



Forrester High School Christmas News Letter



Welcome to our Christmas Newsletter 2018

Please find below a number of stories which we have gathered from across the school to provide a flavour of the great work being done by students and staff this term.

Work Experience

At the start of December, we had over one hundred young people out on Work Experience. It was great to receive such positive feedback from some local employers including NHS, Schools, Charities, Construction, Hospitality and many more.

Lessons from Auschwitz

In November, two of our S6 students, Ailsa Breckenridge and Bradley McCosh, were given a chance to take part in the Lessons from Auschwitz Project. The project included a day trip to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

During the next stage of the project Ailsa and Bradley plan to pass on their experiences to the school community.



The Edinburgh Evening News used the following quotes from Ailsa and Bradley:

“It’s a shock. Learning about it in class is one thing, but actually being in the place where millions have died. It just shows how strong they were and how much hope they had.”
Ailsa

“It’s just so sad. The shock that anything like this could actually happen. Just so much pain and suffering and the people haven’t realised that this is wrong. We should all just be at

peace together instead of this- it’s just not ok.” Bradley

They both agreed that the visit has had a big impact on them that will stay with them forever.

Higher Media Filmmaking Workshop

The Higher Media students took part in a fantastic filmmaking workshop, provided by Screen Education Edinburgh, on Friday 30th November. The students learned various filming skills, using high quality lighting, camera equipment and professional techniques. The two and a half hour session was designed to give the students the necessary knowledge in order to allow them to make their own filmed media text appear as polished as possible.

Annual Mini-trials Competition

On Saturday the 8th of December, 7 students participated in the annual mini-trials competition at Edinburgh’s Sherriff Court. Students prepared both a prosecution and defence case, acting as lawyers, accused and witnesses. They put in a great deal of effort, learning about and preparing their cases outside of school time. The lawyers working with them both commented on the preparation and poise of our students. They were a real credit to themselves and the school.



Heroes and Villains





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On the 20th of November, we celebrated the hard work and success of our S1 cohort. All S1 students created their own hero and villain characters after a workshop with distinguished author Mary Turner Thompson. The stories students wrote based on their characters were published into a novel which was available for purchase. The night also recognised individual students who wrote particularly fascinating stories.



Book Trip

At the end of November the Library Reading Club visited Blackwell's Bookshop to select books for the school library. Each student was given an amount to spend and needed to calculate various special offers and discounts to keep within their budget. We were also armed with wish lists from students unable to join us. Each of these books will be labelled as 'Cool Reads' promoting them as books chosen by students.



The books finally arrived and this week the boxes have been unpacked and checked by the Reading Club and our Duke of Edinburgh volunteer, John.

Next, they will help with stamping, labelling and jacketing the books. Hopefully, most will be on the shelves before the holidays, so

students can borrow some amazing reads over Christmas!

The awesome Reading Club are: Brogan, Amy, Kanta, Kasey, Joanne, Eve, Jasmine, Jessica, Alisha and Chiara. As a thank you for taking part each student was gifted a book to add to their own personal libraries.

Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award

Congratulations to Taylor Fairgrieve, Bethanny Harrison, Arron Illingworth, Kirsty Dingwall and Lauren Bevis on achieving their Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award. On Wednesday 5th December 2018, they attended a ceremony at the City Chambers where the Director of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme presented them with their awards.

We also now have a core group of five staff



who are supporting Duke of Edinburgh to run once again this year. Forty students from S3 and S4 are now signed-up and ready to go.

Advanced Higher Geography Field Trip to Water of Leith

The Advanced Higher Geography class has once again worked with the Water of Leith Conservation Trust on data collection and analysis of the middle course of the river as part of a successful fieldwork day. Despite the cold conditions, some very useful data was collected and the students gained invaluable practical surveying skills not just for helping with their Geographical Study, but for use in the world of work.

Huge thanks once again to Ruth Prince from the Water of Leith Conservation trust for her brilliant input.





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National Travel and Tourism Trip to Royal Mile, National Museum and Mary King's Close

The National Travel and Tourism students enjoyed a great day out, surveying tourist attractions on the Royal Mile. They gained mapping skills and information which should assist them to be successful at National 5 level in their Scotland unit. All students were very impressed with, and thoroughly enjoyed their experience of the National Museum and Mary King's Close.

Senior Leadership Class

Our Leadership class have now finished their work-based placements and the school has received outstanding feedback about our students. Some have already been offered real jobs and volunteering opportunities. Well done to Harry Lauder, Emma Bow, Jack Swan, Jamie Thomson and Kaitlin Hay.

