



Balfron Highlights

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S2/3 visit New York, Kim Denton and Erin Currie

May 2016:

NY Trip

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Shannon Park's photograph (above) captures the sombre mood of the group at the 9/11 Memorial.

On Tuesday the 1st of March 2016, 51 Balfron High pupils jetted off on the trip of a lifetime. A jam packed five day itinerary was planned almost two years in advance, therefore the excitement had been building for a long time and the pupils, and five teachers (Mrs Mackay, Ms Bannatyne, Miss Maxwell, Mr Lucas and Mr Davidson) were delirious, from their excitement and our early start! A few tears were shed on the morning of the departure, as parents waved off 51 beloved, blue clad pupils at Glasgow Airport. Excitement was building, and despite a long seven-hour flight, the group was ecstatic as they touched down in the U.S.A. After dropping off our bags in our accommodation for the week (Upper West Side YMCA), we set off for our first wander around The Big Apple. On our short walk to Columbus Circle for our first subway experience,





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we passed the much talked about Trump Towers. The gleaming gold building towered over Central Park, leaving us in awe and a little disdain as we continued on to the subway. After a short yet shaky journey we arrived at the financial district where we saw the stock exchange buildings before walking across to see the striking views of the harbour. We then continued up to the infamous Times Square for dinner at the equally famous Hard Rock Cafe. A very tired bunch of pupils ventured to the shops around Times Square before heading back, to bed for early six thirty start the next day.



Breakfast at Old John's Luncheonette was a short and scenic ten minute stroll before for our trip to Liberty Island. After what felt like another trip through airport security, we got on the ferry for a slightly breezy journey to the island. We were left to explore at our leisure and got some amazing photos with Lady Liberty herself. After a quick lunch break we continued on for a moving walk around the 9/11 memorial gardens. We all felt very emotional after seeing the names of the thousands who lost their lives in the horrendous attacks. We solemnly continued into the museum for a harrowing tour. It was an unforgettable

experience and we all left with great respect and knowledge off the events. We then went for dinner at Bubba Gumps in Times Square before hopping onto the subway for a quick one stop journey to Broadway. The whole group really enjoyed the much anticipated 'Wicked' and it was amazing to see such an old and famous building.



The next day we met with our tour guides, before our three hour tour of Brooklyn Bridge, The Highline and Chelsea Market. During our tour we walked past the famous site of Moore Mansion where Clement Clarke Moore wrote the famous poem 'A visit from Saint Nicholas' as a gift for his children. The walk along the Highline (derelict rail tracks turned into a garden path) was a walk with a view and the Oreo hot chocolate from Chelsea Market was quite possibly one of the best things we've ever tasted! Next was a spectacular walk over



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Brooklyn Bridge finished by lunch at Grimaldi's where the pizzas were so big we're sure a large one would have served the whole group! After a large lunch we continued on to probably the most anticipated part of the trip - ice skating in Central Park. This was definitely the highlight of the trip for many of us, it really was an experience of a lifetime although a great number of us came back with soggy clothes! Our third meal of the trip was at famous Planet Hollywood we had a fantastic meal which ended with a little song and dance for the pleasure of the other guests also enjoying their meals. The night was finished off with a trip up possibly the most iconic building in the whole of New York, The Empire State Building. The experience was so awe-inspiring that the school may be empty sooner than expected and the New York population may go up!



Our last full day's itinerary was jam packed. A small group of us started the day with a run in snowy Central Park. It was such a great experience and we all thought we'd be a lot fitter if we lived in New York! After yet another early breakfast at Old Johns we felt like we had just stepped into the movies as we entered the Natural History Museum, despite not seeing any talking statues or dancing dinosaurs we all had a great time and learned loads about different animals and cultures from around the world. After jumping onto the subway and arriving at the Rockefeller Centre we had a stop for lunch, some people returning with ice creams the size of their heads, our excuse - your only in New York once! After taking a lift up 70 floors in 48 seconds we had a dance in their famous 'Magic Room' we then went out and experienced the





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breath taking views in the daylight. After the speedy journey back down we walked to 5th Avenue and a few of us set off to splash the cash! After a couple of hours we went for our final dinner in New York and it was a fabulous one to end on. The group then waddled back home, sad to be saying good bye to New York on the last night.

On the final morning we had our last breakfast at Old Johns Luncheonette, there were many sad faces as we left the diner for the final time. Spirits were raised though when we arrived at Woodbury Common Mall and mementos and gifts were purchased along with a few luxuries we probably didn't need! We spent our last few hours in America in Newark airport trying to distract ourselves from the fact that we would soon be back in drizzly Scotland. Everyone was happy to see their friends and family whilst trying to keep their eyes open.

We really did have the most unforgettable and amazing time and we're sure New York will be seeing all of us again very soon.



Balfron Highlights, May 2016





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More pictures can be seen on our twitter feed @BalfronHigh_NYC



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Headlines

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am pleased to share with you some of the activities and highlights of the last few months. It was my intention to have this to you earlier but as you are well aware, our situation changed and my focus was needed elsewhere. However, I am really pleased that all is going to plan with the repair of our building. On a personal level, thank you so much for the messages of support throughout the last few weeks – they have been really very much appreciated by all of us. Our focus is now on bringing our whole school back together on 6th June.

Putting this edition of Highlights together has been a fantastic reminder of the great activities and experiences that we offer our young people and while we have done well to keep many things going as normal over the last few weeks, it will be great to get back to full capacity. Work will progress over the holidays to ensure that the campus is fully available for August.

