



Strathaven Academy



Winter Edition

December 2021

Newsletter



'The group encourages students to set goals for themselves by playing instruments and music they haven't tried before...'

Strathaven Academy Samba Band

New Samba Band Led by the Music Department and Funded by the Pupil Equity Fund Brings New Inspiration as Extra-Curricular Activities Resume

Every Tuesday, the clashing of drums can be heard throughout the school - a sound that compels your body to move and dance. This is the Samba Band. Populated by pupils and teachers, it meets every Tuesday evening between 4 and 5pm to play beautiful music. Due to Covid-19, extracurricular activities were stopped last year, which resulted in many pupils' mental health suffering due to the cancellations.

However, at the beginning of the current school year, we were allowed to start up again, which is exciting for pupils who haven't yet experienced clubs in our school. This club is for all year groups and doesn't require any prior musical experience, as the main goal is to have fun. The group encourages pupils to set goals for themselves by playing instruments and music they haven't tried before, and by pushing themselves whilst building confidence and feeling like part of a team. It's a space pupils can use to their liking to be creative, socialise, have fun or relieve stress.

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Illustration by Millie M.



Languages Day

Strathaven Academy celebrated International Languages Day to raise awareness of the importance of different languages in society. On Thursday, the 23rd of September, pupils and teachers at Strathaven Academy were invited to wear casual clothes and bring a donation. (Continued on P3)



Head Teacher's Message

Welcome to the Christmas 2021 Winter Edition of our school newsletter. The newsletter showcases the journalistic skills of our S6 Communications Team and provides an opportunity to promote the voice of our incredible young people. Once again, the team has produced a superb edition, featuring some of the many recent school events alongside thought-provoking articles and opinions. This term has seen the reintroduction of many aspects of our wider curriculum, with the relaunch of clubs and activities after the October break. It has been fantastic to see, hear and feel the positive difference this makes to our school community. No more so than on a Tuesday afternoon, when our newly founded Samba Band swings into action. The band has already been invited to play at the next Strathaven Balloon Festival and I'm sure will continue to grow from strength to strength. The many clubs and activities on offer add to our positive ethos and vibrant culture, providing opportunities for young people to see teachers in a different light, develop their many skills and abilities, and provide a bit of fun in what can sometimes be trying times. The festive break is fast approaching and we are once again surrounded by uncertainty. There is hardly an hour goes

past when we are not reminded of the dangers associated with the new Omicron variant and the potential impact on all of our lives. Uncertainty is uncomfortable, causes anxiety and is not particularly conducive to learning. Our brains are hard-wired to locate bad news and it can be extremely difficult to stay positive, remain focussed and survive the plethora of negative news stories, never mind thrive! As I have said many times before, Strathaven Academy is a very special school community. A learning community that is based on our core values - responsible, respectful and resilient. We must all live these values, as best we can, to ensure that we navigate the current uncertainty and provide opportunities for every young person to flourish. Reflecting on the present climate and my time at the Academy, I recall an ancient African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child". I am confident that the whole Strathaven community will come together once again to support, nurture, cherish and love our extraordinary young people. Our unique and collective Strathaven spirit will indeed ensure that together we will continue to thrive. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Take care and stay safe.



MR BOYD,
HEAD TEACHER

A Note from the Editors

The school newsletter continues to be produced by the S6 pupil communication group. In addition to developing articles for the newsletter, our team has enjoyed updating the pupil zone on the school website. The process has challenged our time management skills, but we are enthusiastic about incorporating a range of content in this area.

Developing our skills with professional magazine-editing software used in the media industry is really rewarding. Several of us have had our first experience of web design, and others are developing their photography skills. We hope you enjoy this festive edition, which highlights the voice of Strathaven Academy pupils.

Winter Edition Christmas 2021



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If you have something to report in our newsletter, email office@strathaven.s-lanark.sch.uk providing the name and class of the person(s) involved with their achievement/success and a photograph if possible.

