



Weekly News 15th November 2019



From the Head

We are grateful to our Parent Teacher Association for their organisation of a number of forthcoming events to which I draw your attention:

Bag2School Collection - Monday 18th November;
PTA Festive Family Quiz - Friday 6th December;
PTA Cheese and Wine Event - Tuesday 10th December.



Bag2School Collection

This week your child has been given a Bag2School collection sack to take home. Should you have items that you no longer use and wish to donate, please secure the items inside the Bag2School sack, and bring it to the school's iron gate in the front car park in time for the collection at **9am on Monday 18th November**.

Please note that we will not be able to store bags in the school office before this date.

Bag2School cannot accept items of school uniform with logo, but would be very grateful for items of clothing, paired shoes in good condition (tied or secured together), accessories, belts, soft toys and household linen such as curtains and towels, **but not** duvets, blankets, cushions or pillows.

Bag2School helps raise funds for the PTA while supporting those in need, and we thank you for your generous contribution.

Ms K. Schmitz



PTA Festive Family Quiz

We are planning our Festive Family Quiz which will be held on Friday December 6th in the school hall (6pm for 6.30pm). We'll have a Christmas Tree, tombola, refreshments, and a fantastic selection of luxury hampers to be raffled. It will be a fun event for the whole family so please save the date and check the weekly news for further updates! Watch out for the books of raffle tickets which will be coming home in school bags over the next few days.

Mrs R. Paterson-Davies





PTA Cheese and Wine Event with Tessa Williams

Your PTA is hosting a one-off, cheese and wine event with Tessa Williams, a former model and the author of *Hotels of the Stars*. She will on Tuesday, December 10th, get 'up close and personal' with St Margaret's mums and chums to share secrets she discovered while researching her sumptuous, eye-opening book. With a preface by award-winning actor and director Richard E Grant and a foreword by legendary chef, restaurateur and hotelier Albert Roux, founder of the Le Gavroche, this lavish read comes highly recommended – as does its author, who is now working on *Hotels of the Stars 2*. Let her lead you into the world of the uber elite like Brad Pitt, Naomi Campbell and Elizabeth Taylor to indulge in a little scandal. And discover where literary and cultural heavyweights like Steinbeck, Garbo and Dali hung out – you won't be disappointed.

Tessa, is also the author of *Cult Perfumes* and the creator of a range of bespoke fragrances from perfume to scented candles, each carrying their own celebrity endorsement - Hollywood actress Kirstie Alley, UK former rock chick and ex-wife of Noel Gallagher Meg Mathews, and tennis ace Judy Murray to name but a few. Tessa will not only answers questions about the hotels she has explored and the secrets they hold, but will also talk about some of the planet's most iconic perfumes and the creation of her own luxury line. Her fragrance range will be available to buy and you even have a chance to net a signed copy of her books. A percentage of all sales is kindly being donated to PTA coffers along with a fabulous raffle prize. And there will also be a chance to win some of the latest top titles in our book bonanza.

This glittering event with limited seats available, kicks off at 6.30pm and is suitable for adults only (including S5&6 girl, former pupils, parents, teaching staff, and their families and friends)

Admission is only £5 per person, payable in advance. There are three ways to pay (by December 5th please), just choose the one that suits you best:

- direct to the PTA account (Bank of Scotland, sort code 80-05-14, account number 0029 2156) also emailing the PTA treasurer Henry@kingcausie.co.uk to confirm your name and names of those in your party who are attending.
- by cheque (made payable to St Margaret's Parent Association) which should be sealed in an envelope bearing your name and the words 'PTA December 10th event' and left at the school reception.
- or by cash as above.

Mrs Sally McDonald





Below is the second instalment in the series of parent guides from www.thinkuknow.co.uk, an invaluable online resource in supporting schools and families in delivering education and raising awareness of online child abuse and exploitation.

HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH YOUR CHILD

Starting the conversation:

Find a good time and place. Try to choose a good moment. Pick an opportunity when you know you're not going to be interrupted and you are both going to feel comfortable and have enough time – without turning it into one of those 'special talks' moments.

Think about how you are going to introduce the subject. You could mention a recent news story or just explain why you would like to talk to them about something. Try to be clear. It's no good having a difficult conversation if at the end of it they don't really understand what you wanted to talk to them about.

Explain to them why you are worried. Your child might think that you are getting worried for no good reason, but if you explain why something is troubling you they will understand why you want to talk to them. Tell them if it is something you've noticed in their behaviour or maybe something you have read about or seen their friends doing. Help them to understand your worries so that together you can work them out.