There will be some staffing changes for next session that I would like to bring to your attention. Mr Finnerty is leaving us for early retirement after 25 years of service to Balfon High as Principal Teacher Creative Arts. I would like to thank him for his valued contribution over that time as a curricular leader, for his contribution to extra-curricular music and school shows, in addition to heading up of Campsie 3. Ms Cunningham also leaves us for retirement this term. Ms Cunningham has been an English Teacher at Balfon High School since April 1977 and has made a massive contribution to English and Lomond 1 in this time. We wish them both health and happiness in the future.

I have appointed Mrs Volley to Modern Languages and Mr Sharp to Computing for next session. They will both join us in August.

It is always sad to see a year group move on and this year was no exception. Our S6 pupils graduated last month. They have been an absolute credit to us and I wish them well. It is with great pride that we watch them grow into confident and effective young adults. I am sure that they will succeed in their chosen fields.

Now we look forward to welcoming a new S1. Although the transition will be shorter than planned we are really looking forward to having our P7s with us on Wednesday 8th June.

As always, thank you for your support of our school.

Head Teacher





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Question time at Balfon High School, Mr Kenny



March saw Balfon High School's first ever 'Question Time' event, which was run by senior students of Social Subjects and guided by Modern Studies teacher Mr Kenny. This was held shortly before the Scottish Parliamentary election in early May 2016 and the main aim was to encourage our young people (many have now become of voting age since the recent change to 16 in Scotland) to embrace their new-found right to vote and seek answers to questions from those candidates who had put themselves forward for election, and also from seasoned campaigners with experience of the Scottish political system. The panel included a broad range of political affiliations across the main Scottish spectrum, including Bruce Crawford MSP, Thomas Docherty, Jenni Gunn, Emily St. Denny, Elisabeth Wilson, Martin Laidlaw and Dennis Canavan. The questions and issues raised to the panel were mainly all from



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the Balfon students in the audience, and the running of the event was fronted by Balfon pupils also, including chairperson Tom Morley, who did a fantastic job of managing the panel and audience. There were also many other students involved in ushering, filming and other technology-based roles, so the whole event was fantastic in developing transferable skills in a live situation. Many senior phase students attended and engaged with the debate, as well as fellow colleagues and parents from the local community. The event was fantastic and received a plethora of positive feedback from students, staff, parents and panelists alike.



Young scientists, Miss Roscoe

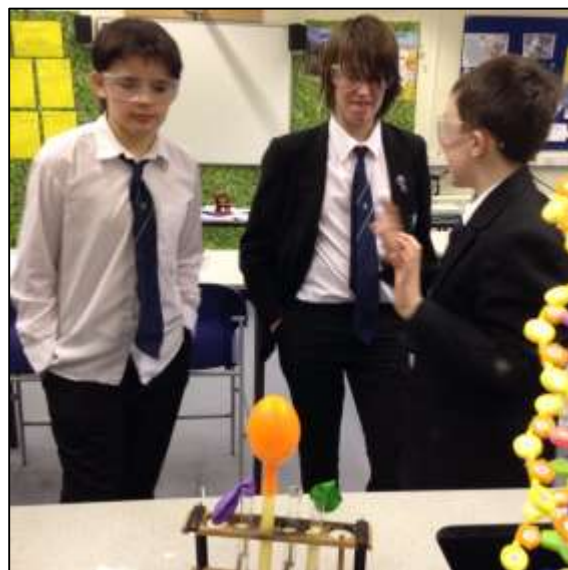
Part of the learning experience in the National 5 Biology and Higher Human Biology courses involve studying the structure and function of the cardiac system. Arteries, veins and valves are not quite the same on paper as in real life!

Our lucky young people got a hands on experience with dissecting pig hearts in class; appreciating what these structures look and feel like and where they are located.

Many thanks to Skinners of Kippen for donating the hearts for our educational benefit.

The Science Club

The science club have been busy investigating how sherbet sweets would react with vinegar and managed to inflate balloons with carbon dioxide!





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The final session of the club saw our young people exploring the science of food. They examined herbs under the microscope.



The club even managed to snap a photo down the microscope of the cells of a bay leaf!

For more pics follow our twitter feed @BalfronSciClub



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The Owen Britton Senior Debating Competition, Mrs Slavin



It was with very mixed emotions that we held the inaugural Owen Britton Debating Competition on Thursday 21st April. Owen was a stalwart of the Debating Club and it was emotional to watch four of his friends compete for a trophy in his honour. However, all present agreed that it would be preferable to not need to have the competition because Owen was still with us.

The motion chosen was one that Owen would have debated most enthusiastically and persuasively, "This house believes Intelligence is Genetic." Elliot Fisher and Andrew Main were the formidable proposition who eloquently weaved science and logic into a persuasive argument. Ultimately, they were outclassed by Tom Morley and Liam Cassidy's passionate blend of humour, hope and questioning of science. The opposition won the team prize of some mint imperials (a sweet which was synonymous with Owen) as did Jessica McGinn of S1 who asked the best question from the floor, which began with the words, "I am a twin..." Thus directly challenging many arguments from each team.

The Owen Britton trophy for best debater was won by Tom Morley, unanimously. Tom's speech was an exceedingly persuasive blend of evidence, wit and probing questioning of the proposition's arguments. However, Tom's debating style effected a warm, likeable persona which was used most effectively to strike at the heart of their key arguments in such a friendly way it almost went undetected.

All four debaters should be proud of the way they have served their friend's memory; it was a very difficult challenge to keep a rein on emotions and memories of Owen during this time when his presence was keenly felt. Yet they did, with aplomb, and debated to a standard the judges said was "astonishingly good for a school debate."



