STRANRAER

ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2026



WWW.STRANRAERACADEMY.ORG



Content

P — 03 Headteacher

P — 04 CDT

P — 06 YPI

P — 07 Charity Bingo Night

P — 09 Great Scott!

P — 12 Higher Photography

P — 18 Photographer of the Year

P — 19 Art & Design

P — 24 Music

P — 28 Drama

P — 30 English

P — 41 Healthy Living

P — 53 Battlefields

P — 56 Student Leadership

P — 58 Maths & Business

P — 60 Columba 1400

P — 62 Chasing the Headteacher

P — 63 Science

P — 67 CPR Training

P — 69 Battlebots

P — 71 Warhammer Club

P — 73 Learning Support

P — 79 Awards Evenings

P — 89 Farewell



Jamie Farquhar

Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to present our Summer Newsletter for 2026. We are proud of our many Improvements this year as we strive to be a school Stranraer can be proud of. Attainment, attendance and behaviour are all improving and resulting in our highest proportion of pupils leaving school to a positive destination - employment, training or further/higher education - ever.

A successful school is also about supporting our pupils to grow into confident and happy young people. The guidance, friendships and experiences offered at school dre central to this growth. I am proud that this newsletter captures so many of these opportunities and successes. I am prouder still of the fun and friendship our pupils have enjoyed; the smiles tell their own story.

Thank you to all our parents and carers for their continued support of our wonderful school.

Young enterprise



CRAFT DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

P — 04

SHORE TO SUCCEED













Stranraer Academy's Young Enterprise team "Creations by the Coast" consisting of senior students Alex Brown, Abbi Johnstone and Shauna Kinahan, saw great success at the regional finals in Dumfries, winning the "boards special award". The team demonstrated strong entrepreneurial efforts in creating customised coaster designs, ranging from your favourite pets, to local landmarks, putting a smile on many happy customers faces.

In addition to their achievements in the regional finals, the students were also all successful in passing an associated Strathclyde University Business School exam, demonstrating their acquired entrepreneurial and business management skills, all of which will be of great value to them going forward in their future careers. Overall, a huge well done to Alex, Abbi and Shauna we wish you all great success in your future years.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

S3 Pupils Win YPI Grant for Home Start

We are incredibly proud to celebrate the success of four outstanding pupils from our S3 cohort, Kayden McColm, Millie Whorlow, Lily McClymont, Sophia Schofield and Lucy Marshall, who were crowned this year's YPI (Youth and Philanthropy Initiative) winners.

YPI is a national programme that empowers young people to research social issues in their community, connect with local charities, and compete for a £3000 grant to support the cause they believe in most. It gives pupils a real voice in philanthropy and a chance to make meaningful change close to home.

Kayden, Millie, Lily and Lucy chose to represent Home Start, a valued local charity that provides practical and emotional support to families with young children. Home Start works alongside parents facing challenges and helps them build confidence, resilience and stronger family life.

What set this team apart was their enthusiasm, their knock-out presentation, and the creativity they poured into every stage of their project. Their commitment shone through and the judges were unanimous: they had earned the £3000 grant that will now go directly to supporting families in our community.

We couldn't be prouder of them. Their achievement will be recognised once again when they are formally presented with the YPI Trophy during our upcoming awards ceremony.

A fantastic accomplishment, and a powerful reminder of the difference young people can make.







EYES DOWN FOR A GOOD CAUSE



S3 PUPILS BRING COMMUNITY TOGETHER WITH CHARITY BINGO NIGHT FOR QUARRIERS







Three of our S3 pupils Aleeah Robison, Shanice Burton and Kalli Garrett have once again shown the power of young people to make a real difference in their community. Inspired by their recent involvement in the YPI programme, the girls took it upon themselves to organise a Charity Bingo Night in support of Quarriers, a respected local charity.

The event held in the Millenium Centre was a huge success. The hall was packed with families, friends and supporters from across Stranraer, all eager to get involved and back the girls' efforts. Thanks to their hard work, organisation and determination, the evening raised an impressive £646 -money that will go directly to helping Quarriers continue its vital work.

Quarriers is a charity dedicated to supporting vulnerable children, adults and families facing a range of challenges. Their services provide practical help, emotional support and opportunities for people to build confidence and independence.

What makes this achievement even more special is that it grew from the pupils' experience with YPI. It shows that our young people don't just participate , they go above and beyond, taking what they've learned and using it to care for others in the community. Their initiative brought Stranraer Academy right into the heart of the community, strengthening relationships and showcasing the compassion and leadership of our pupils.




