



Balfron Highlights

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Merry Christmas from all the staff and pupils at Balfron High!

December 2016:

Christmas Card Comp

Headlines

School show- Grease

Poppy Appeal

*Young Musician of the
Year*

BDT trip to London

*Dyslexia Awareness
Week*

Top of the Bench

Concerts

*Literacy: Reading Logs
& Accelerated Reader*

Engineering for girls

AH Art

Charities

Discos & Dances

Ocean Youth trust

S1 Panto

Blanefield House Visit

S5/6 Health Day

Christmas Fayre

Wider Achievements

Sports Round-Up

Supported Study

Dates for your Diary

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Well done to Skye Cameron of 1L1 (right), who was the overall winner of the Christmas card design competition.

Skye's design was our official Christmas card and was sent by Ms Bannatyne, our Head Teacher, to all of our partners, associated schools and community links.

Well done also to those who won the House and Creative Elective Christmas card design competitions.

Campsie House: Heather Campbell 1C1

Endrick House: Carly Baxter 1E3

Lomond House: Chloe Strathdee 1L1

S2 Creative Elective: Honor Hennessy 2E3





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Headlines

Dear Parents and Carers,

This edition of Balfron Highlights gives a great flavour of the many and diverse range of activities that took place in the last two months – and we only have some of them included! We believe that offering a rich variety of activities in and out of class time is extremely important for our young people. We see them gain skills and confidence as they participate. We encourage them to take part in as much as possible and find their own unique strengths. A fabulous school show, concerts, art, sport, science, ceilidhs, inter-house, debating and design are just some of the features of this edition.

The Drymen DRT has been block booked from Monday-Friday for a 4:45pm service to allow young people to stay after school for co-curricular activities, clubs and supported study in the New Year. Pupils must sign the list on the day they need the bus when they arrive at school. This should be done at the school reception and must be confirmed by interval.

This term we say goodbye to Mrs Mayhew from the school office. Mrs Mayhew has given excellent service to Balfron High since October 1994 We wish her good health and a long, enjoyable retirement and thank her for all of her great work over the years. Mr Lucas and Mr Shields are also leaving us at the end of term. Mr Lucas has secured a Faculty Head of Design post at Cumbernauld Academy. Mr Lucas has contributed to a wide range of co-curricular activities and curriculum developments over his ... years at Balfron High and we wish him every success in his new post. Mr Lucas' post is being interviewed at the end of term. Mr Shields has secured a permanent Principal Teacher of Maths post at Hyndland Secondary. We are sorry to be losing him after only a year at Balfron High but wish him every success in his new post. Replacing Mr Shields from the 23rd January is Mrs Gormal from Rosshall Academy in Glasgow. A huge thank you to all three staff for their efforts.

When we return our senior pupils will be getting ready for prelims. Their timetables have been issued and these can be accessed on our school website. S5/6 pupils will have study leave from 16th January 2017. S4 pupils are expected to be in classes if not in exams. They will be supported with study and revision at these times.

I am delighted to share that we secured funding from Tesco Bags of Help to improve our orchard area and generally improve some of our outdoor learning space. We have plans to work with the community to improve and promote Greenspace projects. Watch this space! Now the building has been fully repaired we are looking forward to having our astro-turf pitch upgraded. In addition to this we have been working with Scottish Athletics and Sport Scotland to secure funding to improve our athletics facilities. I hope to have some news to share with you in the New Year.

The parent council have been working hard to raise funds to support the many activities that you will see in this edition. A new venture is the 500 club and we are keen to have as many of you as possible involved. Please contact me if you would like to take part.

I will keep you up to date through Highlights and emails. As always, thank you for your support of our school.

E. Bannister





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Grease was the word!



This really was a whole school production with everyone pitching in to ensure its success. There were two casts to accommodate the massive talent offered by principals. The cast included pupils from S1-6, boys and girls. There were 165 young people in the cast. Including all those who contributed, there were 310 pupils in total involved in making this show a success. Young people took the lead in all aspects of the school show from front of house planning to hair and make-up to choreography and much more!

We were delighted to make £600 for our special charity, Epilepsy Action, in memory of Owen Britton.



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Ross and Kyle were excellent Front of House hosts. It was great to see some former pupils and members of the community come in to see the show. We had a special visit from FP and River City star, Christine Steele (above).





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Meanwhile behind the scenes...



Huge thanks must go to the Snapdragon Foundation, Wonderland gift shop, Jim Thomson for ongoing support. We would like to thank all parents who supported the event in particular Suzanne Teed for her fantastic drama direction, Heather Stewart for her fabulous choreography and of course our own Mrs Shaw for pulling it all together!



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The Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Service, Mr MacKay



On Remembrance Day, the Advanced Higher History class once again led a very moving assembly for the S5 and S6 pupils.

Ruaridh Shaw and Conor Haggerty opened the assembly, discussing the meaning of remembrance and its roots in the First World War. Tom Morley discussed the White Poppy appeal, whilst Kate MacLachlan discussed the work of humanitarian workers in conflict zones and Kirsty MacArthur presented on civilian victims in Syria.

Mr Weir, our probationary History teacher, gave a very thoughtful and interesting perspective on remembrance from the viewpoint of a former soldier and someone who still has a brother serving in the forces.

We also had wonderful and hugely emotional musical contributions from Sarah Kellie, Katy McEwan, Eva Brownlie, Grogor Kasynski and Innes Dunlop.

At the end of the assembly Kate MacLachlan paid tribute to our former pupil Gary Wright who sadly lost his life serving in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, with the Royal Regiment of Scotland. A minute of silence was then held, followed by Katryna Bell playing the last post.

Our final act of remembrance was the entire audience leaving the theatre in complete silence. As ever, both those presenting and performing and the whole of our S5 and S6 were a huge credit to our school on this most poignant of occasions in our school calendar.



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Young Musician of the Year

For the first time we were delighted to host the Rotary Young Musician of the Year. A huge thanks is due to Ian Dickie from Rotary for supporting the event. The picture below left shows the performers for the instrumental category. Well done to Harriet Patterson for securing a place in the district heats. Below right are the fantastic vocal performers. Congratulations to Lucy Black who won this category and goes through to the district heats at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Thanks to Mr Ratcliff and Mr McIntyre for organising the event.



