



mearns academy  
in justice secure

Spring Newsletter - March 2019

## FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parent/Carer

We have had another extremely busy term here within Mearns Academy and it has been another term which, as Head Teacher, makes me extremely proud to be part of such a fantastic school.

In January, our S4-S6 pupils sat their Prelim Examinations and received feedback to allow them to make progress for their SQA examinations which take place in April/May. It has been a busy time for S4-S6 pupils with SQA assignments, units, folios all having been completed and submitted to the SQA for assessment and verification. It is important that our young people now focus on studying in preparation for the exams but also balance this with their wellbeing as we appreciate how stressful the coming weeks can be.

Also in January, our S4 young people took part in a week of work experience. The young people did themselves, their parents and the school proud during their work experience and I have received a number of positive comments about how our pupils conducted themselves while on placement.

This year in January we reintroduced our Burns Night. This was a very successful event where, alongside parents, staff and pupils, we had representation by Vincent Docherty, Head of Education; Susan Smith, Quality Improvement Officer; Jim Savage, Chief Executive and Liam Kerr, MSP. The event, led by Lauren McGill, was a truly enjoyable evening for all.

In February, our annual ski trip again took place and our young people and staff, including myself, headed to La Thuile. As Head Teacher, it is great to hear Mearns Academy pupils conduct themselves very well and attract very positive commendations from tour staff, providers and other people who interacted with them whilst representing the school – well done to them all and thank you to the staff who ran the trips!

There have been a number of staffing changes this term. Mrs Alison Currie retired in February and Mrs Susan Robson retired only this week. We wish both Alison and Susan a long and happy retirement and thank them for all their work in supporting our young people over a number of years. Mrs Angela Wotherspoon has taken on the role of Quality Improvement Officer for the Laurencekirk Cluster and has been replaced by Mr Robin Christie as Acting Depute Head Teacher. Replacing Mr Christie in Maths is Mr Alastair Taylor who joined us from Forfar Academy. Also this term Miss Rosie Bircham has joined the English Faculty from Portlethen Academy and Emma Myatt has secured a permanent contract with us as a Teacher of English.

In March I presented our area attainment report to our elected members and answered various questions around our school and our attainment. We have also recently had our authority attainment review with the Head of Education. At both meetings, it was recognised that attainment within Mearns Academy is strong across a number of areas.

## RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

As always during this term course choice forms have been issued and returned and Mr Christie has started working on putting together the timetable for Session 2019-2020. For next session we have widened our choices even further and are looking to offer a number of National Progression Awards at level 4/5 and 6. There will also be the opportunity for our young people to choose from a range of Foundation Apprenticeships. You may have heard the adverts on the radio regarding Foundation Apprenticeships as there is a National drive on to ensure that more young people take part in Foundation Apprenticeships. We will provide a number of these opportunities here at Mearns and in partnership with Portlethen Academy, Mackie Academy and Brechin High School.

I would like to again highlight the excellent work being done in school by both staff and pupils as we work towards our gold awards for both Rights Respecting Schools and The School Sports Award. On 18th April there will be a visit to the school where we will be assessed on the work done thus far in our journey towards the Gold Award.

Our Pupil Council in the school is stronger than ever and have been meeting every Thursday. There is both an S1-S3 council and an S4-S6 council. Both meetings are pupil led and the high quality discussions that have taken place have raised a number of points which we will take forward as a school next term.

There really are too many activities and events to mention however here are some examples of other activities which have taken place this term:

- Various Parents' Evenings with over 85% attendance
- Fair Trade Assemblies as part of Fair Trade fortnight
- Equalities Fair by S3 pupils
- Arnold Clark Van visit with apprenticeship opportunities
- Fire brigade & Police Scotland safety talk with S4
- Absafe visit for P7 young people
- P7 club in partnership with CLD on Tuesday evenings
- Tree of Knowledge workshops
- Breakfast club
- Free breakfast for all pupils offering porridge with fruit
- Making Thinking Visible staff workshops
- Soccer 7s Fundraiser
- Interhouse competitions
- Young Musician of the Year on the 20th of March
- Comic Relief event
- Glencoe Trip
- ASL Boccia Festival

As we look forward to the Summer Term with exams, activity days and transitions to name but a few, can I wish everyone a Happy Easter and that you all enjoy some quality time with friends and family.