Cabaret Concert

On Wednesday 10 October, a number of young musicians performed in our highly successful Cabaret evening. This was a first such event for Music and Drama, and the relaxed and informal atmosphere was well received by parents and friends.

Edinburgh School Ensembles – Fanfare Concert (Friday 30 November)

Lewis Ferguson and Rebecca Bean performed in the Lord Provost's Fanfare Concert in the Edinburgh Schools Rock Ensemble and the Edinburgh Schools Central Choir respectively.

Edinburgh School Ensembles – Childline Concert (Friday 7 December)

Alexander Swinney performed in the Instrumental Music Service Childline Concert in the Edinburgh Schools Guitar Ensemble.

National Youth Choir of Scotland

Sarah Brown performed at the televised Remembrance Service from Paisley Abbey. Sarah performs regularly with different ensembles within this organisation, and is now involved in leading some of the junior rehearsals.

Stories from the Science Department

It's been a busy term in the Science Department with trips and visits all round!

"There's been a Murder!"

S2 year group have visited Edinburgh College for the CSI Forensics STEM Activity Day, led by Mr Gray and Miss Masters. Lots of science techniques and learning about DNA.



Royal High "Operating Theatre Live"

Congratulations to MerghaniM Muaz Abdelrahim Mustafa in S5 who has secured a place at the Royal High "Operating Theatre Live" event for aspiring medical students in January!

Science Trip (led by Ms McIntosh)

In October, our National 5 Chemists visited EDF Nuclear Power Station to learn how the energy in radioisotopes is harnessed to power our lives.





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Heriot Watt University STEM

In October, Mr Reid welcomed the engineering team from Heriot Watt University to our Senior Scientists to hear about the opportunities and prospects a career in engineering could offer our young people.

Senior Science Ambassadors

A big thank you to our Senior Science Ambassadors, Rebecca Bean, Agnia Naumova, Chervelle Henry and Mayez Harris who have run a fantastic S1 Science club every Tuesday in the department!!



Vision and Values

For the last year the school has received views from over 300 parents, all staff and all students in developing a collective vision for the school.

It has been agreed that our 3 key values will be Respect, Believe and Achieve. These 3 values will not only be an integral part of every school classroom, but will underpin the start and end of every conversation we have at Forrester.

In January, we will begin installation of a number of new visuals around the school

which should be stunning. By doing so we want to bring the school alive and inspire students to become confident, ambitious and successful people.

Breakfast club

Thanks to the support of 'Magic Breakfast', we have provided over 3000 completely free and healthy breakfasts to students since June 2018. We serve bagels, cereal, toast, fruit, milk or fruit juice to around 45 students every morning. This is helping to improve focus, energy levels, attendance, late-coming and also helps students to manage anxiety and sleep deprivation.

Nurture Group

In October, we launched our 3rd nurture group. We now have two groups in S1 and one in S2. Nurture groups are classes of between six and eight students supported by two members of staff. Young people attend nurture groups twice a week, one of which is first thing Monday morning where they receive a breakfast. Our nurture groups support learning and social and emotional needs; giving whatever help is needed to remove barriers to learning. There is great emphasis on language development, empathy and communication.



Parental Involvement

Parental Involvement is a key factor in a child's success at school. Since the launch of our new Parent Evening Booking System and the introduction of the Pupil Support Officer role, we have seen a dramatic increase in our ability to engage with parents. Over 160 parents attended our last senior parents evening. This was a dramatic increase from previous years.





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Our Forrester app is also proving very popular with over 700 downloads. We encourage all parents and students to use our app to keep up-to-date with events and activities.

Activities week 2019

At the end of May, just before the change of time table (May 28-30th) all students in S1-3 will take part in a week of fun activities. The normal timetable will be suspended from Tuesday-Thursday with a wide range of trips and activities on offer. This is a fantastic opportunity for staff and students to celebrate their academic year, before refocussing and moving into new classes. If you have not already made a choice or deposit payment, please ask for further information at the school office.

Drama Excursions

Our senior Drama classes have been busy seeing a number of live theatre performances, the most notable being "A War of Two Halves" at Tynecastle Stadium on Wednesday 7 November. They were also fortunate enough to have the writer/director/actor from the play come in to school and run a workshop. The venue staff were full of praise for these young people, who displayed excellent manners and respect.