S1 Social Subjects Trip to Bannockburn, Luke Piper 1C3



On Wednesday 7th December 2016, a few S1 social subject classes went to The Battle of Bannockburn Museum. My group went to the workshop where we got to try on all sorts of cool armour and weapons. The guide dressed three people up as medieval soldiers; an



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archer, a knight and a foot soldier. The knight had to wear so much armour and padding compared to everyone else, it was quite funny because he was struggling to walk in all of the heavy gear. We then had to plan a strategy for the battle.

Finally, it was our time in the 3D experience, first we were given 3D glasses and then we entered the room. In the first room, it was a presentation from the Queen of England from that time. When we went into another big room with the battle animations. It felt like we were in a medieval warzone, with arrows flying passed and Scottish schiltrons hammering the unsuspecting English army.



Ceilidh Band Play for French Exchange



A massive well done to our Ceilidh Band who provided the music for the French Exchange Ceilidh. The evening began with James Forrest piping in our pupils and guests. Mr Watson did a great job of MC-ing the evening and teaching our French guests the dances throughout the night.

Our musicians supported by Mr Ratcliff, Mrs McEwan and Mr Pacher did a fantastic job.



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BDT Trip to London, Kirsty MacDonald 5E1

The Business and Design London trip was an amazing experience for me and twenty-three of my classmates from S5 & 6. All the activities we did, and places we visited were incredible! In my opinion, the best part of the trip was visiting The Making of Harry Potter at the Warner Bros Studios. We were able to see many sets, costumes and props that were involved in all of the films, and we also attended a workshop about the set design and got to see how the sets developed from a drawing to what you see in the movie. Another memorable moment was the business tour of Wimbledon. We started off by attending a lesson on the business aspect of Wimbledon and learned about how it makes money - which was very interesting. We had a tour around Wimbledon and saw interview rooms, where the cameras film from, the players' lounge and even Centre Court! We also saw a fantastic performance of Wicked which everyone thoroughly enjoyed! We made it to the 72nd floor of The Shard and got to see some incredible views over the city. The museum of Brands, Advertising and Packaging and Madame Tussauds were also very interesting. Overall, the trip was a great experience that me and my peers would recommend to everyone! Thank you to Miss Vickers and Mr Lucas for organising the trip and taking us down.





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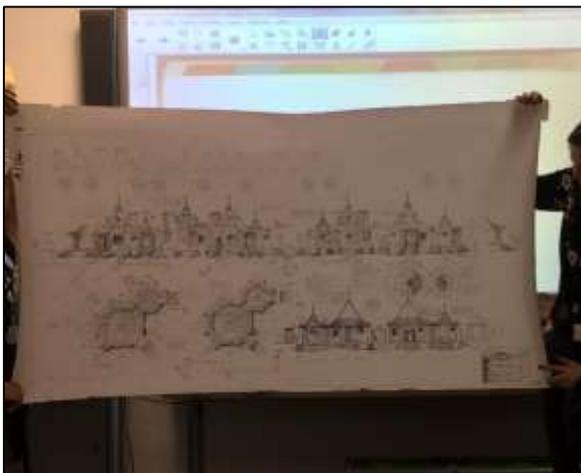
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Library Update

Our library is used really well and that is thanks to Mrs O'Donnell, Mrs Edwards and the S6 Library Assistants. Young people use the library as a quiet place to study or do homework. Others make great use of the fantastic selections of novels available to take out on loan. Often classes use the iPads in the library for research.





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S4 Modern Languages

S4 French students working together to make visual aids on perfect tense. C'est du bon travail!



Dyslexia Awareness Week 7-11 November, Mrs Smith



There was a full programme of events this on the theme "did you know...?" Members of the Pupil Dyslexia Steering Group presented a thought-provoking PowerPoint to House Assemblies. S6 pupils worked with S1 pupils to make blue ribbons to raise awareness and it was encouraging to see so many pupils and staff wearing them throughout the week.

All form classes were shown a short video during form time and an amusing video played in the atrium all week. Information leaflets were distributed to all staff and Support for learning teachers visited each faculty team meeting to give a short presentation on dyslexia friendly schools and present each with a copy of Neil McKay's excellent handbook on dyslexia.



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Top of the Bench Chemistry Competition, Mrs Murray

On 17th November Freddy Morley (4C1), Benjamin Gardner (3L3), Curtis McLerie (3E3) and Benjamin Connolly (2C3) represented Balfion at the Royal Society of Chemistry's local heat of their National 'Top of the Bench' Competition. During the competition, pupils engage in a thought provoking practical challenges to determine who will be declared 'Top of the Bench'.

Despite some traffic problems delaying their start, the Team from Balfion made excellent progress through the first few challenges. Their mission was to carry out a series of experiments so that they could compare the ability of commercial indigestion tablets to remove acidity and determine which one is best value/most cost effective.

Faced with some skills usually experienced at Advanced Higher level, the Team worked



extremely well and showed some great scientific skills. Unfortunately, as the deadline approached the delayed start began to take its toll and the Team from Balfion were unable to complete the final task. This was reflected by a poor score in the final round leaving Balfion in 11th place, with Dollar Academy taking the top spot. Despite this setback the Team agreed they had enjoyed the process and are keen to take part in next year's competition - hopefully we won't get stuck in traffic again!

Killearn Nursery – Grand Opening



James Forrest had the honour of piping in guests at the Killearn Primary Nursery Unit's grand opening of their brand new Canopy.



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Autumn Concert



We were delighted to host an Autumn Concert with visitors from Villeneuve D'asq on 27 October.

Performances from Martha Cole (violin) and Sarah Kellie (violin), orchestra, ceilidh band, chamber choir, wind band, and guest performers from our twin city of Villeneuve d'Ascq, the 'Jeune Ensemble Harmonique'.



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Inspiring Younger Musicians



Balfon High musicians have been performing in the community. Jacob Bell (left) played for a younger pupil at Balfon Primary .



James Forrest and Ewan Brogan were invited to pipe at Blanefield House Care Home yesterday as part of the St. Andrew's Day celebration there. It went down very well with the residents - one elderly lady even got up and danced around the room (above right).

Preparing for the Christmas Concert



Our orchestra, bands and choirs have been busily rehearsing for the Christmas concert on the last week of term. The rehearsals are sounding fantastic and we are really looking forward to the concert on Tuesday 20th December.



