



Christmas Newsletter

Madras College Newsletter

December 2018

Rector's Message

Dear Parent/Carer,

Session 2018/2019 began in August with the analysis of the school's SQA exam results, and once again I am very pleased to report that our results were of a very high standard, indeed the Head of Education described them as "outstanding" in our school attainment review. In all but one of the 7 traditional measures Madras showed improved results on the year before. A striking result was in S4 at 5 or more National 5 results where the school showed an improvement of 6% - against a Scottish National average of a 6% drop. Our "point of exit" results (S6 for the majority of our pupils) were also truly noteworthy 5 or more at Higher showing an increase from 43.2% to 46.0% and 1 or more Advanced Higher improving from 33.8% to 40.8%. As well as this our positive destination for leavers maintained its very high statistic of 95.1% compared to the new South East Collaborative comparison of 93.3%.

However achievement is not just about statistics it is also about individual effort and attainment and I would highlight a few achievements (among many) from our pupils and school:

Well done to Cara Nicholson who on leaving school has been studying Chemistry at St Andrews University and was also helping us in the chemistry lab in Madras with Advanced Highers for the past one year. Cara won the Women in STEM for the year 2018 in London yesterday because of all the voluntary work she does in Science other than her University studies. It is a national level competition which recognises the achievements of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and was sponsored by Ford. She won the award and became the STEM Ambassador for UK.

This term 16 of our young people have been selected to play in the Fife Youth Orchestra, which will represent 26% of the orchestra – an outstanding number of pupils; and a letter from The St Andrews Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development, who link with our S5/6 pupils on a leadership course wrote to us saying:

*"Dear Mr McClure,
I'm writing to you as you have played a part in us winning a University of St Andrews' Public Engagement with Research' Award.*

This award recognises our collaborative work with Madras College pupils in terms of us working with PhD students and undergraduate research scholars to run a series of:

- Academic Skills workshops*
- Professional Skills workshops*
- Leadership Skills workshop*
- Laidlaw research exhibition*

Please thank your pupils and staff for all their collective efforts over the past year. It's lovely to be recognised in this way, and you all have an equal share in this award."

Although the normal running of the school still takes precedent over all that we do and we continue to strive to improve our curriculum in delivery and offer as well as looking to improve our Health and Well Being elements of the curriculum we have had to look to supporting the very real need to address two other issues: A financial reduction of some £300,000 for next session and a job sizing review of all promoted posts in the school (as part of a Fife wide review). I am pleased to say that we have fully consulted on the financial



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challenge and have a positive outcome and way forward for this which will not impact on our outstanding curriculum or delivery for our young people. This will ensure that those pupils who are currently with us and will be with us in the future will receive the same opportunities as those who have gone before. The job sizing exercise which will affect all promoted staff in the school is now almost complete and although I would have preferred to not put staff through this we have done this while maintaining the same structure as is current, again to try to ensure a consistency of delivery and quality of our curriculum for those pupils present, and in the future.

To date our charity drives have raised a staggering £1800+ for a range of charities, and our toy drive once again produced an incredible return, some 13 very large bags of toys and a cash envelope to support local families.

As a final note we were very pleased to visit all of our primary

cluster P7 parents and young people in October, to engage in our annual primary liaison visits which generated a lot of very positive interactions and information.

We are currently supporting the Christmas parties for year groups as we draw the term to a close, a term which has produced some very challenging issues, but once again a term where the staff and pupils have worked incredibly hard to secure attainment, achievement and valuable extra-curricular experiences. I thank everyone for their support and efforts and wish you all a very merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.
Sincerely

Rector

David P. McClure.

Break-time Brew and Blether

Jill Pringle and Mhairi McGregor, CLD Youth Work Staff have been in Madras South Street on a Thursday supporting young people on a one to one basis and with drop ins at break and lunch time. They have a regular attendance at the drop ins, with a small group of mainly girls being formed. Break time, the focus is tea and toast, young people get a safe space to have a chat and relax. Lunchtime there is more of a health focus with games and activities as well as noodles and toasties. We have ran sessions on stress, smoking, alcohol awareness, anti-bullying, mental health awareness are just some examples. One to One's are increasing in numbers and are being successful in supporting young people who are facing different issues in their lives. There are plans to run an after school drop in and run a 7 habits for highly effective teens.

Charities Update

The support and generosity of our pupils and their families with our charity drives continues to astound, collecting an amazing sum of more than £1800 this year, here are some of the recent highlights:

Children in Need

Pupils raised money for this years Children in Need appeal by adapting their uniforms for a 50p donation. The pupils done a fantastic job with decorating their uniforms raising £440 this year.

