



# Christmas Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

December 2017

## Rector's Message

As in previous years the term began with the school's self-evaluation of our 2017 SQA exam results analysis and our South Street Guidance teams meeting with pupils to organise course changes and exam "remark" applications to the SQA.

With regard to our SQA exam results I am once again very pleased to report on an excellent set of results. In all 7 key traditional measures the school recorded an increase, the only school in Fife to do so. Not only this, but some of the attainment was quite outstanding (for example in S5 at 3+ Highers and 5+ Highers the pupils achieved a record 45.5% and 27.1% attainment - at first sitting). It is also a pleasure to report that for the third year running, Madras is placed in the Sunday Times list of top performing schools in Scotland, within which the school's performance in S6 at Advanced Higher placed us in 17th position.

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## Christmas Trade Fair



Once again all S2 pupils have been working in teams to create, run and manage a small business enterprise. The Business and Enterprise department teamed up with Home Economics to deliver the 'Build and Bake a Business' project, the culmination of which was the annual Christmas Trade Fair, held during the Christmas Concert on 14th December. All pupils have been learning about the importance of creating high quality products and an effective brand in order to achieve high sales and beat the competition!

The awards for best profit and best brand were hotly contested and the winners are: Best Brand – Twistmas (2X7); Best Profit – Rudolph's Rocky Road (2X4).

Well done to all S2 pupils who made the project such a great success. All profits will again be donated to MND Scotland. Thanks also to Gillian and Brett from Rocca Deli in St Andrews who conducted some expert judging of the trade stands.



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Throughout the term we have focussed on a main priority of delivering “secure” learning to all pupils. Part of our improvement agenda to do this has involved reviewing our courses in the Broad General Education (BGE) to try to introduce extended topic material (linking to our National 4 and National 5 courses in Senior Phase) and to ensure time is created in these courses for meaningful practice. In the upper school this priority has involved the simple strategy of ensuring all pupils who take a study class have work set from their subject teachers and that their work in their study class is closely monitored for “secure” engagement.

The day-to-day activities across the school have continued to support our rich array of extended educational experiences, such as trips and excursions, sport and musical events, toy drive and other charity events - as well as Top of the Bench and Mathematical Challenge.

In November, the fourth year pupils sat their A/B tests for a range of subjects as part of their introduction to the rigours of the SQA exam process (in May) and to help pupils, parents and school staff monitor (and support) their progress. I am pleased to report that although many pupils felt the pressure of these tests, they did very well and have shown a better understanding of the need for preparation and resilience.

We are now at the end of term and are busy with all the activities which occur at this time of year. We are very pleased with the start to the session and I am very grateful to all our staff for the continued hard work they do to support the education and for the extra experiences they offer to the pupils.

I hope you have a happy and engaging festive break and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.

*David P. McClure.*

## Lessons from Auschwitz



Elizabeth Dyer and Brodi Nicol, accompanied by Mr Robertson, visited Auschwitz for the day as part of the ‘Lessons from Auschwitz’ programme. Pupils from across Scotland attended as did the Education Minister, John Swinney. It was a very moving and emotional day for all those involved.

# Charities Update

### MacMillan Coffee Morning

The MacMillan Coffee Morning and Bake Sale took place on Friday 29th September, raising an amazing £624.16.



### November

In November, three members of staff took part in the Movember appeal and raised a total of £223.42 for Prostate Cancer.

### Children In Need

We raised £571 for Children in Need on the day – fabulous effort and thanks to everyone who got involved.

### Toy Drive



The Toy Drive was a massive success and we handed over more this year than we have ever managed before. Thanks again to everyone who got involved.



### Shoebbox Appeal

The shoebbox appeal for the local sheltered housing estate in St Andrews was well supported by staff and pupils. We collected donations of non-perishable food items, toiletries and small gifts such as biscuits, tea, coffee, jam, marmalade, pasta, tinned goods, chocolates, soap, shampoo, socks, gloves, tissues etc. Thank you to all who donated.

We also hope to donate any extra items to the local foodbank in the run up to Christmas.

### Christmas Jumper Day

On the last day of term we will be raising money for charity by accessorising our school uniform in a festive manner.

For a £1 donation pupils can wear a Christmas jumper, santa hat, Christmas socks etc.



# Music al Notes



The music department has enjoyed another busy start to the session with lots of school and community events. During the festive period many of the pupils have provided musical entertainment for some local community groups.

