



Weekly News 13th September 2019



From the Head

Last Friday we enjoyed an excellent assembly led by the Conservation Club, and I draw your attention to Mrs Wyatt's article [here](#) and her request for help with this year's whole school conservation targets!

"On Friday morning the Conservation Club presented to the whole school assembly. Although early into the new academic year, it was an excellent opportunity for them to outline the many initiatives they had worked on since their creation in 2018 and to set out their targets for the coming year. Over 20 girls from 5, 6 and 7J took part, sharing their achievements which included raising money to sponsor a Bottlenose dolphin from the Moray Firth by way of a very successful swap shop activity, to beginning a letter writing campaign to various Government departments, businesses and Aberdeen Council.

Within school there has been a noticeable reduction in the use of plastic resulting in a huge increase in the use of reusable water bottles. The club continues to collect Walkers crisps bags and during the summer over 1,500 empty packets were taken to a local collection centre to be recycled. This year the club is focusing on paper, not only in terms of reducing the amount used but setting the challenge of replenishing the raw materials - the trees - which we all take for granted. In the light of the terrible fires in the Arctic and Brazil, the club intends to promote new initiatives within the school and wider community to replace and restock our woodlands. It is a huge challenge but vitally important. On a small scale the club invited all the classes in school to remove paper towels, replacing them with cloths which can be washed and reused. On a larger scale, the club is keen to work with the wider community hoping to secure a piece of land, or allotment, where new saplings can be planted for future generations. We have already been invited to join an initiative involving the collecting and planting of acorns from the Crathes estate which we are very excited about.

If you think that you may be able to help us to meet these targets, the club would love to hear from you. The Woodland Trust is currently offering free trees to schools and communities - we would very much like to be a part of this. The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is today (Chinese proverb)."



1 and 2 Junior went out for their first outdoor learning session last week to Rubislaw Terrace Gardens. We started with some 'getting to know you' activities before exploring the safe boundaries. We then worked in pairs to find different textures to add to our palettes before doing some rubbings using chalk and wax crayon. In our free time we chose to make obstacle courses with chalk, climb trees and make nests with the cut grass.

Mrs J. Garden and Miss S. Hulme
1 and 2 Junior





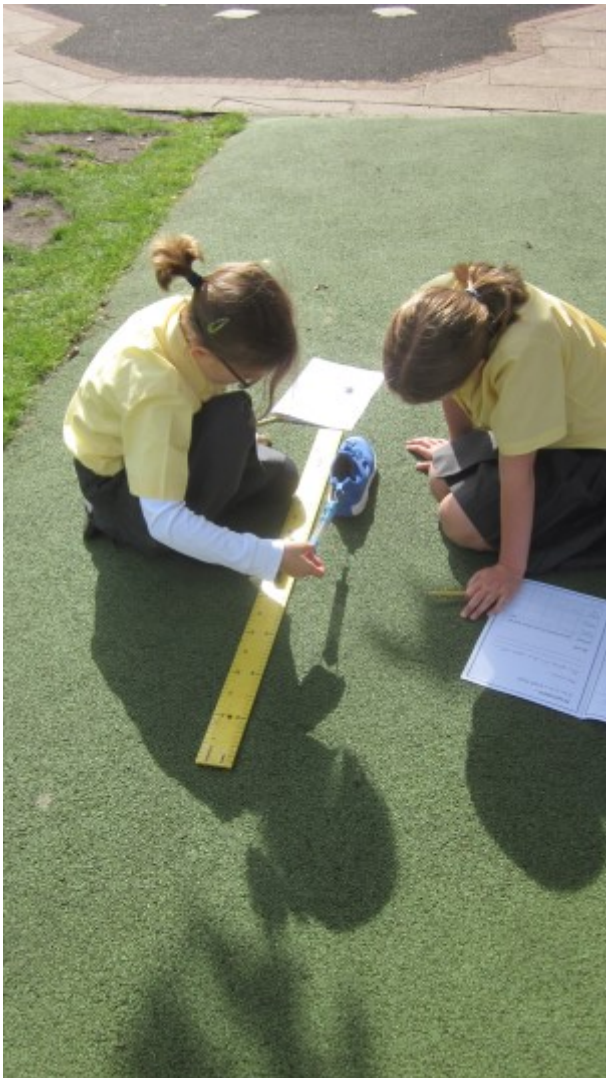
6 Junior News...the first few weeks

The first few weeks of term have been a busy time for 6J - settling in to their new classroom, adapting to the demands of a new academic year and being encouraged to become more independent in their learning.