S2 Expressive Arts project

Our S2 students have been working on a combined project between Drama, Music and Art called "Chamber of Horrors". This involves using lighting in Drama to enhance the performance, music technology in Music to create sound effects and design to create masks in Art. We are looking forward to seeing the final product before Christmas!

Hour of Code

All S1-3 students took part in this year's 'Hour of Code' during Computing. The Hour of Code is a global movement by Computer Science Education Week and Code.org reaching tens of millions of students in 180+ countries through a one-hour introduction to computer science and computer programming. At Forrester we use The Hour of Code to engage

students, and give them an entry point into computer programming. Activities included



coding Minecraft, Star Wars, The Grinch and Flappy Bird. S3 students had the opportunity to further extend their knowledge of the Python programming language. Students wishing to further develop their coding skills can do so from home via the Hour of Code website <https://code.org/>.

Youth Talk

On Tuesday 4th December, members of the Community Life-long Learning Team visited school to gather young people's views on how to improve local activities for young people. Youth talk is about young people "having a say" in what is provided for them in the communities where they live.

Senior Citizens' Christmas Coffee Morning

Our fantastic S6 students organised a very successful Christmas Coffee Morning for our senior citizens last week. They led the whole event and kept our guests entertained with singing, bingo, quizzes and chat. They really did us proud, and showed the very best aspect of the school.





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Our S6 would like to extend their gratitude to all of the staff who supported them over recent months in preparation for the big event. They send the following message:

“On behalf of the S6 Coffee Morning Committee, we would like to express our great thanks to all of the staff whose kindness and generosity helped make the day such a fantastic success!

Our guests really had a great time and were very grateful for all of the lovely gifts and thoughtful donations contributed by staff, parents and students across the school.

In particular, we could not have delivered this wonderful community event without the continued support from our Home Economics Department, our office and janitorial staff, and our colleagues from Chartwells.”

Christmas Card Competition

Congratulations to Jasmine (x2), Joanne and Katie for making the top four in our Christmas card design competition. We will adopt the winning design, ‘Candles by Jasmine’, as our school Christmas card for this year. We will send this out (electronically of course) to partner agencies and other schools. (Katie is also a winner of the Winter Windows competition and will have her ‘Kindness’ artwork blown up and displayed in a 2 metre high, lit glass box on West Parliament square over the Christmas period.)



Winter Concert – Tuesday 18 December

Our Winter Concert featured many of our young musicians, performing solo and in

larger ensembles. A number of the young people, including many from our cluster primaries, were plying in public for the first time. Everyone did themselves proud and our audience was thoroughly entertained by some breath-taking performances.



Senior Football

Huge congratulations to our senior squad who won their 2nd trophy in 2 months, winning the Cooperative cup with a 2-0 victory against St Augustine’s. Kieran Millar came off the bench to score both goals - a sublime left footed finish in the top bin from 25+ yards and a cool header from a Josh Tierney corner. (Kieran wrote this bit himself!)

Santa 5K Run

On Thursday 20th December, Staff and students participated in the ‘Santa 5K’ organised by the magnificent Miss Stewart.



Well done to everyone who took part so enthusiastically, particularly to Jason Howie – fastest student and Mr Nisbet – fastest teacher (almost as fast as Jason).





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S1 Party

Great thanks are due to our incredible PE department and the fantastic Senior Leadership class for providing our S1 students with a Christmas Party to remember. As well



as a bit of Scottish Country Dancing (with a difference), there were games, mini-sports, snacks and competitions.

Christmas Jumper Day

On the last day of term, Friday 21st December, our Student Voice Group held a Christmas Jumper Day in aid of our local Food Bank and the charity, [Social Bite](#).



Charities throughout the year

A special mention should go to our S6 Charity Committee for organising a number of major charity fundraising events. Halloween dress-up day raised nearly £400 for Childhood Cancer and on Friday 16th they continued the Forrester tradition by raising over £700 for Children in Need.

Merry Christmas from Lloyds Banking Group

Our partners at Lloyds Banking Group have forgone their office Secret Santa this year and



instead have collected gifts to ensure that some of our young people receive gifts this Christmas. We thank the team at Lloyds for their generosity and for all their support over the year.

Burns Ceilidh – Thursday 24 January 2019

We are holding our first Burns Ceilidh with live ceilidh band on Thursday 24 January, with stovies included, courtesy of our Home Economics department. Save the date – tickets will be available in early January!

And finally ...

I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I should also remind you that term ends at 12:00 noon on Friday 21st December and that the new term begins for all students on Wednesday January 9th.

Best wishes.

Stephen Rafferty

Head Teacher