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Languages Day

Continued from P1

The donation could be in the form of a small amount of money or a book that would be recycled to a good home. The different departments in the school were assigned different countries! These included Italy, Hungary, Spain, Germany and Switzerland. The IT and Business department focused on Ukraine and was named 'Best Department'! They decorated the hallway with Ukrainian flags as bunting and some common phrases in the Ukrainian language. They even added in the national soup of Ukraine (borscht)! The sixth years' country was Spain, and they were required to dress in red and yellow clothing. Sixth year pupils Bilaal and Morgan are the language ambassadors and they helped to make the props! Many of the younger students contributed by making informative and colourful posters to represent the different countries. Many teachers took pride in wearing department-specific costumes, with some of the favourites being the lunch ladies as Super Mario characters!



2021-2022 Leadership Team Photos

Welcome to a new school year at Strathaven Academy. This year our School Captains are Jane and Oscar. As S6 pupils, we know the school very well and we are excited to make this year at Strathaven Academy a year to remember. It is important we recognise the hard work of our fellow pupils and commend them for the fantastic results they have achieved so far academically. A large part of S6 is given over to extra events and projects we organise. We are hopeful we will still be able to host many events whilst following current guidelines. Electives are very important this year, as we gain knowledge and acquire new skills to use after school. Many of these demonstrate how important pupil voice is in taking responsibility, working in a team and successfully carrying out projects. Our Captains aim to continue the amazing work completed by previous senior years and rekindle work with our community after

multiple national lockdowns. It is our responsibility to inspire and mentor the whole school community and continue to provide an ethos of pride in Strathaven Academy. **School Captains**





'Reading early in life is the easiest way to improve your vocabulary and writing skills for later in life.'



Reading Week Events

Recently, Strathaven Academy celebrated its annual Reading Week. This event is organised by the English Department to celebrate the importance of reading in various areas of life. **Why is reading so important?** Reading is one of the most valuable skills taught to school pupils. Reading early in life is the easiest way to improve your vocabulary and writing skills for later in life. Every

subject taught at school will in some way require reading skills. Whether it's for reading a question in an exam, or writing an essay, reading skills are vital. Even after leaving school, reading skills are used at university or college, as well as in various areas of working life. Reading Week helps pupils to understand the importance of reading and how to improve their skills as a reader.

Cosplay Day Fun

As always, the highlight of the week was Friday's Cosplay Day, when students were allowed to cosplay as their favourite characters from various aspects of media or wear a band T-shirt for £1. Prizes were awarded to the students who were best dressed, and many teachers were able to join in on the fun, with various departments across the school coordinating their costumes.



Drop Everything and Read Period

Drop Everything and Read Period
On period 6 on the Thursday afternoon of our Reading Week, our pupils were allowed a full period of personal reading. Students were encouraged to bring their own books from home or

borrow one from our school library, and enjoy reading in a peaceful environment. This event acted as a break for pupils from their busy timetables, as well as a way to show them how easy reading for around an hour is as a way to improve reading skills.



MacMillan Afternoon Tea Success

In September, Miss Grant and her fourth year Practical Cookery pupils organised an afternoon tea-style lunch for MacMillan Cancer Research. Teachers from around the school were

able to buy tickets for £5 and were treated to a Covid-safe afternoon tea prepared by S4. The event was a resounding success and the whole school is extremely proud of all involved.



Barista Machine

From Barista Machine through Outdoor Seating to the first School Garden, it was a tough competition when it came to deciding on what to spend our school budget! Between September and October, pupils, parents and staff met to decide on three main ideas on which our school budget should

be spent. Once the three ideas were established, it was up to those in the school community to decide what option was best to take forward. Coming out top was the barista machine, with a whopping 1220 votes - more than half of all votes cast! This is a great initiative to take forward, allowing pupils within the school to be trained in using the

barista machine, leading to more employability options and an increase in the skillset of our young people. What a brilliant opportunity we have going forward! It coincides with the launch of our own blend of coffee on which our current S6 Enterprise team is working. We can't wait to see the machine in action in the coming months!

