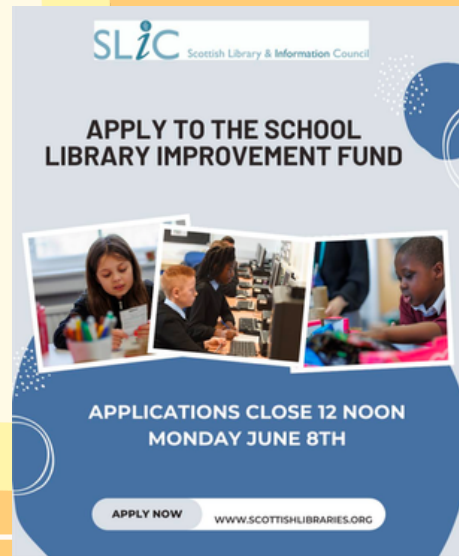
We have a World cup themed quiz out on the tables at lunchtime. Take part and win prizes!

This week S2 will take part in class vs class football quiz to win prizes!



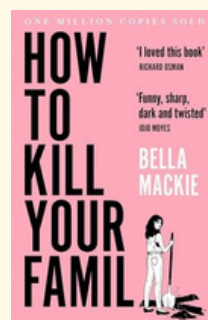
GREAT NEWS!

South Ayrshire school librarians have collaborated on a successful bid called, 'Reading for your Rights', designed to closely align with the Rights Respecting Schools Framework. We can now look forward to an exciting programme of fully funded author visits, workshops, and activities after the summer!



BOOK RECOMMENDATION FOR STAFF AND PARENTS

How to Kill your Family, by Bella Mackie is a dark, satirical thriller, where Grace sets out to systematically eliminate her estranged billionaire father and his wealthy relatives. Fueled by revenge for abandoning Grace and her mother to live in poverty. She delights in her crimes and talks us through the meticulous planning and cold blooded murder of her family from her jail cell.



And finally



#lifeatQMA
#community

