

# Strathearn News



## Mock Trial Success! Soroptimist Finalist

Congratulations to the Mock Trial Team, who won the Northern Ireland heat of the Citizenship Foundation's Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition on Saturday 11 March. The girls took turns at prosecuting and defending a burglary case. Each trial ran in front of a real judge in a real courtroom. Students took on roles of lawyers, witnesses, magistrates and court staff. We even brought a court artist and a court reporter! There was a great atmosphere in court. Strathearn will keep the Northern Ireland trophy, which was collected by lead Magistrate Sarah McIvor, 3T, for the year. As winners of the Northern Ireland heat, our pupils will go on to compete in the national final in England in June.

In February, Tavisha Sood represented Strathearn at the Northern Ireland final of the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition. She spoke articulately on her chosen topic of human rights, and was praised by the judges for her solid research skills and well-structured talk. Tavisha was given five minutes to prepare an extempore speech and spoke with confidence and poise about 'challenge'. She received a certificate and a goody bag in recognition of her achievement in reaching the final.



## Young Enterprise

In February, all of Form 4 took part in a Young Enterprise seminar, in which they learnt about entrepreneurial skills and enterprise. The pupils were encouraged to set up a mock jewellery business, engage in creative thinking and work collectively to market their products. This turned out to be a competitive venture with several business models put forward and with several groups trying to outsell their rivals and make the biggest profit.

We are most grateful for the continuing involvement we have with Young Enterprise who work with several year groups throughout the academic year, and who challenge the pupils to consider their personal skills and career ambitions.

## Dungannon Court Visit

A group of fifteen Strathearn pupils and Dr Haire spent a very productive morning at the courthouse in Dungannon recently, practising for the Citizenship Foundation's Mock Trial Competition. As well as the use of a courtroom for a run-through of our case, the girls were given a tour of the jury selection room and the courthouse's cells. They also briefly watched some court proceedings. The courthouse staff answered the pupils' many questions, and the girls left feeling inspired about the competition as well as their future career prospects in law and related fields.



## The Spring Concert

Strathearn's annual Spring Concert took place on Wednesday 29 March. Many thanks to everyone who performed at this event; it was a very enjoyable evening of vocal and instrumental music, with excellent performances from all the soloists. Thanks also to Ms Kimber and Mrs McIvor for all their work in preparation for the concert



# Individual Successes

## congratulations to...



Eloise McKnight, 1S, who came 3rd in the Mossley Singing Festival.

Mia Davison, 2S, who achieved consideration time for the European Youth Olympics. Mia was also nominated for the North Down Sports Awards.

Hannah McGugan, 2S, who won the Ulster, Leinster and Connacht Junior Opens in Squash, and has been selected to play for Ireland.

Catherine Welsh, 2H, who danced at the Peace Proms in the SSE Arena in February.

Katie McMeekin, 3T, who passed her Grade Eight Figure Skating Exam.

Sarah McIvor, 3T, who came first in the Matheson Debate at Queen's University Belfast.

Alice Huddleston, 4R, who achieved a Distinction in her Grade Six Ballet Exam.

Íde Simpson, 4R, who took part in the Lagan Drama Festival. Íde was placed in five classes, and came first in two.

Emma Carson, 4R, who took part in the Mosgrove Singing Festival, and was placed first in one class.

Sophie Neale, 5S, who has been selected to represent Northern Ireland in trampolining at the British Gymnastics Regional Team finals in Birmingham in June.

All the girls in U6S, who helped the Days For Girls project by making supplies for DFG Kits.

All the girls in 4S, who received a letter from Fields of Life thanking them for the money they raised in their recent form effort.

All the girls in 2A and 4H, who raised £118 for Guide Dogs NI.

Josie Knox, 4H, who raised £186 during a sponsored silence day on 3 February for Assisi Animal Sanctuary.



# Careers Round-up

2017 got underway with L6 going on five days' work experience from 16 to 20 January. The placements were as varied as usual with pupils going to photographic studios, law firms, PR agencies, hospitals, engineering organisations, primary schools and lots more besides. As always we are indebted to those companies who provide such meaningful placements for our pupils.

Many girls in U6 had interviews for a range of university courses. Mrs Hearst gave practice interviews for any girls who requested them and organised two interview workshops for nursing and midwifery applicants.

A lecturer from Ulster University came to talk to girls from Form 4 upwards about a new course – Safety, Engineering & Disaster Management. A representative from the Food & Drink sector in NI also talked to girls from Form 4 upwards about opportunities for jobs in those areas and our careers adviser from the Department of the Economy, Jill Lemon, spoke to Form 5 about choosing A-level subjects.