Movember

In November, Mr Trewartha became a Mo-Bro raising £67.62 for the Movember Foundation benefiting various men's health charities.

Toy Drive

There was an amazing response to the Toy Drive this year with a total of thirteen bags of gifts as well as a significant amount of cash that was donated. Thanks again to everyone who got involved.



Christmas Jumper Day

We will be supporting the homeless charity Shelter at the end of term by allowing pupils to accessorise their school uniform on Friday 21st December. Pupils will be allowed to wear a Christmas jumper or something festive and to make a donation to Shelter if they can.

We will also be hosting a breakfast for all pupils to celebrate the end of term during periods one and two and all pupils will be given the opportunity to join this.

There will be collection buckets available in the hall if pupils wish to give some of their spare change to Shelter at this point.



Musical 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 charity talent show was held on October 3rd. This year the S6 comperes were Tsen Day-Beaver and Frankie Batchelor. The judges had an impossible task judging the thirteen items. Congratulations to the Kilrymont winners, Clara Downes S2, Martha Leeds S2 and Freya McLelland S2 and the South Street winner was Joseph Mackie S5. The overall winners were Katie Grieve S6 and Isobel Grieve S6

Tenebrae Choral Project

Members of the Senior choirs' were invited to participate in a choral project organised by St Andrews University. The project involved several workshops led by singers from the Tenebrae Choir. Tenebrae is a London-based professional ensemble founded and directed by former King's singer, Nigel Short. The pupils had an amazing time working and singing alongside the professional singers. The final performance took place on Saturday the 27th October at the V& A where Madras pupils were joined by pupils from Grove and Harris Academy.

Fife Youth Orchestra Concert

The music department organised a trip to see the Fife Youth Orchestra perform at Lochgelly Centre on Thursday 1st November. The pupils and Mrs Miller were so impressed with the orchestra and all enjoyed the varied programme. Congratulations to Madras pupils; FYO leader, Joel Day S6, Katie Grieve S6, Dougie Kennovin S6, Josh Hartley S6, Caitlin McKee, Thomas Bidaut S6, Euan West S5, Natalie Rengger S4, Joseph Mackie S5, Emily Chalice S5, Annabel Thompson S5, Jed O'Donnell S5, Zoe Mitcham S4, Ailsa O'Riordan S4, Patricia O'Riordan, Andrew Armstrong S2 who represented Madras in the orchestra.

Balnacarron House St Andrews Day Celebrations

On St Andrews day, Miles McClure S5 went along to Balnacarron House and entertained the residents and staff.

Burns Singing Competition

The annual Madras Burns singing competition was held in Kilrymont on Thursday 30th November. Representatives from St Andrews Burns Club were delighted with the vocal performances.

Burns Singing Results

S1 Girls winner - *Nadira Dawood*
S1 Girls runner up - *Laris Spence & Ellis Johnston*
S1 Boys winner - *Jack Webster*
S1 Boys runner up - *Cameron Riddell*
S2 Girls winner - *Freya McLelland*
S2 Girls runner up - *Rachel Black*
S3/4 Girls winner - *Maisie Dury*
S3/4 Girls runner up - *Iona Thomas*
S3/4 Boys winner - *Cailan Duane*
S3/4 Boys runner up - *Caleb Johnston*
S5/6 Girls joint winners - *Natalie Rengger & Eilidh McGhee*
S35/6 Girls runner up - *Louise Roll*
S35/6 Boys winner - *Ben Smart*
S5/6 Boys runner up - *Eugene Ritchie*

Hope Park Church - Partially Sighted Group

In December, Mrs Nisbet and a group of Senior S5 pupils, Hope Kennedy, Natalie Rengger, Adam Gammie, Ben Smart, Aimee Thompson and Kaitlyn Stott performed at the Partially Sighted Christmas Party held at Hope Park & Martyrs church. The talented pupils gave an hour long concert to a very appreciative audience.



Musical Notes—cont.



Christmas Concert

The annual Concert and Christmas Market took place on Thursday the 13th of December. The groups included the Junior Choir, Senior Girls' Choir, Senior Mixed Choir, Staff Choir, Junior String Orchestra, Senior String Orchestra, Wind Band, Clarsach Group, Brass Group, Guitar Ensemble, Senior Folk Group, Junior Ensemble, Pipe Band as well as three solo items. The concert was rounded off with a final performance from the wind band, concert performers and audience singing "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas". The wide variety of performances involving over 200 musicians helped to make the evening a great success.



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, Mr Forbes, Mrs McLaren, Mrs Montador, the Parent Council, Madras Pride Group and the Home Economics Department.

