



Balfion Highlights

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Peru Expedition 2015



This summer, a group of 42 pupils from Balfion High school, took part in an incredible expedition to southern Peru. The students, who had been fundraising for the last two years, signed up to help local communities with building projects and immerse themselves in the unique culture found throughout the Andes region. Deputy Head boy, Cal Clark said, "I wanted to experience something completely different and remind myself that there's more to life than exams".



September 2015:

Peru Expedition

Headlines

Summer Successes

Parent Council

Freshers' Fayre

Creative Writing

Author, Moira

McPartlin Visits

Balfion High

FE/HE information

Evening

Preparing for NQs

*Developing the Young
Workforce*

ConneXions Course

*Partnership with
Strathendrick RFU*

STV Appeal

Sports Ambassadors

Show My Homework

Leadership Weekend

Sports Round Up

Sports Leaders

Inter-House

Dates for Diary

Follow us on twitter

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Accompanying the pupils for their month-long trip were Mr Macintosh, Miss Miller, Miss Vickers and Mr Blair. The group worked extremely hard during their project work, and were praised by the local people for all their help. Christie Yuill and Gemma Christie of S6 said, "We made mud bricks, painted schools and even taught English. We couldn't pick a favourite as they were all so amazing and rewarding".

Seeing sights such as Lake Titicaca, Colca canyon and wild condors, the Balftron group got a real taste of life in rural Peru. They even learned a lot of local Quechua language, which is no easy task!

But the highlight of the expedition was their five day trek to Machu Picchu. The students braved a steep climb around Salkantay mountain at 4600m before travelling through cloud forest and even jungle.

Daniel Gilbride of S5 said, "The trek was really demanding, with 12 hours on the move each day. But the altitude and sore feet were worth it to finally see Machu Picchu at sunrise". Now that they are back and rested, the group feel really proud of their achievements and wonder what their next adventure will be.





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Coming soon.... details of our next expedition.... Plans for summer 2017



Balfour Highlights

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Headlines

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is great to back and hard to believe that we are only four weeks into the new session. We have such a vibrant and hard working learning community with great opportunities for our young people in class time *and* outwith. This edition of Highlights gives a flavour of just some of the activities that have taken place since we broke up for the summer and returned in August.

We are very proud of our senior pupils' SQA results. The Leadership Team met at school and phoned all of our returning pupils the day after the results were sent. This allowed us to check in with pupils, congratulate and offer support. We were able to make amendments where necessary to courses for the new session. All of our pupils worked hard to secure a good set of results that will take them on to positive destinations. It was pleasing that as a school we showed improvement in key measures in S4, 5 and 6 results. We are committed to continuing this improvement with the support of parents and hard work of young people and staff.

It was great to see so many of our young people excel – thirty-three S4 pupils achieved straight As in their first set of national Qualifications. Twenty-three S5 pupils secured five As at Higher. There were some notable outstanding achievements. Harry Johnson is being awarded the prestigious Landsdown Prize by the Franco-Scottish Society in recognition of him attaining the highest award in Scotland for Advanced Higher French. Catharine Eckersall is receiving the Modern Studies Association prize in recognition of being in the top two nationally in Higher Modern Studies in the 2015 examination.

As you may already know, we are working towards a move to the 33 period week to be implemented at the timetable change in June 2016. This will mean some alterations to the start and finish of our school day. Stirling Council are currently in talks with the bus company to identify the possible timings that would work for our young people and others affected by transport. Once we know the parameters we will be able to bring a group of pupils, staff and parents together to finalise plans. I will, of course keep you in the loop at each stage.

Thanks to all of you who completed the parental survey in June. I fed back the results to the Parent Council last week. It was really useful to discuss areas that are strong and get some support and suggestions as to how others can be improved. This has allowed me to amend our school improvement plan in light of feedback and suggestions. I will post the results in the parent zone area of the school website in due course for your information.

Please let us know if there is anything we could include in the next Highlights that we have not captured and do get in touch if we can help in any way. Thank you for your continued support of our school.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Elaine Bannatyne'.