S1 - 3 Reading Logs, Mr Blair

Reading really is fundamental. It provides many important and surprising benefits, including mental stimulation, vocabulary expansion, stress reduction, memory improvement, stronger analytical thinking skills, improved focus and concentration – the list could continue. As such, all young people are encouraged to read for at least 20 minutes per day, giving access to – on average – 1.8 million words per year.



We recognise, however, that sometimes busy schedules and other priorities get in the way of this, and so the English team have recently decided to monitor all S1, 2 and 3s' reading habits more closely.

Everyone is asked to gauge how many pages they should personally be able to read in a 20-minute period, then multiply this figure by 7. They then add this total to the page number they are currently reading in order to set themselves a realistic target for the following week.

And it appears to have worked wonders! We have found that increasing numbers of young people are meeting or surpassing their weekly reading target. We are extremely proud of our learners' increasingly positive reading habits and remain optimistic about the continued success of this simple, yet effective solution.





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Accelerated Reader - My Experience by Justin Adam, 2L3



I feel that this project has helped me increase my reading speed and the time I spend reading. I believe I am not as much on my phone or X-Box.

The quizzes are difficult if you haven't properly read the section, so it makes you want to read carefully. I think it has been a great help, and I hope I can go on reading with this project.

A special well done to the following pupils who have achieved 100% in the quiz: Matthew Dow, Max Tysall, Justin Adam, Christiaan Lamb, Matthew Wright

Euroscola 2017

Congratulations to Joanna Borland (right) in S6 who has been awarded a place on the Euroscola trip to Strasbourg in February 2017, sponsored by the Strathendrick Rotary Club. She will be representing Scotland at the European Parliament and working with other young people from Europe. Well done to everyone who took part in the interviews and preparation beforehand.





Engineering the Future for Girls, Laura McKenzie



During the month of May I applied to Strathclyde University to gain a place on their course, "Engineering the World for Girls", with the help of Mr Cameron in Physics my application was accepted. The course was aimed primarily at 3rd year girls from all over Scotland to promote the Faculty of Engineering to aspiring young female engineers of the future.

For the last week of term instead of travelling to school, I rather nervously travelled by train into Glasgow, to the University of Strathclyde campus. Unsure of what the week ahead would bring, I was both excited and slightly anxious at the same time! I needn't have been. From day 1 our schedule was enjoyable and jam-packed involving most aspects of engineering. There was significant input from the university's engineering departments including, Civil and Environmental, Electrical and Electronic, Chemical and Process, Mechanical and Aerospace, Design and Manufacturing and Naval Architecture.

Working in small groups we created models relating to each of the engineering departments, such as wind turbines, support beams, cargo boats, helicopters and even a full-sized shelter. With a healthy dose of competition, each group tested their models for ease of use and practicality. We were constantly coming up with ideas, proving them right or wrong through experimentation and then implementing solutions. It was an extremely hands-on course which I enjoyed immensely! An added bonus was the delicious lunch provided each day.

Towards the end of the week we were taken to the BP and Ineos petrochemical plant in Grangemouth, where we spoke to female professionals and were shown what they do as Chemical Engineers. It was an extremely interesting visit and gave me an insight into a career within the oil and gas industry.

Overall I found it to be a fun filled week which introduced me to new friends and a new perspective of what engineering is. I thoroughly enjoyed learning about the different aspects of engineering and now know that I would like to pursue a career in engineering, though I am still undecided which specific discipline. I would encourage girls thinking about engineering, as a possible career, to take part in the course if it were to come up again. It was a great experience which opened my eyes to the massive part engineering plays in our daily lives.



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National 5 Energy, Mr McFarlane

During the month of December the Skills for Work: National 5 Energy class have been investigating wind turbines. Our young people have been researching, building and evaluating wind turbines as part of their portfolio. This culminated in an academic showcase of their work for staff and pupils. Our young people produced highly informative posters and confidently presented their findings to staff and their peers. In January they will begin a similar project on solar hot water panels.





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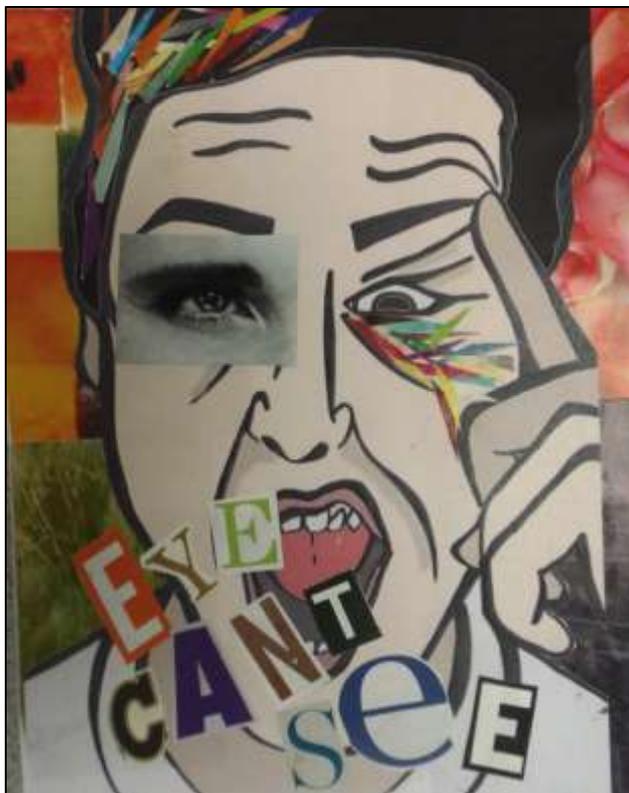
Advanced Higher Art



Carolyn Powers



Storm Brown



Emma Pretorius



Gabriella Whitehouse-Middleton



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Martha Cole's AH Art work (left)

Charity Work, Mrs Reid

3C1 are selling Christmas candy canes to support the C1 charity, Reverse Rett. This is a charity working to cure Rett Syndrome - a genetic condition that affects little girls and leaves them unable to walk, talk or use sign

language. 3C1 have previously held a bake sale and raised £387 for the charity (see photo below) and are hoping to raise some more money selling personalised candy canes to be delivered across the school.



