

2025

Autumn

Issue 25-26

1

School News

Sports

Trips

Shows

Achievements





Introduction From Mr Tuffery

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a relatively settled start to the year at Kirkcudbright Academy, with no substantive changes in staffing and our new S1's have settled in well and are enjoying the different challenges and approaches in the Secondary School. Our S3's are getting ready for their S3 exams and Seniors are getting ready for the first half of their "Prelim." diet, with the second half coming shortly after Christmas. All of these pupils should be working hard at home with revision and preparation for these. At the same time, preparations are underway as we approach the festive season with our S6 leadership team organising a Christmas fair and a large number of pupils from across the year groups have been hard at work on their Christmas Pantomime - Peter Pan.

Already pupils have had many opportunities to participate in a wide variety of activities outside the classroom, including sporting activities in a wide variety of sports, the Maths Challenge, the recently completed London trip for S2 and S3, a STEM trip to the Glasgow Science Centre, YouthSpeaks competition, and the new football experience trip, that had previously been cancelled by the trip company due to issues with Newcastle United fans, was rearranged to include an Anfield stadium tour and a game at Manchester City.

We continue to emphasise being well-presented and ready for learning. In this respect, the year started fantastically well and even now the vast majority of pupils are in correct uniform - the new

school hoodies from Banks and Braes are proving very popular and look smart - there are however a small number of pupils who persistently wear footwear that is not all black, and tracksuits or branded sportswear and I would ask parents and carers to please ensure that their children are dressed in the correct school uniform, in order to avoid possible upset or sanctions. We understand that occasionally it is not possible to be in uniform but would just ask that you let us know, either with a note or a call to the school office.

Attendance at school has never been under greater scrutiny than it is now, at National, Regional and school level. Across the UK, school attendance has been falling over the last few years, and Kirkcudbright Academy has seen similar trends. We know that there are good reasons why some young people cannot attend school on a given day but any possible reduction in absence will be of benefit, both socially and in attainment terms. Last year we found that S4 pupils with attendance at over 95% achieved, on average, 6.3 National 5's at grades A-C, whereas pupils with attendance between 80% and 90% achieved 2.7 National 5's at grades A-C, and it dropped off correspondingly lower as attendance decreased.

As always, please remember that if you have any concerns or queries, contact the school office who can pass these to the most appropriate staff.

Pupil Voice

The Pupil Voice Committee is a new student-led group that was formed at the beginning of the school year. It aims to give pupils a say in wider issues, both in the school and internationally. Last term, the Pupil Voice Committee have been working to support the issue of fast fashion. This is when cheap clothing is worn once or few times and is then thrown away, causing pollution to the environment, specifically in the ocean. To reduce the impact of fast fashion in our local community, the Pupil Voice Committee organised a clothing drive which was held in the Cochran Hall on Friday 10th of October. Donated clothing was sold to pupils and members of

the public with the intention of reusing unwanted items and therefore preventing them from being discarded. Chosen clothes were weighed and then priced by the kilogram to encourage the purchase of more items. Tea, coffee and cakes were also available throughout the event. The primary objective was not to raise money but instead to repurpose clothes, however, all money raised was donated to the EcoArt charity. Thank you to the Parent Council, the Rotary, teachers and everyone else involved in the event.

- Eliza Clark, S5



Parent Council

I, Rebecca McFarlane, am the new Chair of the Parent Council taking over from Laura Moodie who has been Chair for the last 4 years. Laura has worked hard to raise funds and keep all the parents informed about what is going on at the school and about issues which affect pupils and their parents and carers. I look forward to continuing that work.

So far, I have worked with the school in their Gold standard accreditation for UNCRC (United Nations Charter for the Rights of the Child), helped with the Clothes Drive along with other members of the Parent Council, met with the Rector and Prefects regularly, applied for funding, met with parents at P7 evening, used funding to buy school sports kit and sourced a laptop from the IT Centre amongst other ongoing projects.

Coming soon we are planning a Film Night (The Goonies) in the Cochran Hall (November 21st) and will be working on student support materials and opportunities for parents.

If you would like to help out with funds, then setting up a standing order for the monthly draw (In it to Win it) is very easy to do. For £1 a month you will be entered into the draw which is a monthly prize of £30. Ideally, we would like to get to at least 100 active participants. Currently we only have 43 which returns an annual profit of £156 (not even enough to cover the cost of running a website). **If you would like to take part, please set up a standing order for £1 to sort code: 80-08-63 and the Account number is: 00536728.** You will also need to email us at KAPCCChair@outlook.com so we know who to send the money to if you win. If we get to 100 members this will mean an annual contribution to the school of £840. Our recurring annual outgoings to the school are £856 yearly, so this contribution will cover that.

Please support our young people by supporting the Parent Council and feel free to get in touch with any issues or questions you may feel appropriate to discuss or share.