Elaine Bannatyne, Head Teacher



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Advanced Higher Geography – Field Trip to Arran

On September 3rd – 6th, 11 Advanced Higher Geography pupils went on a field trip to the field studies centre in Lochranza on Arran. Each day started with a full cooked breakfast to set them up for the work ahead. Beth, the instructor, gave an introduction to the day's work in the classroom and then it was time to grab the equipment and head outdoors.

We covered a whole range of field techniques and looked at coastal processes; river profiles; vegetation succession on a saltmarsh; footpath erosion up Glen Rosa and soil studies. The weather was fantastic and after a long day out in the field the pupils returned to a 3 course meal in the centre. BUT the day's work was not yet over. In the evenings the pupils were back in the classroom looking at ways to present their findings and statistical analysis of their data.

On the last night we celebrated with toasted marshmallows on a campfire on the beach. The pupils were all fantastic – even organising their own pre-breakfast coastal walk. They have returned ready to take on their own Advanced Higher Geography study and stocked up with enough cheese and soap to see them through the year.





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Successes for Balftron High School Pupils



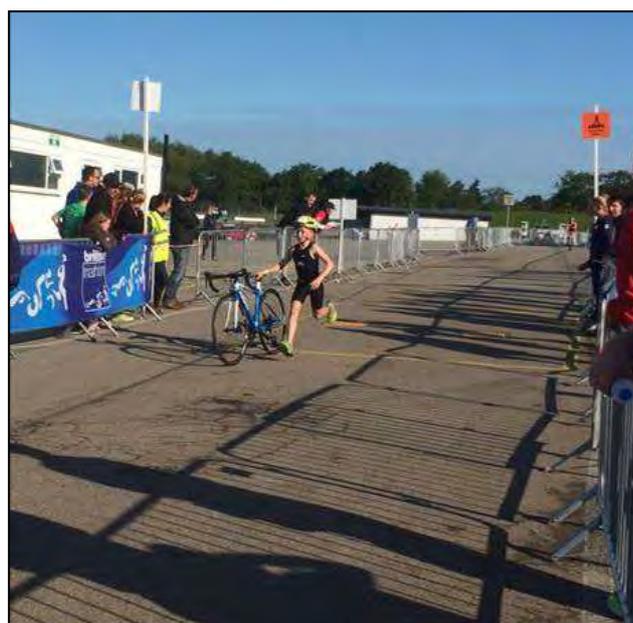
Congrats to Jamie Carruth 4C1 who won gold with the Scottish Youth Team at the International Fly Fishing Championship



Congrats to Ross Martin, 5C3, who has won the FKS Championship, £150K prize money for racing in 2016



Congrats to Lewis Stewart (middle), who took gold with the Scottish Sprint Cycling



Congrats to Callum Byrne, 1E3 who was called up to the Scottish Triathlon Squad and competed in his 1st international



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Marc Gibson, 3L3, Racing Successes – Some of his race highlights

RD3 6/7 June Knockhill <<<< Reverse!!

This was meeting three and another track to learn.

Knockhill was going to be in reverse this weekend! The weather was awful; dad had no worries about tyre choice they were going to be wet ones! I was ok about the rain, however what I was not prepared for was the power of the high winds which caught me off guard during practice and qualifying causing me to come off into the gravel trap and give myself a bit of a sore back and my trusty steed a few scrapes (thankfully Uncle Bob knows a man who can)!

Despite this I managed to qualify 3rd before being blown off again but I held onto a front row start. To my disappointment racing was cancelled for rider safety for the rest of the day. Sunday brought better race conditions.



Race1 I got a good start but a little excursion from track lost me half a lap from the front runners, I soon clawed my way back up to finish 4th, Race2 started well until it became apparent that things weren't right with my bike. An electrical fault led to me retiring from the race, my first DNF! Unfortunately this continued to cause me problems and I had to retire from race 3 as well.