*Gareth*

Gareth Campbell  
Head Teacher

## YOUNG MUSICIAN

The final of the Mearns Academy Young Musician of the Year Competition was held on 20<sup>th</sup> March. Once again the talent shown was incredibly high with nearly 50 pupils applying to audition for the event.

There was a great variety of performances from S1- S6 including instruments such as piano, trumpet, voice, violin, guitar, cello and bagpipes. Thanks to everyone who helped support this event and make it such a success.

The overall Young Musician of the Year was Betsy Wood (S4). Well done!





## S3 EQUALITIES FAIR

Article 2 of the UNCRC says that all children have rights, and individual children shouldn't be discriminated against. This includes:

- sexism
- racism
- sectarianism
- homophobia
- transphobia
- discrimination against the disabled.

Well done to S3 who planned and delivered a fantastic Equalities Fair. The stalls were informative and well presented. Nearly all S3 have now completed the work required to gain the SQA Wider Achievement Award – Religion, Belief and Values.

Thank you to the parents, relatives and friends who came along – we hope you learned something new.



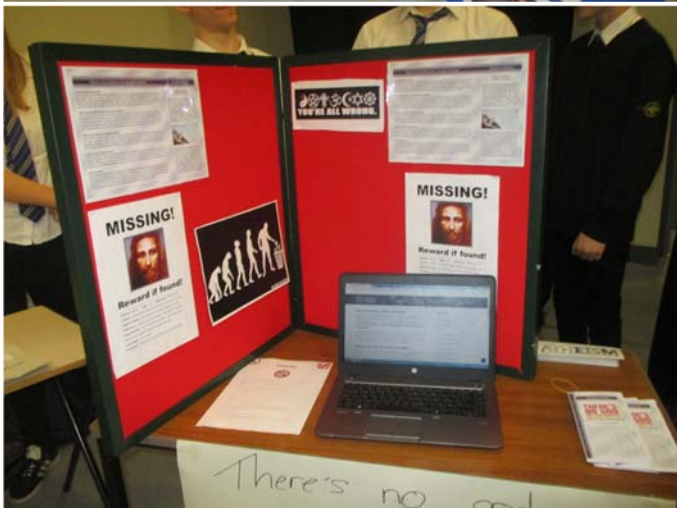
### Fundraising results from the Equalities Fair

- Hounds for Heroes - £54.64
- Paws for Progress - £48.35
- CLAN - £48.32
- Fairtrade Foundation - £45.40
- Mermaids UK - £32.35
- Dyslexia Scotland - £31.33
- Playlist for Life - £22.11
- Samaritans - £13.17
- Make a Wish - £11.74
- Music Therapy - £10
- The Little Princess Trust - £9.23

A total of £326.64 - Thank you everyone.





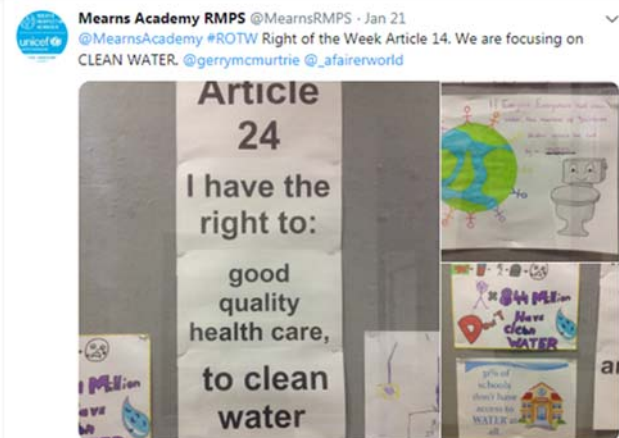
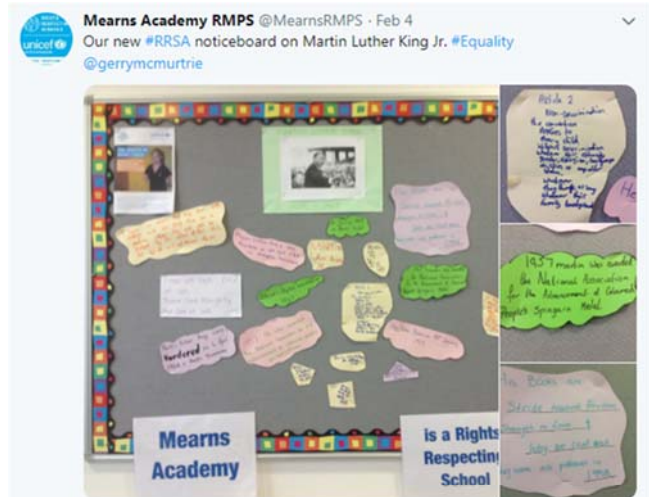




## RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

We have been very busy this term with our Rights Respecting Schools work and we are very excited to announce that the accreditors will be coming to do our GOLD accreditation visit on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April.

