

STRATHEARN NEWS

PRIZE DAY

This year, Prize Night took place on 28 September in the Sports Hall. An excellent programme of music by the Orchestra opened the proceedings, and then our Head Girl, Ella Reid, welcomed everyone to the event. Ella reflected on some of the highlights of her time in Strathearn, including the junior school discos, the Italy trip and, of course, moving into the new school itself. Mrs Stewart, Chair of the Board of Governors, then spoke of the great pleasure it was to be able to celebrate another successful year for the school. She praised the pupils for their achievements in exams, and thanked the Governors, Principal and staff for their contribution to the life of the school. Mrs Stewart also welcomed back Mr Manning to his first Prize Night since retiring as Principal.

Mrs Connery then delivered her first report on the school year as Principal. She praised the pupils for the results they had achieved, and thanked teachers, support staff and parents for the help they had provided for the girls. Mrs Connery also commended the various musical, sporting and dramatic achievements of the Strathearn girls.

Ellen Gilpin then spoke about her enjoyment of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, before Bethany Craig provided a summary of the various House events that had taken place over the last year.

The Chair of the Board then introduced our Guest of Honour, Dr Grainne Watson, a Senior Innovation Strategist with Fujitsu. Dr Watson urged the girls to make brave decisions about their futures, and argued that 'being yourself' was not a barrier to career progression. After a presentation to our Guest of Honour by the Deputy Head Girls, Shannon Montgomery and Katy Skillen, the evening was brought to a close with beautiful musical performances from Yuan Chen and then the Chamber Choir.

Photo: Lower Sixth Prize Winners



House Plays Leavers' Ceremony

The House Plays were presented to the Junior School on 24 October and to the Senior School on 25 October. Barbour House produced *A Day in the Life*, Boucher produced *Take Me Home to Your Mother*, McCaughey produced *I'm a Celebrity*, and Watts produced *Rugby, Sun and A & E*.

We welcomed Shane Johnson, artistic director of Belvoir Players, as our adjudicator this year. The results of the competition were as follows: the Frances Mulley Rose Bowl for Best Actress was awarded to Molly Longstaff for her hilarious portrayal of Donald Trump; the levers Shield for Best Cameo Performance went jointly to Marnie Preston and Mia Wheatley; the McNeill Cup for Directing went to Alice Graham, Evanna Maxted and Bethany Craig; the McMinn Cup for Best Supporting Actress went to Lexi McKechnie, and the Gillian Douglas Drama Award for the Best Technical Performance went to Boucher. The Inter-House Drama Award for Best Play went to Barbour for their excellent depiction of the differences between Strambell College and Cathearn Grammar School.



The Class of 2017 returned to Strathearn on 30 August to receive certificates, prizes and awards at an informal ceremony in Manning Hall. It was a pleasure to congratulate the girls in person and to wish them well as they move on to the next stages of their lives. We hope to keep in touch with the Class of 2017 at other school events.



Happy Halloween!

Individual successes

CONGRATULATIONS TO



Freya Rowe, 2H, who won a silver medal at the Dance World Cup in Germany and was Team Captain for Northern Ireland.
Jess Winton, 4T, who was ranked 8th Topper Sailor in Ireland for the 2017 season.
Niamh Hatfield, 2A, who ran in the Irish Schools' Cross-Country Championships for Lagan Valley Running Club.
Madalaine Wilson, 2A, who achieved a Distinction in her Grade One Harp Exam, and a Merit in her Grade Four Piano Exam.
Rachel Brett, 2R, who achieved a Distinction in her Grade Four Piano Exam.
Rebekah Devlin, 2S, who passed her Grade Three Clarinet Exam, and who came first in the Musical Theatre Section of the Holywood Festival.
Eloise McKnight, 2S, who passed her Grade Four Drama Exam.
Safiyah Nabi, who passed her Grade Three Piano Exam.
Sarah Catherall, 3S, who achieved a Merit in her Grade Four Musical Theatre Exam.
Rebecca Moore, 3S, who achieved a Merit in her Grade Five Theory Exam, and a Merit in her Grade Six Clarinet Exam.
Ella Keane, 3S, who passed her Grade Five Saxophone Exam, and achieved a Merit in her Grade Three Theory Exam.
Rebekkah Lindores, 4H, who was interviewed by the BBC about being the youngest guide dog owner in Northern Ireland.
Tori Jackson, 5R, who achieved a Distinction in her Grade Five Pop Singing Exam.
Amy Bole, 5R, who achieved a Merit in her Grade Eight Musical Theatre Exam.
Anna Kenny, 5R, who achieved a Distinction in her Grade Six Violin Exam.
Emma Carson, 5R, who achieved a Merit in her Grade Five Ballet Exam, and a Distinction in her Grade Seven Drama Exam.