Race 4 saw better end and I managed to finish 4th. I was feeling a little flat and bruised but to show good sportsmanship I went to the trophy presentation to cheer on Lewis who had done really well this weekend. Unexpectedly Dennis Hobbs and Dunc called me up to collect a trophy chosen by them and some of the officials, I was delighted to receive Rider of the Day for not giving up and continuing to give my all despite the obstacles. I have to say I did leave Knockhill with my confidence a little shaken and my ego (and a few other things) a little bruised.



RD4 July 11/12 East Fortune

The weather was looking good for the weekend with showers expected; I had been a little under the weather with hayfever and some fluid behind my eardrum causing me to feel a little dizzy-er! I just finished my out lap and it was obvious my electrical fault was going to be a problem again. A quick coil change seemed to rectify this but not me qualifying last! I had 2 - 4ths and 2 - 5ths,

Although I had some good scrapes through the field my confidence was still low after Knockhill and not feeling so well. I'm hoping to be back on form for my next meeting in August.

Thanks to Marc for the insight. Balfron High wishes Marc well in future races!



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Christie-Anne Shannon, 2C2 – More Ice Skating Success!



It has been great to see Christie-Anne progress in figure skating. We are delighted to report that Christie-Anne won the Basic Novice A category at IJS Sheffield. The link below shows her winning performance.

Christie and a few friends were interviewed for STVs Riverside show recently (pictured left).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0zKUd6Jzak>

Our Europe Winning Film



Follow the link below to see our winning team's film outlining what it is to be a European Citizen today using their modern languages. Congratulations to Erin Gallacher, Anisah McDonagh, Harriet Patterson and Tess Stewart who have done Balfion High School proud.



<http://oureuropecompetition.com/films>

Parent Council

The Parent Council would really love to see some new members. We are keen to get a group together to help with fundraising. If you think you could give some time to this great cause, please come along to the next meeting or contact the chair, Fiona Edwards-Smith via fiona@endrickit.com

The parent council will next meet in the Strathendrick Suite from 7pm on 3rd November.



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Creative Writing Club Celebrates 10 years



Our Creative writing club celebrated 10 years. The group celebrated with minion cakes!

Author, Moira McPartlin Visits Balfion High School, by Jamie Cushing 3E2

Recently we had a visit from a successful author. Her name was Moira McPartlin and she came to do a creative workshop with the group. She began telling us about many different techniques such as always bringing a notebook to jot down ideas on and to listen into people's conversations, as that is often where you get the best stories. She then went on to teach us how to make generic, boring events sound interesting and how to observe our surroundings carefully as you never know, you might end up writing about it. Towards the end of the workshop we were given 10 minutes to write about our journey to school. There were many funny stories shared with the group. I found that it helped me remember details that I thought I'd forgotten. The workshop was interesting and informative. The creative writers would like to thank Mrs McPartlin for visiting us.





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FE/HE Information Evening



On the 2nd September, we were delighted to invite parents and senior pupils to get advice on applying to universities and colleges. Parents got a presentation from Sally Nicolson (Strathclyde University admissions) on the UCAS process, personal statements, university life and Mrs Patrick shared the school deadlines and support that pupils are being offered. It was great to have representation from many colleges and universities keen to encourage our young people to apply to study with them!



Preparing for National Qualifications

At the first S4 Assembly of the year, new S5 students Kirsty McArthur, Jamie Wastling and Grace Currie delivered an assembly with some excellent tips on how to maximise success in S4. The new S5 shared their experiences in a fantastic Prezi, along with some great advice on organising time, methods of study, dealing with exams and finding time for yourself.

We hope that our new S4s found the input useful. More practical support from Live and Learn will be coming to S4, S5 and parents soon!

Our Senior pupils have access to a huge range of national 5/Higher and Advanced Higher learning materials through **Scholar**.

Mrs Convery led an assembly with presentations from Mike Falconer from the Scholar team who outlined the benefits of using Scholar to increase attainment.