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Future Pathways Apprenticeship Event, Mrs Patrick



All S3-6 pupils had the opportunity to learn about the various apprenticeships available as a potential future pathway at the Apprenticeship Event held in Balforn High School on 30th March 2016. Each year group started the event with a presentation from Mrs Patrick about the types of apprenticeships available, sources of information about apprenticeship opportunities and advice to help people applying to an apprenticeship. Mrs Crawford from Skills Development Scotland then shared interesting facts and information about modern apprenticeships.

After the presentation all pupils then had the opportunity to spend time at the stalls in the atrium where they were able to speak to a range of apprenticeship providers and current apprentices from a variety of career areas from Financial Services to Hospitality. For more information about the day please see the Future Pathways website at -

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/st/futurepathways/options-post-school/apprenticeship/why-do-an-apprenticeship/>





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Youth Advantage Outreach, Mr Campbell



On Monday 18th April, after the end of the Spring break, Daniel Taylor and Cameron Davies (S4) travelled with Mr Campbell to Wallace High School to embark on a one-week residential with the army. At Wallace High we met up with over 20 other pupils and staff from schools across Stirling and Clackmannanshire and got the bus to our base, which was Barry Buddon army barracks near Carnoustie.

The Youth Advantage Outreach is run by the British Army and provides young people with an opportunity to experience life within an army base, where they can learn new skills and develop personal qualities. Upon arrival, the pupils met the soldiers they would be working with for the week. After a brief introduction and explanation of rules, the pupils were sent to complete the 1.5 mile run, commonly used as a fitness test for the army, which was certainly a shock to the system for some. After this they were issued with their kit and army life had begun!

During the rest of the week the young people took part in a range of activities. These included adventure activities like raft building, abseiling and laser clay-pigeon shooting. The group was also



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taught how to read maps and had a demonstration of a fire engine from the fire brigade, as well as doing the army assault course and other team building activities. The week was busy and strenuous, discipline was tight and mornings were early, however, everyone came to the end of the week tired, but having enjoyed the experience.

The week finished with a full day outside on Thursday, sleeping in tents overnight and then returning inside on Friday morning. This was a highlight of the trip for many. The young people were divided into teams and had lessons on how to set up camp outdoors, exactly as would happen when the soldiers are serving on tour. They then learned and practiced how to move as a group, either to look for others, or to avoid being seen. When night-time came, the teams had a task – they needed to find some items in a field, while avoiding the soldiers who were there to find and capture them. After a tense night which involved at least a mile of crawling on elbows and knees, everyone was tired enough to sleep (for about 4 hours) in their makeshift tent.

Overall the week was a rewarding and enjoyable experience and Daniel, Cameron and myself can all recommend it to others in the future. Thanks to Mrs Patrick for co-ordinating the Balfron part of the group!





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Working with St Modan's, Stirling and Wallace High Schools

Our colleagues at our partner schools could not have been more helpful and welcoming when news of our pending displacement reached them. Working with staff and pupils at the three schools, we have done our best to ensure that learning continues as normal and we make the very most of the new adventure.

Our days start and end with the journeys which have turned out to be more tiring than anticipated. The buses are organised with military precision and Ms Bannatyne is delighted as suddenly we have no late-coming!

Everyone in our community has pulled together to make the very best of our situation. We have been really well supported by Bellrock, Stirling Council and the three schools are we grateful for their efforts.





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Lomond House at Wallace High School





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Endrick House at St Modan's High School





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Campsie House at Stirling High School





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Swiss Alps Trip



A group of adventurous S3 pupils and four of our staff, Mrs Youens, Mrs Ellis, Mr Cameron and Mr Brown, have been out exploring the geography of Switzerland. During the field pupils studied the topics of glaciation and settlement studies - a great lead into National Qualification level.

Our group arrived safely on Monday and got straight to work with a settlement study. Only then the group enjoyed some down time in the form of a quiz. Weather forecast- very snowy!

Day two, the group enjoyed visits to the infamous cheese and chocolate factories. They are pictured at la Maison du Gruyere. Everyone say 'cheese'! They have all learned about the reasons behind Switzerland's prime location for cheese manufacturing.

Wednesday included a trip to the Bex salt mine in the morning. Pupils got a feel of what it was like to mine by hand and experienced a trip on a mini train 2.5km into the mountain. We look forward to catching up on the rest of the adventures next week. Enjoyed the chocolate factory- especially all the free samples! Everyone say 'Chocolate'!



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Switzerland Trip, Pippa Cowtan 3L1

Day 1 – Choc and Cheese

We started our first full day by going to the cheese factory in Gruyere. We were given a packet with three different ages of cheese in it, 6 months, 8 months and 10 months. We had an audio guide round the factory where we could look down on it and see the cheese being made. At the end we all tried the cheese and concluded that 8 and 10 months were everyone's favourites.

We then continued on to the chocolate factory, Cailler. After a long time getting photos taken we eventually went. It was a sound and light tour with a different setting and room for each part of the story about how chocolate was discovered and then produced. After that we went into the tasting room. Here we could eat an unlimited amount of chocolate. Needless to say, most of us spent quite a while in this room. We then all bought some chocolate for friends and family (and some for ourselves of course)



Switzerland Trip by Kim Denton, 3L1

The Bex Salt Mine was an amazing experience. For some people it was a bit of a challenge as a trip through a small tunnel took us to the main information and tour area. After this we continued our day at the aquapark. We all really enjoyed the lazy river and slides as well – some taking a brave trip to the boosterloop!