Careers Update Greenhill Trip

Our first term got underway with many girls attending open days, talks and presentations. All U6 attended the Queen's Open Day while other pupils attended the Open Day at the Jordanstown campus of Ulster University. Many parents attended the UCAS Parents' Information Evening at the end of August which gave them a better understanding of the entire UCAS application process and many pupils have submitted their UCAS forms already.

We welcomed representatives from the University of Oxford, St Andrews and the University of Dundee who spoke to girls about opportunities at those institutions, while a speaker from the University of Law based at the Chester campus talked to pupils about applications for Law courses.

Mrs Hearst has been running a series of lunchtime sessions for guidance on writing personal statements for engineering, accountancy, business & finance, science, languages, history and geography. We have also had representatives from the army and from the nursing, teaching and veterinary science professions to inform the girls about those careers. Two girls from the Sixth Form attended a three-day STEMWEX course at Magilligan to learn more about STEM opportunities in the army, while one pupil in U6 attended at Dietetics Open Day at Knockbreda Health Centre. Form 3 had their Subject Mapping session which raised their awareness of potential careers and where jobs are likely to be in the future, and helped them to begin to consider choosing their GCSEs which they will do in Term 2. Finally, the Form 5 careers guidance interview programme has started with Jill Lemon, our careers adviser from the Department of the Economy, and our programme of guest speakers is underway with talks on engineering, law and medicine.

On 17 September, Form 2 spent the day taking part in team-building and outward-bound activities at Greenhill YMCA, Newcastle. Activities included raft-building, the climbing wall, the zip wire, canoeing, archery and high ropes courses. We had great weather and lots of girls had the opportunity to try something they had never done before and, in some cases, to face personal fears! It was a great opportunity for girls to mix with people from other form classes and just to enjoy being outside in the last breath of summer!



Form 1 Zoo Visit

On 15 September, Form 1 went on a bus to the zoo for a bonding day. As soon as we got off the bus we were put into groups and we mixed with girls from other classes. Half of the groups went to see, touch and hear about different animals and insects. There was a tarantula, a frog, a snake, a stick insect, a giant African snail and a hedgehog, and we were able to touch many of them. Next we were able to explore the zoo in our groups and take turns to go to the gift shop.

On our way around the zoo, everyone made new friends from other classes. We saw monkeys, elephants, seals, penguins, giraffes, lions and many more animals and took lots of photos with our iPads along the way. The seals were great fun to watch as some sunbathed, some swam and some were diving into the water.

Overall the zoo was a great day, and now we are able to say hello to many more people in the corridors that we met on our trip. It was very nice getting to know so many new people in first year, so that we now have friends from other classes. Not only did we meet new first years. We also met new teachers that might teach us in our upcoming years of Strathearn.

Laura Dunlop, 1T



Nashville Trip

Beth, Amy, Chloe and I met Mrs Kernaghan in the early hours of 25 August to get to Dublin airport on time for our flight to Nashville. Only one of us had been to America before, so it was safe to say the trip was full of new opportunities.

Our host families were so welcoming. Mine made sure I had the full American experience; we went straight from the airport to Krispy Kreme Donuts, which I loved... and miss! The Nashville trip was different from any other I've been on; the small group gave us the opportunity to spend time together as a group with our "exchange sisters".

