



Open Morning

This year our Open Morning took place on 17 January, and record numbers of P6 and P7 pupils and their parents had the opportunity to visit our new school to see the superb facilities at first hand. Our thanks are due to the many pupils who acted as guides, worked in the crèche, and helped with classroom exhibitions, music, sport and drama. These pupil support teams did a wonderful job, and we would also like to warmly thank the parents who supported the event too. We look forward to welcoming many of our visitors back again in September as members of our school community.

Jessica Arbuckle, 3S, who shared family memorabilia from the Great War with visitors to the History Department



OPEN HOUSE EVENT



To mark the Official Opening of the new school, an Open House event will take place on 28 February from 10am to 12 noon for anyone who has had a connection with Strathearn over the years and any friends of the school who may be interested to see our new facilities. We are particularly keen that past governors, staff and pupils along with current governors, staff and parents join us on this special occasion.

For more details of this very special event, please download the flyer from our school website!

careers round-up

As always, a lot has been happening in the Careers Department over the first half of this term.

All of the Lower Sixth went on a week of work experience during the week of 12 January. Placements were as varied as ever in terms of their nature - hospitals, schools, PR agencies, solicitors, accountants, film companies and vets. They were also varied in terms of their location, with girls having placements throughout NI, England and the Republic of Ireland. As always, this was a fantastic opportunity to help girls decide about their careers and university choices for next year. To bring university choices into sharper focus, we brought several universities into Strathearn to talk to Lower Sixth about courses and higher level opportunities. These included St Andrews, Liverpool Hope and Newcastle and Northumbria. More universities will visit Strathearn after half term. A representative from Deloitte came to talk to the girls about opportunities within the firm in the following areas: Technology, Tax, Actuarial and Pensions, Audit and Consulting. We were delighted to welcome Gary Ormsby and were very interested to learn about the 338 new jobs they are creating over the next three years which are aimed at school leavers.

Many girls have attended a range of career events outside school during this period. Four girls attended a *PwC Insight Day* at the Waterfront Plaza in Belfast, one girl attended a *Work Inspiration Programme* with AV Browne on Graphic Design, Online Marketing and Advertising and several girls attended the *Queen's School of Management Taster Programme*, which provided a valuable opportunity for our girls to speak to staff and students to learn more about the programmes on offer. Seven girls attended an *Educational Psychology Open Morning* with BELB at Academy Street in Belfast, and five girls in Lower Sixth attended the Stranmillis Open Day. Three girls went to the *Engineering Our Future* Conference at Methodist College, Belfast where they had the opportunity to gain a unique insight into a number of branches of the engineering profession. Several girls have attended two Nursing Interview Workshops and Mrs Hearst has continued to give girls interview practice on a one-to-one basis.

Fifth Form's talks are continuing with the girls having a presentation on creative industries from Greg Maguire, a world-renowned animator who has worked on projects like *Harry Potter* and *Avatar*. Form Five also had a talk on Social Work and another on the make-up industry in NI. Form Five girls have had a presentation on A-level choices by our careers adviser from DEL, as well as having attended a talk by Mrs Connery and Mrs Hearst.

Some Form Three classes have visited the careers suite to get any queries answered regarding their GCSE choices and they have also been spoken to by Mrs Hearst and Mrs Connery. Form One classes have all had introductory visits to the careers suite.

individual successes!

Congratulations to ...



Chloë Browne, 1A, who achieved two personal bests in the Swim Ireland Development Gala in Lisburn.
 Amelia Kane, 1A, who attended the Ulster short course in swimming and gained four *Dave McCullagh* times. Amelia also attended the Irish Squad camp in Dublin during the Christmas holidays.
 Charlotte Macdonald, 1A, who passed her Grade 5 in Ice Skating.
 Emma Lennon, 1A, who played violin with the Ulster Orchestra at Victoria Square.
 Megan Fitzpatrick, 1A, who won a 1st prize and two 2nd prizes in the South Belfast Irish Dancing Championships.
 Saskia Craig, L6A, who was first in the U16 Ulster Championships solo event for Irish Dancing.
 Tori Jackson, 2A, who passed her Grade Two Piano Examination.
 Amy Bole, 2A, who passed her Grade Five Music Theatre Singing with Distinction.
 Ide Simpson, 2H, who passed her Grade Four Piano Examination with Distinction.
 Alice Huddleston, 2H, who passed her Grade Five Ballet Examination with Distinction.
 Scarlett Reid, 2R, who is appearing in the Belfast Festival presentation of *Lizzie Borden*.
 Connie O'Callaghan, 4R, who won first place in a Girls' Brigade competition at Inter-District level.



Library News



STAFF COFFEE MORNING: The library assistants organised a Staff Coffee Morning as part of a charity effort on Wednesday, 28 January. Members of staff enjoyed a welcome break from their busy day, relaxing and sampling the wonderful cakes and biscuits made by the girls.

