

Marr Matters

Welcome to the Marr College's Winter newsletter.

It has been a privilege to take on the role of Acting Head Teacher this past term in Mrs McGregor-Sloman's absence.

It goes without saying that it has been a busy term, with perhaps the highlight being the opportunity to assist at the Official Opening of the Refurbished and New Building, which took place on the 29th November.

John Swinney MSP carried out the official opening along with Director of Education Douglas Hutchison. Those parents requesting tickets were able to attend the event. The event was only made possible through the fantastic commitment of our young people through their wonderful musical talents and our senior students who were able to converse with the invited guests. We have been inundated with praise for our young people following the event.

I am delighted to announce that a delegation from South Ayrshire attended the first Education Buildings Award and the big prize of the night, 'The Project of the Year' was won by Marr College. The Trophy is now on display in the Trophy Cabinet in the school.

Former students to Marr may be interested to know that many of the treasured artefacts from Marr College have been returned and will be kept in the Rotunda and School Museum space.

Our first school dances took place in the Marr Building last week with great success. Credit must go to the S6 Leadership class for decorating the Assembly Hall to a high standard and organising the event with our PE department.

Following a number of Christmas themed events, including the Marr College Christmas Lunch and Jumper day on December 15th where senior pupils raised funds for Save the Children, our Christmas concert will take place in school on Tuesday December 19th. Proceeds for this will go to both Sign and Be Heard, a charity which has involved many of our young people being taught sign language as part of their S3 elective and Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. The concert takes place in the Assembly Hall from 7 – 8pm, followed by a Christmas Fair in Learning Plaza/Canteen between 8 and 9pm. The school day will finish slightly earlier on December 22nd at 2.30pm.

Graeme Hobson.

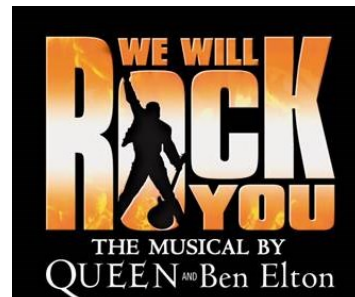
School Show

ALMOST 50 students from across the school auditioned to take part in our school production of We Will Rock You. The popular musical – featuring the songs of QUEEN – will be performed next summer term (6, 7 and 8 June 2018).

The standard of performance was very high and those who put themselves forward did exceptionally well. Musical Director Kirsty Walker said: "Our young people really rose to the challenge of taking on the rock-style tunes."

Principal cast members include Olivia Burnham from S4 as Scar-amouche and Laura Watson from S6 as Killer Queen. Other more familiar Marr Musical Theatre faces include Josh Duffy, Emma Pattison and Cameron Watson.

Marianne Gunn, director of the school production, added: "The fact we have students from S1 to S6 working together to achieve a shared goal is fantastic – and testament to the talent we already have in our school."



The Clyde Marine Plan Partnership Visit

Our Environmental Science and a handful of Geography students in S4/5/6 were involved in a consultation exercise about how to manage the Firth of Clyde. They were one of only three schools chosen to ensure that young people have a voice in the Marine Plan. This involved a

visualisation exercise where the young people had to decide what kind of Troon they would like to see in 2050. They were then involved in a large scale competitive planning challenge the following day using a board game which simulates the decisions and interests represented in a marine environ-

ment such as ours. From this, the students then decided the areas of priority that they would like to see included in any statutory plan.

Duke of Edinburgh 2017

Having completed very successful expeditions before the summer holidays, many of the Marr students in S4, S5 and S6 have been working to complete Awards at Bronze, Silver and Gold. Already over 80 students have completed and will be presented at the South Ayrshire Council Duke of Edinburgh presentation in Febru-

ary. There are still a few who have not quite finished. All students should be ready to complete their Awards. If you require any help please contact Jennifer Maxwell, Duke of Edinburgh Co-coordinator at the school.



Debating News

Two of our pupils – Katy Ramage and Erin Connelly – took part in the first round of The Donald Dewar Debate which was hosted here at Marr by Mrs O'Mailley. Unfortunately they didn't proceed to round two but did an excellent job of proposing the motion that historic monuments of historical controversial figures should be removed.