GREAT SCOTT!
BACK
TO THE FUTURE
COMES TO CAIRNRYAN
DMC
DWU
140W

GREAT SCOTT! BACK TO THE FUTURE COMES TO CAIRNRYAN

In what is fast becoming a tradition for Mrs Gibb's S2 classes, this year's cohort finished studying the media techniques in the modern classic film 'Back to the Future' just in time for the return trip of classic car enthusiast John Kennedy's DeLorean DMC-12 from the annual 'DeLorean Revival' event in Belfast. 16 members of the class headed out to Cairnryan to hear first-hand all about the car's history and some fun facts about the film.

Maya, Lilly and Alistair each wrote a short piece about the experience of seeing the car in real life.:

Maya: 'When John came to show us his amazing DeLorean in Cairnryan, he told us about when the factory started producing the cars in 1981 but then stopped in 1983, they desperately tried selling the cars. Eventually, we all took turns sitting in the incredibly low car and it was an awesome.'

Lilly: 'John Kennedy told us very interesting information about the DeLorean, giving us fun facts about the history and layout of the car. He was kind enough to let everyone sit inside the car and have a nice laugh. He showed us the engine in the back and the boot in the front! Overall, it was a very fun and exciting time for me, and the car definitely meets my standards!'

Alistair: 'On June 15th, Stranraer Academy pupils from Mrs Gibb's S2 class were invited for a fun evening away to see a DeLorean. The kids, and some of the adults, got to see and learn about the car's history. Many of them were able to get their picture taken in the low-riding car. This was all possible due to John Kennedy's kindness and help. He had just returned from a DeLorean Revival festival in Northern Ireland and offered to stop by to let the kids see. Once he had to leave, all the kids gave him a big cheer to say thank you.'

Stranraer Academy would like to extend our grateful thanks to John, and his friend Kenny, for taking time out of their journey home to Glasgow, and to the parents/carers who brought the pupils out to Cairnryan - some of the parents were more excited than their children to see this iconic car up close!

















GREAT SCOTT! BACK TO THE FUTURE COMES TO CAIRNRYAN

Through the Lens: A Vintage Year for Higher Photography

This year's Higher Photography cohort has produced what is, without exaggeration, some of the most ambitious and accomplished work the department has ever seen.

Leading the charge is Alex Brown's extraordinary Tales from Hill Valley, a love letter to the entire Back to the Future trilogy and quite simply the biggest project the department has ever received — and, in all honesty, may ever receive. Across fifteen shoots, Alex touched every corner of all three films and just about every technique in the photographer's arsenal: long exposure, studio portraiture, scale-model construction and special effects galore, all in homage to the trilogy that inspired it. It is a staggering body of work.

He was in fine company. Zac McCutcheon's Prison Break captured the claustrophobia and unease of prison life — from the cold geometry of the cells to a canteen brawl and a tense bid for freedom — turning isolation itself into a subject. Georgia Sutherland's beautifully realised project drew on The Last of Us, holding two worlds in balance: the eerie tranquillity of nature quietly reclaiming the earth when the clickers aren't hunting, and the sudden, total chaos when they are. The contrast was handled with real maturity.

Elsewhere, Aiden Kyles's scale-figure photography conjured cinematic moments in miniature — Ghost Rider ablaze, the Marvel and Star Wars universes, and even a Street Fighter II showdown — proving you don't need a Hollywood budget, just patience, lighting and imagination. A Hunger Games-inspired project set the dazzling glamour of the Capitol against the desperate scramble for survival of the tributes, while the rest of the cohort ranged gloriously wide: album-cover concepts, fashion editorials, minimalist studies, animal photography and architecture.

From a flux-capacitor-powered DeLorean to the quiet of a post-apocalyptic forest, it has been a truly wonderful year — and one of the strongest collections of portfolios the department has ever sent away. To every photographer: take a bow. The future, it's fair to say, looks bright.