We took an amazing walk up the Trient Glacier and some people had a walk in the VERY cold river. After our walk back we had some free time in Chamonix. We all found an amazing ice-cream parlour which was a lovely way to cool down. We took a 15 minute train journey up to the top to see the mer de glace and saw some amazing crystals formed in the mountain. After returning to Chamonix we then went to one of the most anticipated parts of the trip – the hot springs. The hours flew past as we enjoyed relaxing in the indoor and two outdoor pools and the not so lazy river.



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After a good night sleep, we prepared for the journey home after a walk to Lac Lioson. The rough yet scenic walk was more than worth it for the stunning lake at the top. It was definitely a perfect way to finish off our trip. We all had an amazing time and we want to say thank you to the teachers for making it an amazing experience.

You can view more pictures from this trip on our twitter feed @balfron_Swiz

S6 Leavers' Day

It is always sad to see our S6 go and this year was no exception. It was great to get them all together in the morning for some fun and games. They formed a long conga and danced their way through and out the school. The graduation in the evening was fantastic. We wish all of our S6 the very best in their chosen fields.





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Great to host Primary 7 pupils in our Library, Mrs O'Donnell



Killearn Primary 7 pupils showed themselves to be eager learners, developing research skills in the Balfon High School library.



Killearn Primary FPs were delighted to catch up with their P7 teacher Mrs McLean.



Between February and May, 117 enthusiastic primary 7 pupils from the eight primary schools in our catchment visited the school library with their class to do some research, talk about recognising and avoiding plagiarism, and the format of bibliographic information for a range of information resources. The class visits were between 1.5 and 2 hours, and also provided the pupils with opportunities to ask question about the library services and routines, the school day and extra-curricular activities. Most pupils enjoyed seeing former primary school classmates passing by the bridge during intervals. Many BHS pupils stopped in during break to say hello to their former teachers. Keen interest was shown by all primary 7 visitors on how the lines worked in the Atrium during morning break and lunch!



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Primary Visits



Balfon and Drymen Primary Schools visited in February and appeared in the previous Highlights!

We look forward to having P7 with us on Wednesday 8th June.



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Library Update

Miss Collins' class made great use of the library at form class time to mark and celebrate World Book Day.



Seniors make great use of the study resources available (above).

Sometimes you just want to find a quiet place to finish your book (left)!



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S4 Pupils Take on the Escape Rooms, Mrs Gannon



On Tuesday 24th May the Mathematics Department took 8 S4 pupils to the 'Escape Rooms' in Glasgow for a day of team work and logic thinking,

In two teams they ventured into the 'Riddler' room and the 'Zombie' room and with 60 minutes on the clock each team had to solve the puzzles, riddles and brain teasers. The goal was simple – GET OUT IN TIME.

This mind bending challenge tested their logic and problem solving skills and most importantly TEAM WORK.

In the final room all 8 pupils worked together to steal the diamonds from the bank vault within the hour and with only seconds to spare it was mission accomplished!

Pupils had a fantastic and enjoyable day, learning in a different environment.



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Ms Bannatyne visits each of our associated primary schools



In April I was joined by S5 pupils when I visited each of our associated primary schools. The S5 were former pupils of the primary school and had a good memory of what it is like to move from that primary school to Balfron High. It is always fantastic to meet the Primary 7 pupils who genuinely seem excited, and some a little nervous, about joining us at Balfron High School. We spent time talking about the transition and many of the operational aspects that they are keen to understand. It was great to have S5 pupils with me as they are able to reflect on their own experience and allay any fears that the younger pupils have. The main things tended to be around buses and finding their way around the school! Prefects will be on hand to help at the induction and the first days of the August term. We are all looking forward to welcoming our new S1.

Pi Day



Our Pi Day Celebrations which took place at Balfron High School managed to raise a total of £317.17 for home area C2's charity SANDS - well done and thanks to all who helped out!



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Learning For Sustainability & our ConneXions Course



This year we are concentrating on flavour and colour with our crops.

Pupils have been really busy planting salad and herb seeds and planting out tomatoes, purple sprouting broccoli, red cabbage, onions, peas, beans, sweet corn, spinach, pumpkins, mini cucumber, peppers, strawberries and a cape gooseberry. We've still to find a place for the carrots and pink fir apple potatoes!

This all involves a great deal of watering! Local Balfon volunteers would be most welcome.



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Pupils have also learned how to stake tomatoes and net peas. They will use the produce they grow to try out exciting recipes and will also sell surplus to buy next year's seeds and plants. Growing and eating fruit and vegetables in season is an important part of the course. We are also awaiting the arrival of some blueberry plants in June.

We are planning a trip to the Royal Highland Show in June to learn more about locally grown produce and where our food comes from. It is important that pupils make the connection with what they eat and how, where and when it is grown.

We will be feeding some of our tomato plants with molasses this season to see if it increases sweetness in the tomatoes.

We are looking forward to the visit from our fellow gardeners from France as they pop in to visit our polytunnel on 22 June. Hopefully we will have lots to show them.

We are looking forward to starting the new session with new pupils and welcome the return of 2 of last year's pupils as mentors to the new group.



Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver Award Recipients



Well done to everyone presented with their Duke of Edinburgh Award last month. A huge thank you to the Balfon Award Group, led by Neil Metcalfe, who run this for our young people. Certificates have been sent out to those pupils unable to attend the ceremony.



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Pupil Voice – Pupil views help shape our new Improvement Plan



Recent pupil council meetings focused on gathering the pupil view on what our focus for improvement should be next session. Pupil council reps reflected on our progress in the big Scottish government priorities and how we could improve further. There was interesting discussion around raising attainment, the importance of literacy and numeracy and how it could be further improved, employability skills and curricular opportunities to support those skills.