## **TALENT SHOW**

The annual charity talent show was held in Kilrymont on 26th October. The level of talent was extremely high and the audience was entertained by all the acts. Thank you to Mrs Nisbet, Miss Rae and Mr Crow for judging the competition. Well done to the Kilrymont winners, Maisie Dury and Luisa Miller and the South Street winners 'The Selkies' (Dylan Syme, Evan Shively and Lewis Stephen). The overall winners were 'Frankie and the Parallel Lines' (Peter Visocchi, Lawrence Brown, Eugene Ritchie, Tsen Day-Beaver, Frankie Batchelor and Isobel Grieve).

## **AVISON ENSEMBLE PROJECT**

Sixteen pupils were invited to participate in an education project organised and funded by the University of St Andrews. The project introduced the pupils to ornamentation used in Baroque music. Pupils participated in two workshops working alongside professional musicians from the Avison Ensemble. During the final workshop the pupils were treated to a wonderful performance from the Avison musicians.

## **MND CHARITY MUSIC CONCERT**

In September two former pupils Mairi Grewar, Joanna Stark and a friend, Rachel Catherine Liddell, held a charity fundraising concert for the Euan MacDonald Centre for MND research. The concert, 'Ecosse, Europe et Amour' was a lovely mix of piano, cello and vocal pieces. Mr Grewar was a very proud father watching in the audience.

## **ROCK BAND COMPETITION**

The Fife Rock Band Competition was held at Auchmuty High School in October. Evan Shively, Dylan Syme and Lewis Stephen (all S5) represented Madras on stage. Mr Watson took a minibus of pupils to cheer on the boys. Although the group did not win the competition the feedback was excellent.

## **FIFE YOUTH ORCHESTRA CONCERT**

The music department organised a trip to see the Fife Youth Orchestra perform at Auchmuty High School on Wednesday 26th October. The pupils, Mrs Miller and Ms O'Donnell were impressed with the orchestra and all enjoyed the varied programme. Congratulations to Madras pupils; Mandy Jackson, Katie Grieve, Dougie Kennovin, Euan West and Zoe Mitcham who represented Madras in the orchestra.

## **TAYSIDE & FIFE HOSPITAL CHARITY CONCERT**

For the second year running the Senior Girls' and Mixed Choir were invited along to perform at the CLIC Sargent charity concert at the Caird Hall. This was another great opportunity for the pupils to showcase their talent and they did not disappoint. The programme included a selection of Christmas and Secular pieces.

## **NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF SCOTLAND**

Congratulations to Katie Grieve who has been selected for the National Youth Orchestra. Katie will take up her place in April and the first performance will be Sunday 8th April in Glasgow City Hall.

## **HOPE PARK CHURCH – BLIND GROUP**

Senior pupils Ruiaridh Weir, Katie Grieve and Isobel Grieve performed at the Blind Group Christmas Party held at Hope Park and Martyrs church. The three talented pupils gave an hour long concert to a very appreciative audience.

## **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

The annual Concert and Christmas Market took place on Thursday 14th December. Over 200 Madras pupils performed and the groups included the Junior Choir, Senior Girls' Choir, Senior Mixed Choir, Staff Choir, S6 Group, Junior String Orchestra, Senior String Orchestra, Wind Band, Clarsach Group, Brass Group, Lower Strings Ensemble, Folk Group, Cello Quartet, Pipe Band and several other ensemble and solo items. The evening was a great success with so many pupils involved.

Before the concert and during the interval the Christmas Market was open and this year the event was supported by the S2 Enterprise Classes, Senior Enterprise, Senior Youth Achievement Group, Mrs Montador, Mrs Harrower, the Parent Council and the Home Economics Department. A special mention to Miss Orem and Miss Hann for their involvement and help in raising funds for MND research.

## **MUSIC EXAM SUCCESS**

Well done to all pupils who sat instrumental exams this term.

- Katie Kerr (S1) was awarded a Merit for her Grade 2 Cello exam.
- Luke Gallacher (S1) was awarded a Pass for his Grade 2 Cello exam.
- Daniel O'Riordan (S1) was awarded a Distinction for his Grade 2 Cello exam.
- Ewan Chanter (S2) was awarded a Merit for his Grade 2 Piano exam.
- Lucy MacKay (S2) was awarded a Merit for her Grade 2 Piano exam.
- Joanne Mackie (S2) was awarded a Pass for her Grade 2 Cello exam.
- Michael Snodgrass (S3) was awarded a Distinction for his Grade 3 Guitar exam.
- Katie Grieve (S5) was awarded a Distinction (full marks in her pieces) for her Grade 6 Cello exam.
- Isobel Grieve (S5) was awarded a Distinction (full marks in her pieces) for her Grade 5 Saxophone exam.
- Juliette Van Steensel (S6) was awarded a Merit for her Grade 5 Violin exam.