A total of £276 was raised in support of The Royal Victoria Children's Hospital, which will be put to very good use.

Many thanks to all who supported this and also to the library assistants who baked, advertised, and served at this event.

CRAFT FAYRE: There will also be a Craft Fayre for the pupils, again to raise money for the Children's Hospital, and this will be held at lunch time in the Library on Thursday 26 and Friday 27 February. The Library has been a hive of crafting activity over the last few weeks in preparation for this, and the girls have produced some beautiful cards, bookmarks, brooches and so much more. There will also be some *Harry Potter*-themed crafts, so worth saving up pocket money for!

WORLD BOOK DAY: To celebrate *World Book Day* on Thursday 5 March, the Library will have a book-related competition, with prizes for the winners, and a Book Swap, open to both staff and pupils.

Unwanted books can be brought in from now until 5 March and exchanged for a 'book swap token' which can then be 'spent' on *World Book Day* in the Library. If you bring in more than one book you can receive the same number of books in return. This is a great way of getting new books without having to spend any money.



Trips, Events & Charities

ART TRIP: Fourth and Sixth Form artists have recently enjoyed visiting the CCEA *True Colours Exhibition* at the Ulster Museum. The exhibition showcases a selection of the best of the GCSE, AS and A2 Art & Design work from 2014. Students were excited to view the wide variety of high-quality work on display and gained lots of inspiration for their own Art work this year.

DRAMA WORKSHOP: Girls from 1A took part in a drama workshop run by Belfast City Council. The hour-long session, which focused on issues relating to litter and public responsibility, was both entertaining and highly informative.

SPORTS FESTIVAL: In October all of Form 1 participated in a sponsored *Potted Sports* event in the Sports Hall. It was a great opportunity to raise money for charity while improving personal fitness levels ...and having lots of fun! £1,200 was raised for the NI Hospice. Well done, girls!



Festival of Sporting Fun Event

Biology Field Trip Strathearn's Got Talent



The first group of AS Biologists experienced very cold weather but lovely blue skies as they completed their field work at Delamont Outdoor Centre. It was the first time for many years that the sea edges of Strangford Lough were covered with ice.

On Friday, 13 February all four Houses competed in the *Strathearn's Got Talent* Competition. The competitors performed twice - once for the Junior School and then over lunchtime they gave their final performance for the Senior School. The judges, Mrs Connery, Ms Kimber, Mr Heaney, Miss Campbell and Mr Hoeritzauer were impressed by the range of talent in all of the Houses and the results were as follows: first Lucy Robinson (McCaughey); second Amy Bole, (Barbour) and third Anna McCabe (Barbour). Well done, girls! Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of this hugely enjoyable event which created a great mood for the holidays!

sports hall athletics

Good luck to all our athletes who will be competing in the Ulster Final at the Meadowbank Stadium in Magherafelt on 12 March.

swimming



MINOR TEAM WIN DOUBLE GOLD AT IRISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Congratulations to our Minor Swim Team of Eve McKibben (Templemore Swimming Club), Amelia Kane, Rebecca Callaghan and Rebekah Burrows (all Ards Swimming Club) who won gold medals in both the 200m Medley Relay and 200m Freestyle Relay at the Irish Minor Schools' Championships held at the National Aquatic Centre in Dublin on Sunday, 8 February.

Individually, Rebekah Burrows finished 10th in the 50m Freestyle event while Amelia Kane finished 5th in the 50m Butterfly and 6th in the 100m Individual Medley. Unfortunately, Rebecca Callaghan was too ill to compete in her individual events, but was instrumental in assisting the relay teams to double gold in the relay events. Brilliant results, girls!

Also further congratulations to Amelia Kane, who competed in the Derventio Excel Open competition in Sheffield on Friday 6 and Saturday 7 February with Ards Swimming Club. Amelia performed excellently to win one gold, one silver and two bronze medals. Well done!



sporting

SUCCESSSES

Congratulations to ...

Olivia Nelson, 3H, who was placed first in the Irish Championship Clubs Cross-Country in Dublin. Ulster was the overall winning team. In the Celtic Games on 18 January Olivia was ninth in the U20 and fifth in the U17 races. She was first in Ulster U17 and U20 and second in Ireland U17. The Ulster Team U17 was placed third overall.

Tess McMillen, 3S, who was selected for U18 Ulster Regional panels.

Aimee Stitt, 2R, who was second in the 800m and third in the 200m relay at the NI and Ulster Indoor Athletics.

Daisy Moore, 2R, who was *Gymnast of the Year* at the Salto Gymnastics Club. Daisy achieved level seven at the first bar and second beam in the Northern Ireland General Championship.