Strathaven Academy - The Performance Sessions



Until two years ago, the Music Department had been renowned for providing live music in various forms, from the 'Young Musician of the Year' competition, through many events within the community supporting the elderly, to the annual Christmas Concert extravaganza. Last year, due to restrictions, the Music Department decided instead to make a video

showcasing all the excellent musicians Strathaven Academy has. This year we are doing the same. The video features performances recorded by pupils and staff. The Christmas Concert video is available now. We hope you enjoy the film using the following link or go to the news section on the school website. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UC_vJZfxP2o

S1 Fun Day

On Tuesday, the 5th of October, S1 pupils enjoyed a fun-filled day of team-building games organised by our brilliant sports leaders, PE staff and Emma, our Active Schools Coordinator. Throughout the day, pupils were split into different groups. Activities included Landmine, Knots and Crosses and The Floor

is Lava! S1s demonstrated our school values of being Responsible, Respectful and Resilient to ensure the day ran as smoothly as possible! Our sports leaders did an excellent job working with S1 to provide fun and challenging activities. The most difficult task was trying to get out of the human knot. Very difficult indeed! We can't wait for the next sporting event!





Enterprise Pupils Introduce 'Blend 1905'

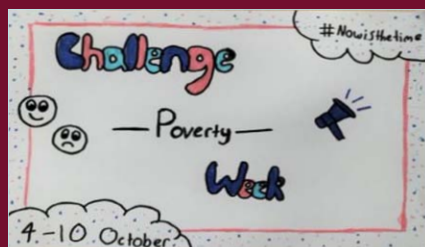
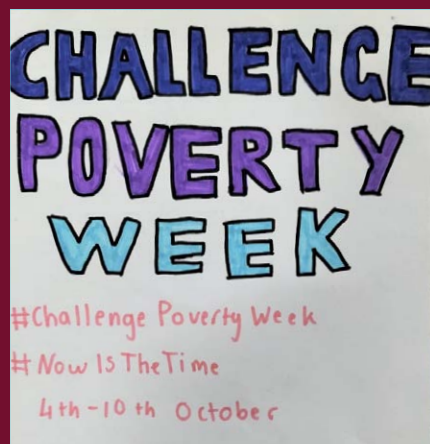
The enterprise group this year has been hard at work for some time now creating our very own Strathaven Academy coffee. Blend 1905, made and sourced by Fower, is the name of the delicious coffee the enterprise group has created. There are four different blends: coarse grind, medium grind, fine grind and

whole bean. The flavour is a mix of chocolate, caramel and red berries, making for a lovely wake-up in the morning or getting you through those hard working days. £7 is the fee for this amazing blend and an additional £5 will get you a Strathaven Academy mug to go with it, to prepare you for a day of hard work!

Poverty Awareness

At the beginning of the school year, white tote bags were placed in every cubicle of the women's toilets. These bags are full of sanitary products and are an extra step in ending period poverty. On the 24th of November, 2020, the Period Products (Free Provision - Scotland) Bill made sanitary products free in Scotland. Baskets were put in place for those who needed them; however, pupils have taken

an extra step to eradicate period poverty by putting these bags in private areas so people can take them at their discretion. Students of S6 have also taken the initiative by taking in collections for the loaves and fishes food bank. They have been collecting donations of tins of beans, sausages, hotdogs, biscuits, Micro Rice, and Cup a Soups for charity.