In social studies the girls have been researching the many faces of Queen Victoria, from her early years, marriage and motherhood, through to her period of mourning after the death of Prince Albert. The girls have created collages from images and pictures they have found on the internet and made eye-catching visual timelines of Victoria's life.

In science, designing and testing soles of shoes has been the focus of our lessons, learning the definition of friction and how friction is used in real life situations. As part of their project 6 Junior have been tasked with creating a new non slip sole for a running shoe. Their designs, with explanations, will be displayed in the top junior corridor next week.

Mrs G. Wyatt





6 Junior News...the first few weeks (continued)





6 Junior News...the first few weeks (continued)



Lego League City Shaper Challenge

Let the building commence! Last Wednesday saw the inaugural meeting of the St. Margaret's Lego League Club. First Lego League is an international competition organized by FIRST, for students aged 9 to 16 years. Each year First Lego League introduces a scientific, real-world challenge for teams to focus on, and research. The robotics part of the competition involves designing and programming Lego Mindstorms robots to complete tasks. The students work out solutions to the various problems they are given whilst being guided by the six FIRST core values: inclusion, discovery, innovation, impact, teamwork and fun.

The girls were all eager and ready to take part in the City Shaper Challenge. The girls were split into two teams and introduced to their ROVOP mentors, who will be guiding and offering technical knowledge to assist the girls during the design and making process. We are also grateful to ROVOP for sponsoring one of our kits.

This week saw our first opportunity to build the basic robot and to start building the Lego structures that will be used in the Challenge Mission. Focus and concentration was intense as all were actively involved. Some of the steps were quite tricky but we persevered. The 60 minutes sped by but we all were proud of what we had achieved.

We are all looking forward to our next meeting.

Mrs E. Gibb, Mrs G. Wyatt and Mrs P. Twigg





I Senior Biology Trip

Last Friday, the whole of I Senior participated in the biology field trip to Hazlehead Park. Apart from the slightly chilly weather, we had an exciting time analysing different types of lichens on the trees, looking at the life that lies within the water and finding various species of bugs. We also had the chance to upload our data onto the OPAL website where they can use our information in their research.

Ellie Ong IA





Art and Design Animation Student Visit

The art department was delighted to welcome Leah McAdam (a former pupil of Mrs Scott's) to talk to our VS and VIS girls about her creative journey from school to college to university.

Here is what they said:

"Leah coming in allowed us to see how a student can develop and grow so individually. She had taken the route right for her, opting to go to college from school in order to gain new experience before university and showing that she knew her passions and what she wanted to do but also her limits. Leah also illustrated to us how we should take every opportunity and see what happens as she unexpectedly and fortunately got to go to a summer school in Paris. Her talk was undeniably inspiring as we were exposed to not only Leah's story but her clear passion for art (and amazing portfolios!)"

Kezia Fraser VS

"When Leah showed us her artwork from IVS through to uni, with her dedication and passion to make sure she got into the top animation course in the UK, it made me feel like I actually had a chance doing what I wanted if I worked hard enough."

Justine Arndt VS

"Seeing Leah's journey and her entire folio from N5 all the way through to uni really inspired me. She had a few set-backs along the way, however, she used them as opportunities to gain experience and is now well on the way to working at the top end of the animation industry. Seeing her development also showed myself that there are many forms of art and you just have to find what is right for you!"

Ruth Leith VS





Art and Design - What's On

North East Open Studios 14th to 23rd September - every September local artists, makers and designers open their studios to the public. This is a great opportunity to meet and chat with individual artists and see their working process and exhibitions; please go to the website for more information: <https://www.northeastopenstudios.co.uk/artists-search/>

Gallery Heinzl on Thistle Street has a new exhibition of Robert McAulay work, from Saturday 14th to 5th October.