While the food and the shopping were definitely a big part of the week (we all left with heavier suitcases due to a Sephora trip!), we also got to experience a lot of the rich musical culture. The Country Music Hall of Fame was definitely a highlight - especially the Taylor Swift tour bus, complete with a karaoke recording studio.

I loved staying with a host family, because I got to experience the city in a way that no tourist would. I went to a sold-out storytelling night, formal dress shopping in a very American prom dress outlet, and a proper American pool party! By the end of the week, we left our host families with many tears and hugs. I still talk to my exchange sister Olivia every week, and I'm counting down the days until she comes to stay with me!

Hannah Johnston, U6T



netball

Our netball practices are up and running. If you are interested in getting involved, please check the notice boards in the sports hall for practice details and come along! Fixtures will start after half term so please keep an eye out for details of these on the notice board as well.

Good luck to Rosie Bonner, Seren Evans, Anna Gillespie, Niamh Hanna, Lauren Mooney and Megan Stewart who have been nominated for U15 Future Internationals Netball trials on 17 October.

UK School Games

Aimee Stitt and Murphy Miller were selected to represent Northern Ireland in athletics at the UK School Games in September. Mia Davison also competed at this prestigious event as part of the Irish swimming team. Well done girls.



Oxford Summer School

This August, I attended a week-long summer school run by Wadham College at the University of Oxford. It was for students going into their last year of school who are interested in pursuing a career/degree in Classics - the study of the literature, history, philosophy, art, languages and archaeology of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds.

At 9am every morning we spent time learning Ancient Greek in small classes of around seven students. This was definitely a challenge as I had absolutely no experience of the language! After that, we had a lecture on either a piece of ancient poetry, literature, or a play. Our theme for the week was gender and sexuality. Lunch was usually followed by group research and independent study time, in which we could work on either homework or the 1500-word essay we had to finish by Wednesday night! After dinner, we had another lecture, some more study time, and then from around 8 o'clock we had quizzes, games, or film time organised by the lovely student mentors who were there to help us.

Even though it was very intense, I loved my time at summer school and would definitely recommend it to anyone who is interested in studying at Oxford. It showed me what an undergraduate week at Oxford is like, confirmed that I definitely want to study Classics, and gave me the opportunity to get lots of help and advice regarding my university application from some of the top academics in the field. I also made friends from all over the UK!

Sophie Anderson, U6R



Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

Our Silver and Gold participants completed hillwalking and canoeing expeditions during July and August in the Mourne Mountains, Argyll, Lough Erne and the Ballyconnel Canal. The Gold Expeditions were completed in poor weather but preparation, training and determination helped the girls to keep going despite the rain and wind. At our annual parents' evening in October we celebrated 63 Bronze and 23 Silver participants completing their awards from last year. Well done to all the girls and their families! Four girls from previous years completed their Gold Awards during the summer and a few more have been to St James's Palace in London to receive their certificates. We look forward to more completed Gold Awards later this year.

Photo: Gold Canoe Qualifying August 2017 - Skellan Lock, Co Cavan, on the Ballyconnel Canal

L-R: Rebecca Black, Alice Graham, Rachel McCausland, Abby Acheson, Ruby Baxter and Lauryn Todd.



new driver talk



On 21 September, L6 gathered in Manning Hall to hear a talk for new drivers. We were given lots of tips about how to pass the driving test, the percentage pass rates for the various test centres, and many anecdotes about previous L drivers and their mishaps. Our speaker, Stephen Savage of New Driver, advised us on where to find the best insurance and what type would be best suited to us as learners. Stephen asked a variety of questions about the Highway Code and many girls offered their answers confidently and correctly - Stephen and Mrs McCracken seemed to be taken aback by the comprehensive knowledge of a year group who, for the most part, are still 16. In particular, Stephen asked if any of us knew the legal limit for the minimum tyre tread depth - luckily for me, I had my driving theory test the week after and so was well versed on this question!