On the same evening, Megan Smith and Logan Cotter (S4), participated in the Victim Support Public Speaking Competition in Ayr considering the im-

pact of 'sexting' on young people.

Ms Owens accompanied six of our pupils – Heather Sweeney, Rachel Hughes, Liusaidh Ligertwood, Katy Ramage, Clair-Soo Blackwood and Ailsa Page - to the Scottish Parliament for the St. Andrew's Day Debate. Heather Sweeney did a fantastic job debating alongside a university student while the others pupils had an opportunity to chair and judge a variety of de-

bates.

Two of our S3 pupils - Kathryn Muir and Ellie MacDonald –took part in an English Speaking Union debate at Wellington in Ayr, on Thursday 7th of December.

Watch out for the new Debating Club for learners in S1 -3 starting after Christmas with Mrs O'Mailley and Ms Owens.

S1/2 Creative Writing Club

The S1/S2 Creative Writing Club have recently submitted their entries for the Young Writer's Ghost Stories anthology. Ryan McLean (1W) won first prize in the school competition with his spine-chilling story 'It's Here'. Jack Barrett (1W) came second with his excellent story titled 'The Incident on Ben Regis'. Pupils are now working on their entries for the national Stranger Sagas competition.

Gardening Project

A small group of S3 students, Calum Stalker, Aiden Dickie and Kyle Sheeran, have been involved in making better use of our school facilities for growing plants, fruits and vegetables that would be useful in the school. The boys spoke to the home economics department to find out the most commonly used produce and also researched growing seasons. They visited Fullarton woods

allotments and looked at the layout of a produce garden and identified a location near our greenhouse where we could develop our own. As it is winter, the boys have been working on creating another, larger raised bed area using salvaged pallets from the building project and have been planting herbs to grow indoors. They have liaised with the technical department and

the science technicians to help their progress.



STEM – brief summary

Feedback from pupils has been overwhelmingly positive. 135 S1 pupils have achieved the criteria for CREST Bronze Award – 85 % of the cohort. Unprecedented number of CREST awards for a single cohort nationally. CREST (Creativity in Science and Technology) are nationally recognised awards issued by the British Science Association, as a reward for excellence in

STEM projects. It is currently the only national (UK wide) external certificate award for such a great achievement.

We made initial links with a physics summer camp in Houston Texas via Skype. We showed them work on projectile motion using air powered rockets, and they showcased the electric circuits they had been building. The American summer

camp pupils were so excited that they wanted to work with us again the next day, but school was out for summer! We hope to establish firmer links with middle schools and high schools in the Houston area surrounding the world-leading Rice University and build partnerships to promote uptake and interest in STEM across both sides of the Atlantic.

S1-3 Book Club

Two of our S5 pupils - Clair-Soo Blackwood and Ailsa Page – have started a book club for S1-3 pupils. The book club is open to anyone who enjoys reading or wants to improve their reading of literature. The club meets the first Monday of every month.

S1-3 Girls' Football

Look out for information on our Girls' Football training for pupils in S1-3 run by Ms Law and Ms Richard. The club will start properly after Christmas and is open to all regardless of experience or fitness levels. Details will be on posters around the school and will also be published through Tutor Time classes.

Marr Chess Club in Partnership with Troon Chess Club

Marr College has developed strong links with Troon chess club - with Clive Baird from Troon chess club kindly running an annual tournament and providing the handsome trophy for the win-

ner. We are also delighted to secure the support of local expert Bob Reid, who is with us every Friday at Marr and is providing fantastic hints and tips to develop our young people's skills. Chess club runs

every Friday lunchtime in room 118 (science corridor). All students are welcome - if you have never played chess before, come along and learn in a friendly, fun and supportive environment.

Lego Story Starter Pilot

4 students in S1 and S2 are taking part in a South Ayrshire wide research pilot on the impact of Lego Education resources to improve outcomes in creative writing. This is one of many projects currently being undertaken to raise attainment both at Marr College and in South Ayrshire. After some initial assessment, students have been attending a weekly session coordinated

by Ms Elliot and Ms Marsh. Each session is based around the theme of community dilemmas taking into account elements such as the environment, responsibility, laws and empathy for others. The students are encouraged to build individual story boards with Lego and verbally discuss their stories before writing them down, submitting photographic and video evidence inter-

mittently to the authority for research purposes. We are currently half way through the pilot and hope after completion, it can then be delivered to a wider audience.