- Rebecca McFarlane

UNCRC Gold Rights Respecting School Award

As a school, we have been on an inspiring journey towards achieving the Gold Rights Respecting School Award through UNICEF UK. This award recognizes schools that have fully embedded the values and principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into every part of school life – from lessons and leadership to relationships and school culture. In October, we had a virtual visit from UNICEF, to check our progress by looking at evidence and asking groups of students, staff and the local community questions on where we see rights in our school community. We have been recommended for the Gold Award and await the final paperwork in mid-November.

Over the past few years, students, staff and community members have worked together to make sure that children's rights are not just something we learn about, but something we live by every day. Assemblies, UPS sessions, Rights days/afternoons and our curriculum have all helped to bring the UNCRC to life, encouraging everyone to think critically about fairness, equality, and respect – both in school and beyond.

The UNCRC sets out 54 rights that every young person under 18 should have – including the right to education, safety, health, and to have their voice heard in decisions that affect them. Understanding these rights helps young people realize their own worth and the importance of standing up for others, both locally and globally.

- Mrs. Curtis

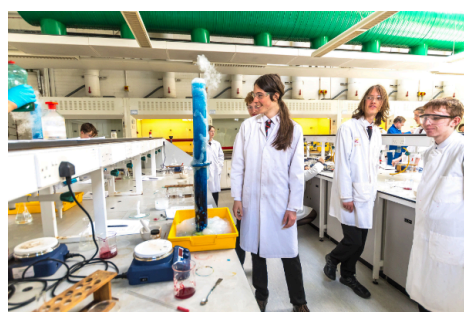
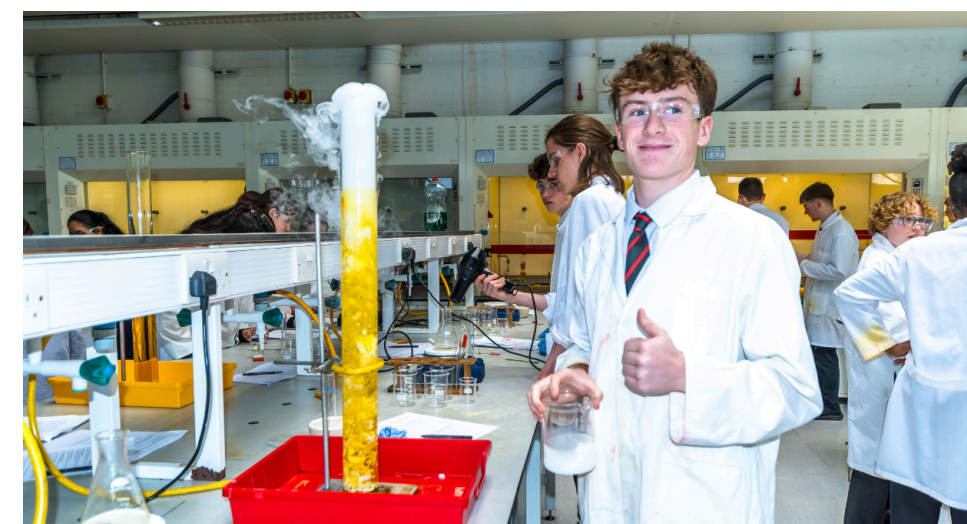
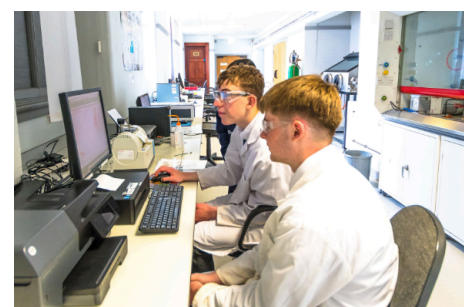
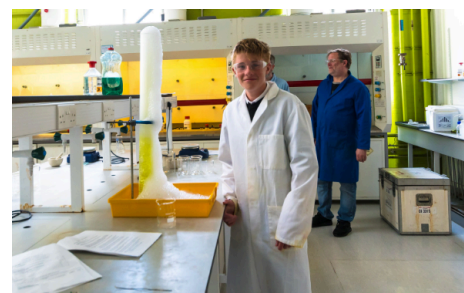




STEM trip - Strathclyde University

Watch out world, future chemists coming through! On the 10th of June, Higher and Advanced Higher Chemistry pupils got a glimpse into the world of Chemistry careers at Strathclyde University. They were given a warm welcome upon entrance and treated with respect when in the labs. After a brief introduction, they went on to complete the experiments which included making slime using various chemicals, changing the pH of water by adding ammonia and dry ice, testing how pH changes with solution concentration, and they even attempted to make stalagmites (some worked better than others). Overall, it was a fun and valuable day and is HIGHLY recommended to those who are interested in Chemistry and work better with hands on learning.

- Grace Cardozo-McDowall, S5





STEM Career conference

On the 16th of September, our school was privileged to attend a STEM career conference held within the beautiful grounds of Dumfries House. The event served as an excellent platform to showcase the diverse range of career opportunities available within the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The conference featured professionals from a variety of sectors, including the textile industry, animal welfare, mechatronic engineering, and astrophysics. We were offered the opportunity to engage in informal discussions with panel members, gaining insight into their professional roles as well as their personal experiences and career journeys within STEM. A particularly inspiring aspect of the event was the strong representation of women among the panellists, which served as a motivating and empowering reminder of the growing inclusivity within STEM fields. Overall, the visit was an enlightening and enriching experience, encouraging us to consider the endless exciting possibilities that a career in STEM can offer.