Reverse Rett, Aidan Rooney 3C1

3C1 decided to choose Reverse Rett as our charity this year. So far we have done a non-uniform day, a bake sale and are now selling Christmas candy canes. We chose Reverse Rett because Mrs Reid's friend has a little girl with Rett Syndrome who is the same age as her son and has seen how Rett Syndrome has impeded her development. Rett Syndrome is a neurological condition which first affects young girls when they are around one or two years old. It leaves these girls with many disabilities and medical complexities for the rest of their lives. Most are unable to speak or move but the sad part is there is nothing wrong with their brain, so they can understand just like us but they are trapped inside a body that doesn't work. One in 10,000 girls have Rett Syndrome. Reverse Rett is a charity that funds research into trying to reverse the faulty gene. In 2007, scientists reversed the gene that causes Rett Syndrome in mice so there is real hope for the girls suffering today.

3C1 are planning to continue fundraising in 2017.



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Children in Need, Rebecca Ross 6E2

On Friday 18th November, the S6 Charities Group organised an event for Children in Need. This involved having all members of sixth year dressing up and wearing their pyjamas to school, but a bake sale also occurred. For all sixth years this is an occasion looked forward to by all since it has been occurring for the past few years. For the bake sale members of sixth year form classes, and donations from younger year groups allowed Rebecca Ross (6E2) and Courtney Maitland (6L1) to sell cakes at break to raise money for Children in Need. However, alongside the pupils raising money, Hilary from the Bellrock Kitchen Team made Pudsey Bear cookies for the pupils to enjoy. The money brought in from sixth year pupils, the money made via the bake sale and Pudsey cookies enabled the Charities Committee to make a staggering £251.88 for Children in Need. The Charities Committee would like to thank everyone for their contributions and hope they enjoyed their day.





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Shoebbox Appeal



A special well done to Alice Calvely (left) and Katy McEwan who led the Shoebbox appeal this year on behalf of the S6 charities group.

The many boxes collected were given to Blythwood Care and will have been distributed to those in need in the UK and around the world.

Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI)

YPI is a programme for secondary schools that strengthens the social sector by engaging young people in social issues, local charities and grant-making.

S3 pupils researched local charities following an afternoon of visits from a wide range of charities eager for their support. Each class had to nominate a group from their form class to give a presentation on their chosen charity to the year group and panel of judges.

Well done to the group (Lauren, Mieke, Sophie and Kate) from 3E1 who won the £3000 prize for their chosen charity CHAS. They are photographed with Jane Clifford from YPI.





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Live N learn for S4 and S5



Alan Black, director of Live N Learn, delivered study skills work shops to our S4 and S5 pupils on the 17th and 18th November. There was a strong focus on growth mindset and strategies to help organization and memory.

Pupils were given a user name and password to access Live N Learn resources at <http://live-n-learn.co.uk>

Music Ambassadors

These head up the S6 Music Leadership Group (15 members in total). We have six Music Ambassadors over the three houses: Murren Addison and Kirsty Maitland from Campsie; Emily Shaw and Aaron Johnston from Endrick; Sophie Howie and Jamie Wastling from Lomond. They are almost akin to senior prefects in that they motivate and inspire younger years through setting an excellent example in numerous ways: in rehearsals, our Ambassadors often take small sectionals working with a number of pupils before returning to the larger ensemble; they speak at House Assemblies to spread news, upcoming events and notable mentions from recent months; they are in BGE classes during non-contact periods to support younger pupils; they source performance opportunities in the wider community for our co-curricular groups.



Debating, Mrs Reid

S2 pupils Julia Anderson and James Doherty have reached the next round of the English Speaking Union junior debating competition. They debated the motion "This house would not test on animals" at Douglas Academy and gave an impressive performance. Good luck for the next round.



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S1 Micro Tyco, Mr Cameron



Micro-Tyco is a month long challenge that enables participants to practice and learn fundamental business principles in a safe, 'micro' environment. Teams from schools have one month to turn £1 seed capital into as much money as possible. Micro-Tyco aims to unleash participants' talents, fostering essential entrepreneurial thinking, resourcefulness and team work.



Our final was held on the afternoon of 8th December and all the first year did themselves proud. Mr Cameron and the judges were impressed with their efforts, understanding of the concept and their presentations. The winners were 1L2, so well done to them and Miss Quinn (Form Class Leader). A big thank you to the efforts of **all the S1 form class leaders** during the month of November. Also thank you to the judges Liz Mayhew, Tony Wilkes and Lucy Evans from Advanced higher business and from outside the school Mr Iain Howie from the Killearn Business Network.

Visit from Dr Frank O'Donnell, Mr MacKay

On Monday 19th December, S3-S6 pupils had a fascinating end of term presentation by former Balfion pupil, Dr Frank O'Donnell, currently a lecturer in Strategic Studies at the Britannia Royal Naval College in Plymouth. He discussed his present role teaching naval officers and cadets but also discussed his fascinating education and work history since leaving Balfion in 2004. This has taken him from St Andrews and Aberdeen to London and Washington DC and finally, to Plymouth.

Dr O'Donnell also gave the pupils great advice on how to pursue their career ambitions in whatever field they choose to pursue.



The session was finished with an excellent Q&A session, which ranged from the political situation in the US and security in the Far East, to the role of think tanks in the political process and the content of International Relations courses at universities.



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Halloween Discos

Our pupils made a fantastic effort with costumes at the Halloween discos. All three events were well attended and our young people had a fantastic time. Huge thanks to staff, parents and S6 pupils who organised and supervised the event and of course to former pupil, Nick North for DJ-ing! Here are a few of the many great costumes...





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Ocean Youth Trust - Two schools sailing together, Calum MacMillan 5E3



On hearing about a sailing opportunity with Ocean Youth Trust (OYT) Scotland, I was enthusiastic from the start. While some friends were concerned about the effect on their studies of such a trip during their fifth year at school, my anticipation grew as the trip got closer.

The trip combined 6 students from Balfron High School along with 4 from Douglas Academy in Milngavie. We were a little apprehensive as to how we would all get on, but we need not have worried; we all got on with each other right from the start. Over the week we became firm friends sharing a single experience. In my eyes, this alone made the trip a success, the sailing on top of this made the whole week fantastic.