Loaves and Fishes

In the run-up to Christmas, a group of school captains and prefects are leading an initiative to collect donations for local charity Loaves and Fishes. In November and December, pupils are encouraged to bring in a donation to send to the charity. Some of the suggested donations are tins of beans, sausages, hotdogs, biscuits, rice and soup. However, to make this a bit of fun and include some competition, we are running this as a house competition. Each house has a set week to bring in as many donations as possible, with each donation being worth house points. The house with the most donations by Christmas will receive a prize. This is a brilliant initiative to bring the whole school community together before Christmas, and the huge number of donations will be greatly appreciated by those who need it most. The real question is, which house will come out on top?



COP26 Climate Action

Our time at the CEN (Climate Emergency Newsroom) was phenomenal. Each day produced a stream of new articles, ideas, and interviews – teamwork was crucial if we were to achieve our daily goals. Throughout the course of the week, we were constantly in an environment with new people, whether that be with students from other schools or with professionals we were to interview. We got the amazing opportunity to

interview Dr Dominic Hinde – a lecturer in sociology at the University of Glasgow. He had worked with a range of professors from around the world to produce a short documentary called Adaption – Three Stories from a Changing Planet, and we got the chance to watch this documentary at RCC Glasgow. On the final day, we were reporting live from the march that began in Kelvingrove Park and congregated in George



By Stephanie A (S6)

Square. In our search for people to interview, we ended up being interviewed ourselves. Henry Hepburn from TES wanted some coverage featuring young voices in light of COP26. This was a wonderful way to conclude our week, as this interview was published online, allowing our message to reach a wider audience.

Sport News

In November, the Strathaven Seniors' Netball Open A team beat Kyle Academy in the Scottish Championship, with Rebekah L being voted player of the match by the opposition. As well as this, netball was successfully introduced as a Wednesday and Thursday after-school activity, and this has been very successful, with many players of all ages and skill levels turning up. We are also incredibly proud of S4 pupil Zoe B, who has made the Scottish Thistles U17s team. What a great achievement!



Congratulations to Emma T and Kate F, who have both been selected for the U15s Lanarkshire Girls' Select Team. This is a great achievement and opportunity. Well done on a fantastic achievement!



A huge 'well done' to our Seniors, U16 and U14 football teams, who have all been successful in their recent games across November and December. Everyone has been a huge credit to the school and shown that there are exciting things to come over the next year!

A huge 'well done' to Ella H in S6, who was runner-up in the 2004 Girls' Singles Scottish Schools Badminton Union Tournament. Ella has been fantastic in her tournaments recently, and everyone is very proud of her achievements. Well done, Ella!



On the 29th of November, pupils were invited to compete in a boccia tournament against the teachers. Each pupil was assigned a specific teacher. Each pupil played a match and then moved on to play against the next teacher. Boccia is played similarly to bowls. Each player takes turns at throwing the ball to try to hit another ball. The player that manages to throw their ball closest to the starting ball wins!



MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM EVERYONE
AT **STRATHAVEN ACADEMY**



Opinion Corner 'COVID 19 Vaccine'

Aidan Says...

The impact that COVID-19 had on everyone over the last couple of years has been catastrophic. All through the multiple lockdowns we endured, we patiently awaited a solution. Then, finally, we got it. Vaccinations for COVID-19 began for the most vulnerable members of society, and eventually the vaccines reached many different age groups. We're on the verge of returning to normality, but a section of the population has refused to get vaccinated. Obviously, some people cannot get vaccinated as it would endanger them; however, the issue is those who are able to be vaccinated but choose not to, as they feed into the lies and misinformation that are spread about the vaccines. Vaccines are the most effective way to minimise the effects of COVID-19 on your body and are perfectly safe. There's no reason why anyone who is able to be vaccinated shouldn't.



the NET WORK

As this year's Communications Elective group, we continue to refresh the 'pupil zone' section of the school website. We have been working hard to update resources and have rebranded the zone 'The Network'. We will continue to share information, thoughts, events and ideas. We also aim to share information about house points and events, as well as provide information on mental health, study skills and pupil life at Strathaven Academy.



STRATHAVEN LEARNING COMMUNITY



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