All in all, it was agreed that the New Driver talk was highly informative and relevant to all of our year. The handbook each of us received upon leaving Manning Hall summarised everything that Stephen had told us and detailed some ideal learner driver cars. I have no doubt that these were wafted under many parents' noses by girls longing to be the proud owner of their first set of wheels!

Bethan Jones, L6H

LIBRARY NEWS

The end of last term saw a flurry of activity at the library. The Library Awards recognised the hard work of all those pupils who dedicate a great deal of time and energy to the school community through their work at the library. Special mention goes to Neve O'Neill who received her School Lifetime Achievement Award.

The conclusion of the Accelerated Reader Competition saw Mrs Connery give certificates to the ten girls whose reading was exemplary and announce that the winners of the Word Warriors Competition were 1T and 2T. The winners enjoyed a great day out in Portrush on Midsummer's Day.

For the final Book Club of the year, the library transformed into a little corner of Hogwarts, as we celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the publication of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. More than fifty pupils took on the Summer Reading Bingo Challenge, where they were encouraged to read a range of genres in a variety of places. On our return in August, only five girls had managed to secure a full house, so congratulations to them.

The Library Team proved to be as popular as ever at the start of this year, with plenty of new and returning library assistants donning badges and signing up to help at break and lunch. Special mention must go to Jordyn Patterson and Emily Hanna who have been making great efforts to help in the library this term. The Library Committee organised their first event of the year: Book Craft for new pupils. The library was buzzing as pupils turned old books into book hedgehogs and beautiful book marks. The pupils raised nearly £80 for Book Aid International by selling their items. The Book Club has sustained its momentum and the atmosphere on Thursday at lunchtimes is warm and welcoming as pupils bring their lunch along with them and talk about books.

Strathearn will be fielding a team in the Northern Ireland heat of the global competition, the Kids' Lit Quiz, and the Scholastic Book Fair will be at the library from 13 to 17 November. As the school earns commission to purchase new books with every sale made during the week, it's a great way to support the library and get pupils reading. Preparations are also well underway for the Bar Mock Trial Competition and the BPW Public Speaking Competition next month. Please follow @Library_Strath to keep up to date with the library's activities.

Photos - Top to bottom: Summer Reading Bingo Challenge; The Word Warriors Winners - Forms 1T and 2T; and the Accelerated Reader Certificate Winners.



Dates for your Diary

- 6 November
- 17 November
- 20-21 November
- 21 November
- 23 November
- 29 November
- 30 November
- 6-8 December
- 13 December
- 20 December
- 21 December

- School resumes at 8.40am
- Exceptional Closure Day. School Formal. Form 1 Consultation Afternoon
- Geography Field Trip
- U6 Interview Evening
- Form 2 Young Enterprise Event
- House Quiz for Forms 1-3
- House Quiz for Forms 4-U6
- School Production - *The Sound of Music*
- Community Service Party
- Carol Service
- School ends at 12 noon



Hockey

The hockey season has commenced, and we're off to a good start! We have travelled far and wide for fixtures during the last few weeks, including Omagh Academy, Coleraine Grammar School, Wallace High School, Sullivan, Belfast Royal Academy and Glenlola.

The 1st XI competed in the Ulster Schools' Super League however they were in a tough section and unfortunately missed out on progressing to the knockout stages of this league. They will now focus their efforts on the cup.

The 2B and 3A XI have started their Gibson Cup fixtures and so far have a 100% success rate with wins for the 2B XI over Wallace and Sullivan and for the 3A XI against Grosvenor. Let's hope this continues!

The U14 and 2A XI will begin their cup matches after half term.

Congratulations to the following Hockey Captains for this season:

1st XI Captain - Victoria Hamilton. Vice Captains - Hannah McCann and Chloe Sweet.

2A XI Captain - Lauren Kirkwood. Vice Captain - Zoe Hepworth.