HOLOMAX
JAWS 19
This Time It's
REALLY REALLY Personal
DIRECTED BY
MAX SPIELBE

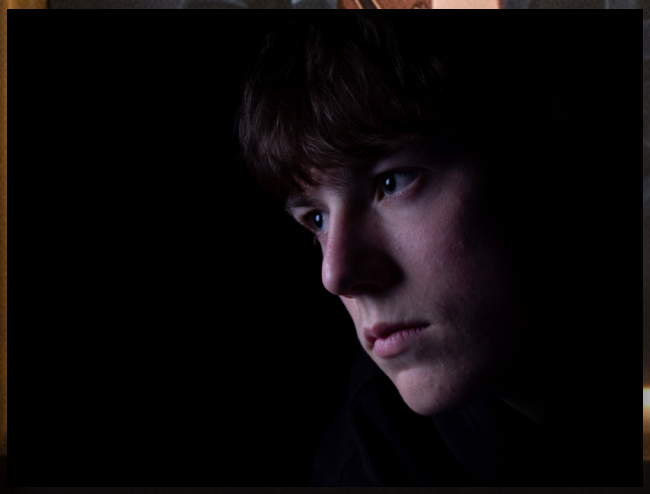


ALEX BROWN





ZAC McCUTCHEON









GEORGIA SUTHERLAND





AIDEN KYLE





JACQUE STEEL









IRIS WALKER



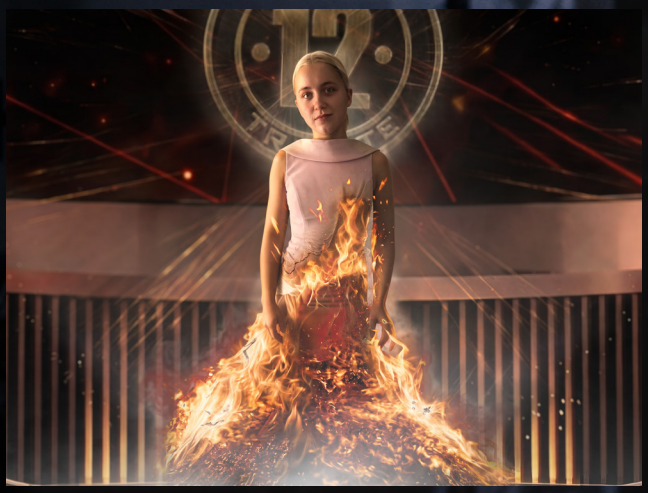
MINH NGUYEN



LIAM MACDONALD



ABIGAIL RICE









ELLY ALLISON



DYLAN HERON



ROXY WHORLOW





ISLA WESTBROOK

PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

It's been a wonderful year for our weekly Photographer of the Week competition, and the standard of entries made choosing an overall winner was no easy task for senior students. After a lovely collection of photographs across the months, the title of Photographer of the Year goes to **Keara Bark** for her beautifully captured red squirrel — a patient, perfectly timed shot of one of Scotland's most elusive little residents.

Hot on her heels in second place was **Cameron McClymont** with his dramatic harvest scene, while **Hamish Scott** claimed third with the Red Arrows roaring over the crowd. Rounding off a superb top group were our three runners-up: **Ellie-May Watson** with Delicate Balance, a stunning close-up of a bumblebee at work; **Atticus Orr-Ewing** with his golden-hour dirt-bike shot; and **Erin James** with the striking feline portrait Mystique in Black. A brilliant set, every one of them.

The competition runs every week from August right through to December, so the holidays are the perfect chance to get snapping. Whether you're away somewhere exciting or just out and about closer to home, keep your camera (or phone!) handy and build up a stash of shots ready for the competition's return in August. Certificates and prizes for this year's winners will be available to collect after the summer holidays. We can't wait to see what you capture over the summer!



1





2



3



RU



RU



RU

ART & DESIGN









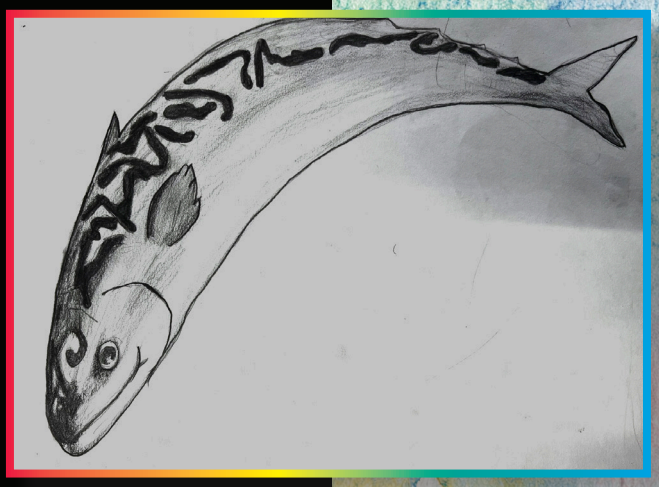
From Danny DeVito to dragon's eyes, sweet wrappers to circus posters, our BGE Art & Design pupils have been busy. This term's work spans observational drawing, portraiture, mixed media, oil pastel, watercolour and textile design — with a few surprises along the way. Thanks to Mr James and Miss Thompson for sharing their classes' work. Scroll through and see if you can spot the Julian Opie influence, the half-face half-creature portraits, and the insect studies that became shirt designs for Edinburgh Zoo. There's something here for everyone.



