Let them talk. It's hard sometimes when a child doesn't want to open up. Asking them a question like 'how are things going' and remembering to give them time to answer will help. It's tempting to keep talking at them to fill the space – try not to.

Listen more than you talk. A conversation has to have two people in it. It's important you listen to them and that you explain you'd like them to listen to you. Talking at them is never going to work.

Be loving and supportive. The most difficult conversations can be made easier if your child understands that you care about them and whatever the outcome you will love them just as much.

If your child tells you something that worries you:

Take a break. If your child is telling you things that worry you it is really important to stay calm and not to react immediately. Let them tell you what's going on and then decide together how you're going to deal with it.

Get help together. If your child tells you something which means they could be in danger you must report this to the relevant organisations. Try to agree to do this together. Don't take over unless you think that is your only option.

Get support for yourself. Your focus is going to be on looking after your child but remember to look after yourself as well and get support from your family and friends. You can get further [advice from Thinkuknow](#), [Parent Zone](#) and [Parent Info](#), and there are [other organisations that can help](#) you and your child.

What if your child doesn't want to talk?

If your child doesn't want to talk to you and you are still really worried don't give up. Try again another time or find a different way to start the conversation. Be patient and make sure they know where they can go themselves for support on difficult issues. You might want to talk to their teacher to see if they share your concerns – whatever you decide be ready when your child decides they want to talk to you.



St Margaret's Day Service at St Machar's Cathedral

This morning school will hold its annual St Margaret's Day Service in the ancient St Machar Cathedral. The flat oak ceiling, which dates back to 1520, is decorated with heraldic shields representing the monarchies of Europe, and includes St Margaret of Scotland.

The cathedral attracts 25,000 visitors a year and if you can't visit it in person you can take one of their virtual tours and see if you can find St Margaret's shield:

http://www.stmachar.com/heraldic_ceiling.htm

The Cathedral has launched a fundraising campaign, Raise the Roof, to help raise £350,000 to meet the £1.85 million target to complete the required roof repairs and protect the ceiling. For £10, supporters can buy a slate and the names of all those who have donated will be written on a scroll and placed in a time capsule within the roof. The school will, of course, be supporting this essential project and if you would like further information on the appeal please contact the Cathedral on 01224 485988 or office@stmachar.com.

Mrs R. Paterson-Davies





St Margaret's Annual Fund 2019 - 2020

Earlier in the autumn term the school launched its second annual fund appeal. More information about the appeal can be found on our webpages (<https://stmargaretsconnect.com/#annualfund2019/20>) but it may be useful to have a bit more context around why the school is making this appeal.

What is the annual fund?

The annual fund is an appeal to our community to support the school's bursary programme, providing means-tested transformational bursaries. The annual fund will run for this academic year.

Why is this appeal needed?

As a charity regulated by OSCR the school must, and does, provide means-tested bursaries. These are funded by careful management of school finances together with gifts from donors.

Demand for bursary support, however, exceeds what the school can provide. We are reaching out to ask for your support in helping us offer the opportunity for a St Margaret's education to girls from our community.

How will your donation be used?

Your donation will be used to support the St Margaret's Fund which will provide transformational means-tested bursaries, unless you wish your support to be directed towards other school initiatives.

How will you know if your gift has had a positive impact?

We will update all donors on the progress of the annual fund appeal. For reasons of confidentiality we cannot disclose the recipients of awards but we will update supporters with information around the bursaries awarded as a result of the appeal.

What other fundraising activities is the school involved in?

Our school and pupils benefit from a dedicated group of donors who have supported bursaries, music and pupil clubs to name a few initiatives. Occasionally gifts are unexpected but other donors prefer to make a longer and planned commitment and it is fantastic to have all their support.

The school are actively engaged in applying to trusts and foundations for support for the bursary programme and this work is a priority for the Development Office.

And of course, the PTA have been tremendous fundraising champions for the school with their activities throughout the year, helping to fund projects from nursery through to senior school.

What value of gifts is the school expecting?

Every gift, no matter the size, will make a difference to our bursary fund. Whether you chose to give a single gift or a recurring gift, £5 or £100, all of your donation will be used to support the pupils who benefit from St Margaret's Fund.

How can you give?

You can give by completing the donation form on the website and sending into the school: <https://www.st-margaret.aberdeen.sch.uk/downloads/Donation-form-2019.pdf> Donations can be made by bank transfer, banker's order or cheque.

If you have any further questions please contact our Head of Development, Rachel Paterson-Davies (r.patersondavies@st-margaret.uk)



ANNUAL FUND 2019/20
OUR SCHOOL, OUR COMMUNITY, OUR FUTURE



Outdoor Learning at Hazlehead Woods

1 and 2 Junior had their first session at Hazlehead woods as part of their outdoor learning. They worked with a ranger and toasted marshmallows around a fire pit. They peeled their own sticks using vegetable peelers to make sharp ends for their marshmallows.