Stonehaven Art Club annual exhibition - 14th to 23rd September at Stonehaven Town Hall.



FP donation in memory of physics teacher, Mr Ian Gall

We were delighted by a recent donation from the Former Pupils Club in memory of Ian Gall, which allowed the Physics department to purchase a ripple tank, allowing pupils to see and experience ripple effects in water. Ian served many years as a physics teacher at St Margaret's and is fondly remembered by the many pupils who passed through his classroom. He was well known as a regular contributor to school activities and events, long after he retired, but Ian sadly passed away in May this year.

Mr A. Mountain



Hockey

Congratulations go to Martha Sheal and Jennifer Tait who were selected from thirty five girls to represent the U18 North District squad at the inter-district tournament in Edinburgh this weekend.

Dance

Congratulations go to Aimee in IIS who recently passed her ISTD Intermediate Foundation exam with Distinction. Her Modern class is competing in The Aberdeen Dance Proms at the Beach Ballroom on the 9th and 10th of October. Aimee has also been asked to represent her dance school, Evolution School of Dance, in the opening number along with one representative from each of the dance schools competing.

Mrs K. Norval



PTA MINUTES OF AGM AUGUST 26th

PRESENT: Head Teacher Miss Tomlinson, Bursar Mr Mountain, Deputy Head Mrs Lynch, Deputy Head (Learning & Teaching) Mrs Smith, Head of Juniors Mrs Murray, and Nursery Manager Miss Minett. Also in attendance were Chairwoman Tracey Almeida, Vice Chair and Acting Secretary Sally McDonald and Treasurer Henry Irvine-Fortescue.

APOLOGIES: Audrey Sheal, Isla Davidson, Gillian Corry and Judith Mackie

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT:

Chair Tracey Almeida welcomed a super turn out of parents to the AGM and said she was delighted to see so many new faces which included a good number of dads. TA gave a brief explanation of the role of the PTA. She pointed out that it existed not only to raise funds (for those special 'extra' items not normally covered by the school budget) but also to organise fun events for both pupils, parents and staff, with the aim of enhancing the school community.

TA gave examples of the many and varied events held, from a sell-out afternoon cream tea, to a fish and chip quiz night, a fun film night and a Christmas extravaganza. She also spoke about the hugely popular and highly successful pre-loved book and uniform sales organised by Gillian Corry. It runs twice each year providing an invaluable service to parents and raising bumper funds for the PTA. Mrs Corry and her small army of helpers are to be commended for their hard work and dedication in delivering this service.

The chair also highlighted proposed new and exciting events for the coming year and encouraged all to keep a close eye on future announcements on both the PTA's Facebook page and in the school newsletter. She encouraged all parents new to the school to feel free to offer up ideas for future events.

TA concluded by adding that the PTA had had a bumper year, despite the challenges of being for a time without a secretary and treasurer and she paid tribute to those who had given their support throughout the year, both in the organisation and staffing of events, and to those who had enthusiastically attended and engaged in the spirit of the occasion.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The PTA's new Treasurer, Henry Irvine-Fortescue, presented two years accounts for the years to 30 June 2018 and 2019. The income comes from the uniform and book sale, the Christmas hamper raffle, the quiz and fish and chips supper, Bags 2 School, sports day and Easy Fundraising initiative, along with relatively recent social events for parents and pupils like the spring afternoon tea and the movie night.

Net income after relevant expenses for the two years was £6,822 and £7,660 respectively which he said is a fantastic result. It has meant that additional items have been purchased for the school.

These include the refurbishment of the multi-purpose room, black-out blinds for the drama studio, classroom display screens, benches for the nursery kitchen, equipment for after-school care and the holiday club, and a water fountain.

He advised both the Head Teacher and Bursar of cash now available for the purchase of additional items, and pledged, as with all other past expenditure, to make parents aware via the PTA Facebook and Web page and future school newsletters exactly what their donations, fundraising and support have brought to the school.