Several girls in L6 attended the Stranmillis Open Day and one girl from L6 attended an engineering insight day at Montupet. Form 1 classes had their introductory visits to the careers suite. After half term we continued with our programme of guest speakers for Form 5. We welcomed Eunan McConville, a journalist and producer from the BBC, who talked to the girls about journalism, Steffan Hill spoke to the girls about a career in photography and a newly qualified chartered accountant from EY talked to the girls about working in the financial sector. In addition, a tutor from Queen's talked to Form 5 about Psychology, a representative from Waddell Media spoke to the girls about a career in that sector, and a lecturer from Stranmillis gave a presentation on a career in teaching. As always, we really appreciate all the time these busy professionals give to girls here in school.

Our university talks have also continued. We have had presentations from the Scottish Universities Tour (on behalf of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Heriot-Watt, Stirling and Strathclyde), Southampton, Oxford, Liverpool Hope, Northumbria, Liverpool John Moores, Queen's, Ulster,

Cambridge, Scotland's Modern Universities Tour (comprising of presentations from Queen Margaret, Abertay, Glasgow Caledonian, Edinburgh Napier and Robert Gordon University). We also had a presentation from an ambassador from Harvard University and a question and answer session with Hannah Craig, U6, who has secured an offer to study there in the autumn. We also had a visit from a representative from SERC.

Our pupils have continued to attend careers events outside school. All of L6 attended the Ucas Higher Education convention at the Eikon Exhibition Centre at Sprucefield and pupils interested in applying to the universities of Oxford or Cambridge attended a Student Conference in Lisburn. One pupil attended a Speech & Language Open Day at Belfast City Hospital, another attended a Work Inspiration Day with international law firm Arthur Cox, two girls went to a Dentistry Open Day, while others went to Engineering and Law Conferences at Methodist College and a Medical Symposium at the MBC at Queen's.

Members of the Careers Department have had one-to-one interviews with Form 3 girls and their parents about their GCSE choices and there have been additional question and answer sessions in the careers suite to clarify any queries or issues.

Mrs Hearst has been running sessions for L6 girls interested in working in a hospital setting, school or those considering a job in social work. She also gave a presentation on Student Finance to all of U6 so that they are aware of the financial implications of going to university.

Finally with STEM in mind, Form 3 girls attended a Bring IT On session where they learned about opportunities in the IT sector, and Form 1 went to a Robotics Road Show hosted by Sentinus in school where pupils programmed a toy vehicle.



# Library News



Staff Coffee Morning

## Staff Coffee Morning

There has been plenty of activity at the library since term began in January. The annual staff coffee morning was held at the end of the month, and £250 was raised which will purchase two donkey-drawn travelling libraries for communities in Africa. Members of the Library Team and the Library Committee worked really hard to provide catering for the event, and staff were delighted by heaps of buns, stacks of biscuits and large wedges of cake that they were able to sample!

## Local Author Visit to Strathearn

In February, local author Jan Carson visited the school to give a talk about writing and to deliver a workshop on postcard stories to Form 3 pupils.

## World Book Day Charity Event

Strathearn joined the global celebration of reading that is World Book Day at the start of March. Junior classes entered into a sponsored read, and managed to raise more than £2,000 for local charity, the Cancer Fund for Children. Rebekkah Lindores of 4H won our 'Read All About It' competition, correctly guessing the names of some great works of literature from newspaper headlines. Akhila Dondapati from 1R wrote the best Twitter fiction story. Mr Hamilton won the staff's Extreme Reader Competition.

## Accelerated Reader Programme

The Accelerated Reader programme is picking up pace, and at the last count, pupils in Forms 1 and 2 had read 1969 books so far this year. Congratulations to the two most recent winners of the Quiz Club Wall of Fame draw, Juliette Ruelland-Kennedy from 1R and 2R's Faith Heyburn. 1S and 2H currently lead the race to win the Word Warrior Competition. The eventual winners of this will receive a class prize, so keep reading and quizzing to rack up the words!

## Thank you to our Library Team

The Library Team continues to support the daily running of the place, and special mention must be given to Emma Ferguson of L6A and to Zara Conroy of 1H, who have been particularly helpful. Thanks go to all the girls who give up their break and lunchtimes to make this important contribution to the life of the school.