Our two lead learners, Grace and Euan, who have been working with peers from schools across Stirling, led focus groups. We were keen to ensure that everyone had a say, so in addition to the pupil council input, focus groups were put together randomly to discuss some of the emerging issues.

The good work of the literacy champions was recognised and there were some interesting discussions around the amount of homework our young people get. Our younger pupils are also keen to have a clear idea of their working levels – so watch out for the new plan and developments in these areas!





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Pupil Voice – Visit to McLaren



The final visit of the schools partnership took place at McLaren High School. Here young people and staff joined peers from Larbert High School. They shared good teaching practice and young people followed McLaren High School timetables. Look out for the short film that we are making about the experience!

Looking back at the Easter Services



Well done to our young people who participated and performed in the Easter services. They did a fantastic job. A special thank you to our chaplaincy team for given us their time at the end of last term.



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S3 Masterclasses

We managed just one week of the S3 Masterclasses but even in a short time, S3 pupils got a taste of some great courses developed and improved some skills. Pupils had the opportunity to do animal behaviour, comic graphic art, computer design, debating, digital photography, drama, fitness, golf, Italian cookery, mosaic art, cycling (mud, sweat and gears), primary French, running, sports leadership, sports science and the apprentice (chemistry). We managed to get a few pictures.





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John Muir Masterclass, Mr Youens



The John Muir group have been over to the island of Inchcailloch to assess the health of the woodland using Citizen Science survey packs. In Balmaha the group have filled the red squirrel feed boxes and learnt about attempts to protect the species. At Glen Finglas they learnt about the work of the Woodland Trust and acted out scenarios about conflicts that can take place in the National Park. They also visited the RSPB centre at the Lodge to learn about Ospreys. For the conservation part of the award they moved four tons of gravel and rocks up Ben Lomond which will be used for footpath maintenance over the next 15 years and filled six bin liners with rubbish from the shores of Loch Lomond. In their final session outside they visited a hill sheep farm in Luss and a dairy farm near Balfron to try and get a better understanding of how two different farming systems work. They also carried out a questionnaire on tourism at Lomond Shores. This week they will be educating their parents and P4 pupils at Balfron Primary School about the John Muir Award. The group have worked extremely hard and have been a credit to the school.





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S4 Use BBC micro:bit, Mr Young



S4 pupils were given the fantastic opportunity to utilise the new BBC micro:bit, a miniature microcomputer designed to encourage a new generation of school pupils to start coding. As well as the 'The Micro Bit' being a codeable computer it has some extremely clever features, which allow pupils to attach a plethora of input and output devices, giving it a real world context to their learning. The challenge for the day was for the S4 pupils to use the BBC micro:bit to create a prototype for a step counter or stepometer product. After a brief introduction to the micro:bit and the BBC micro:bit coding website, pupils began to experiment with the microcomputer and discuss their approach to developing a fully functional electronic pedometer





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Our Europe Competition, Miss Maxwell



The Our Europe competition offers pupils the opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of Europe whilst developing their language and creative skills. This year the Our Europe Premiere and Awards Ceremony took place in the Scottish Parliament. A group of our S3 pupils successfully made it through to this stage and had the opportunity to showcase their very own film production to an audience. The challenge that faced Frederick Morley, Lisa Little, Amy MacDonald and Hamish Finn was not an easy one, but hopefully an enjoyable one! Their task was to make a short film about what it means to be a European citizen. The pupils had to combine their language skills, filming technique and knowledge of European issues in order to make their film. They definitely rose to this challenge and I am thrilled to report that they won the prize for the 'Best Edited Film'. Frederick, Lisa, Amy and Hamish worked extremely hard throughout the process and we are extremely proud of what they have achieved as a team. Well done! Supporting the pupils on the day were Anisah McDonagh, Tess Stewart, Harriet Patterson and Erin Gallacher. The girls won the Our Europe competition last year and kindly agreed to say a few words on the day about their own experience. I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you, or rather merci, to the girls as they represented their school extremely well. Well done, Balfon High!



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Master Chef, Miss Kelso

The Master Chef club have had a busy term in the kitchen. They have been focusing on developing their practical skills through making a variety of tasty desserts. The pupils have successfully made their own jaffa cakes, sticky toffee pudding and Rocky Road. We celebrated Easter with some delicious Cream Egg brownies. Miss Kelso introduced them to a classic Irish recipe of Fifteens which was a great hit and an easy recipe to follow. Masterchef club will resume in August and all new members are welcome.

Ocean Youth Trust

A group of adventurous S3 pupils spent a week on the award winning sail training voyages



that encourage young people discover their true potential through the experience of sail training. Ocean Youth Trust Scotland is a world leading youth work charity that delivers an annual schedule of residential youth work voyages aboard its fleet of sail training vessels. This residential voyage provides a uniquely powerful and extremely effective environment for the personal development of young people.





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OYT by Ollie Reilly, 3L2

The ocean youth trust trip is an adventure on water. It's a trip where 10 pupils and 2 staff go on board a sailing boat and set out for 5 days. Throughout you learn new skills, work as a team and most importantly have fun! As we sailed we stopped at some fishing villages, beaches and more. What was great about it was that the sea staff basically just showed us how to do something and then we would go and be able to do it, so we had great responsibility while aboard. It also included cleaning below and above deck, cooking for everyone, learning new knots and making new friends. When aboard the sea staff were very friendly, kind and welcoming. We learned many new things about the boat, the names of each part of the boat, sailing terms and sailing songs too! In conclusion the ocean youth trust trip was excellent for trying new things, making new friends, learning about the boat, and building confidence. So to anybody who is thinking about taking part in future ocean youth trust trips I would definitely recommend it!