"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up."

— Pablo Picasso



ART & DESIGN

ART & DESIGN









"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."

— Maya Angelou





ART & DESIGN

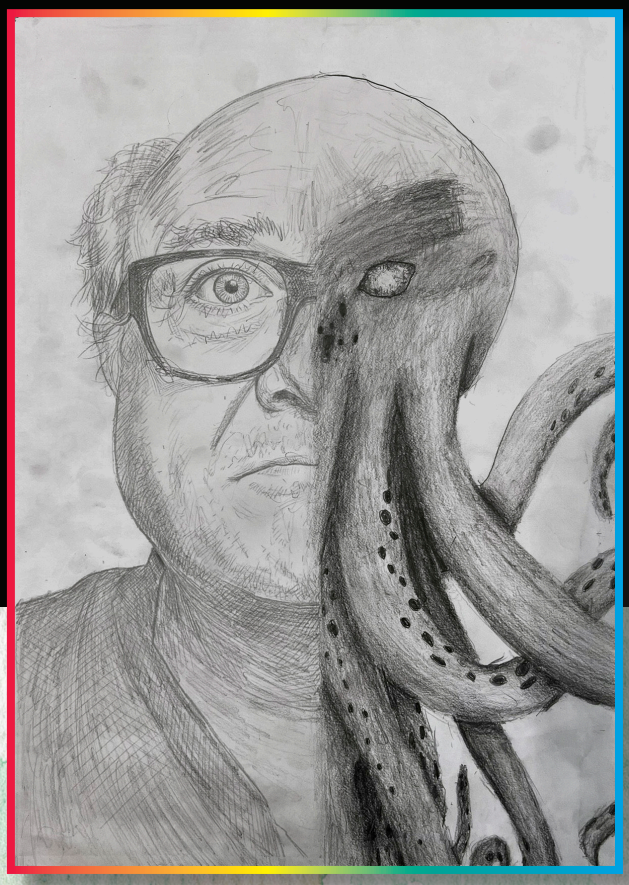


ART & DESIGN

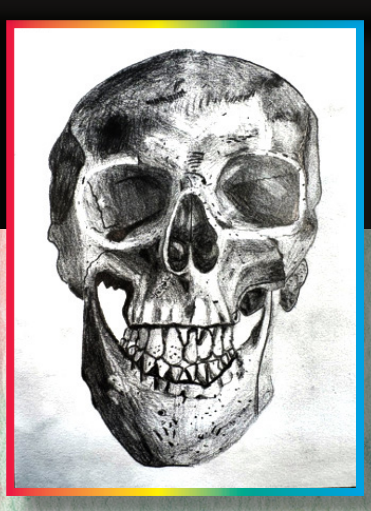












P — 23

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

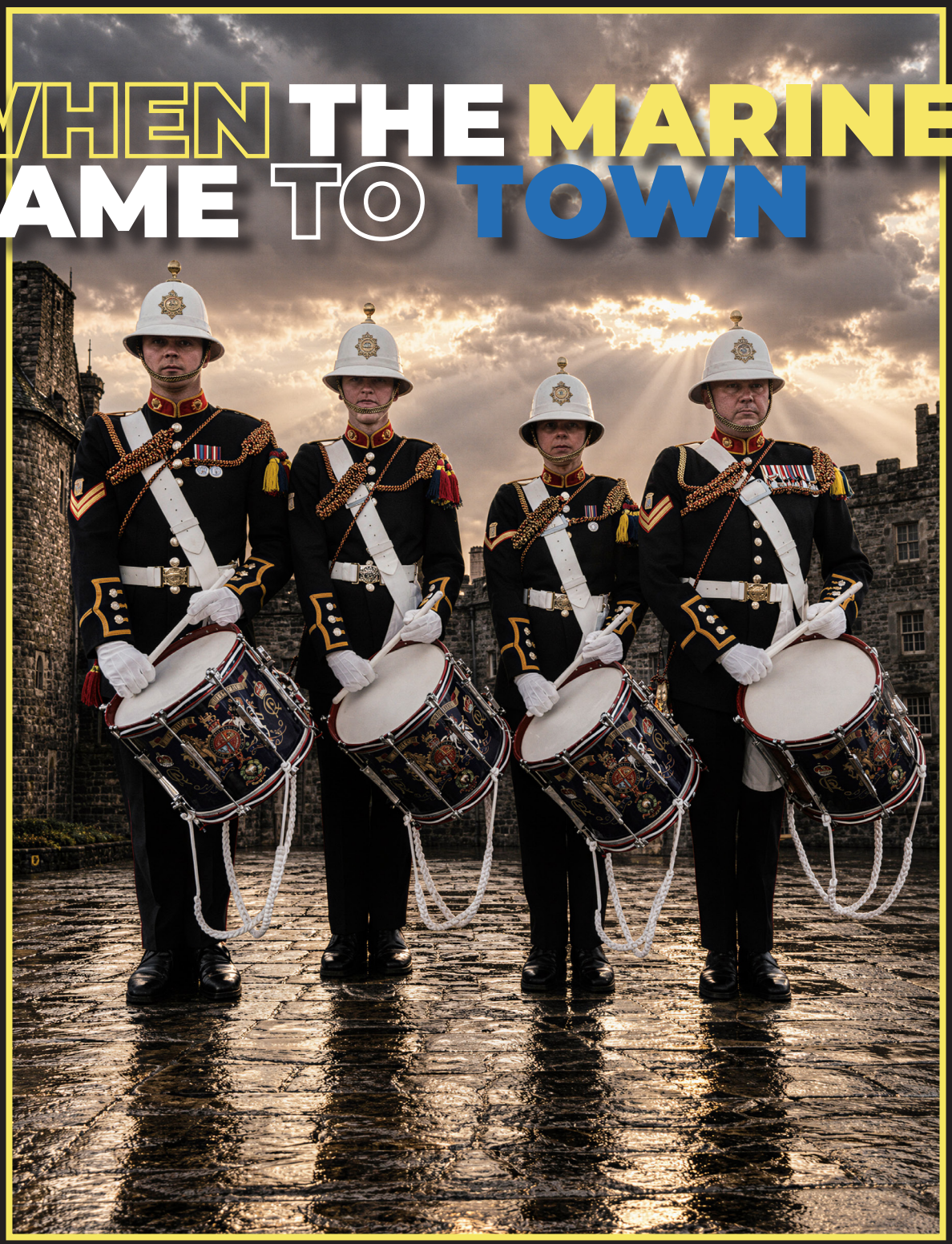
ARTICLES BY RHONA SMITH



HITTING THE HIGH NOTES

On March 1st, the Stranraer Junior Brass Ensemble competed in the final of the Scottish Young Musicians Brass Ensemble of the Year. Stranraer Academy pupils Ava Stevenson, Libby Stirling and Caellan Scott took to the stage at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland alongside Rephad Primary pupil Elliott Williamson and Glenluce Primary's Cameryn Scott. They played with great style, confidence and musicality and received wonderful feedback from the adjudicators. Although they didn't win, being one of only 5 finalists picked from throughout Scotland was a magnificent achievement for these young musicians.

WHEN THE MARINES CAME TO TOWN



Drumming Workshop with Scotland Band of HM Royal Marines

It was a great pleasure for the Music Department to host a drumming workshop led by 4 members of His Majesty's Royal Marine Band on 4th June. The 4 musicians from the Scotland Band of HM Royal Marines included our former pupil Bronagh Gibb. Pupils from the Academy who received drum lessons with Mr Duffy and also pupils from some of the Primary Schools who attend Lochryan Pipe Band spent the afternoon with the professional musicians being put through their paces and also learning new skills. Everyone really enjoyed the afternoon. The particular highlight was seeing the 4 musicians from the Royal Marine Band performing live at the S1/2 Awards Ceremony in the evening. What a show! Big thanks must go to Mrs Gibb for organising this and giving our students this amazing opportunity.