# Mathematics Department News

## COMPETITIONS

In November 41 pupils participated in the United Kingdom Mathematical Trust Senior Challenge. Overall pupils achieved three gold, three silver and eight bronze awards. A special mention to our gold award winners Mandy Jackson, Lewis Alsop and Wei Han Lee. Mandy qualified for the British Mathematical Olympiad round one paper due to her strong performance. Well done Mandy!

## NATIONAL MATHS WEEK

- The Maths department celebrated the inaugural year of Scottish Maths week in September. This event will run annually to support positive thinking around mathematics across the nation.
- Our pupils were able to participate in a number of great activities running throughout the week, some in conjunction with the University of St Andrews.
- Within the school pupils participated in the Sumdog challenge.

- S1 and S2 pupils were given the opportunity to compete in the “Maths wi Nae Borders” competition, a Scottish version of the maths competition *Mathematiques sans Frontieres*.

- S3 pupils had the pleasure of listening to our special guest lecturer Dr Charles Paxton, a statistician from the University of St Andrews mathematics department. He spoke to pupils about his research around Statistics and Sea Monsters.

- Our advanced higher pupils were lucky enough to visit the University of St Andrews Maths building to see a display of special Mathematics writings that were being exhibited for a short time during the week.

- A small group of higher and advanced higher pupils attended The Copson Lecture, run by the University of St Andrews, with invited guest speaker Dr Vicky Neale from Oxford talking about the magic of prime numbers.

# Sponsored Cycle



Four pupils, Abbie Mulholland, Kai Neil, Billie Baillie and Jack Cairney, from the Senior Youth Achievement Award Group, recently took part in a Sponsored Cycle from St Andrews to Dundee. The 20 mile cycle, on a combination of paths, minor roads and forest tracks, raised £95 in aid of The Samaritans.

Eric Christie MBE, the fundraising coordinator for Samaritans, accepted the money and gave an interesting talk, followed by a question and answer session with the pupils.

# S D S

## National Swimming Championships



Six Madras swimmers qualified to represent the Fife swimming team at the National Swimming Championships in Glasgow. All swimmers competed well and made it through the heats to reach their respective finals. Jenna Richardson was the only Madras pupil to win a medal – she won silver in the 25 metre front crawl.

# Observatory Visit

Some hardy S4 and S5 physics students braved the cold temperatures to visit the James Gregory (open air!) Telescope at St Andrews University Observatory. They were rewarded with clear observing weather, getting some excellent pictures of the Moon with the small telescope and of the Dumbbell Nebula on the James Gregory Telescope. All senior phase pupils have recently studied Astrophysics as part of the CfE course(s) so the visit was very useful. Many thanks to Observatory Director, Dr A Scholz for once again showing us around. The Observatory is open to the general public on the first Wednesday of every month from 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm.

# S1 Football



The S1 football team won their first Scottish Cup fixture away to Viewforth. Madras performed very well and ran out comfortable winners (12-2). Jake Langlands, Nik Edwards and Charlie Gillespie all scored four goals each. Unfortunately, Madras came up against a strong Woodmill side in the next round and were beaten 9-1 on home soil.

# Modern Languages

## EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES



One of the biggest events in the calendar for the Modern Languages Department took place on 26th September, The European Day of Languages. Students across all year groups engaged in a variety of activities in classes including a music quiz, Gaelic lessons, designing posters and a European passport task. S2 Spanish students also worked on an art project inspired by the works of Antoni Gaudí.

Ms MacEachen organised an event for S1 students where they had an opportunity to come to the library during a lunchtime for a European quiz and to sample a variety of European foods. They also were able to hear some of their teachers, from many different departments, speaking other languages.

S3 pupils attended an event, organised by Miss Hoy, on the theme of Languages and Employability for the European Day of Languages. Speakers from a variety of backgrounds attended, including guests from University of St Andrews and Dundee United.

This year's events were a great success and we are already looking forward to next year!

## SEE T – OUR WORLD

Students from S4 Spanish took part in the “Our World” competition run by the Scottish European Education Trust. They designed storyboards and put together ideas for a short film on the themes of migration and welcome, travel and leisure and trade. One of the entries was selected to go through to the next round, with Maisie Payne, Eloise Whittet, Natalie Rengger and Isla Cameron being invited to Edinburgh to film their creation.

## CONCOURS DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

A group of students from S2 French have been working on a piece of drama for their entry to the “Concours de la Francophonie” run by the Institut Français d’Écosse. They have based their submission on the topics they cover in the S2 French course and have chosen to create a light-hearted comedy embracing some cultural stereotypes!

## DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL



Students across all year groups had the opportunity to go to the Discovery Film Festival at the DCA in Dundee. This year our students attended screenings of the French film “My Life as a Courgette” and the Spanish film “Zip and Zap and The Captain’s Island”.

S4, S5 and S6 pupils studying German attended a screening of ‘Goodbye Berlin’ at the DCA. We believe this to be the only screening of the film in the UK outside London. The film was well received by the pupils and we hope it will encourage them to go on to read the novel ‘Tschick’ by Wolfgang Herrndorf on which the film is based.

## “MODERN LANGUAGES MEET AND MINGLE”

Ten S5 Modern Languages pupils visited the School of Modern Languages at the University of St Andrews networking event on Wednesday 22 November. They were able to put questions about language learning, university life and living abroad to current Modern Languages students there. They also had the opportunity to meet with staff and undergraduates, to learn more about courses in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Persian, Russian and Spanish and to share experiences with other pupils from across Scotland.

*“I thought it was interesting and I enjoyed hearing the thoughts of the students who study languages. The students were friendly and welcoming and I liked that fact that the groups we were put in were small, as you were able to have a more developed conversation with the students.”*

*“Meeting the language students and hearing about their time at uni and their year abroad was really useful and really made me want to study languages at uni.”*

It was also a pleasure to see a former pupil from Madras there, Hannah Gray, who is now in her final year studying Spanish and French.

## Modern Languages

*continued*

### GERMAN NEWS

In July Lawrence Brown (S5) was invited by the UK-German Connection (who sponsored the Diamond Jubilee Anniversary celebrations of the Kiel Exchange) to attend the 91st birthday celebrations for Her Majesty the Queen at the British Embassy in Berlin. The main guests at the event were the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. This was Lawrence's second visit to Berlin this year as he took part in a Brexit seminar at Easter, again organised by the UK-German Connection.

Emily Davis (S6) represented the school at a UK-German Connection seminar in Hamburg on the topic of 'Seas and Oceans'. Emily met other young British and German pupils who share a concern for the environment. As well as being able to practise her German, Emily also experienced first-hand the mudflats of the 'Wattenmeer'.

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## A hat-trick of wins In Scotland's Investment Challenge!



A team from Madras College has for the 3rd year in succession defeated the competition in the final of the Investment Challenge for North-east Scotland schools, a competition run in partnership with BNP Paribas which aims to introduce young people to the excitement and challenge of the financial services industry. Working in pairs to analyse market and media information and make effective investment decisions, the victorious team of Kian Hart and Scott Graham (S6) turned their initial investment of £300,000 into a total fund value of £470,000. This made Madras, once again, the most successful school in Scotland! The winning team were also joined by Iona Byers and Peter Rowley (S6) at the final in Dundee.

## Carol Singing

*St Andrews Community Hospital*



Mrs Nisbet took a group of pupils to the hospital where they sang Christmas carols in the foyer and went along to entertain the patients.

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## Ohio Exchange

*Iona Byers*



Ohio was the trip of a lifetime, as decided by all 17 Madras pupils who attended. Full of different cultural experiences, it's fair to say we all learnt something, whether it was the rules of American football or some important anti-Obamacare facts. During our trip we spent the days cramming as much in as physically possible. Unanimously we have decided that the theme park, Cedar Point, was the best day because we really got to know everyone with the vast amount of time we had to chat in the thousand-hour long queues. During our evenings we enjoyed the freedom of the Americans having their driver's licenses and spent the time attempting to fit as much fast food as physically possible. Although we came back slightly pudgier from the diet of fried chicken and pizza, we all feel it was worth it nonetheless to meet such an amazing group of students, and understand how similar we can be despite the geographical barrier. All of us are extremely excited to see our partners again, and cannot wait to show them all the 'best bits' of Scotland and St Andrews in March.

# SPORTS NEWS

## Benfica Football Trip Kelpies 5K Run

The countdown is on for this year's trip to Portugal. This will see 44 Madras pupils train at Benfica's famous Seixal Academy for 5 days. On top of receiving world class coaching from UEFA certified coaches, pupils will tour the Estadio da Luz, play local opposition and take in a Benfica match amongst other excursions.

In a bid to raise funds for this, a large number of pupils participated in the Kelpies 5k run in November. This saw the pupils run around the famous monuments and some even managed to beat their personal bests. More importantly, it was great to see the children take responsibility of their own fundraising efforts and this will all help them be prepared for Portugal.

With more fundraising to come, the experience has only just started however and pupils will participate in some fun activities against their parents as well as bag-pack at a local supermarket.