S3 Social Enterprise

We have two teams from our S3 Social Enterprise Elective – the Marr Juice Bar and the Marr Merchants. After winning funding for equipment and materials from #AYE the teams have been producing and selling their products. Students also attended a talk from Alan Mahon of Social Bite & Brewgood on after their successful #AYE bid. The Marr Juice Bar have been selling

different flavoured coolers from the hatch every Friday lunchtime. The coolers are both nutritious and delicious! Students had to undergo training to use the new equipment and also managed to pass their Level 2 Food Hygiene & Safety - Catering award. The Marr Merchants have been selling Marr pencils and emoji magnets for the inside of school lockers.

All of the money raised will be donated to charities chosen by the S3 students: Ayrshire Hospice, RNLI and the RSPCA.



UCAS

Senior students are finalising the completion of their UCAS applications with over 65 students applying to higher education this session. Many of our students have received unconditional offers which is fantastic news, and we wait to hear the conditional offers that are as yet still being offered. Guidance staff are finalising references with seniors and we wish all of our students good luck with their applications.

Micro Tyco

Our S2 students have been taking part in the Micro Tyco Challenge again this year. Some of the items on offer included festive box frames, personalised money pots, S1 Christmas cards, personalised glitter baubles, gift tags, sweetie jars, Christmas cards and a games room run by a team during lunchtime.

The event, run by The WildHearts Foundation, develops entrepreneurial, problem solving, leadership and interpersonal skills - while raising money for a good cause. WildHearts recently announced that they have now helped over 200,000

people globally. This is with the help of Micro-Tycos sharing their vision of 'Business for Good'. To date, WildHearts have helped generate investments of over £5 million, funding their work in entrepreneurial education, microfinance and gender equality. To learn more see their website: <https://www.wildheartsgroup.com/microfinance>

Our students have done a fantastic job and look to have raised around £1,200 – smashing previous years. Once all the money raised has been collected and counted we will announce the final total. The

department would like to thank everyone who supported the students throughout the challenge.

It gives me great pleasure to share our final total for this year a whopping £1443.78. This is our largest figure by miles and we are absolutely delighted. We have secured second place across the UK for secondary schools with a trophy coming our way next year.

A huge thanks to everyone that supported us and for all the festive items you bought. We will see you same time same place for more Micro Tyco fun J

The Business Team.

ABW Workshop

Several senior students from our department visited Kilmarnock FC this term for a workshop on "Marketing on a Budget". The event was held by Ayrshire Business Women (ABW) an affiliate of

the Association of Scottish Business Women. Students were given a tour of the grounds, a hot buffet meal and attended workshops run by local business women. This gave our students

an insight into how the topics they study in class can be applied in real life business situations.

Drop-In Club

Drop-in club is up and running every lunchtime in room 46. All pupils, and staff, are welcome to come along and enjoy various fun activities; including board games, movies, arts and crafts, quizzes and even karaoke. Numbers are increasing every day, with over twenty students enjoying a safe and fun place to spend lunch.



S3 Administration Troon Primary Santa Letters

Our S3 Administration class have been working on a festive project in conjunction with Troon Primary. The class will be writing personalised letters from Santa to P3 students from Troon Primary. The P3 classes have been working hard on writing their letters to Santa - telling him a bit about their siblings, pets, what they want for Christmas etc. In return our S3 Admin students will be using their Word Processing and data-

base skills to complete a mail merge creating a personalised letter for each Troon Primary student. These will be delivered in festive envelopes with a Santa sticker enclosed for each child. The class were even trying to convince Miss Wyllie to let them hand deliver the letters dressed as elves! A big thank you to Mrs Roan from Troon Primary for her help coordinating the project.



Mentoring

With the exception of one or two students who have not been in school we have now identified a potential mentor for our entire targeted S3 cohort. The aim of the programme is to support our young people in managing their own learning and raising aspirations. Weekly meetings offer mentees' an opportunity to discuss their progress, suc-

cess, and any concerns they may have. Mentors are there to listen, and then ask questions that will encourage mentees to identify their course of action for improvement. Following the Christmas break, we will begin further mentoring pairings for S1 and S2 groups.