HOCKEY

On Saturday, 7 February the 1st XI were drawn away to Limavady Grammar in the quarter-final of the Senior Schools' Plate. Preparations had been hampered by weather, with three consecutive Saturday fixtures having to be cancelled in January, but by their own admission the team under-performed on the day and lost the match 5-1. This was a very disappointing result and with only one remaining friendly fixture to play, the players will now look ahead to improving things next season.

On a more positive note, the 2B XI meet Down High School in the quarter-final of the Gibson Cup. Again, weather has played its part in disrupting preparations and the date of the fixture has had to be rearranged on more than one occasion. We wish Mrs Harvey and the team every success.

netball

Strathearn's netballers have been in action recently. Against Sullivan, the Minor Team won 13-5 and also were successful against Regent House winning 10-2. The Junior Team lost narrowly to Sullivan, 7-9, but had more success against Regent winning 6-4. The Intermediate Team agonisingly lost by a single goal against Regent 18-19 and were defeated by Rockport 13-6. Meanwhile the Senior Team lost 13-7 to Regent.

squash

On 4 February, Strathearn entered two teams in the Ulster Schools' Squash Cup at the Boat Club in Belfast. Despite the U19 Team being reduced to only two players instead of three, namely Jemma Gillan and Alex Gillan, the girls successfully defeated Ballyclare High School to take the U19 title. In the U17 age group, Hannah Craig, Victoria White and Emma McGugan, defeated Laurehill and Down High School to win the U17 title. Both teams have now qualified for the Irish Schools' Competition, which will take place in Dublin on 17 April.

All our squash players were in action again on Saturday, 7 February at Belfast Boat Club playing in the Irish Junior National Championships. Hannah Craig was crowned U19 Irish Champion while Emma McGugan finished in a very creditable 3rd place in the U15 age group. Well done to all our squash players!

cross-country

Congratulations to all the Strathearn athletes who competed in the Co Down District X-Country Championships on 4 February. The girls were outstanding and brought home 4 out of 5 of the Co Down trophies, with some exceptional individual and team performances.

The day started with the Mini Girls' race and our Form 1 girls got us off to a great start with Amelia Kane leading from the front; she powered home well ahead of the field to win Gold individually and helped the team to become Mini Champions with Eve McKibbin finishing 7th, Rebekah Burrows 9th, Jemima Thomas 14th, Emily Gault 15th and Tara Kerr 29th.

The Senior girls were next to take to the course and they finished in Bronze medal position with Emma Watson the first of the Strathearn girls to cross the line in 5th place. Anna Campbell was 11th, Amy Hepworth 16th, Chloe Johnston 19th, Lauren Brooker 20th and Amy Dutton 21st.

The Juniors were determined to continue their winning streak over the last two years and they did not disappoint! Olivia Nelson ran a magnificent race and sailed home full of running with nobody near her. The battle was happening further back for the next places with Erin McConnell and Sam McCormick fighting hard and finishing in 4th and 5th place respectively. Jessica Anderson-Bell was 12th, Zoe Hepworth 14th and Ruby Baxter 45th. The team were a massive 41 points ahead of the next school and were again crowned Co Down Champions for the third successive year.

The Minor girls took on the challenge next and despite some illness in the team, the others showed the meaning of team effort and worked very hard to keep the trophies coming our way. Aimee Stitt came home in Bronze medal position with Harriet Platt and Grace Ruding not far behind her in 6th and 7th place respectively. Murphy Miller finished 14th, Freya Axten 23rd and Anna McKibbin 32nd. The team score was again better than any of the opposition and Strathearn added the Minor title to our list of wins.

The Intermediate Team were the last girls' race of the day and they had the challenge of running twice around the course to complete 3000m. Jessica Leeman led the Strathearn troops and finished in 3rd place with Sarah Brown narrowly beaten at the finish in 5th place, Alex Reilly was 17th, Kezia Beattie 30th, Jemima Mercer 36th and Georgina Gomes 45th. Again this team effort meant we finished first overall in the Intermediate age group.

So not a bad day's work for the Strathearn X-Country teams and we are now looking forward to the Ulster Championships on 24 February at Mallusk. Well done girls!

Trampolining

Sophie Neale, Jodie Wilson and Robyn Corry competed in the Schools' Trampolining Competition at Ards Leisure Centre on Sunday, 14 December. Both Sophie and Jodie competed in the Under 14 Girls' Novice Event, which included some 66 competitors. Sophie finished in 2nd place with Jodie winning the event. These results qualified the girls for the Schools' Zonal competition which was held again in Ards Leisure Centre on 31 January. Sophie finished in 10th position and Jodie finished 6th.

Dates for your Diary

23 February - Exceptional Closure Day

4 March - Form 5 Parents' Consultation Afternoon 1.45pm-5pm

10 March - Form 3 Parents' Consultation Evening 6.30pm-9pm

11-13 March - Lower Sixth Biology Fieldwork Trip

19 March - Spring Concert

20 March - SU Weekend

Back to school on 24 February at 8.40 am