Developing the Young Workforce

Trip for Pupils Interested in the Medical Sector, by Mathew Hoyle, 6L2

Leaving the school at 8am in the morning, we drove to the University of West of Scotland campus in Hamilton to attend an event held by NHS Blood and Transplant. We were greeted by an opening lecture held by the Head Paediatric Nurse. She explained to us why she chose paediatric nursing over general nursing and talked about other possible careers in paediatrics.

After this we split into groups and were sent into different sessions with other medical professionals. These included A&E, pathology, renal transplant and the ethical issues surrounding it, intensive care and a talk from a theatre practitioner about proper hand washing technique and how to put on scrubs properly.

In the afternoon, we had some time to kill so we headed over to the Science Centre to explore the exhibits. After this Mrs Patrick drove us over to the Beatson Institute, next to Gartnavel Hospital. One of the main functions of the Beatson is to trial new and revolutionary cancer drugs, so we were told how procedure is undertaken and reflected on



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the physical and mental implications. We were also given a tour of the Institute and allowed to see the wards and different instruments used to find, diagnose and treat cancer.

All in all the excursion was extremely helpful in detailing what a career in the medical sector would entail. Our thanks to Mrs Patrick for organising it!





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Stirling Local Employability Partnership Annual Conference

Four Senior Prefects joined Mrs Patrick at the SLE Annual Conference in Forth Valley College Campus on September 7th. We joined a number of workshops where we had the opportunity to discuss apprenticeships, volunteering and Higher Education with local employers.





S4 Work Experience Training



All S4 pupils took part in a pre-work experience training event on 10th September. They learned about the benefits of work experience from S5 pupils and Mrs Patrick reminded everyone of the basic arrangements for lunch, illness etc.



Mrs McNellis summarised the requirements of the log book and the importance of getting a supervisor's report before Julie Bundy from Recyke-a-bike shared employers' expectations with our young people.

Lorna Robb from Fraser C Robb then gave a practical demonstration, with the help of Aisha on risk assessment and health and safety in the workplace. Mrs Patrick finished the training with information about post work experience tasks in PSE to complete the SQA unit.



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ConneXions Course, by Mrs Smith



Our polytunnel and related ConneXions course are both progressing well with our young people learning skills of sowing, potting, planting and plant care.

Our tomatoes, herbs, salads, potatoes, peppers, aubergines and strawberries have been doing well and the pupils have been cooking with the produce in Home Economics. They are also learning about plant growth in Biology and are carrying out experiments on light and soil Ph. The group have also been building workstations, raised beds and making hand trowels in technology.

The pumpkin patch outing to Arn Prior Farm was a great success and the pupils hope to return soon to pick a pumpkin to use in some exciting pumpkin recipes. Future trips that we are looking forward to include a visit to the Botanic Gardens in Glasgow and a visit to Foragers near Drymen.

Future polytunnel activities will include planting out our home grown kale and spinach seedlings and garlic from Nairn. We are also involved in a Royal Horticultural Society project to plant and monitor rocket seeds which are currently orbiting planet earth. Rocket in a rocket! This is part of a nation wide project investigating the effects of weightlessness on the seeds. We can't wait!

The ConneXions course is planned around making curricular connections, making the connections between what we eat and how it grows, connections with local producers and related businesses and also connections with the environment in relation to low carbon activity, up-cycling to reduce waste and the consumers' connections to local produce and sustainability. All of this is done in partnership with our own Eco-Schools group and Bellrock, who manage the campus facilities, including the kitchen.



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Freshers' Fayre August 2015



Nick and Leah along with Neil Thomson signed pupils up for after school sport and activity.

There is something on every single day after school!

Delighted to welcome Graeme Knox who is leading an after school bridge club with the support of our librarian, Mrs O'Donnell.

40 pupils signed up and we have seen a regular 11 so far.

This club runs on a Wednesday after school.



S6 pupil Lois Miller is leading the Astronomy Club this year.

This club runs on a Tuesday at 1:10pm in C15.

Isaac and Sian were the ambassadors for the Creative Writing Club.

This club runs on a Thursday after school in the library.