"MUSIC IS A HIGHER REVELATION THAN ALL WISDOM AND PHILOSOPHY" - BEETHOVEN









WHEN THE MARINES CAME TO TOWN



THE BIG BRASS DAY OUT

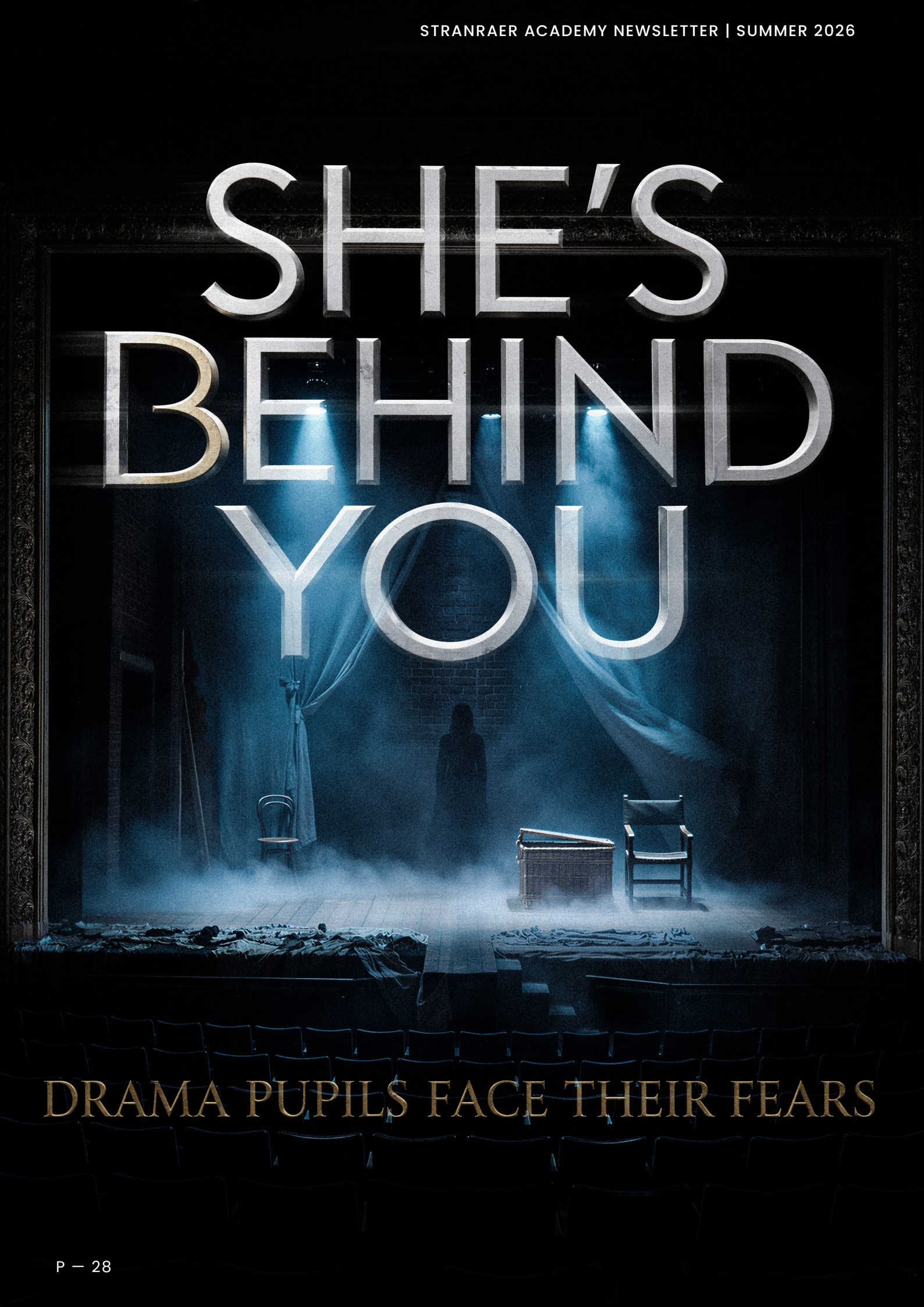
Brass Workshop at Kirkcudbright Academy, 17th June

16 Brass students from the Academy and Rephad and Glenluce Primaries travelled to Kirkcudbright Academy on 17th June to take part in a workshop with Katrina Marzella Wheeler (principal conductor of the Cooperative Brass Band) and some B Ed Music students and staff from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. This was a brilliant day! All the brass players were part of a 40 strong brass band and enjoyed the benefit of Katrina's enthusiasm, knowledge and skill in getting the best out of musicians. It was also great to see what the students on the Bed Music course do and get a chance to talk to them. Our group were praised for their involvement and enthusiasm on the day. Well done Team Stranraer Music and big thanks to Angela Miller for getting us all ready to play!