We were the crew of the boat Alba Venturer for the week, supervised by the skipper and his staff. We all lived (and slept) on board the boat and we had to ensure that everyone was fed, the boat was kept tidy, we sailed and docked safely at each day. Organised into two watches, mixed between the schools, our daily routine started with two of us getting up early to make breakfast for everyone onboard. Afterwards the two cooks washed the dishes while remaining crew cleaned up the boat before we all prepared Alba Venturer for the days sailing. This involved arranging the sails to be hoisted, sorting out ropes and removing fenders once the boat had left dock.

While sailing, one Watch would be on deck looking out for boats, buoys and other obstacles. Of course they often had to “jump to”, pulling in sails and changing tack and following orders of the First mate. Whilst this went on the other Watch would be downstairs, learning



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about sailing techniques, learning to tie knots and providing cups of tea for all the crew on deck.

As a result of this trip we all have an enhanced desire to push ourselves and to expand our life experiences. For me the trip was so much of a success I would happily go again. Once we completed our five days aboard the Alba Venturer we were told about further opportunities to develop our sailing experiences and take on leadership opportunities with Ocean Youth Trust Scotland. As a result of the sailing experience we accomplished many things we had not dealt with before. We all worked as a team, enhanced our CV with the experience as well as gaining a qualification from the Royal Yachting Association.

On returning to school one of my friends stated that they regretted pulling out of this trip. All I can say is, if it interests you then go for it because it may be one of the best experiences of your life, as it was for all of us.

In summary, I gained new friends, had great fun, gained a sailing certificate for Competent Crew, gained a desire to try new things, enhanced my CV and learnt to sail.



Drymen DRT

From the new 2017 term, the Drymen DRT has been block booked Monday to Friday at 4:45pm. To confirm a place with this service, pupils must sign in with Mrs McAllister at the reception when they arrive at school. This must be done by interval at the latest. The school will confirm numbers with the DRT service at the council.



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S1 Panto, Romeo Iervasi 1E3

The pantomime was a wonderful experience for all to see. It was a well put-together mix of Hansel and Gretel, Little Red Riding Hood and Robin Hood, called Weans in the Wood. As all the children scurried onto the comfortable bus, excitement and exhilaration filled the air. As the bus's engine started and the rumbling began, the voices of jolly children got increasingly louder. As we neared the pantomime (Macrobert Centre) people were almost shouting.

Children stumbled off the bus, desperate to watch the amazing pantomime. Finally, the doors opened and we stared in amazement at the wondrous theatre. Soon, the show began. The characters were delightful, each holding feelings of their own. There were a lot of laughs and the characters were played amazingly.



The point of the story is an old (very old) witch has a plan to destroy the good side (not a Star Wars reference) by taking the power source from the local magic school so that she may rule the pantosphere. But luckily, Hansel, Gretel, Robin Hood and others were going to have to stop her. (Did I mention there was a prince who was turned into a werewolf?) Overall, the pantomime was a great experience for all. Comical characters, funny plot-twists and even a joke about Donald Trump. Yes, this pantomime's amazing and I would definitely recommend it.

Numeracy Mascot Competition

Mr Cameron, our Lead Learner in Numeracy, launched a competition to create a numeracy mascot. The winning mascot will be used across the curriculum to signpost activities where learners are using numeracy skills. Well done Sophia Kalmijn and to runners up Adam, Nathan Amy and Sky (not available for the pic).





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Social Dance Launch



The atrium was the setting for the start of social dance. Led by Head Boy Rory Teed on the drums, the Ceilidh Band began to play while seniors and staff started a flash mob style dance. It was not long before others joined in. It was great fun and a fantastic reminder of the positive spirit of Scottish social dancing.



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The countdown begins... Ecuador 2017



The fundraising continues as the expedition to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands gets closer. Some pupils made and sold soup to staff on the in-service day, some also spent an afternoon at Waitrose bag packing. The group raised £359.44 bag packing at the weekend.

Flights have all been booked and the itinerary is complete. The young people leave to do community project work at Camp Ecuador with Camps international in June.





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Visit to Blanford House Care Home, Alice Calvely 6E2

On November 13th, 20 students and 3 teachers travelled to Blanford House Care Home to perform for the residents, family and staff. Performances included choir singing Christmas songs, the flute group playing Let It Snow and Carol of the Bells, the string quartet playing Eine Kleine Nachtmusik "Romanze", and the ceilidh band playing the Gay Gordons and the Saint Bernards Waltz. The people at Blanford House thoroughly enjoyed all the performances and some even danced.

The students had a great time playing for them and were very happy to know that they had had a positive impact on the residents' day.





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Inter House Update

Well done to Lomond House who won the inter-house song contest. You can see their fantastic performance by following the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1teAWHK6CYU>



Lomond House also won the bake-off! Here are some pictures of the competition.

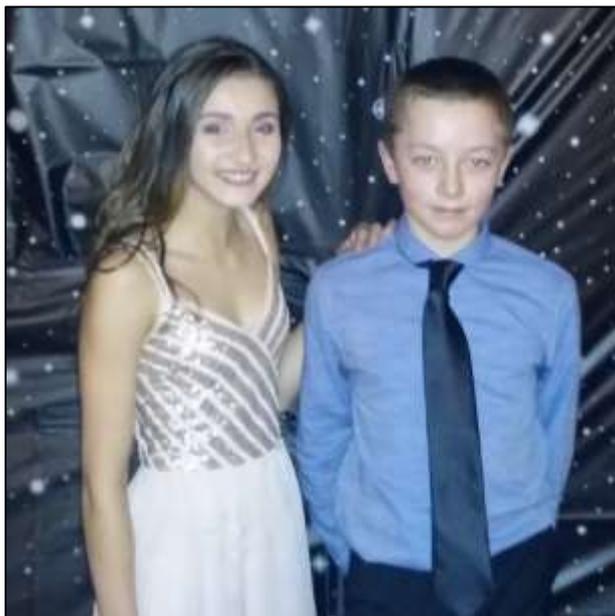
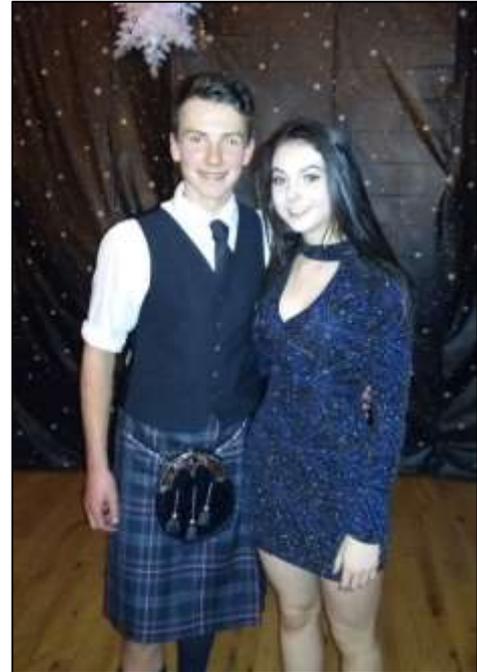




Balftron Highlights

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More Inter-House...