The Breakfast Club

The breakfast club is up and running, with growing numbers attending every Friday morning. Pupils take part in fifteen minutes of PE and then enjoy a healthy breakfast together. We use a Better Movers and Thinkers (BMT) approach to the activity session, with a focus on improving executive functions.

What the pupils think:-

"The breakfast club is healthy, sporty, is really fun; and you get your breakfast"

"I think the club is good to get out the house before school and have fun before class starts"

"It's fun for sports and socialising with other people; and we get breakfast!"



Go Mountain Bike

On Thursday 9th November a group of 8 S3 students started a ten week programme called Go Mountain Bike.

Go MTB is a progressive mountain bike achievement award that enables participants to advance their technical riding skills as well as learning how to look after themselves, their bike, the environment, and other people.

The group is led by our campus police officer P.C Andy Harrower and Ross Muir from the

Adventure Centre for Education in Girvan. In addition they are joined each week by a different member of school staff.

With support from MS Elliot students have been writing a weekly blog all about their



adventures. This can be found on the school website www.marr.sayr.sch.uk under 'The School Day' and 'Wider Achievement'

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Business Guest Speakers

Mrs Thomson organised guest speakers for our National 5 and Higher Business Management students. This will be a great help to them when completing their assignment this year giving them the opportunity to learn about their chosen organisation first hand. This was a valuable and enjoyable experience for students – with many even winning some £10

gift vouchers for Buzzworks! Our speakers were -

Higher BM Speaker

Alison Blair (Owner) – Buzzworks

National 5 BM Speakers

Joanna Burns (Owner) and Sarah (Beauty Therapist) from The Make-Up Lounge

Peter Telfer (Partner) – Urquharts Opticians

Again a big thank you to everyone involved for giving up their time to speak to our classes.

S4/5/6 Cinema and Christmas Market Trip

Some of our senior pupils went to the Glasgow Film Theatre in November to watch Wallay, a French film about a 13-year-old boy who is sent from his home in France to live with external family in rural Burkina Faso. The movie dealt with the theme of adolescence and culture differences. After the movie we walked to the International Christmas Market in Glasgow, where pupils enjoyed the traditional French dish, tartiflette.

S3 - Scottish European Educational Trust Workshop

A small group of our S3 pupils took part in a workshop organised by SEET. This allowed them to enter Our World competition, a languages and citizenship based film making project. During the workshop they learned how to create a storyboard to present their European themed film ideas. If selected our pupils will be invited to an all-day film making workshop, where teams can turn their storyboards into real films. The third stage of Our World will take place in April 2018 after the films are completed. All teams who made a film will be invited to attend a grand premiere and awards ceremony at the Scottish Parliament where they can view the films they made. Fingers crossed!!

S2 Cinema Trip

A group of S2 pupils went to the Glasgow Film Theatre in November to see Ma vie de Courgette a 2016 Swiss-French stop motion animated comedy-drama film directed by Claude Barras. After losing his mother, a young boy is sent to a foster home with other orphans his age where he

begins to learn the meaning of trust and true love. A mental health organisation was available at the end to discuss the movie and answer some of our pupils' questions.



BrightRed Textbooks

Miss Wyllie completed a survey for BrightRed Publishing on their proposed new online system. She was lucky enough to be one of 3 national winners, gaining a free set of class textbooks. This allowed for some new Business Management and Accounting books to be ordered. Thank you BrightRed!



Russian Taster Club - русский клуб

A group of our senior pupils have been taking part in a Russian taster club led by Mrs Richard. So far we have looked at the Cyrillic alphabet, wrote our name in Russian as well as read signs. молодец!

Community Learning and Development

A team of S3 boys spent a few afternoons helping to tidy up a plot at Troon Allotment Society based at Fullarton Woods. The plots owner, Iain, had been

unable to keep on top of the work due to ill health. The boys made light of the hard work and really made a huge difference

by clearing the area in time for winter.