## Creative Writing Competitions

Pupils at Strathearn have been putting their pens and keyboards to work on their creative writing. A number of students from the junior school entered BBC Radio 2's 500 Words competition. Three Sixth Form pupils, Emma Beattie and Laura Gooding from L6H and L6A's Emma Ferguson submitted work to the National Flash Fiction Youth Competition, a UK wide contest, and Emma also offered her poem, *Song of the Stonemason*, to the 2017 Tower Poetry Competition. Participation in these external competitions is an important chance for pupils to



Accelerated Reader Winner

develop their own voice as they write prose and poetry.

## Book Club

The Book Club is still attracting a loyal band of committed book lovers to the library on Thursday during lunchtime. Readers from across the school who haven't made it along yet would be very welcome to join in too.

## Library now on Twitter

The library is now on Twitter – so to keep up to date with what's happening. Look for our handle, @Library\_Strath.



# Day of Ambition

'The Day of Ambition' at Bloomfield Collegiate on 6 December, brought together schools from East Belfast with some of our most exciting local entrepreneurs and innovation companies.

The theme for the day was 'Stretch Yourself'. Pupils were able to experience the opportunities that exist in the world of innovation and creativity. The pupils were able to meet local entrepreneurs of all ages, including those who had just left school and were developing their products with support from Catalyst Inc. Our Form 4 pupils joined in all the activities and were on winning teams for some of the challenges!

The event was supported by the Department for Communities and the CONNECT team at Catalyst Inc. Thanks to all at Bloomfield for the effort they put in to make sure the event was a great success.



# SPRINGTIME

# Geography Trip Road Safety Roadshow

In December, each Form 3 class got to visit the Coca-Cola factory at Knockmore, near Lisburn. It was an opportunity for the students to grasp the scale of operations of one of the largest multi-national companies in the world. We got an insight into how Coca-Cola was first brought to Northern Ireland over 80 years ago through a video documentary. We also toured the factory where we witnessed the hi-tech operations that produce drinks at such a fast rate, that every single person in Northern Ireland could be supplied with a bottle every day. An important part of our visit was to judge how sustainable Coca-Cola's operations are. We saw how air is used to move products instead of electrical machines and we also discovered that glass bottles are collected by Coca-Cola and re-used up to eight times. Even big businesses are doing their bit for environmental causes.



Imagine speeding at 90 miles per hour down a dimly lit road. You're soaring, as if nothing stands in your way. Then bam! A tree is in your way. You lie there immobilised, heaving in every breath. Then breathe your last... or not - because you didn't get into that car, you made the right choice and called for a lift home. When you cut away all the gruesome imagery, what you are left with is the fact that young drivers are the biggest cause of road deaths in our country. This isn't a DoE advertisement; it's real life.

This year every girl in Lower Sixth got the chance to attend the Cool FM Road Safety Road Show at the City Hall. The atmosphere was upbeat as we took our seats, but when the talks began, we were left with the brutal reality.

We were spoken to by a police officer, a paramedic and a fireman who had all worked on the same devastating case. This was an incident which left one girl dead on impact, and a young man paralysed. We then heard from two people who had suffered road death losses within their own families. We all listened intently but the talks had only begun. We were also spoken to by a young woman who had found herself in a car accident on her 18th birthday which left her paralysed. Alcohol abuse and fast driving had led to her accident. The speakers wanted to inform us that we all have a choice; we either put ourselves in danger or not. We were told of the Share the Road to Zero Campaign, to which over 19,000 people in Northern Ireland have already pledged.

Finally we were taken outside to view an enactment of a car crash scene. The chaos was evident, but so was the composure of the paramedics, the police and the fire fighters. Nothing can prepare you for that - but this is what they face every day.

*Emma Ferguson, L6A*

## Walk a Mile in their Shoes

In March, the Form 3 students finished their study of development issues in Africa and this included a specific focus on the water crisis facing millions of people. With five million Ghanaians lacking access to safe, clean water and teenage girls having to walk for four hours each day in Ethiopia just to collect water for their families, we wanted to help.

So, all the Form 3 pupils undertook the 'Walk a mile in their shoes' challenge for the charity, Stand By Me. The pupils got sponsored to carry a jerry can of water for one mile, empathising with girls who do this every day of every year, just to get water to survive. It was a tough challenge but we did it. We look forward to presenting a cheque to Stand By Me which will allow them to buy water filters for families in Ethiopia on our behalf.



## Tayto Visit

On 6 March, Form 4 Business Studies pupils visited the Tayto factory in Tandragee to view the production processes of one of Northern Ireland's most famous brands. On the tour, pupils learnt about the application of many of the topics they study at GCSE including the following: Methods of Production; The Impact of Technology on Production; Health & Safety; Quality Management; Marketing; New Product Development and Stock Control. Pupils also enjoyed sampling the unflavoured crisps immediately after they had been cooked and were still hot. A variety of crisps and corn snacks were also enjoyed after the flavours had been added. Pupils found the experience very beneficial as they got to see a factory employing over 350 people in full production, and witnessed the whole production process from the potato store outside to the packaging of the crisps for the various retailers.