2B XI Captain - Beth Watson, Vice Captain - Ellen Gilpin.

3A XI Captain - Hannah Meredith. Vice Captain - Katrina Kerr.

3B XI Captain - Alex Reilly. Vice Captain - Beth McColl.

U14A XI Captain - Lara Whitten. Vice Captain - Anna Gillespie.

U14B XI Captain - Alice Sloan. Vice Captain - Martha Todd.



Congratulations!!

Well done to the following girls who were nominated to attend the U15 Talent Development Programme Trials - Olivia Knox, Amber Hamilton, Amelia Kane, Anna Gillespie, Lara Whitten, Zara Hanna, Molly Elliott, Hannah McGugan, Lucie McNaught and Mabelle Wilcox. Some further congratulations to the six girls who have been selected for the next stage of this development programme - Amelia Kane, Anna Gillespie, Lara Whitten, Zara Hanna, Molly Elliott and Lucie McNaught.

Good luck to all the teams this season!

World Silver Medallist Visit

The PE Department welcomed Laviai Nielsen, Silver Medallist at the World Athletics Championships 2017, to speak to pupils on 10 October. Laviai was part of the Great Britain 4 x 400m Relay Team which won silver at the Worlds over the summer. The girls really enjoyed hearing a bit about her journey to becoming an international athlete and about what lies ahead for her this season. There was an opportunity to hold the medal and to get photos with Laviai at the end. We have invited her back to give us more of an insight into what such a successful sports career entails.



Clubs

All of our clubs are now up and running and we are delighted to see such high participation rates.

Once again, for our adventurous pupils, we are offering a **Kayaking Club** on Friday afternoons run by Belfast Kayak Academy.

Gym Club run by the Gymnastics Academy is on a Friday afternoon.

Badminton Club is proving once again to be popular amongst the girls, and matches will be beginning very soon.

Cross-country remains a favourite activity amongst many girls in Strathearn, with girls of all abilities coming out to try and improve their personal fitness.

After Self-defence was so popular last year it is back with many girls getting involved. Mr Tsang has been coming in to teach the girls some basic moves as well as improving their fitness.

A new venture this year is the **Karate Club** which is being held on Thursdays after school. Again Mr Tsang will be teaching the class and girls will have the opportunity to learn basic skills and also have the opportunity to grade if they wish.

This year the **Orienteering Club** is back and is held on Tuesdays after school. Orienteering caters for all as you are able to walk, jog or run the course and map reading skills are being learnt to help navigate around the courses.

Fitness Suite

Once again the fitness suite is being put to good use, with many Sixth Formers using their free periods to come down and use the facilities. As well as this, the fitness suite is open on a Tuesday after school for girls in Form 5, and on Wednesday after school for girls in Sixth Form.

Dance Team

Well done to all the girls who auditioned for the dance teams this year. The standard was very high and we are excited to see the team performances progress over the next few months. Team lists will be posted on the Dance noticeboard very soon. Unfortunately, not everyone can be selected but there will be a dance club on Thursdays at lunchtime for anyone who wants to join in, so come along and get involved.

SWIMMING

Well done to all the swimmers who participated in the Swim Ulster Schools' Gala which took place on 21 and 22 October at Aurora in Bangor. Results to follow.

ATHLETICS

The Ulster Schools' Combined Events took place on 14 September 2017 at the Antrim Forum. Well done to Niamh Hatfield who came 12th, Karis Hamilton who came 10th, and Sophie Hoey who came 4th in the Minor section. Anna McKinty placed 8th in the Junior section and Murphy Miller came 3rd in the Intermediate section. Sophie Hoey and Murphy Miller have both qualified for the Irish Multi-Events Championship which will be taking place in Athlone at the end of October. Good luck girls!

Show Jumping

This year our show jumpers are competing in the Inter Schools' Show Jumping League run by the Meadows Equestrian Centre in Lurgan. The girls compete monthly in this league and have already competed twice this year. They have not yet placed, but still have plenty of opportunities.