Balfron Highlights

www.balfronhigh.org.uk

Netball Youth Umpire Award

On Friday 6th of May we were lucky to have Ruth Henderson from Active Stirling come to Balfron and deliver the Netball Youth Umpire Award to 17 of our Girls Netball players. The course lasted around 2 hours with elements of both theory and practical. This allows the girls to be confident Umpires for games played at Primary school level, as well as improve their own knowledge of the Netball rules. The course was run in collaboration with Netball Scotland.



Netball Success



A big well done to our Girls netball team and coach Miss Vickers, who were Open Netball Bronze Final winners 2016 in the Scottish Schools Cup competition!

Girls from left to right; Laura McKenzie, Kirsty Kay, Halle Reynolds, Lauren Harvey, Iona Campbell, Emily Watson, Joanna Borland, Emily Shaw and Esther Ross.



Balftron Highlights

www.balftronhigh.org.uk

Scottish Schools Aquathlon, Mr Perman

On the 26th of April, six of the finest Balftron High Athletes competed in the Scottish Schools Aquathlon held at Dollan Aqua Centre in East Kilbride. A combination of swimming and running, this endurance event is a challenge for even the most resilient of competitors. Participants were challenged to a lengthy swim which was followed by a demanding hilly run. Distances varied and were dependant on the age of the competitors.

Off first was Isla Britton (1L1) for the S1 Girls. After a 300 metre swim, the competitors had to exit the pool as fast as they could, enter transition to slide on their trainers and embark on a gruelling 2 Kilometre run. Isla had a strong swim and an even stronger run. She finished a fantastic 2nd in her heat and went home with a well-deserved bronze medal. Isla should be extremely proud of herself as Balftron High are for medalling at this prestigious national event. A Brilliant effort from the future endurance superstar.



Next to go were the S1 boys.

Consisting of the same demanding course and distances the field for this was extremely strong with participants competing from all across Scotland. This elite field far from phased Balftron's Callum Bynre (1E3) who stormed the first heat, winning it by a remarkable distance after a confident swim put him in fantastic position to rip up the run. Callum managed to finish 6th overall and should be extremely pleased with his race. This engine will certainly be featuring in Balftron sporting success in the future. Well Done Callum!

The S1 boys heats also featured two enthusiastic young sportsmen who were competing in their very first Aquathlon event. Jack Primrose (1L3) and Francis McGinn (1L3) both swam and ran exceptionally well in this extremely demanding event. Both Jack and Francis finished the race strongly, just as they had started it. A huge congratulation and well done to both our boys for completing the event. They can be enormously proud of their efforts and representing the school at such a high level. Well Done!





Balftron Highlights

www.balftronhigh.org.uk

After supporting their younger teammates throughout the day, it was now time for the older Balftron High pupils to take to the starting blocks in the senior boy's race. Rory Strachan (5L1) and Jamie Wastling (5L3) embarked on a punishing 400 metre swim swiftly followed by a demanding 4 kilometre run. Jamie, in his first event, had a steady swim which put in him fighting position for the run. It was clear that his hard work throughout the year on his stroke had paid off. An impressive run saw him finish in the top 10. Fantastic effort from Jamie who will be aiming for better again next year! Well Done Jamie!



The veteran triathlete, Rory Strachan dominated the swim and managed to get himself out the pool in fantastic time. A smooth transition saw him enter the run in a prominent position. Running alongside his fellow national competitors, Rory soon started to establish a small lead. A sprint finish over the last 200m saw Rory finish an amazing 4th in a very strong field.

Rory should be immensely proud of his achievement. It is clear that Rory will have a very bright future ahead of him in the world of endurance racing. Well Done Rory! Balftron High is very proud of you!





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Athletics Success

Balfon High School S1-S3 athletes took part in the first Stirling Schools Athletics Championships at Stirling University on Wednesday, 4th May. Our team impressed everyone present with their talent and commitment, winning 17 golds, 8 silvers and 3 bronzes.



S1 Girls

Our S1 girls won all their events! Katie Burr won the 100m and long jump, Evie Hylands won shot put, Amy Kirkpatrick won the 800m, and Emily Corrigan and Emma Wilkes joined Katie and Amy to win the relay by a long way.





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

S1 Boys

Andrew Methven followed family tradition to win the shot put. Euan McKenzie (100m), Callum Byrne (800m) and Fraser Cruickshanks (long jump) were all third in their events. Callum Howie, Francis McGinn and Finlay Hand joined Euan and ran their hearts out to win a tough relay.



S2 Girls

Shona Harrower (shot put) and Briagha Cook (long jump) won their events. Second places went to Briagha (100m), Cosima Schwann (200m) and Rosie Eckersley (800m). Miranda Stitt joined Briagha, Cosima and Shona to win their relay, again by a large margin.





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

S2 Boys

Jamie Horrocks impressed the crowd by winning the 800m by a huge margin. Second places went to Lewis Ward, right, (shot) and Fraser Green (long jump), with Sandy Carey (100m) and Philip Ross (200m) taking fifth places. Benji Pires joined Fraser, Sandy and Philip and all four boys fought hard in a tight relay race, achieving an excellent second place.



S3 Girls

Our S3 Girls won everything- except for the relay, where they were in the lead by a long way but were disqualified. First places went to Anna Cameron, left, (200m and long jump), Rebekah Cowan (100m), Elizabeth Thompson (800m) and Laura McKenzie (shot).