Music Exam Success

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

- *Ash Simmons S1 was awarded a Merit for his Grade 1 Piano exam.*
- *Hamish McCallum S1 was awarded a Merit for his Grade 3 Trumpet exam.*
- *Andrew Armstrong S2 was awarded a Distinction for his Grade 7 French Horn exam.*
- *Heidi Dunbar S2 was awarded a Distinction for her Grade 4 Violin exam.*
- *Tara Earley S3 was awarded a Merit for her Grade 4 Violin exam.*
- *Pani McDermott S3 was awarded a Distinction for his Grade 4 Piano exam.*
- *Tara Earley S3 was awarded a Distinction for her Grade 3 Piano exam.*
- *Joseph Mackie S5 was awarded a Distinction for his Grade 8 Piano exam.*
- *Katie Grieve S6 was awarded a Distinction for her Grade 8 Violin exam.*
- *Isobel Grieve S6 was awarded a Pass for her Grade 8 Piano exam*

Drama Department Update

Trips

The Advanced Higher Drama class were taken to see Dundee Rep's first production of the season 'The Yellow On The Broom'.

The Higher Drama classes went to see 'Gagarin Way' also at Dundee Rep. They will use this as the basis for writing their Performance Analysis essay.

On the 30th of November, 36 lucky S1 pupils were taken to The Byre theatre to see Sleeping Beauty. A good time was had by all.

Production

The S5/6 Drama Activities Class performed, for one night only, a very successful production of 'Cuttin' A Rug' by John Byrne. Set in 1957 at the A.F. Stobo & Co., Christmas Staff dance, the Kilrymont stage was transformed with the help of a set provided by Mr. John Urquhart (former Depute). Costumes of the time period were sourced in The Drama Department and from The Byre Theatre. The main cast were supported by 6 S4 Nat 5 Drama girls as chorus members and the Lighting and Sound was also provided by 2 S4 Nat 5 Drama boys with the help and support of Technicians Mr J Love and Miss H Anderson. The group performed on Thursday 6th December and the audience feedback was very positive. Well done to the cast and crew!





English Department News



Macbeth trip

This term, pupils from S4 to S6, and five teachers - Mrs Payne, Ms Small, Mrs Montgomery, Mr Lawrie and Mrs Ovenstone-Jones - were confronted by a bleak world in the National theatre's production of Macbeth, performed at Edinburgh Festival theatre. In this visually daring production, the landscape was blasted by both civil war and the remnants of human carelessness— discarded material, mainly plastic, trailed from a dark sky and provided the backdrop to an intense and partially modernised production of the play. The costumes conveyed the suggestion of recent civil war, with Macbeth and his warriors in modern battle fatigues, with camouflage jackets and stab proof vests. The set of concrete bunkers, a solid metal bridge and movable poles created a world under threat of sudden violence. The pupils enjoyed the intensity of the characters' emotions and were impressed by the agility of the actors, particularly during fight scenes, and by the witches whose constant watching and loose limbed zombie appearance made a chilling contribution to the narrative.

Debating

The debating club is currently open to S4-6 and runs on Wednesdays from 3:40 – 4:50pm in P6. Since August we have debated a broad variety of topics, many of which are very challenging. Topics have ranged from parental responsibility versus the nanny state, abolishing zoos, forcing social media providers to police their own platforms, compulsory military service, and humanity should fear artificial intelligence. The pupils have responded with intelligence, wit and tenacity as they have both learned more about the world around them and started to build analytical and persuasive skills which they will continue to use in their future studies and careers. New members are always welcome.

Additionally, we offered pupils the chance to engage in competitive debating and this term seven pupils attended St Leonards to informally debate lessening extradition laws in the UK. No prizes were on offer, but the chance to think on their feet and defend their position gave them a real taste for further competitions.

We again travelled to St Leonards to compete in the first round of The Law Society's Donald Dewar Debating Tournament where Lawrence Brown and Flynn Duane won through to the next round proposing the motion "This house believes Google causes more harm than good".

Burns Speaking Contest

The pupils had a Burns competition on Friday 30th November and the quality of all the performances was very high so



well done for everyone that entered. The winners in each category are;

- S1 Girls:** **1st** - Kayden Fettes,
 2nd - Amy McClymont
- S1 Boys:** **1st** - Jack Webster,
 2nd - Christian Webster
- S2 Girls:** **1st** - Kaelah Fairclough
- S2 Boys:** **1st** - Hjalmar Stuck,
 2nd - Connor Payne
- S3/4 Girls:** **1st** Sophia Issberner,
 2nd - Iona Thomas & Kya Stewart
- S3/4 Boys:** **1st** Cailin Duane,
 2nd - Ethan Campbell

Reading Challenge

This term the English department have been engaging with the First Minister's Reading Challenge. This scheme aims to promote reading within our school community. So far we have elected a number of S1 reading champions who will be meeting at the end of term to discuss our first book *Everyday* by David Levithan. We have also created a number of 'What am I reading?' signs for teachers; aiming to share and promote reading for enjoyment between pupils and staff.