# Art News 3H FORM EFFORT

Form 4 artists enjoyed a Textiles Workshop on 6 December with visiting artist, Aisling Smyth. Aisling brought along examples of her intricate and beautiful work and discussed her flourishing career, which includes working in the costume department of the hugely successful *Game of Thrones*. Aisling demonstrated a variety of beautiful hand-stitching techniques and assisted the girls in creating a range of samples relating to their project themes. This was a most enjoyable and stimulating day of textile creativity. Also in December, Forms 4 to U6 visited the annual Royal Ulster Academy Exhibition at the Ulster Museum. The girls were impressed by the wide variety of exciting art work on display, and came back with a wealth of ideas about how they could integrate a range of techniques and concepts into their work. In January, Forms 4 to L6 returned to the Ulster Museum to attend the True Colours Exhibition of GCSE & A-level work created by pupils in schools across Northern Ireland. This was most inspirational to all students, and everyone returned with enthusiasm for their forthcoming projects. We are hopeful that students from Strathearn will continue to be selected to exhibit their exciting artwork each year. Best of luck to our very talented KS3 artists who have entered the prestigious, nationwide Texaco Children's Art Competition. We all have our fingers crossed!



For our form effort our class decided to do something that we hadn't done before. We thought of many different ideas but we finally decided on going out to Breffni House and Breffni Lodge in our local community, to sing Christmas Carols and entertain the older people. We thought this was a brilliant idea as it was coming up to Christmas and we knew that they would really appreciate our company. We hoped it would give them something to look forward to and get them into the Christmas spirit.

We researched Christmas carols and hymns, and then our class split up into two groups to think of other things to do. We thought of reading out poems, dancing, playing the guitar and flute, group singing and also baking shortbread and brownies. We downloaded backing tracks to the songs and printed out the lyrics so we could practise. We practised in form class, LLW and at lunch times in the sports hall. We were all very excited but nervous too. We didn't know what to expect because we hadn't done anything like this before.

The day soon came around and we split into our two groups and headed off to visit the homes. As it was Christmas time, our entire class agreed to wear Christmas jumpers and hats to show a bit of Christmas spirit. We were very lucky that we didn't have to walk very far and got there in about five minutes. We were greeted with the lovely, welcoming faces of staff and residents. Many of us felt quite nervous and hoped that we wouldn't make any mistakes in our dancing or singing, but fortunately everything went very smoothly.

We began by handing out delicious, homemade shortbread and buns to all the residents. We then gave a great dance performance that we had been working very hard on. We also had a fantastic solo performance on the flute, and to finish off, the whole group got together to sing various Christmas carols. This created lots of smiles in the room. When the time came to leave, we all wanted to stay but were very glad to see so many happy faces.

Overall, we felt that this was an amazing experience. Not only were we able to raise money for charity, we were able to have fun too! Tara Kerr and Aimee McGill, 3H

## Drama Trip

On 9 February, twenty-six pupils from Forms 4 and L6 went on the Drama Department's trip to London. The girls enjoyed performances of *The Woman in Black* and *Les Miserables*, as well as taking a tour of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. It was a really enjoyable trip. Many thanks to Mrs Ingram, Mrs Kernaghan, Mrs Atkinson and Mrs Fox.



## Duke of Edinburgh

Bronze, Silver and Gold participants have been working hard all winter, training in First Aid and Map Skills and planning their expeditions for the Summer. Every DofE participant is also undertaking weekly Volunteering, Physical and Skills activities throughout the year. Volunteering activities include helping with Brownies, GB, BB, youth clubs and junior sports and dance teams. Some girls work in charity shops, churches, animal shelters, environmental projects and help local charities with fundraising. Over 3000 hours of voluntary work are completed by Strathearn DofE participants every year.

Expedition outdoor training for all groups starts at Easter. Good luck to all our Hillwalkers and Canoeists in the Mountains and Waterways around Northern Ireland. Let's hope for good weather and sunshine for all!