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Anna and Duncan were encouraging our rugby players of the future to sign up to join our partnership club run by Balfion Strathendrick.

Boys rugby training runs on Monday after school. Girls rugby runs on a Thursday after school.

We are delighted to see the BHS Junk Kouture and Snapdragon paper Crafts club included in the Fayre.

This club runs on a Thursday lunchtime from 1:15pm



New member of the teaching staff, Miss Collins along with Mrs Layden and Miss Doran have been running this year's science club. Pupils have been enjoying with many exciting experiments. This club runs on a Wednesday at 1:10pm in Science.

And who can forget about the highly competitive inter-house lunchtime programme???

Something for everyone from sport to countdown to the BHS bake off!

These run Tuesday-Thursday





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STV Appeal



Thanks to the determination and leadership of Callum Cummine in 3L3, his whole Form Class along with Miss Murray have organised a number of events to raise money for the STV Appeal. It was fantastic to have STV crew filming our *Teacher Take Me Out* event.

STV Ambassadors were appointed to join the organising team Pupils from S2-6 have been taking a lead. These Balfon High Ambassadors used their skills to talk teachers into participating in the *Take Me Out* event!



Mrs Shaw, dressed as Paddy McGuinness hosted the lunchtime event and in no time the theatre was full!

Thanks to Mr Perman, one of our PE probationers for stepping into the limelight and being a great sport. In the end he chose Miss Roscoe after loads of entertaining and cheesy jokes from all involved. This event raised £200 for the STV appeal. If you would like to contribute to the cause along with us, you can text BHSF85 along with the amount to 700700.

Look out for clips of our event on the STV appeal show in October!





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Sports Ambassadors



At the end of last session Niamh Doyle and Angus Brownlie were elected as Young Sports Ambassadors. They join a strong team of Nick North, Leah Taylor, Rory Teed and Emily Watson. The team will work hard this year with Neil Thomson, from Active Stirling. Among other things they will run the Sports Councils and report back to the Health team to help improve the opportunities for the young people to take part in an active and healthy lifestyle.

They attended the Young Ambassador conference in Perth and met with other Young Ambassadors and elite athletes. Niamh said, "We've come back with lots of ideas and started planning how we are going to make them happen."

Mr Macquarrie and Mrs Fisher were invited to speak at the conference by Sportscotland. They highlighted the opportunities that the young people in Balfron High have to be leaders. From joining the Sports Council, S3/4 and S6 Sports Leadership, House Captain, coaching teams and captaining teams there is something for everyone. It was a real honour for the school to be asked to share what we do and try to support other schools in providing the same opportunities.



Balftron Highlights

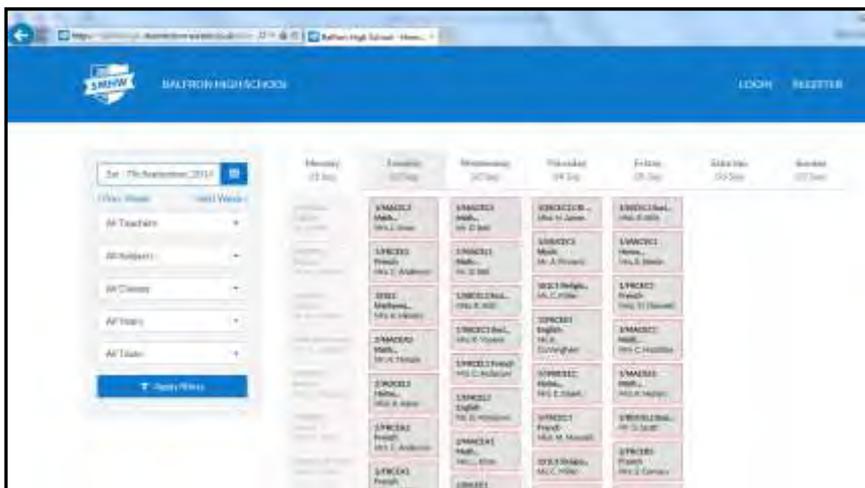
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Show my homework

<https://balftronhigh.showmyhomework.co.uk>

With the support of the Parent Council and Balftron High School Trust, last year we have invested in a web-based homework recording website.