Parents are welcome to come and speak to our visitors, so feel free to contact the school if you



## ROAD SAFETY

Our S4 pupils received a Road Safety talk and rescue demonstration from the police and fire brigade.





## SKI TRIP

The 2019 Mearns Academy ski trip started with a leisurely bus drive through the French and Italian Alps to reach the stunning destination of La Thuile. The 35 pupils and 5 staff set off on Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February and reached La Thuile on the Sunday afternoon. Everyone enjoyed almost 6 full days of skiing with excellent weather and snow conditions.

There were also many Après ski activities, for everyone to enjoy, including ice skating, pizza night, bum boarding and a quiz night. Skiing finished an hour early on the last day to give everyone time to pack up and get home on the evening of Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup>. In conclusion it was a very enjoyable, and tiring, week.





## HEALTH & LEISURE

### Extra-Curricular Clubs

Throughout this term our extra-curricular clubs and teams continue to go from strength to strength. To date our pupils have represented the school in the following events with more to follow in the last week of term and into the summer term:

S1-4 rugby at Mackie Academy

S1 netball festival at Aberdeen Beach Ballroom

Senior netball

S2 Football Angus Cup

Senior Football Aberdeenshire League and Cup

Orienteering

Boccia

Thank you to all of our pupils who attend our clubs, we look forward to seeing you in the summer term.



The Senior girls won their last match against Portlethen Academy 15-14. The girls have done well this year and have made big improvement as a team.





## HEALTH & LEISURE

### S1 – 3 Festival of Sport

On Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> of May the School Sports Committee along with the PE Department and Active Schools will run our first ever 'S1 – 3 Festival of Sport'. This event will run in conjunction with the Aberdeenshire Wellbeing Festival and provides all S1 – 3 pupils with the opportunity to participate in a sport of their choice. The Sports Committee have already visited Assemblies and Tutor Groups to promote the event and they will continue to plan for this when we return after the Easter holidays.

### Interhouse Cross Country Championships

Our annual cross country championships took place on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March, with the overall winners being Thornton. Results for individual year groups can be viewed below.

<u>House</u>	<u>S1</u>	<u>S2</u>	<u>S3</u>	<u>S4 - 6</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>CONVETH</b>	11	0	14	20	45
<b>DRUMTOCHTY</b>	0	0	2	18	20
<b>JOHNSTON</b>	39	0	8	16	63
<b>THORNTON</b>	37	10	30	0	77

### Primary Pathways Event

On Tuesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of March our Senior Sports Leaders organised and ran the 'Primary Pathways Event'. They welcomed 70 local primary 3/4 pupils from our cluster schools, offering different activities, focussing on skill challenges. The overall winners were Fettercairn. Well done to everyone who took part and helped organise the event.

To keep up to date with everything that's happening in the Health & Leisure Faculty please follow us on Facebook:



# BURNS SUPPER

Fantastic Burns Supper organised by our Head Prefects which included:

Welcome from the Chairman  
*Cutis Hirst-Senior Prefect*

Arrival of the Haggis  
*William Milne and Scott Lewis- Prefects*

Address to the Haggis  
*Lauren McGill- Head Prefect*

The Selkirk Grace  
*Mr Campbell-Headmaster*

The Meal  
Starter- Tattie and Leek Soup  
Main-Haggis, neaps and tatties  
Desert- Sticky toffee pudding

Violinists- Megan Lewis and Sarah Benton

The immortal memory  
*Mrs Craig- Head of English*

Musical Interlude  
*Hannah Glassby- Head Prefect*

Toast to the Lassies  
*Patrick Wood- Prefect*

Reply to the Laddies  
*Hollie Dunn- Senior Prefect*

Poetry  
*Soraya Hossainpour-Burns Federation Winner*

Tam o'Shanter  
*Mr Crabb- Former Drama Teacher*

Ceilidh and Auld Lang Syne



Mr Jim Savage, Chief Executive , Aberdeenshire Council attended the evening and wrote our Head Prefects a letter, which included "I was hugely impressed with all the preparation and organisation you have both led in creating what was a very special evening for everyone who attended. It was one of the most enjoyable evenings I have been to in recent times."