Innes and Sophie – winners of the inter-house senior dance competition (20 points for Lomond House)

Jamie and Daisy – winners of the inter-house S3/4 dance competition (20 points for Campsie House)

Corilidh and Callum – winners of the inter-house S1/2 dance competition (20 points for Endrick House)

Well done to Campsie House who won the inter-house banner competition. The banners are on display in the atrium – pride of place!





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S5/6 Health Day

All of our S5 and S6 pupils took part in a day promoting Health and wellbeing.



Recycle-a-bike activity



Womens' Aid workshop



Heartstart training



Healthy cooking/eating workshop



Healthy cooking/eating workshop





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Breathing Space workshop



Alcohol & Sexual consent discussions



Fish for health





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Christmas Dances

The Christmas ceilidhs were a great success again this year. All three dances were packed full of young people enjoying the dancing, festivities and great food provided by Hilary and the Bellrock staff. Mrs Gannon and her team of S6 had done a fantastic job decorating the theatre to set the scene perfectly for the events. The PE team did a brilliant job MC-ing the dances and getting everyone involved. Euan Brogan was a fantastic piper at the beginning of the senior and S3/4 dances. It was great to have parent helpers join staff with supervision. Thanks to everyone who did their bit to make the dances successful.



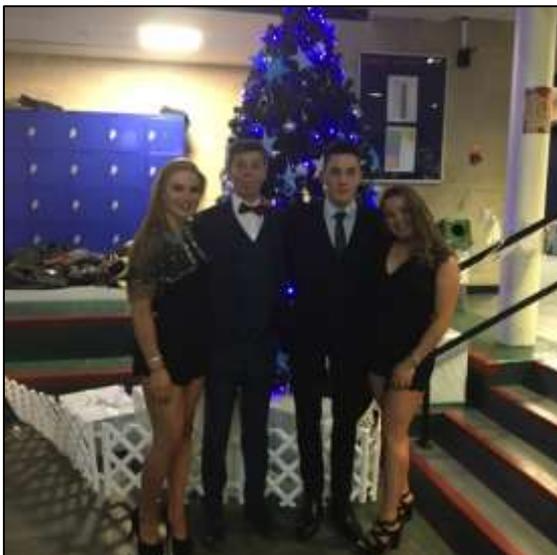
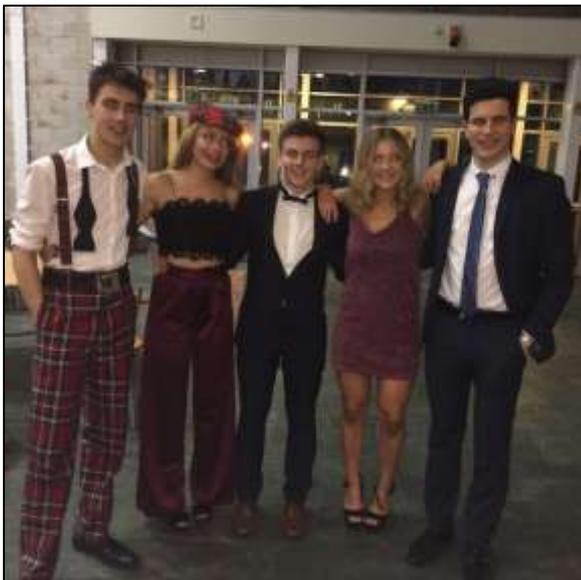
We were joined by the Head Boy and Girl from Dunblane High School (above)





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Well done to the photography team and thanks to Mr Scott who ran the photobooth at the dances. Lots more pictures on our twitter account @balfronhs





Balfion Highlights

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Christmas Fayre



The atrium and theatre were packed full of stalls run by pupils, local traders and members of the community on Friday 16th December. Pupils from Balfion Primary came along and entertained everyone with Christmas Carols. Some pupils were raising money for Camps International, pupils the conneXions course were selling some of the produce grown in our own polytunnel and the creative Arts team were selling Balfion High Calendars and cards designed by our own pupils. S2 were selling items in aid of their chosen charity Save the Children. Pupils from classes were given the opportunity to visit the Fayre and we were delighted to welcome members of the local community to our school too!



£72 was raised at the Christmas Fayre from the sale of hyacinths and narcissi and candle holders made from recycled wood. These were all grown and prepared by the pupils themselves. The money will go towards plants and seeds for the new growing season in the polytunnel.



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Well done to 3E1 who led the Christmas Jumper day and ran stalls in aid of Save the Children. 3E1 raised a massive £455.88 for the charity from the Jumper Day, donations, bake sale and technology stall. Well done!



Contact the Creative Arts team if you would like to buy one of our school calendars filled with our talented pupils' work.





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Wider Achievements



Congratulations to Alasdair Mitchell & Gabriella Whitehouse-Middleton. Alasdair won 3 Golds, 2 for Sparring and 1 for Special technique. He also won Silver for Patterns. Gabriella Won 2 Silvers for Sparring. Earlier in the term they also attended the North East Challenge Cup in Aberdeen where Gabriella Won Bronze for Sparring and Alasdair won Gold for Sparring and Silver for Special Technique.



Congratulations to Emma Wilkes who won a silver medal at the British Judo Championships



Congratulations to Lucy Steel is the J14 singles indoor rowing champion



Congratulations to Ryan Calway who won a bronze medal in the Scottish Kickboxing Championships



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Congratulations to Lachlan Reynolds who is the European Tour Golf Champion .



Congratulations to Matthew Chandler who was part of the Scotland combined events team at the SIAB pentathlon. Team silver and three PBs



Congratulations to Harriet Patterson who has secured a place in the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland.