Modern Languages

Discovery Film Festival

Following the success of previous trips to the Discovery Film Festival, this October/November more pupils than ever (approximately 150 across all year groups) had the opportunity to see a foreign language film at the DCA in Dundee. This year a group of our S1-3 French pupils saw the delightful French film "Belle and Sebastian" and S1 Spanish pupils attended a screening of "Hero Steps" (Pasos de Heroe). This Chilean film tells the story of a young boy who overcomes his disability to achieve his dream of playing in a football team. Both films were very well received by the pupils.



S4-6 pupils studying French attended a private screening of 'Bag of Marbles', an exciting and very moving true story set in occupied France during WW2. Two young Jewish

brothers are sent by their parents to the Free Zone, and display courage, intelligence and ingenuity as they escape the occupiers and try to reunite their family. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed this film and we hope it will encourage them to go on to read the novel 'Sac de billes' by Joseph Joffo.

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.

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 the University of St Andrews, NCR and Xelect.

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

Loches Presentation at the Byre Theatre

In September four of our S3 pupils who had participated in the French Exchange to Loches in May were invited by the St Andrews branch of the Franco-Scottish Society to give a presentation at the Byre Theatre.

Robin Hamilton, Ola Lawonska, Luisa Miller and Rafi Reicher-Saleem gave a Power Point presentation on each of their trips to Loches. Those in attendance were very impressed by their performance, which was extremely eloquent, entertaining and enthusiastic.



Modern Languages

German News

The Advanced Higher German pupils recently visited the S1 German class with German twins, Anne and Carolin Gohring from Hanover who have just spent a term at Madras. The pupils discussed differences between the German and Scottish education systems and highlighted the value of taking part in school exchanges to experience these differences for themselves.

Ella Markham (S6) and Flynn Duane (S6) have regularly attended the two S2 German classes as peer tutors. Their help has been invaluable. Lawrence Brown (S6) and Jessica Aitken (S6) have been working as Language Ambassadors on Thursday afternoons with pupils at Guardbridge Primary School. We are keen to encourage the uptake of German to ensure the continuity of the longest running school to school exchange in the UK, the Kiel Exchange now in its 62nd year.

The S5 and S6 pupils celebrated European Day of Languages with a cake, baked by Lawrence Brown and decorated with the European Union flag. A few weeks later the pupils celebrated the Day of German Unity with a cake, baked by Flynn Duane in the shape of the united Germany.

“Modern Languages: Meet and Mingle”

Twenty-six S5 Modern Languages pupils, accompanied by Miss MacEachen and Miss Hoy, visited the School of Modern Languages at the University of St Andrews networking event on Wednesday 21st 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 university 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.

The accompanying staff met with the university staff to discuss issues about transition from school to university.

Everyone enjoyed the afternoon and pupils found it most informative.



Art Department

In September over sixty S4-6 Art and Design pupils, accompanied by Mr Wotherspoon and Miss Stewart, visited the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh. They were able to view the Gallery's permanent collection as well the temporary exhibitions of work by German artist Emil Nolde, English contemporary artist Jenny Saville and Indian contemporary artist Raqib Shaw. Pupils gathered information to be used in their exam written paper. Everyone found this an inspiring experience and were highly impressed by the variety and quality of work on display.



Social Subjects News

Westminster Visit

The Higher Politics class took part in a very busy trip to London last week.

They took the sleeper down to London to visit Westminster, during the visit they were taken into the House of Commons, and had a tour of the Palace of Westminster. They were then allowed to watch Lady Brady of the Apprentice make a speech in the House of Lords on the issue of reconciliation in war zones.

In the afternoon we had a walking tour of London led by Mr Robertson

and took in some of the sites, including Downing Street and Buckingham Palace, later in the afternoon we went on a guided tour of the Supreme Court, and heard about some of its most famous judgements. In the evening there was still time for a cruise down the Thames and pizza before returning to the sleeper.

The photographs below show the pupils on the steps of Westminster Hall, the site of some very famous speeches from the like of Nelson Mandela and Barack Obama.