The accounts – which are now due to be audited – were formally adopted at the meeting.



ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS:

Nominations were received and seconded resulting in each of the existing office bearers continuing in their posts (TA Chair, SMcD Vice Chair, and HIF Treasurer).

A secretary is still required but SMcD – who is filling the role at present – advised that the task was neither too onerous nor time consuming, requiring attendance at only one meeting per term which involved handling the minutes. She stressed that full support would be given.

AOB:

St Margaret's Head of Development Rachel Paterson-Davies addressed the meeting to explain her role within the school's development department. She explained that she currently works with former parents, pupils and staff and would like to further enhance her links with the PTA to work more closely with both its members and parents. She encouraged all to "feel free" to go and speak with her and alerted the meeting to a future online event on the history of the school.

Comments from the floor included the importance of the role of Class Reps who are a vital link between the PTA and parents, disseminating information and rallying support for events. TA, SMcD, and HIF endorsed the comments, saying the PTA could not operate effectively without them.

The meeting was told that a calendar of events for the entire year was now being discussed with staff and, in response to parents' requests, would be circulated in the near future to afford them plenty of advance notice and an opportunity to make appropriate entries in their diaries.

CLOSE:

Head Teacher Miss Tomlinson thanked the PTA and its supporters for their efforts throughout the year.

Chair Tracey Almeida thanked all for attending the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Please note that PTA meetings are held at 4pm in the school for the convenience of parents. Meetings last only around an hour and refreshments are provided. If you feel you can be involved, or help in any way, please do contact any of the above office bearers.

Mrs Tracey Almeida
Chair



17 SEPTEMBER 2019

Lower Deeside: Working together for the youth in our COMMUNITY



Being an adolescent in our society is not easy. Are you confused about how to support your child - from exam stress to phone attachment? Are you worried about drugs, alcohol or cyberbullying? You are not alone...

Access to topic specialists on current trends affecting young people.

• Increase parenting knowledge, awareness & skills.

• Opportunity to work together to support young people's well-being.

• Come along and have your say and questions answered.

HILLVIEW
COMMUNITY CHURCH
Earlswells Road, Cults,
AB15 9NY

Register: [Eventbrite](#)
[Lower Deeside](#)
[Working Together](#)

Cost: Free

Time: 7 - 9pm



Are you.....

- Unsure what "normal" behaviour in young people is?
- Concerned your child might be experiencing poorer mental health?
- Feeling a bit overwhelmed in facing the ever-growing challenges of helping your children make full use of the advantage of digital technology whilst safeguarding them from the potential dangers?
- Worried about stories of drug use and wondering what the warning signs are that you should be looking out for? What do we do on the dreaded day that we suspect our children have used drugs?
- Unsure if a few beers or glasses of wine are okay as part of our teens' "Rites of Passage?" But what is the real impact of this on our children? What if you are the only parent not allowing it?

If you can relate to any of these questions - please join us on the 17th September 2019 at Hillview Community Church, Cults, Aberdeen. Doors will open from 6:30 pm for registration, coffee and tea. Information sessions and presentations will commence at 7 pm on:

- Cyber safety
- Young people's mental and emotional well being
- Drugs and alcohol

This event is open to all involved with raising children in primary or secondary schools in the Lower Deeside area and aims to offer help and support in various aspects of parenting. In line with successful projects around the world, we are starting this exciting time in our community with the support of the **NHS, Alcohol and Drug Partnership, Aberdeen Counselling and Information Service (ACIS), the Police, Cybersafe Scotland, CREW 2000, Aberdeen City Council, local churches and others.**

Our sincere hope is that this will be the start of a journey where we can work together to raise our children in a safer, stronger community, supporting each other through the challenges we are facing. By working together through open discussions, we aim to create and provide tailored community support and information where needed most.

Come ready to ask questions, pick up helpful resources and tips and to propose ideas of what could help all parents in this area to flourish as part of our community.

If you would like more information on these topics but are unable to on the night please e mail: nhsg.aberdeencityadp@nhs.net.