Please keep letting us know about our young people's successes out of school. We are keen to recognise and celebrate them.

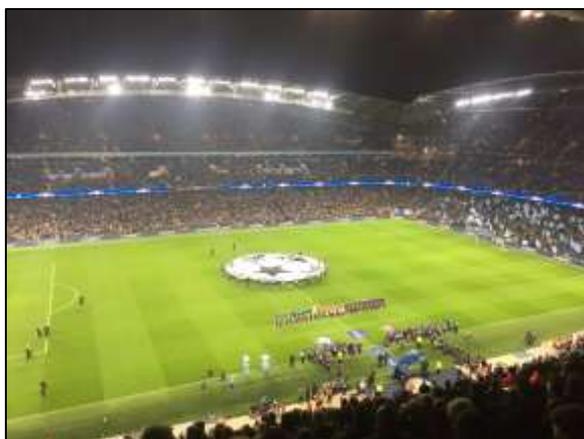


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Champions League Trip, Mr Watson

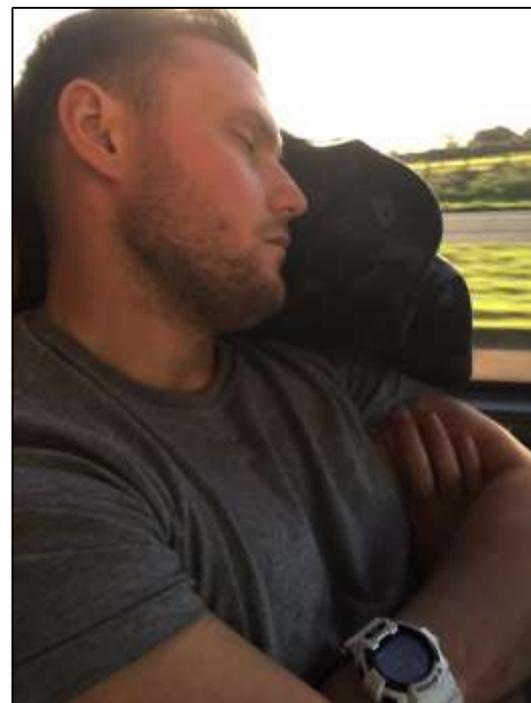
47 of our S1-S3 pupils were lucky enough to secure a place on the Champions league trip to Watch Manchester City play Barcelona. The group arrived well in advance to soak up the atmosphere and witnessed a fantastic game in which Man City came from behind to win 3-1. A special mention must go to Ross Hamilton who correctly predicted not only the first goal scorer and the final score but the exact time that the first goal would be scored! The next morning our pupils visited Old Trafford (Manchester United home stadium) where they experienced a stadium tour and an education classroom session before heading back home! What a great trip!





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It was a great trip but a little too much for Mr Lucas!



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Bowling, Miss Hinchliffe

Max Tysall and Linda Lochans attended the Forth Valley Disability Sport Indoor Bowling festival at Falkirk Indoor Bowling Club. They both did a fantastic job representing Balfron High School.



S4 Sports Leaders Lead Basketball Tournament

All S4 pupils select what activities they can do in S4 Core P.E and we have two classes of pupils who selected Sports Leadership. They have experienced a range of team building and leadership skill development throughout the block and this culminated in them leading a P4 Basketball Festival.

The pupils were required to plan, deliver and then evaluate the sessions and then run a round robin tournament. The Festival was a big success with both the Primary and High School pupils having a great experience.

Thanks should also go to Neil Thomson from Active Stirling for his support in coordinating this event with the primary schools.





Balfroon Highlights

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Tennis on the Road, Mr Macquarrie

A group of S6 pupils were trained in Tennis coaching and then led a session with the Balfroon Primary P4/5 class. The pupils worked really well and enjoyed the training session and then working with the Primary pupils.



Boccia, Miss Hinchliffe

Linda Lochans and Max Tysall participated in the Stirling Schools Boccia Event, competing against other pupils from Stirling Secondary schools. Linda was 3rd and Max was 4th. Both have qualified for the regional competition in January. We wish them the very best of luck in the next round.



Balford Highlights

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Heartstart Training for Staff, Mr Macquarrie

We were very lucky to have the Trossachs Search and Rescue team come into the school to train 18 staff in Heart Start. This is a national programme which aims to have as many people as possible able to do CPR to save a life. We teach all our S1 and S4 pupils each year and also the S6 were able to select it as part of their Health Day.



S3 Sports Leaders



Our S3 sports leaders did a fantastic job supporting Active Stirling with the P6 sports hall athletics festival.





Balfion Highlights

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Balfion pupils have a wheelie great time! Miss MacPhee

The first week back after the October holidays saw four Balfion High pupils attend a cycling camp residential at Lagganlia Centre for Outdoor Learning. The residential was kindly organised by Cycling Scotland, with four other High Schools also in attendance. The key aim was for pupils to plan a project which would see them gain a grant of up to £3000 to increase cycling at the school. Throughout the week, pupils put together a detailed presentation outlining their ideas based on time-scale, costing and feasibility of the plan. Workshops on bike maintenance, first aid and bike handling skills were offered to pupils so that on return to their respective schools, they could compliment their new found skills with the project.

Euan Wartigg, Abby Stewart, Hamish Finn and Fiona Rowan all from S4 impressed with their ideas so much that the full grant has been awarded to the school. The next phase is to plan a track around the surrounding school grounds to make Balfion High a cycling friendly campus.





Balfroon Highlights

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Girls Rugby, Mr Dalziel

The Under 15 team has had a great season which peaked with a National Cup semi-final against Carrick Academy. The girls were defeated but gave a great account of themselves against a team coming from a school of rugby. There has been clear progression in the whole team and they should be delighted with their cup run.



The Under 18's haven't had as much game time as the Under 15's although they managed to reach the National Shield Final. The girls were defeated by a strong team made up of a number of schools in East Lothian. It was a relatively young team with more than half the players only in S4 so the team hopefully have a bright future ahead of them.

All the girls involved have been a credit to themselves and we will hopefully have an enjoyable and successful 2017.





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Boys U15 Rugby



The U15 rugby team performed very well against Wallace High winning 60-25. Jamie Horrocks was named man of the match. The rugby teams are now looking forward to the Central Schools Cup at U16 and U18 level and also the Central Sevens.