## Dates for your Diary...

- 26 April: Form 2 Consultation Afternoon (3-5pm)
- 1 May: Bank Holiday
- 17-24 May: School Exams
- 26 May: School Closes at 12.50pm
- 29 May: Exceptional Closure
- 15 June: Form 4 Consultation Afternoon (1.45 – 5pm)
- 30 June: End of Term! School Finishes at 12 noon

**SCHOOL RETURNS on**  
**MONDAY 24 APRIL at 8.45am**

# hockey



The U14A XI got through to the quarter-final of the Ulster Schools' Junior Cup having defeated Regent in the 3rd round. The quarter-final against Wallace High School was a well contested game and with the score still equal at full time, it went into extra time and eventually penalty strokes. Wallace won the game but our girls played very well and were unfortunate not to make it to the semi-finals.

The 2B and 3A XI both progressed to the knock-out stages of the Gibson Cup and were drawn against Ballyclare Secondary School and Ballymena Academy respectively. Both teams gave all they had but unfortunately were not able to progress to the next round. We were, however, beaten by the eventual finalists in both cases so perhaps we were unlucky with the draw!

The 2A XI faced Glenola in the 1st round of the Plate and moved easily into the next round against Portadown College. Down at Edenvilla we battled against the wind and made it through to the quarter-final against Friends' School, Lisburn. We took the lead early on, but Friends' fought back and scored so we faced extra time. Friends' put the pressure on and scored; unfortunately for us, the silver goal rule meant that we had to score within five minutes of the first period of extra time. We did not manage to do this, and so the semi-final place was taken by Friends'. This is a young team, however, which gained much experience throughout the year.

## SENIOR PLATE FINAL

Strathearn's 1st XI made it through to the final of the Ulster Schools' Senior Plate having beaten Bloomfield and The Royal School Dungannon in the quarter and semi-finals respectively. Ballymena Academy made it through on the other side of the draw, and the final date was set for 7 March just up the road at Civil Service. When the day arrived, the players were well prepared and so were the supporters. They had banners, loud hailer, drums and face paints! The Ballymena supporters came prepared too, and it seemed as though a battle was about to commence on and off the pitch! The atmosphere was brilliant!

Ballymena took control early in the game and put pressure on us in the circle, winning a number of penalty corners. Strathearn defended well and absorbed a lot of pressure, but unfortunately at the fifteen minute mark, we conceded a goal. They kept the pressure on and we were lucky to keep the score line at 1-0 at half time.

The girls knew they had to turn this around, and they were determined to show Ballymena what they were made of. Right from the whistle, they applied pressure and looked a different team. This paid off five minutes into the 2nd half, when Harriet Platt stormed through the middle of the pitch to slot the ball through to Katie Wills. Katie remained calm as she negotiated her way around the keeper to slip the ball into the goal.



Strathearn - Plate Finalists

This lifted the team and we continued in attacking mode as much as possible, but Ballymena also fought hard as the minutes ticked away. It edged closer to full time and it seemed that we would be in for extra time and strokes when, with seconds to go, Ballymena drove into our circle and squeezed a shot from a very narrow angle which just slipped in. Unfortunately that was that, the match stolen from us in the dying seconds with no time left to respond. Credit goes to Ballymena, however, for playing such a fantastic match and scoring a well taken goal at a crucial time.

Our girls should be very proud of their performance. They showed great resilience to come back from a goal down to compete right to the end. Runners-up in the Senior Plate is not a bad way to finish the season with a young team gaining valuable experience on the pitch. The four U6 girls finished their school careers with a silver medal and lots of fond memories. Well done everyone on the team. Special mention goes to Captain Sarah Brown, Vice Captain Bonnie Ramsay, Ailie McKinty and Kate Farrelly; we will miss you next year!

## Belfast Area Board Hockey

Six girls were nominated for the U15 Belfast Area Board Trials – Francesca Park, Amelia Hopkins, Eve McKibbin, Alex Fawcett, Grace Hutchinson and Sarah McDonald. Most of the girls progressed to the 2nd trial, and Francesca and Grace were selected for the team to play in the U15 Area Board Tournament on 14 March. The following girls were nominated for the U17 Area Board Trials: Harriet Platt, Katie Wills, Hannah McCann, Maya Savage Newell, Jessica Anderson Bell, Chloe Sweet and Claire Whiteside. Lots of girls got through to the second trial but the standard was very high and only Katie made the team to play on 30 March. Well done!

# Fencing Win!

The Northern Ireland Open is the biggest and most prestigious fencing event of the year in Northern Ireland. It was held in Grosvenor Grammar School on 21 and 22 January. Strathearn pupil and Belfast Fencing Club member, Keziah Beattie, won the women's foil event. This confirmed her position as Northern Ireland's top female foil fencer. This is the second time she has lifted this trophy, having previously won it in 2015.