Some parents have shared frustration around being unsure what their child's homework is or when investigation deadlines and assessments are scheduled. Equally teaching staff have been frustrated around pupils forgetting homework and deadlines. We hope that this will provide a solution for everyone.



yeargroup.

There is no need for a password to access the information. Parents and carers can simply click on the link from our school website or search for 'showmyhomeworkbalftron'. You will have immediate access to the tasks issued.

The screenshot shows the layout of information. You can filter by class, subject or

Bridge Club Underway!



S1&2 pupils have been developing their Contract Bridge skills and strategies under the skilled instruction of Bridge Master Mr. Graeme Knox of Stirling and Union Bridge Club. Competition between the pairs is very strong! Mr Knox visits the school every Wednesday afternoon as a volunteer, to tutor our pupils in what he calls "the best card game in the world".

Pictured: Benjamin Gardner, Sam Shiell and Carlos Casteel



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Leadership Training with Outward Bound



Our Head Prefects, House Captains and Senior Prefects were invited to take part in a leadership training event run by the Outward Bound. XXX S6 pupils participated along with Depute Head Teachers in charge of each of our three Houses.

Cal Clark, depute Head Boy shares his experience.

The Outward Bound weekend was a weekend well spent. With great staff, fun activities and a strong positive vibe from everyone involved, I was able to take tonnes of experiences out of the weekend.

The idea behind the weekend was to bring the senior prefects all a bit closer. To prove this was exceeded I am proud to state my deep personal connection with my clan, clan Gordon. (all prefects involved were put into random clans for the weekend). Through all sorts of team building exercises the clan grew close within the first day. The next few days of tasks simply strengthened this sense of companionship.



Balfour Highlights

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A brilliant example of clan Gordon's interpersonal strength that was gained was made clear to our instructor, Amy, when it was our clan up for the flying fox. After a Gordonite flew down the zipline, it was required that they be caught, moved into position, lowered using a hook, positioned on a ladder, and then unclipped and safely vacated of the harness. This sounds both confusing and dangerous when I am describing it now... But it would appear neither of these things when watching clan Gordon in action. Hours of team building led us to be one fluid motion of F1 pit stop level organisation and co-ordination. "I have never seen anything so impressive" were the spellbound words used by Amy when describing our flying fox performance.

I know that the lessons learnt and the experiences gained from the Outward Bound weekend will have an effect on my time back in school. For example, I was lucky to have Ciaran, Head Boy, in my clan, because as deputy Head Boy it is vital that he and I have a close bond to work efficiently together. After both experiencing together the icy embrace of loch Eil, the swamping mud clinging to our overalls, the strain of pulling and pushing one another up walls and rock faces, but most of all sharing the same toilet as three other teenage boys, I feel he is like a brother in arms. I mean after all that stuff organising prom, parents' evenings, assemblies and pupil council meetings couldn't be that hard, right?

The key value that the Outward Bound weekend ensured we all had by the end of the two and a half days was the ability to work in a team. Not in a football team with your mates, but a team of people, possibly with differences, coming together to accomplish a common goal. This is a value I now have and one that will aid my time in both school, and later in life.





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Prefects 2015



Well done Jessica and Veronica (above) who were nominated Lomond's Prefects of the Week for excellent commitment to duties!

It turns out that being a prefect is not the most glamorous job in the world but certainly one that positively influences the spirit and tone of our community.

Thanks to all prefects for their input so far – you're doing a great job!





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Sports Leadership



The S6 Sports Leadership classes had a busy start to the school year! In preparation for primary school delivery after the October break they have participated in a number of coaching courses including Positive Coaching Scotland training, Pre-School Fundamentals, Football Fundamentals and Multi-Sport Fundamentals. All courses are designed to provide ideas for successful physical activity and sport lessons for many of our local primary school pupils. S6 pupil Callum Clark said, "Sports Leadership is a great opportunity to learn a wide variety of skills which could be used for both personal and work placed development. I am really enjoying it so far."