Environmental Science



On a bright and sunny day in November, the Higher Environmental Science class went on a fieldtrip to Tentsmuir Forest. They looked at Sand Dune succession along a transect, collecting a wide range of data via an equally wide range of fieldwork techniques. The class also made history, with Elliot and Georgia (pictured below) making the first dig of the new educational facility close to the Ice House, due to open in 2019.



Developing Young Workforce

Congratulations to John Simpson from S4 who made a great success of his weekly Wednesday DYW work experience at Cambo

Heritage trust - next to Cambo House Visitor centre.

John maintained his enthusiasm for the entire six weeks of the work experience programme on which he learnt a number of crafts and skills: from making apple juice and seasonal chutney to building

wooden Christmas trees and raised bed enclosures, John proved he was up to the challenge.

John also gave as good as he got with the social banter - engaging in an effortless way with adults and university student volunteers. John hopes to return to Cambo in the New Year to build on this wonderful work experience.



Remembering Auschwitz

This Autumn Skye Donnelly, Caitlin Mckee and Mrs. Matheson visited Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland for one day as part of the lessons from Auschwitz programme.

Caitlin and Skye will be passing on their experiences in the coming term where they will be informing S3 and S5 pupils of their experience visiting Auschwitz.

The trip was a long, emotional and exhausting one but also one which was worthwhile. Caitlin and Skye look forward to passing on all that they have learned from the trip.

SPORTS NEWS

Madras Inspire

At East Sands

East Sands Leisure Centre, St Andrews, ran a fitness based scheme over the past two terms entitled 'Madras Inspire' for Madras College pupils. The main instructor, Dennis Smith ran the thirteen week course from August through until December. Pupils took part in swimming, racquetball, table tennis, a circuit class, spin bike class and the main activity – the gym. Four pupils 'graduated' from 'Madras Inspire' gaining their gym passes along with a one month free silver pass thanks to Leisure Active.



S D S

National Swimming Championships



Madras took a strong swimming team to compete in the annual inter-school gala at Lochgelly HS in September.

From that event, twelve Madras swimmers qualified to represent the Fife swimming team at the National Championships in Tollcross, Glasgow in November. All swimmers competed well and made it through the heats to reach their respective finals.

Blake Tennant (pictured bottom right) was one of two Madras pupils to win a medal – he won bronze in the 25 metre back crawl. Josh Gibson was the other medal winner.

Triathlon

Great news to end the year with, in the Triathlon Scotland Legends Ranking Series for 2017/18; Aquathlon (swim/run) - Anna Hedley (S3) and Ruby Methven (S2) ranked 1st and 2nd both in the age 13-14 category.

Triathlon (swim/bike/run) - Ruby Methven was ranked 3rd for the age 13-14 category.

Active Schools

The Young Ambassadors recently presented to local Councillors, Councillor Jonny Tepp and Councillor Tim Brett.

The Young Ambassadors, made up of S5/6 pupils, work in partnership with Active Schools and the PE Department to promote, develop and organise sport and physical activity for their peers.

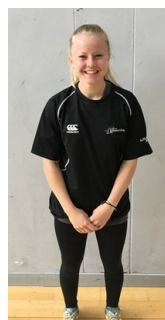


The Young Ambassadors presented on their roles and their achievements throughout the academic year, to the Councillors. Main achievements from the Ambassadors include setting up a S4-6 fitness club, a S1-6 basketball club, the introduction of the Madras Sports Stars Programme and formation of a School Sports Committee.

Competition Organisers Training

Madras College were recently represented at Active Schools Competition Organisers Training by two S3 pupils, Charlotte Travers and Katie McKay. Through this programme the girls gained knowledge on how to engage participants within sport, structure sessions and competition formats. On completion of the training the girls will now work with Active Schools Co-ordinator Lynne MacKenzie to support cluster programmes.

Young Ambassador of the Month



Fantastic news that Laura Nicol was awarded 'Young ambassador' for November. This award recognises that Laura has been proactive in her role as a Young Ambassador, displaying the initiative to present new ideas and suggestions to her mentor. This has resulted in her collaborating with St Andrews University to create a new S4-s6 weekly fitness programme for girls. As well as supporting Tayport PS and at the S1 sports fayre.

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, 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 (from your mobile phone browser)
- **on Facebook** - follow-us on facebook.com/fifecouncil
- **on Twitter** - follow-us on 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



ALERTS

Sign up for email or text alerts:
school closures, road updates
and service disruptions

Dates for Your Diary

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

(all dates inclusive)

Monday 24th December 2018 —

Friday 7th January 2019

Thursday 14th and Friday 15th February 2019

Friday 5th — Friday 19th April 2019

INSERVICE

Wednesday 13 February 2019

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