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## Volleyball

On Tuesday 14th November, Mr Tarvet and volunteer coach Mr Paterson took 15 pupils to Edinburgh to compete in the S2/3, 4-a-side Volleyball Festival. The day at Napier University games complex was a great success with all sides playing four games in the morning session and four more in the afternoon. This was a super opportunity to play against Scotland's top teams and other emerging sides like ourselves and all players acquitted themselves well - each team winning at least two games. The highlight was the 'Battle of the Twins' when Julia and Natalia's teams were pitched against each other.

Many thanks go to Colin Paterson for his time on Tuesday evenings to coach the group and for giving up his day to help them at this Festival.

## Girls' Football



This season saw our girls enter the Fife Schools League for the first time. Participation at girls training has remained high as the season has gone on and the team have given increasingly more encouraging performances in both the league and Scottish Cup fixtures.

In this short time, captain Emma Stewart, has been selected for the Fife Schools Girls team at under 15 level. This is a fantastic achievement and reflects Emma's growing footballing talents. Well done Emma.

Girls training continues every Wednesday from 3.45 pm - 4.45 pm at Kilrymont Road. All ages and ability levels are welcome!

Also, the girls recently took in a trip to see Glasgow City Football Club. The team had a great time as they got to meet several of the players and participated in a Questions and Answers session. It was made even better when Glasgow City won 3-0 in a very entertaining match.

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## Swimming

Anna Hedley (S2) and Nicole Reynolds (S4) brought back Gold Medals from the Fife Schools' Swimming Championships held at the Michael Woods Centre, Glenrothes on Sunday 19th November.

Anna won Gold in the 400 m Freestyle and Nicole took Gold in all three events she was able to enter, 100 m and 200 m Breaststroke and 400 m Freestyle. Nine other medals were won by Madras pupils.

## Tennis Scottish Cup

The Madras College Tennis Team came through an intense tie to beat Albyn School and reach the next round of the Tennis Scottish Cup. On a bitter Friday morning at St Andrews tennis club, Madras built a 3-0 lead as Peter Mackay and Greg Proctor both convincingly won their singles and doubles matches without dropping a set. However, Albyn kept the first round tie alive after claiming victory in the 1st and 2nd seed singles matches to make it 3-2. Despite the comeback, Gregory and Cameron Dritschel managed to use their stern tactics and brilliant chemistry to clinch a victory in an intense doubles match, winning 7-6, 7-5. This is the first time in three years that Madras has made it through to the next round after previously facing tough opposition. The team are now optimistic about reaching the later stages of the Cup.

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## SPEEDWAY

*Fife Schools Championships*

*1st Leg*

*Thursday 23rd November 2017*

Overall, the racing was great, close and clean. The newcomers were superb and with their track craft already very good the future is bright, the future is Fife. Next leg of the championship is at Glenrothes High School on 23rd February 2018.

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## Basketball

Under Mr McClung's guidance the U15s and U18s were entered into the Scottish Cup for the first time in many years. Each team had a Regional group to compete against; they took some heavy defeats but enjoyed the competition and chance to see and play against other schools. They all look forward to some friendlies in the coming months.

# Information

## *Fife Council*

### *Information for Parents/Carers*



As early as possible on the morning of severe weather or other situations such as water, heating and building problems, the main ways for you to stay informed are:

- **by text direct to your mobile phone or by e-mail.** To receive these you will need to sign up for this service via Fife Direct - to sign up for text or email alerts, please enter your contact details via [www.fifedirect.org.uk/alerts](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/alerts), click on Alerts and under Alert Services click on Register with fifedirect.
- **by Groupcall text or e-mail alerts through your school -** make sure that you have given up-to-date contact details to the school so that they can contact you by Groupcall
- **on your mobile phone** - search for [m.fifedirect.org.uk](http://m.fifedirect.org.uk) (from your mobile phone browser)
- **on Facebook** - follow-us on [facebook.com/fifecouncil](https://facebook.com/fifecouncil)
- **on Twitter** - follow-us on [twitter.com/fifecouncil](https://twitter.com/fifecouncil)
- **by radio bulletins** - listen to Kingdom FM (95.2 and 96.1), Forth One (97.3) and Tay FM (102.8 and 96.4)
- **by digital television** - red Button on Sky, channel 539 and Virgin Media, channel 233 , press red



## Dates for Your Diary

### **SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**

*(all dates inclusive)*

Monday 25 December 2017  
to Friday 5 January 2018

Thursday and Friday 15 and 16 February 2018

Friday 30 March to Friday 13 April 2018

### **INSERVICE**

Wednesday 14 February 2018

## Contact Us

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