Balfroon Highlights

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Sports Round Up



The new year has started very strongly, after a successful Fresher's Fayre organised by Mrs Fisher we have more pupils than ever taking part in extra-curricular physical activity.

There are a huge variety of clubs on offer. New clubs include Running club, table tennis and boxing. The new Rowing club have joined the Scottish Schools Indoor Rowing League, with 4 Scottish Champions in the school we are sure they will do very well. The American Football team is benefiting from the expert coaching of parent coach Mr Price and is going from strength to strength, with a number of the players pushing to represent their country. The competitive leagues are starting but we also have fitness sessions and swim sessions for the less competitive pupils.

We are always looking to improve and expand our opportunities for the pupils. If you could support any of our clubs or could run a new club please contact Mr Macquarrie at the school macquarrien01s@stirling.gov.uk



Balfrom Highlights

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Scottish Athletics Success



There were some fantastic performances by our young athletes in the Scottish Age-group Championships at the weekend. Briagha Cook (left) won the gold medal in the hurdles, and the bronze medal in the long jump.

Matthew Meredith won gold in pole vault, and Matt Chandler took silver in high jump and bronze in hurdles. Emily Watson won the silver medal in the 200m in the Scottish Athletics age- group championships (all below far left). Anna Cameron (below middle) narrowly missed out on medals, coming 4th in the long jump and 5th in 100m. Congratulations to all who competed.



Congratulations to Aidan Grevemburg (above right) who won both javelin and shot putt at the Youth Development League finals at Meadowbank.



Scottish Rowing Success

Congratulations to Martha Coombes and Lily Young who competed in the British and Scottish Rowing Championships during the summer holidays. They won the Scottish J13 double sculls, the schools double sculls and gained second in the J14 doubles. In the cox quad Lucy Steel, Alex Clark, Innes Dunlop, Martha Coombes and Lily Young won the J13 Scottish Championships.



Balfon Highlights

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Balfon High School Inter-House Programme



Inter House has started very strongly this year. The new House Captains and Junior House Captains have done a great job of motivating and encouraging as many people to take part as possible and there have been great matches of Hockey and Football.

RESULTS

The S1's made their first contribution to the House competition at their transition festival in June and Sports Day was a huge success with Endrick House winning overall.

For the latest information why not follow the House Twitter feeds

@balfonlmond

@balfonendrick

@balfoncampsie

The next major event is the Swim Gala at the end of term with the Basketball and Rugby to come next term.





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Partnership with Strathendrick RFUC



This year Balfion and Strathendrick Rugby have formed a partnership with the SRU to provide an even more extensive rugby programme than usual. As well as the local and national cups we are in a league set-up with schools from Central region. These matches are played mid-week and so far we have recorded wins against Larbert High and Falkirk High. Funding from the SRU has enabled us to organise this programme and we thank them for this.



Strathendrick Rugby coaches are supporting weekend fixtures and thanks must go to Jeremy Pemberton-Pigott, Gary Heron and Bruce Duncan who have supported the teams with coaching both during the week and at weekends. Alison Ross has also completed a very full fixture list for the teams.

Balfion/Strathendrick rugby is a strong position with regularly 70 pupils at training on a Monday night. If any other pupils would like to join the club they are more than welcome.



Balfroun Highlights

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Balfroun High V McLaren High

Our U18 football squad have made a great start to the new season with a 1-0 win against McLaren High School.

Dates for your Diary

21 September	Senior Phase Information Evening
24 September	Duke of Edinburgh Launch (S3)
25 September	Jeans for Genes (£1 donation, jeans + uniform!)
28 Sept- 2 October	S1 Form Class Leader Interviews
29 Sept - 6 October	Book Fayre (library)
5 October	P6/7 Introductory open afternoon
3 November	Parent Council, 7pm, Strathendrick Suite

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