Iain thanked the boys by saying "How can I thank you enough! Wow, what a fantastic job done by your team of helpers, I appreciate it so much!" Iain is a trained chef and he wants to repay the boys by giving them a cooking lesson when his health improves.

The picture shows Gregor Murray, Ollie McDowell, Fergus Morgan and Kyle Shearer working at the plot.



S1 Science Club

The S1 Science Club have been having a blast (quite literally) this year. Pupils have created slime, tested rockets, written with fire, made sparklers, dissected organs and used methane to hold fire in their own hands! Most recently, the club have been collaborating with Strathclyde University to help them in their endeavour to analyse soils from across the whole of Scotland—not bad for S1! New members are always welcome and can find us in room 115 at 1.30 on Wednesdays.



Outright Campaign 2017 @ Marr College

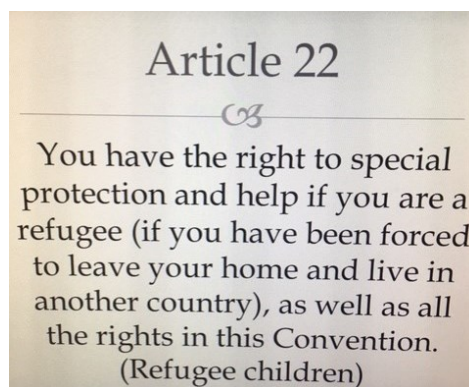
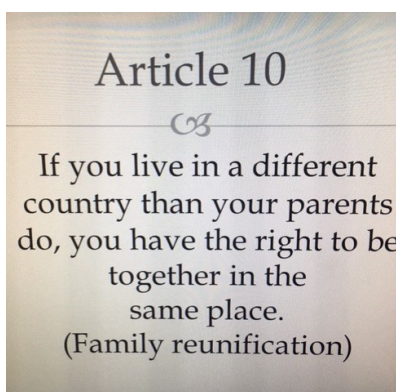
During the month of November, Marr College pupils across S1-3 worked in their Tutor time classes to complete a series of lessons for Unicef's Outright Campaign 2017.

The theme for this year's campaign was to support refugees, particularly children and to challenge the UK Government to change the current laws around family reunification.

As a school we introduced the pupils to Muzoon Almeliehan, a Unicef Goodwill ambassador whose story introduced us to the problem of refugee children and family separation. We learned about Articles 10 and 22 which state the rights of refugee children and family reunification. We then looked at what we knew about the current refugee crisis worldwide and what refugee children and their families have to face on a daily basis.

We created designs for Blue Dot centres, focusing on the fundamental rights of education, shelter, food and medical care. Some of our pupils looked at making refugee connections through the story of and tried to understand what it actually feels like to experience life as a child refugee.

Finally our campaign messages were written and shared via our Twitter feed @marr_rrs and these messages of support will be delivered to our local MP, Dr Philippa Whiteford to show our support for the change in the laws affecting refugee families in the UK.



Wider Achievement Success

Following successful Princes Trust funding during the summer term, a group of students went out to various college campuses to complete a series of intensive short vocational based courses. These courses are from industries which are major employers within the local area, and we are delighted that all of the students who sat the courses were successful in achieving certificates of accreditation in the end which will be a big CV-booster for them. Well done!

Daniel Coulter – ITC Certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work & Ayrshire College Achievement Certificate – Painting, Decorating & Bricklaying

James Laing - ITC Certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work

Shaun McNeil - ITC Certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work & Ayrshire College Achievement Certificate – Painting, Decorating & Bricklaying

Craig Oliver - ITC Certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work & REHIS Elementary Health & Safety Certificate

Ross Stevenson - ITC Certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work & REHIS Elementary Health & Safety Certificate

Declan Byrne - ITC Certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work & REHIS Elementary Health & Safety Certificate

Bethany Cameron – City & Guilds Level 2 Barista Skills

Ciara MacKenzie - City & Guilds Level 2 Barista Skills

Logan McCulloch - City & Guilds Level 2 Barista Skills

Shelley Ann McLellan - City & Guilds Level 2 Barista Skills

Samantha Millar - City & Guilds Level 2 Barista Skills

Jack McIndoe – REHIS Elementary Health & Safety Certificate & Ayrshire College Achievement Certificate – Painting, Decorating & Bricklaying