S3 Boys

Hugh Johnson won the 100m and Jamie MacCorquodale, right, was 2nd in long jump. Ross Michie (200m) and Fergus Eckersall (800m) were fourth in their events and Jamie came 5th in shot. Hugh, Ross, Jamie and Fergus ran a fantastic race to come second in the relay.

Thanks to all the athletes who took part, especially to those who were experiencing their first official athletics competition. Many thanks, also, to the teachers, Mrs Robertson and coach, Rhona McLeod, for playing an important role in the team's success.



Balftron Highlights

www.balftronhigh.org.uk

Katy Burr – Gold at East of Scotland Championships



Congratulations to Katy who took gold in the long jump with a personal best of 4m 44cm.



Coirilidh Cook – Gold at East of Scotland Championships



Congratulations to Coirilidh who won hurdles at the East of Scotland Championships.



Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

S3 Villarreal Trip





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

27 of our young people from S2 and S3 jetted off for an experience of a lifetime to Spain in early May. Whilst there they trained with Villarreal CF coaching staff and lived life as a professional Football player. They also took in a Spanish La Liga Match and played a competitive fixture against Spanish opposition. Delighted to report that we won our first ever game on Spanish soil with Our U14/15s winning 4-1 and our U15s winning 6-5. A fantastic time was had by all.



You can see more pictures and videos from this trip on our twitter feed @balfonvillarreal



Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Christie Anne Shannon

<https://t.co/R885xWagEh>

Congratulations to Christie Anne who is the Basic Novice A British Figure Skating champion!



Rosie Eckerslie



Congratulations to our own Rosie Eckerslie on her selection to the Scottish Athletics Squad



Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Central Schools Cup Champions!

Well done to our Under 16s Rugby squad who won the Central Schools Cup.

The U16 Rugby team continued their impressive season with a convincing win against a strong Falkirk High team. The boys played some excellent rugby scoring some very good team tries. Michael Hewitt, Jordan Martin and Craig Kay were particularly strong on the day but it was the full squad that allowed the team to play so well.

Well done to all involved in a very successful season, both for the school and as part of Strathendrick RFC. Mr Macquarrie would like to thank the Strathendrick coaches at all age groups for the support which they offer throughout the year.





Balftron Highlights

www.balftronhigh.org.uk

Girl's Football 7s



The Girls Football Team play in a Soccer Sevens Tournament every Thursday evening from October to May, organised by the SFA. This involves playing a number of schools within Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Falkirk Councils. Unfortunately the junior team narrowly missed out on being runners-up in the competition for the 2nd year in a row to St Mungos HS. It is a massive commitment for all the girls involved and they have been a credit to the school throughout the season.

March 3rd saw the first Girls' football 7s tournament of the year. Rachel Degan scored a massive five goals, Jenna Clark and Kate Nicolson each scored three.

International Basketball

Congratulations to Balftron High's Katy Young who was awarded the Most Valued Player award after her performance in the U18 Playoff final at the end of March. Katy scored 27 points and 8 rebounds.

(Photo @stirling_basketball)





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Girls' Rugby, Mr Dalziel



The Girls managed to get another game under their belt in some interesting conditions, as shown in the pictures! They faced some tough competition from an Alva, Larbert and Wallace combined team and for a number of the girls it was the first time they had played a full 60 minute game. The girls took a while to get used to the conditions but managed to bring themselves back into the game. It was a high scoring and physical contest for the girls but they came out of it having done themselves, and the school, proud.



We welcomed some primary 7 girls along for some transition sessions and they got the chance to join in with some of the training drills with the under 15 team. The girls enjoyed themselves and we hope to see them back after the summer. We also had to say goodbye to the 6th year girls

who are leaving us. It was emotional for them as most of them have been part of girls' rugby at Balfon since the beginning. We wish them all the best for the future.



Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Basketball Success, Miss MacPhee

The Active Stirling Senior Basketball Tournament saw Balfon enter 3 teams in to the competition. The teams began with a timid start but were soon proving to be a challenge for the other Stirling schools. Raucous support from the sidelines spurred each of the players on as they battled to maintain possession of the ball to create some nice moves and get points on the board. Each of the teams worked their socks off and played well considering they had not had much competitive action together. An outstanding effort from them all!





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Football U14s, Mr Campbell



The under 14 team have completed an exciting and successful year of school football, which resulted in them winning the Stirling and Clackmannanshire league at the start of February. This qualified the team for the Forth Valley Schools' play-offs, where they met Braes Academy, who finished 4th in the Falkirk league, in the quarter-final. The game was played at Balfon and despite being without a couple of important players, the boys won 5-4. The team started well and looked comfortable, especially when 4-2 ahead with not long to go. However, a strong fight back from Braes brought the game back to 4-4, before Benji Pires scored with a superb individual effort to take the boys through to the semi-final.

The semi-final (also at home) was against Stirling High, who had beaten us 5-2 earlier in the season. The boys put in a much improved performance, with Cormack McKenzie to the fore in defence. Losing 2-1 with time running out, Sam Black stepped up to score one of the goals of the season from a free-kick, look out for Mr Campbell's footage of the goal at the sports awards night! Unfortunately a last minute equaliser from Stirling forced a penalty shootout, where the boys were defeated, thanks in part to the excellence of the Stirling High goalkeeper.

The East Stirlingshire Cup brought a change in fortunes for the team in penalty shootouts, when the boys defeated a strong Alva Academy team in the quarter-final on penalties after a 5-5 draw. The game was one of the most memorable of the year, especially considering Balfon played most of it with 10 players, after Jack MacDonald received an unfortunate red card for handball on the line. Fraser Green saved the resulting penalty and Benji Pires put Balfon in the lead soon after, giving the team the lift they needed to keep going. Again the team conceded a late equaliser but this time they recovered their composure to win the shootout, where Fraser Green again made a vital save.