Hockey, Miss Hinchliffe



Our senior hockey teams finished the year with another great night at McLaren High. Balfron 2 finished in 1st place and Balfron 1 finished in 3rd.



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Netball, Miss Vickers



This year we have 3 teams entered into the Netball Scotland Scottish Schools Cup.

Our S1 team finished top of their regional group and have progressed into the Gold section for the knock out stages, with their next game taking place on the 16th of January against St Thomas Aquinas High School.

Our S3 team finished 3rd out of 5 regional teams so are into the Silver section of the knock outs. They will play Fortrose Academy on January 24th.

The Open team finished 2nd in their regional group, but unfortunately had to forfeit their Silver knock out match due to injuries and

illnesses. Disappointingly, this means they won't progress any further in the competition.

We have also participated in two S1-3 Netball festivals organised by Active Stirling. Our team has been a combination of S1 & S2 pupils who have played against Dunblane HS, McLaren HS and St Modan's HS.



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Girls Football, Miss Vickers



Girls Football 7-a-side tournaments have taken place every Thursday from September to November at various locations across Stirling. Unfortunately our Junior team have only managed a friendly match against McLaren High School due to various constraints. Our Senior team have attended every one of their 7-a-side fixtures to gain a good position in the league table. The tournaments take a break over the winter months, so will return from March-May next year.

Scottish Disability Sport Parasport Festival

Sian Wallace, Max Tysall and Linda Lochans had a fantastic day trying different activities at the Parasport festival such as swimming, boccia, tennis and wheelchair basketball. They all did extremely well representing Balftron High.





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Rowing, Mr Scott

At the end of October 43 pupils from school took part in the National Indoor Rowing Championships. The pupils performed fantastically and supported each other superbly throughout the day. Across the team and individual events, we medalled 6 times. Evie Hyland won individual gold in the S2 girls category, Laura Mckenzie an individual silver in the S4 girls and Euan Mckenzie and individual bronze in the S2 boys. In the team events, our S3 girls team of Alex Clark, Lucy Steel, Martha Coombes and Innes Dunlop won gold. Our S4 girls team of Laura Mckenzie, Abby Stewart, Kim Denton and Lorna Farquhar also won gold. Continuing the theme, our S5 girls team of Freya Logan, Maddie Woods, Evie Gage and Esther Ross won gold. Everyone involved was a credit to themselves and the school.





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Alex Clark, Lucy Steel, Martha Coombes and Innes Dunlop are pictured left, straight after their excellent gold medal winning performance in the girls S3 team event.





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Badminton



Balftron High School had a number of pupils participating in the Central Schools Badminton Championships on the 7th of December. Pupils had previously won through to this stage by reaching a semi-final or further in their chosen event(s) at the Stirling Badminton Championships. This competition brought together the winners, runners up and losing semi-finalists from Falkirk and Clackmannan schools as well as from the private schools within Forth Valley. Balftron now have a number of Central Schools

Champions who will progress to the Scottish Schools National Badminton Championships next year as follows: U16 girls singles - Laura McKenzie; U16 girls doubles - Laura McKenzie & Lucy McConnell; U19 girls doubles - Annabel Crook & Beth McConnell.





Balftron Highlights

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Girls in Sport Day, Miss MacPhee

Around 250 girls from S1-4 participated in the annual Active Girls Day held on Friday 28th October at Balftron High School. The nationwide event seeks to raise awareness of girls' participation in sport and physical activity, whilst emphasising the value of such an event. We were fortunate enough to have Glasgow City and Scotland Footballer Fiona Brown at the day to actively get involved in the sessions and inspire the next generation.





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Active at school and at the rowing comp!





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Prefects working hard at the S3 Parents' Night



A massive thanks to our fantastic prefects who work hard behind the scenes to make sure parents' nights go smoothly. Duties include helping with car parking, serving refreshments, signing parents/carers in, giving out evaluations and most importantly, gently trying keep teachers to time!



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Supported Study

Subject	Day	When	What level
English	Vary according to student needs- they need to arrange a day with teacher	Any day	Any Level
Maths	Monday	Lunchtime	S1-3 & N4
	Tuesday	Lunchtime	N5
	Tuesday	Lunchtime	Ad Higher
	Wednesday	Lunchtime	Higher
	Any day by arrangement with Mr Shields	After school	All Levels
Creative Arts			
Music, Music Technology	Tuesday/Thursday	After school	N5, Higher & Ad Higher
Art & Design	Every day	Lunchtime	All Levels
Health			
PE	Tuesday	After school	Higher
	Thursday	After school	N4/5
Hospitality	None at present		
Science			
Biology	Tuesday	Lunchtime	Higher
Chemistry	Monday	After school	Higher
	Wednesday	After school	N5
Physics	None at present		
Modern Languages and RME			
Spanish	Any	Lunchtime- from February	Higher & Ad Higher
French & German	Any day	Lunchtime	All Levels



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RME	Wednesday	After school	Higher
Social Subjects			
History	Monday	After school	N5
Geography	These will start after Prelims		
Modern Studies			
Design and Technology			
Business Management	Monday/Thursday	After school	Higher/N5
Graphic Communication	Monday	After school	Higher/N5
Design & Manufacture	Thursday	After school	Higher/N5
Practical Woodworking	Thursday	After school-	N5
Practical Metalwork	Thursday	from January	N5
Photography	Monday	After school- from December	Higher
Accounting	Wednesday	After school- from December	Higher/N5

Dates for your Diary

5 January	School resumes
6 January	S1/2 HPV/MMR Vaccination catch-ups
12 January	S1 Parents Meeting
16 January	Senior Phase Prelims begin
23 January	S2 Form Class Leader interview week
24 January	Parent/HT Drop-in
3 February	S4 Safe Drive Stay Alive workshops (period 5 and 6) S5/6 Finance Workshops (period 6)
8 February	S5/6 Parents Meeting
13-14 February	In-service Days
15-17 February	Holiday
27 February	Senior Phase Course Choice Information Evening (S3/4/5) S3 Form Class Leader interview week
7 March	Parent/HT Drop-in
13 March	S4 Form Class Leader interview week
31 March	School closes for spring holiday



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If you are interested in having a flavour of the day in the life of the school, why not follow us on twitter - **@balfonhigh**

Merry Christmas from all of us at Balfon High School!