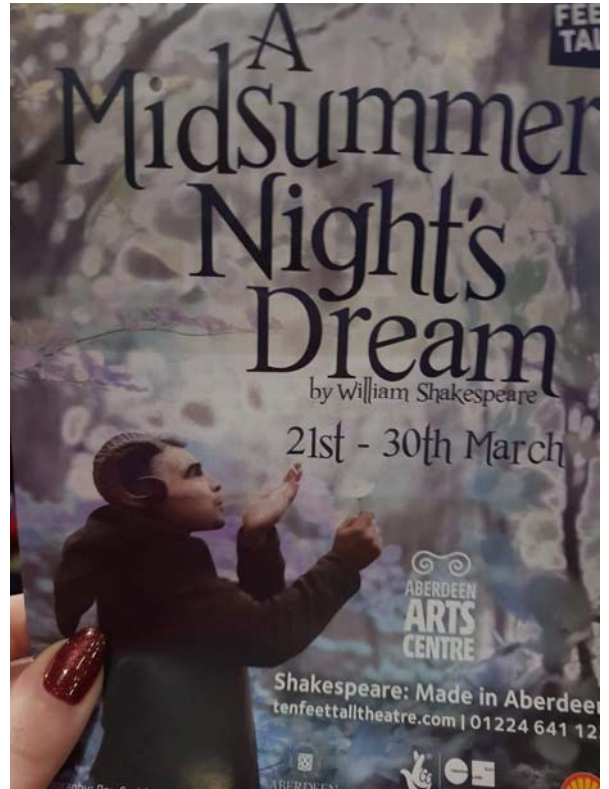


## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March the Faculty of English went to Aberdeen Arts Centre to Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare. 97 pupils from S1/2 enjoyed the Ten Feet Tall traditional Production.

*"On Tuesday we went to a Midsummer Night's Dream. It was very interesting, and even though the Shakespearian language was quite hard to grasp, it was still funny and I could follow and enjoy. I was intrigued from start to finish. All in all it was an amazing show and I think we all really enjoyed the experience"*

Madison Diack 2T2



## ACTIVE SCHOOLS

As we approach the end of another busy term in the Mearns network it seems an ideal time to reflect on some of the highlights achieved in recent months.

Between January and March, 441 P1 – S6 pupils from the Mearns network have taken part in our local physical activity opportunities. In total 34 extra-curricular clubs have been available to local pupils with a wide range of activities on offer including dodgeball, football, netball, badminton, yoga, cross country, golf, rugby, walking and athletics.

Another busy term will begin in April where we will continue to support as many opportunities for pupils to take part in sport as possible. We would like to thank all of the 33 dedicated volunteers for their commitment and enthusiasm who make all of the activities possible. Thank you! If you too would like to volunteer with Active Schools please get in touch and we will support you to make a difference in our local community.

The best way to keep up to date with all local physical activity and sporting opportunities is to follow our Facebook pages. Please click on the links below and give us a 'like'

[Active Schools Aberdeenshire South](#)

[Mearns Academy Health & Leisure](#)

[Mearns Sports Centre](#)

## HOUSE NEWS



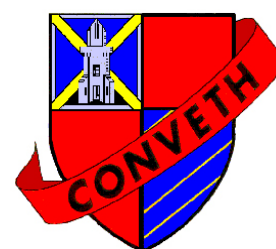
Currents scores are:  
Thornton – 296



Johnston- 261



Conveth – 254



Drumtochty- 215

## 2019 KEY DATES

Term 4 begins	15th April	May Day	6th May
Good Friday	19th April	SQA Exams begin	25th April
		Activity Days	22nd-24th May
		Term 4 ends	5th July

## COMIC CLUB SHOPPING SPREE

On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February the Comic Club had a trip to Waterstones in Dundee to buy some comics, graphic novels and manga for the library.

We were treated to a talk about the collection by comics expert Richard, then the pupils were allowed to choose three books each to add to the stock. Great fun was had browsing the fantastic selection and choosing their favourites.

We were then treated to hot chocolates in the café in Waterstones!



## CONTACT DETAILS

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