Balfron Highlights

www.balfronhigh.org.uk

The semi-final was played against Braes, this time away from home. The game was played in difficult conditions, but Balfron had a strong squad available and once Lachlan Reynolds had scored a penalty to get the team in the lead, we always seemed in control. The game ended 4-3 to Balfron and credit goes to Calum Murray for standing in for Fraser in goals and making some important saves.

The season finished for Balfron with a well-earned trip to Stenhousemuir FC for the final. The boys were up against St Modan's and hopes were high that they could repeat their win from earlier in the season. The team missed Lachlan Reynolds's presence in midfield and started the game on the back foot, quickly realising that St Modan's were a stronger team than last time. As a result, the boys found themselves 3-0 down at half-time, despite good saves from Fraser. The boys re-grouped at half-time and made some changes and soon they were playing much better, with Sandy Carey leading the way. They fought their way back to 4-2 down thanks to goals from Sandy and Benji and were then awarded a penalty. Unfortunately Sam Black's effort was saved and soon after St Modan's had restored their 3 goal lead. Balfron added another goal but at the final whistle St Modan's had deservedly won 7-3, having scored 2 late goals. The boys were understandably disappointed, however, they can look back proudly on a fantastic season.

The team has been nominated for team of the year at the school's sports awards in June, where the result of the player of the year vote will also be revealed. Benji Pires finished the season as top goal scorer and Sandy Carey carried out the role of captain superbly, setting a high standard in terms of effort and performance on the pitch, while also helping with organisation for games. Well done to everyone for a good season and hopefully there'll be more success on the way next year!





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Forth Valley Dance Competition, Mrs Shaw

Dance has always been a popular physical activity amongst the girls in Balfon High School. There is a lunchtime and after school dance club, amazing dance in the school shows and for the first time this year an inter house dance competition. There are also several teachers in the school who have previous experience and interest in dance and are happy to support this creative activity.

In the last 3 years boys have started to take an interest in dance and have been actively involved in the recent school show such as 'All Shook Up'. They have also been learning ballroom dance.

Two years ago the senior dance troupe including 9 senior girls and 9 senior boys won third place in the Senior Large category in the Forth Valley Schools Dance Competition. This year the Balfon senior dance troupe won third place in the Senior Small category and first place in the Senior Large category. As a result of this Balfon High School are the overall winners of the Forth Valley Dance Competition 2016.

Not only did they bring home 3 trophies but they are now performing the opening dance of the competition next year. Well done what a troupe. Well done to our Balfon High dancers who won overall school dance group at Forth Valley Dance Competition. Our team Unite took 1st place and Storm took 3rd place!





Balfron Highlights

www.balfronhigh.org.uk





Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

S2 Rugby



The S2 Rugby team have competed in two sevens competitions recently. In the first event the boys performed well but lost twice and won one game. They were back with a bang in the second event and beat all the schools present. In the final game they played a combined Stirling High and Wallace side and were narrowly beaten.

The players deserve great credit for the season they have had and thanks must go to the Strathendrick RFC coaches who have also been working with the squad.

S1 Rugby

Miss Campbell led the S1 team through an unbeaten event at Grangemouth RFC. The players were excellent and showed great skill and team work to win most games very comfortably. Fraser Thompson and Christiaan Lamb deserve a special mention.

Inter-House Cross Country

A record number of pupils competed in this year's Inter-house cross country competition. 335 pupils to be exact. Well done to Campsie house for winning it and widening their gap as the House Cup leaders.



This years apache relay involved 17 athletes from each house. Sprinters, Swimmers and Rowers combined in a bid to win this relay competition with Campsie house being victorious once again.



Balfon Highlights

www.balfonhigh.org.uk

Campsie House overall winners of Inter-House 2016 , Mr Watson



What another fantastic year for the Inter-house programme we have had. Young people at Balfon High competed in 18 Sporting events including the first even inter-house Golf, 6 major sporting events including our first Dance competition, 2 Academic events including our first even 'Countdown' and 6 Creative events including a Bake Off, Pictionary, Photography and a movie making competition. A total of 5000 points were given out making this our most action packed inter-house

competition ever. A huge thank you must go to all the House captains who were exceptional in organising teams, enthusing others and speaking at monthly assemblies to celebrate the success of their house. Their passion for the House Cup continues to impress us all. A special mention must go to Lydia Ross who was voted House Captain of the year by her peers. The final points and placing's were as follows:

Endrick - 1440

Lomond - 1540

Campsie - 1680

A massive congratulations to Dr Applequist and Campsie House who retained their title..... We now look forward to beginning the 2016/17 competition at Sports Day in a few weeks.





Balfon Highlights

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Balfon 4K, Mr Macquarrie



The Balfon 4K was a great success again this year. 40 pupils signed up for the big event and we had some serious runner competing for the trophy, some less serious superheroes running and a few out to challenge themselves against the clock. Well done to all who participated. In the girls race Rosie Eckersley, who recently competed for Scotland, took first place ahead of Sally Duncan and Jessica McGinn. The boys' race was won by Findlay Hand, who had to rush off to play football, ahead of Jamie Horrocks and Fergus Eckersall.





Balfon Highlights

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And finally....



Congrats to our staff team who won the Bearsden Academy staff volleyball tournament.

Dates for your Diary

7 June	P7 Parents' Information Evening
8 June	P7 induction Day
16 June	Outstanding awards Ceremony
17 June	School Sports Day
22 June	Sports Awards
23 June	Summer Concert
28 June	School closes for summer 1pm

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