They also helped to feed the wildlife with threading Cheerios onto branches which was a good fine motor skill activity. The girls explored the steep hill and were very resilient with the rainy, chilly weather.

Mrs J. Garden and Miss S. Hulme







Natural Disaster - Volcanic Eruptions!

After several long weeks of papier-mâché, painting, gluing and waiting, finally the 5 Junior girls had the opportunity to ignite their volcanoes. Our investigations have told us that volcanoes erupt due to pressure from tectonic activity. However, we used a mixture of warm water, washing-up liquid, vinegar, baking powder and, of course, some food colouring for dramatic effect!

Mrs E. Gibb



String Concertino

On Tuesday 5th November Mrs Wiedermann and the Junior Strings Group treated the audience to an enjoyable hour of music. The afternoon was kicked off by the Purcell Players performing a very entertaining Double Bass Rap and German Song. We then enjoyed solo, duet and small group performances. Girls from as young as 2 Junior stood up to perform and it was great to see the progression in the playing of all the girls. Well done!

'I had a excellent time playing my cello with Sophie; we both loved playing Tap Dancer for everyone listening to us.' - Emily G., 4 Junior.

'I enjoyed playing my violin at the concertino. It was great fun and nice to see the younger girls play so well.' - Jessica, 7 Junior

Mrs V. Gunn





Junior Conservation Club

The Junior School Conservation Club planted 2,000 hyacinth bulbs on Wednesday lunchtime. The bulbs, a gift from Aberdeen City, will add a touch of colour to the front lawn and complement the existing daffodils. The school gardener very kindly removed the top layer of turf making the planting easier for the girls who enjoyed placing each individual bulb up the right way, and then bedding them in by stamping down the turfs. Thankfully the weather stayed bright and sunny, despite the overnight frost.

The girls in the club will be heading out to Hazlehead Discovery Woodland on the 27th November to help the Aberdeen City Council Rangers plant new trees. It is such an exciting start to the year.

Mrs G. Wyatt





Junior Conservation Club (continued)





Let's Have a Blether About Books!

Book Week Scotland takes place from Monday 18th until Friday 22nd November. This year's theme is 'blether'. St Margaret's will be celebrating by hosting a number of events for pupils and staff.

'Book at Breakfast' – this will take place every morning from 18th to 22nd November in the school library from 8:15 to 8:35am. Two special guests will be talking about their own love of reading and reading aloud extracts from their favourite texts. All senior pupils welcome. Light breakfast refreshments will be on offer.

'Book Bake-Off' – pupils and staff are invited to take part in this competition. You make choose to bake a cake, a number of cupcakes, biscuits, bread or any other type of 'bake' and it must be based upon a book (fiction or non-fiction). There must be no nuts or nut-based products used in the making of your bake. Bakes must be brought into school for judging on Wednesday 20th November. Winners will be announced on Friday 22nd November.

'Big Book Swap' – pupils from IA have arranged a charity book sale on Friday 22nd November at lunchtime in the Hall.

'St Margaret's Reads' – pupils from across the Senior School have been participating in a reading survey during this week. The results will be published at the end of Book Week Scotland. This survey will indicate what our favourite books are and provide pupils with a recommended reading list just in time for Christmas.

We hope you will join us in celebrating reading and if you are unable to join us in school, then we hope you can find your own opportunity to have a blether about books.

The English Department





Divided Berlin Talk

The history department held a talk for pupils and staff on the topic of, 'Divided Berlin.' We were delighted to have strings teacher Mrs Wiedermann as our guest speaker. Mrs Wiedermann grew up in West Berlin during the era of the Cold War. She shared her memories of what life was like during that time. She spoke very vividly about going to visit relatives in the East, and the differences between their lives. The girls also had an opportunity to ask her any questions about her experience. Her talk was very informative and was particularly useful for our National 5 pupils who are studying this topic. We would like to thank Mrs Wiedermann for taking the time to share her story with us.

Mrs S. Stirton





Visit to Belmont Cinema - French Film

On Wednesday 6th November, the III Senior French classes headed to the Belmont cinema to watch the French film, 'Une Colonie'. We were invited along with three other schools as part of the annual French Film Festival. The whole film was shown in French, which encouraged us to use our knowledge of the language to understand the film, although there were English subtitles to aid our understanding.