# Badminton

# GYMNASTICS

Congratulations to our Form 1 Badminton Team who reached the Final of the Ulster Schools' Year 8 Badminton Cup. They faced Coleraine Grammar School, having beaten both Wallace and Friends in previous rounds. The team of Cara Murray, Lois Whiteside, Aiza Ghafoor and Sarah Tweedie got off to a great start to go three sets up. Coleraine, however, made a great comeback and the result went right down to the wire. In the end we were pushed narrowly into runners-up position by 1 point. A lesson well learnt though girls... every point matters! Even so, it was a super achievement to get to the final. Well done!

Congratulations to our gymnasts who were competing in the Northern Irish Schools' Sports Acrobatic Championships on 25 February.

The U14B Team of Erin McClure, Rebekah Devlin, Hannah Watson, Caitlyn Corbett, Lauren Wilson, Molly Bladon and Ellie Gilmore were 6th in the group competition.

The U14A Team finished in a very commendable 3rd place. The team was made up of Emma Hylands, Aimee McGill, Rebekah O'Tiarnaigh, Hannah Pollock-Chan, Cara Murray and Freya Murray.

Emma and Aimee were also 3rd in the U14 pairs and Jodie Wilson and Rachel Caughers finished 1st overall in the U19 Novice pairs.

# Cross-Country



## Co Down District Cross-Country Championships

The day started with the Mini girls race. Our Form 1 girls got us off to a great start with Mabelle Wilcox powering home well ahead of the field to win gold. This helped the team to become Mini Champions with Hollie Massey finishing 5th, Niamh Hatfield 6th, Connie Hanna 8th, Alice Browne 9th and Sophie Thomas 14th.

The Senior girls were next to take to the course and they put in a great team performance to finish in gold medal position. Harriett Platt was the first of the Strathearn girls to cross the line, finishing just narrowly out of the medals in 4th place. Beth Crosbie was 8th, Sarah Brown 12th, Alex Reilly 13th, Keziah Beattie 22nd and Georgina Gomes 32nd.

The Juniors were determined to continue their two-year winning streak and they did not disappoint! Amelia Kane ran a magnificent race and sailed home full of running with nobody near her. Eve McKibbin finished 9th, Jemima Thomas 13th, Sophie Kenny 14th, Charlotte Keers 41st and Chloe Browne 45th. Strathearn again came out on top in team points, and so another title was ours!

The Minor girls took on the challenge next and the team worked very hard to keep the trophies coming our way. Freya Adams came home in bronze medal position with Anna McKinty in 6th place, Lara Whitten 12th, Lucy Chambers 20th, Rosie Elwood 26th and Mia Davison 29th. Our team score was the best in the competition and so we added the Minor title to our list of successes.

The Intermediate Team competed in the last girls' race of the day, facing the challenge of running twice around the course to complete 3000m. Strathearn's runners came home in 1st, 2nd and 4th places thanks to Murphy Miller, Olivia Nelson and Erin McConnell respectively. Katie Wills finished 11th, Aimee Stitt 16th and Ruby Baxter 29th. This was a brilliant way to finish the races for us, with another first overall in the Intermediate age group.

This was a fantastic day's work for Strathearn's Cross-Country Teams, and one that will be hard to live up to in years to come. We are now looking forward to the Ulster Championships on 22 February at Mallusk. Well done girls!

## Results from the Ulster Schools' Cross Country Championships

The Mini Team got the day off to a great start putting in a super team effort, despite the fact that Mabelle Wilcox was out of action due to injury. The girls had to pull out all the stops to keep the team score ahead of the opposition, and although Mabelle was missed, the team still finished well ahead of the rest with Hollie Massey finishing 6th, Niamh Hatfield 14th, Connie Hanna 23rd, and Alice Browne 26th. Sophie Thomas and Kate Hunter also ran, and the team claimed the Ulster Mini Cross-Country Trophy.

The Minor Team ran well and finished in a commendable 6th place overall. Freya Adams was the first of the Strathearn girls across the line in 11th place, and in doing so, she secured a place in the Irish Schools' Championships on 11 March.

Amelia Kane led the Junior race from start to finish and sailed home with no other runners in sight to claim her gold medal and title as Ulster Champion. The rest of the team competed strongly and were only narrowly beaten by 2 points to bring home the silver medals. They also earned qualification for the Irish Championships.

Next up were the Intermediates and we had another outstanding individual performance from Murphy Miller. She stayed at the front of the pack for the entire race to claim her title as Ulster Champion. Her five teammates worked hard behind her, with Olivia Nelson and Erin McConnell finishing 12th and 13th respectively. Their overall team score won them the Intermediate trophy and they have also qualified for the Irish Championships. For some of the team members, this is the 4th consecutive win at these Championships and hopefully not the last!