- Clary McLaughlin-clear, S6



Pantomime - Peter Pan

Our school pantomime this year is.... Peter Pan! It will be full of the typical mischiefs and adventures, as we follow Peter and Wendy on their journey through Neverland!

We are about halfway through rehearsals, and they have been going great. It's brilliant to see so many new faces joining our cast this year! It is an amazing opportunity, especially for younger students, to

meet new people and make friends that they wouldn't have made otherwise.

Dates for the performances will be the 17th and 18th of December. Tickets will be available to buy at Thomson's Newsagents in Kirkcudbright, or at the school office.

- Ava Rice, S4





Autumn Concert

On Thursday the 4th of October, the school hosted their Autumn concert which consisted of 25 performances. These performances consisted of students singing and playing various instruments, including solo performances, small groups, and the school choir. All the students displayed amazing levels of talent throughout the night, showcasing how hard they've all worked in recent months.

These events bring so many different people together, from sharing rehearsal spaces and looking for lost sheet music to getting ready in the bathrooms whilst giving pep-talks to your friends. Performers are so greatly supported by the audience, as well as their peers, and there's no feeling quite like having a room full of people that have come to hear you play your piece.

A massive thank you to Mrs. Curtis and Mrs. St Joseph for accompanying, supporting and organizing this event for our young people, and for providing the opportunity for us to showcase what we do, we truly appreciate you.

- Asha Morris, S5





Running for Scotland

Following on from my first international mountain race in Ireland last year - where I finished as the 11th U17 in Britain, NI and Ireland - I was very excited to see what I could achieve in the 2025 season if I ramped up my training a bit.

The season didn't disappoint. Starting off with a win in one of the national hill league races, I was off to a good start and had all eyes on getting selected for the international U18 mountain running championships held in Slovakia. Being in the younger end of the age bracket I was happy to finish fourth U18 at the trial race, joining the team of four men and four women on the plane to Slovakia in June.

The course in Slovakia was a brutal one consisting of a short and sharp 5.2km packing 520m of elevation on an uphill only course with very varied terrain. I was happy to finish halfway down the field in 32nd place, though I struggled big time in the heat and knew I was capable of more. But there's always next year. We finished 6th as a team out of 18 and therefore beat the English which made everything all the more worth it. It was an incredible experience being part of the team and meeting so many people all over the world.

The next weekend was the national hill running championships. Luckily my legs felt good and I came home with the national title, posting a new course record to top it off. My successes continued with a silver in the national trail running championships in July, and then two days later a 26:48 PB in the Gelston 5 mile to finish second (by about a centimetre!).



My last big race was the Junior Home International where U17 and U20 teams from the UK countries and Ireland compete for team and individual medals. After a first place finish in the trial I felt confident leading up to the race, which was held on and around a slate quarry in Y Fron, Wales. The technical terrain suited me well and I came away with 4th, a massive improvement on my 11th place finish at last year's event. The team finished 1st, 4th, 6th and 7th giving us a comfortable gold - beating the English again!

To round the year off I finished the Scottish hill league at the top of the table at one of my favourite races with a waterslide finish.

Thank you to everyone who has supported me throughout the year. I'll be shifting focus onto cross country for the winter but can't wait to see what opportunities the mountains bring next year!

- Ben Hodson, S5

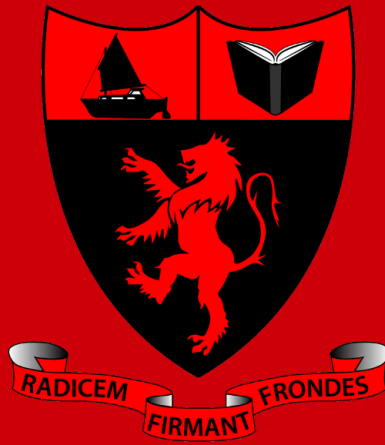


Netball

In recent months, our junior and senior netball teams have participated in many games and events. At the beginning of September, the senior team attended the annual netball festival in Dumfries Academy. The team played a number of different schools from around the area and finished in the top half of all the schools in the region. They ended up with six wins and five losses, a great achievement for them. Congratulations to Olivia C who won player of the match and received a medal. Following on from the festival, both the junior and senior teams hosted Wallace Hall Academy as part of their league fixture. The juniors played in what was their first ever competitive league fixture for the school. Although they did not win, they played extremely well and managed to score in every quarter. Cally C was the player of the match. The seniors won 28-14 with their player of the match being Emilie S. Overall, this is a great start to the netball season and both teams hope to continue gaining more successes in games to come.

- Eliza Clark, S5





The Team

Grace Cardozo-McDowall

Eliza Clark

Stuart Davies

Isabel D'haen

Ben Hodson

Maya Patel

Asha Morris

Rebekah Wellby