Set in Sorel Tracy, Québec, 'Une Colonie' focuses on the life of twelve year old Mylia, who is entering high school for the first time. She meets Jacthine, a popular girl who introduces Mylia to teenage life, and Jimmy, a quiet boy who she secretly befriends. The film follows Mylia's journey through the early stages of her teenage years. It mainly focuses on how Jacthine and Jimmy influence her life, and brings the good and bad aspects of teenage life to light. It is a realistic film and highlights these issues to a wide range of people.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the film and are grateful that we were given the opportunity to view a French film, which has added to our knowledge of the language.

Bethan Wood and Amy Coxon, III Senior



Athletics

Congratulations go to Josie Laing and Anna McNeill for receiving awards at the recent end of season AAA awards night. Josie came first and Anna came second in the Under 13 championships. Josie was also delighted to pick up the award for the most promising sprinter.



Basketball

On Wednesday after school a group of IS-IIIS girls played in a friendly basketball game against Aberdeen Grammar School. The matches were tightly contested with St Margaret's managing to score just one more basket to clinch it so the girls were delighted!





PE News (continued)

Hockey Leaders Course

The Scottish hockey development officer, Mark Pain, along with Active Schools are looking to run a Hockey Leaders course at St Machar Academy 4-6pm on 27th November and 4th December. This course is free and open to pupils and adults aged 12 years and upwards. Participants would need to attend both dates to complete the course. The content of the course is now going to be more in line with the new GB coaching pathway, so it has the following structure over the course of 3 hours:

- Intro
- Warm Ups
- Running Games (including umpiring)
- Festival organisation

Anyone interested should email Mark on mark.pain@SCOTTISH-HOCKEY.ORG.UK.

Tae Kwon Do

Congratulations go to our martial arts captain Caitriona Hastings who has just passed her black belt in Tae Kwon Do. She spends on average four nights a week training and after 11 years was delighted to achieve this belt.

Mrs K. Norval



Debating Success

Congratulations to Kasia Bain and Sophie Jennings, both IV Senior, who were placed first in the third round of the North of Scotland Schools' debating competition last week. They debated the motion 'This House believes that it is my body and I can do what I like with it.'

The final of this competition will be held here in school on Friday 29th November. The evening will run from 6:30pm to 0:00pm, as the debate will be followed by a buffet. The motion for debate is 'This House believes that democracy is just an illusion.'

All girls who would like to attend should see Mrs Jennings as soon as possible.

Mrs H. Jennings



Art and Design - What's On

Northern Arts Club Christmas Exhibition - 22nd to 24th November 2019. View and buy original artworks, prints and greeting cards by local artists.

HAAN Design Market - Design Pop Up HAAN- 6th to 8th December 2019, Aberdeen Art Gallery , Friday 6 – 9pm; Saturday 10am – 5pm, Sunday 11am – 4pm.

Fold – The Barn Arts: a new dedicated retail and workshop space presenting the best in contemporary Scottish Craft and Design from established and emerging designer-makers, Saturday 16th November 10am – 4pm.

Mrs J. Richardson



The Robert Gordon University's school of sociology is beginning a Community Seminar Series where the community can come and attend public interest discussions, debates and lectures free of charge. These events will be held monthly and we hope that we're going to have some really exciting discussions! Please contact a.butler2@rgu.ac.uk with any questions.

Should we stay or should we go? A tale of five referendums, Dr Coree Brown Swan (University of Edinburgh)

Are referendums the ruin of democracy or are they the only way to make big political decisions?

To tackle this question, join us on a journey through five referendums - on EEC membership in 1975, devolution in 1979 and 1997, independence in 2014 and EU membership in 2016. We will examine each of the referendum campaigns and go on to explore the impact of these referendums on Scottish and British politics. The lecture will draw on the rich visual materials available from the Scottish Political Archive, including posters, pamphlets and leaflets.

Date And Time

Tue, 10 December 2019
18:00 – 19:30 GMT

Location

N204, Sir Ian Wood Building, Robert Gordon University
Garthdee Road
Aberdeen
AB10 7AQ

For more information and to book a place, visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-seminar-series-should-we-stay-or-should-we-go-tickets-81541995303?aff=utm_source%3Demail%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_campaign%3Dnew_event_email&utm_term=eventurl_text

SHOULD WE STAY OR SHOULD WE GO? A TALE OF 5 REFERENDUMS

Dr Coree Brown Swan
University of Edinburgh

Tuesday 10th December 2019
6pm, N204, Sir Ian Wood Building,
Robert Gordon University, Garthdee Road

Join us for the first
Community Seminar Series
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University's School of Applied
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Contact Alice Butler-Warke
for more information:
a.butler2@rgu.ac.uk





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