The Senior Team again put in a good collective effort but with the level of competition being very high, we finished out of the medals. We did, however, achieve a very respectable 5th place, contributing to the all-important overall points.

These are superb results so well done to everyone involved and best of luck to the athletes who have qualified for the Irish Championships in March! Murphy and Amelia have been selected to run at the London Mini-Marathon in April as a result of their individual performances.

## Irish Schools' Cross-Country Championships, Mallusk Playing Fields, Saturday 11 March

The Strathearn Cross-Country Teams were in action again a few weekends ago, this time at the Irish Schools' Cross-Country Championships at Mallusk. The course was longer and muddier than it was at the Ulster Championships; the girls had to contend with these difficult conditions as they competed against the best athletes in the country in the battle for medals.

The Junior Team of Amelia Kane, Freya Adams, Eve McKibbin, Jemima Thomas, Sophie Kenny and Chloe Browne took to the course first and all six girls put in a fantastic team performance to claim the Irish bronze medals. Special mention goes to Amelia who ran a very gutsy race but was narrowly beaten into 2nd place. The winner took to the front shortly after the race began, but Amelia stuck to her heels all the way and nearly passed her a couple of times. All credit, however, goes to the Munster girl for managing to pull away from Amelia because it was not easy to stay ahead. We are all very proud of Amelia's courageous run for her silver medal. She was also selected for the U15 Irish Schools' Cross-Country Team which will run at the Schools' International competition in Wales on 25 March.

Next up was the Intermediate Team of Olivia Nelson, Erin McConnell, Murphy Miller, Katie Wills, Aimee Stitt and Ruby Baxter. All six girls ran very well to take home the bronze medals in the Intermediate Team competition as well, just missing out on silver by 3 points. This was superb running, which covered 3,600m in a very muddy Mallusk.



# SQUASH



The Ulster Schools' Squash Championships took place on 6 March at Belfast Boat Club. Our U15 Team of Hannah McGugan, Jemima Thomas and Sophie Thomas beat Methody to become Ulster Champions and qualify for the Irish Schools' Championships in April. The U19 Team of Victoria White, Emma McGugan and Alex Reilly also claimed the Ulster title and have qualified for the Irish Championships in Cork in April.

Sophie Thomas, Hannah McGugan, Emma McGugan and Victoria White were all selected to represent Ulster at various levels in this year's Irish Junior Interprovincial Championships in Dublin. Sophie and Hannah have also been selected to compete for Ireland at the upcoming Five Nations' Championships in Wales.

Hannah Craig has had a busy year competing around the world in a variety of squash tournaments. Currently ranked 5th in Europe, she has enjoyed a number of successes, including winning the French Junior Open in February and finishing in 3rd place at the German Junior Open. Hannah is also the current Irish Senior and Junior (U19) National Champion and will be competing at the European Senior Championships in Helsinki and U19 European Championships in Portugal next month where she will play in both the individual and team events. She will also be representing Ireland at the World Junior Championships in New Zealand in July before taking up her scholarship at Harvard University. This is an amazing opportunity for Hannah to be able to train with some of the best players in the world and to benefit from the top class facilities and coaching available at Harvard.



# Dance SWIMMING

Congratulations to the Junior and Intermediate Dance Teams which competed at the Northern Ireland Creative Movement and Aerobic Championships on 10 March.

The Strathearn teams are led and choreographed by our own pupils, and they compete against some very talented teams who have professional dance teachers. The teams have worked hard since September to learn and perfect their routines. All this hard work paid off with the Junior Team finishing 3rd in their section. Well done to all the dancers but special mention to their team of coaches from Form 5 – Aife Sansom, Rebecca Black and Sarah McTaggart - who have worked tirelessly to get the girls to this level.

The Intermediate Team was led by Ellie Biggerstaff, Evanna Maxted, Sophie Gillespie and Alice Graham from L6. These girls choreographed and organised everything themselves, and the team finished in a very well-deserved 2nd place in their section. These are fantastic results against tough opposition. Well done girls!



Congratulations to Erin McConnell, Amelia Kane and Mia Davison who have been selected to represent Ulster in the Interprovincial Championships in Dublin in April.