CJ Cunningham - REHIS Elementary Health & Safety Certificate

Daniel Coulter – Ayrshire College Achievement Certificate – Painting, Decorating & Bricklaying



Hospitality Area

The hospitality area (The 'Creation Station') has now been fully equipped and given a makeover thanks to funding from the Princes Trust. Students in Mr McPhee's Maths and Ms Gillies English class have been sitting a 'Customer Service' qualification on Friday mornings which has been supported by Ayrshire College. Students will be hosting a coffee morning in January for members of Troon Rotary Club, supported by hospitality businesses within the local area.

The area has also been used by members of Mrs Sharpe's business enterprise group on a Friday lunch time. The group are running a project selling healthy smoothies and promoting healthy lifestyle choices



Work Placements

As part of our Developing the Young Workforce initiative, Work Placements continue to be a real strength at Marr College. Students in S4 are given the opportunity to take a week long work placement at the beginning of October, and we saw over 95 students go to a work place in the local community during this week. In addition to this, over 70 students in S5&S6 have opted into selecting a Work Placement as part of their school timetable, and participate in work-based learning and activities every week. This year we have students placed in just about every industry going from supporting our local primary schools, working in local engineering firms at Prestwick Airport, working in shops within the local area and commuting to Glasgow to work in finance industries. Thank you to all of the local businesses and organisations who have supported our young people this year, our students are more employable than ever. If you are part of a business/organisation and you think that you may be able to support a young person then please let us know.

Hockey

Senior girls have developed very well since the beginning of this year. We have held Scottish Cup and Plate ties against Craigholm and Fettes where we have been narrowly beaten in both games. The girls also recorded a brilliant win away at St Columbas, the first win against them in 10 years. They won 1-0 with the goal coming from Katie Watson. It is credit to the hard work the girls and coaching staff put into the team, and I am sure we will see more positive results after the New Year.

The S3 team have also had some good progress and have had some fantastic results along the way. The girls comprehensively beating Dollar, Jordanhill, Wellington and most recently, Lomond. We have seen some outstanding performances from Ellie Corrigan and Robyn Jamieson in the middle of the pitch. But we have also seen excellent development in Sofia Burnham, Emily Balish and Molly Matthews. Sofia, leading the goal scoring tally by quite a few goals.

The S2 team are playing a new exciting brand of attacking hockey. The girls are never short of goals and excitement in their games and the development of forwards Abbie Allan, Emma Watson and Sophie Lennox has been amazing to see. Again, this is a very competitive year group and more often than not we have 2 teams out at S2 level. But the future looks promising for this group of girls. There really is no shortage of talent in S2. The S1 girls who are playing competitive hockey for the first time have also had some excellent progress. Coaches Ian & Heather are flooded with new girls every year and it is credit to them how they manage to get some many girls engaged and playing on Saturdays. The S1's getting a huge 5-0 win against Lomond most recently.



In the New Year, we will welcome two new appointments to the school, Mr David Alford, who will take up a post as Teacher of Computing and Miss Victoria Mitchell, who will be our new PT Home Economics. Meanwhile as I act as Head Teacher, Fiona Young, our PT Support for Learners has been appointed Acting DHT. Ms McCallum will go at Christmas on maternity leave and Miss McCue; PT Maths will take her place. Mrs Jarvie will step up as Acting PT Maths.

I have also included a few important dates for diaries as follows:

Monday 8th January (8.45am)	School reopens
Monday 15th January (6 – 8pm).	S4 Parents' Evening
Monday 15th – Friday 17th January	S2 Learning reviews
Monday 29th January - Friday 2nd February	S3 Learning reviews
Tuesday 20th February 2018 (6 – 8pm)	S5/6 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 7th February (6 – 8pm).	S2-5 Careers and Options Evening.
Wednesday 14th March (6 – 7.30pm).	P7 Transition Evening

May I take this opportunity to wish all parents and carers, students and staff a peaceful and restful Christmas and New Year.



This newsletter was made by Robyn Walker and Emma Pattison, who are in the S6 Leadership Group. Thank you for taking the time to read this, hopefully there will be another one soon.