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS' GALA RESULTS

### JUNIORS

Rachel Childs came 7th in the 100m Butterfly and 8th in the 100m Backcrawl. Freya Adams came 8th in the 100m Individual Medley and 10th in the 100m Freestyle. Faith Heyburn came 23rd in the 100m Individual Medley and 24th in the 100m Freestyle. Evie Gallen came 18th in the 100m Breaststroke and 36th in the 100m Individual Medley. Sophie Thomas came 33rd in the 100m Breaststroke and 36th in the 100m Backcrawl. The Relay Team of Faith Heyburn, Evie Gallen, Rachel Childs and Freya Adams came 6th in the Medley Relay and 6th in the Freestyle Relay.

### OPEN -INTERMEDIATE

Anna Heyburn came 6th in the 100m Freestyle. Sam McCormick came 11th in the 100m Butterfly and 12th in the 200m Individual Medley.

### SENIOR

Victoria White came 3rd in the 100m Backcrawl and 6th in the 100m Freestyle. The Relay Team of Sophie Thomas, Anna Heyburn, Sam McCormick and Victoria White came 1st in the Medley Relay and 1st in the Freestyle Relay.

# SPORTS SNIPPETS

# netball

Strathearn has had yet another great season of Netball, with many girls getting involved at all age groups. Well done to all our teams, and especially to the Intermediate Team which was victorious in all of its matches. This great run included an impressive 24-3 win against Sullivan. Congratulations to the Minor B Team whose enthusiasm and commitment brought them victories in all but one of their matches. There has also been a number of solid team performances from the Minor A, Junior and Senior Teams, with valuable game-play experience gained from competitive matches against schools including Glenlola and Bloomfield. The Form 1A and B Teams are still playing off in their NI Netball league matches, so good luck to them!

## Trampolining

Strathearn's U14A Trampolining Team took part in the Zonal Championships in Wigan in February. The girls represented Strathearn very well. Congratulations to all the girls who took part! We hope next year will bring us further enjoyment and success!

Sophie Neale and Eliza Chittick have also been selected for the Northern Ireland Level 2 and Level 3 Teams respectively and will compete in the British Gymnastics Regional Team Final in Birmingham in June.

## Showjumping

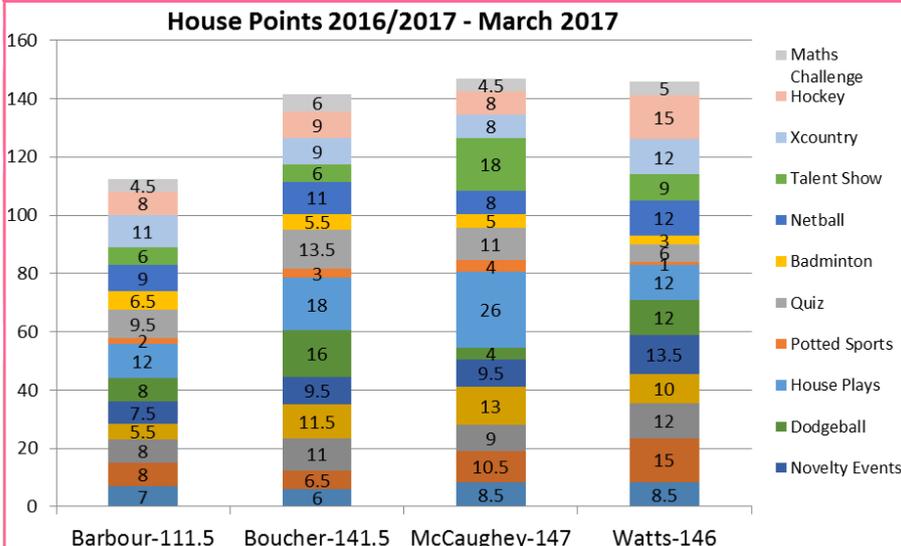
Our showjumpers were in action at the St Patrick's Day Inter-Schools' Competition at The Meadows Equestrian Centre in Lurgan. Katie Smith, Felicity Johnston and Zoe Martin made up a team jumping over 1m fences, and Charlotte Keers and Molly Cahoon competed as Individuals in the 85cm category. All the girls rode well, but unfortunately did not get placed.

## Irish Dancing

In November 2016, Anna McKibbin competed in the Ulster Irish Dancing Championships in Newry. After a long and tiring day, she became Ulster Champion. Following her win in November, Anna competed in the Northern Ireland Championships for 'Festival' Irish dancing held in the Girdwood Community Hub. She won in an extremely competitive age group to become Under 16 Northern Ireland Champion. In the summer Anna will be travelling to Poland to dance in an international folk festival which will be a great experience. Well done Anna!

# House Points Table 20 March

**!HOUSE POINTS! - There are still 3 activities to go before the final placings are decided!**



# Happy Easter!