DRAMA PUPILS FACE THEIR FEARS









THE WOMAN IN BLACK

As part of their Drama studies, a group of pupils travelled to the Theatre Royal Glasgow in January to see a production of Susan Hill's The Woman in Black — one of the most famous and terrifying plays ever staged.

The production, which ran at the Theatre Royal from 20th to 24th January, starred Glaswegian actor John Mackay as Arthur Kipps and Daniel Burke as The Actor. Mackay, whose credits include playing John Logie Baird in Doctor Who alongside David Tennant, brought decades of stage experience to the role, having performed extensively with the Royal Shakespeare Company and in the West End.

The Woman in Black tells the story of a young lawyer haunted by a mysterious ghostly figure after visiting the remote and eerie Eel Marsh House. What makes the production so unique is that the entire story is performed by just two actors on a sparse, minimally dressed stage — relying on sound, lighting, and the audience's imagination to create an atmosphere of genuine terror. The action is not confined to the stage either, with moments designed to make the audience feel as though the horror is happening all around them.

Originally adapted by Stephen Mallatratt and directed by Robin Herford, The Woman in Black ran uninterrupted in London's West End for over 33 years and more than 13,000 performances before its final show in March 2023. Over 7 million people have seen the production, and it is now touring the UK for audiences outside London to experience for the first time.

Our pupils were thoroughly gripped — and more than a few were genuinely terrified. A fantastic experience and a brilliant opportunity to see world-class theatre brought to life.



S1 ACCELERATED READER 'MATILDA' TRIP

In March, 45 students from Stranraer Academy travelled to the Edinburgh Playhouse Theatre to see 'Matilda the Musical'. This was because of our participation in the Accelerated Reader competition, ascertaining who can read the most words in the months from starting S1 up to February, when spaces on the trip are allocated. The top 45 students were selected to participate in the trip. We had an amazing time, stopping for McDonalds in the middle of the drive up, then finding our seats in the theatre and having a blast at the show! Songs being sung, snacks being eaten, and fun being had! The teachers were having just as much fun as us students, of course, and I am thankful to Mrs Kelly, Miss Parker and Mrs Gibb for taking us, to Mrs Gibb for organising it. It was a thrilling experience and I would recommend that all new S1 pupils work hard on their reading as they will have a great time on next year's trip.'

This trip was a reward for commitment shown to the Accelerated Reader program, which is one strand of Stranraer Academy's literacy strategy. The benefits of reading for pleasure are well known and we hope all pupils are inspired to continue their reading journey into S2 and beyond! Transport and ticket costs were made affordable for all due to generous financial support provided by Stranraer Community Council and the Rhins Educational Trust.

by Jessica Lammie







Even the Smallest Person Can Change the World

SET SAIL FOR EDINBURGH



S4 SCOTTISH SET TEXT

In March, 45 S4 pupils travelled to Edinburgh to take in a performance of 'Sailmaker'. It is one of the Scottish Set Texts for National 5 English but this is the first time we have been able to attend a live performance of the play. Arriving early to the Studio Theatre, we took the students a short walk to Bristo Square to allow pupils to soak up the sun and appreciate the rich surroundings of the various buildings of Edinburgh University estate. **Aidan Adams** wrote a short review of the day:

SAILMAKER TRIP

Going on a trip to Edinburgh to watch 'Sailmaker' by Alan Spence was extremely beneficial in helping bring the play to life, as seeing the scenes play out in real life made them significantly more memorable, making it much easier to recall quotes from the play. The great acting also made the key scenes in the play seem a lot more significant than just reading them in a book, which in turn helped when trying to recall parts and quotes of the play during the exam. After the play the actors all came out and spoke to us which gave us a great insight into the staging. On the way up, we got a McDonalds which was a treat. The way home was not so good, as we had to go a diversion route, but overall, it was a very helpful and fun day that greatly helped with remembering key aspects of the play that otherwise might have been difficult to recall. Pupils are very grateful to everyone who made this trip happen.

Transport and ticket costs for this trip were also subsidised by Stranraer Community Council and the Rhins Educational Trust.





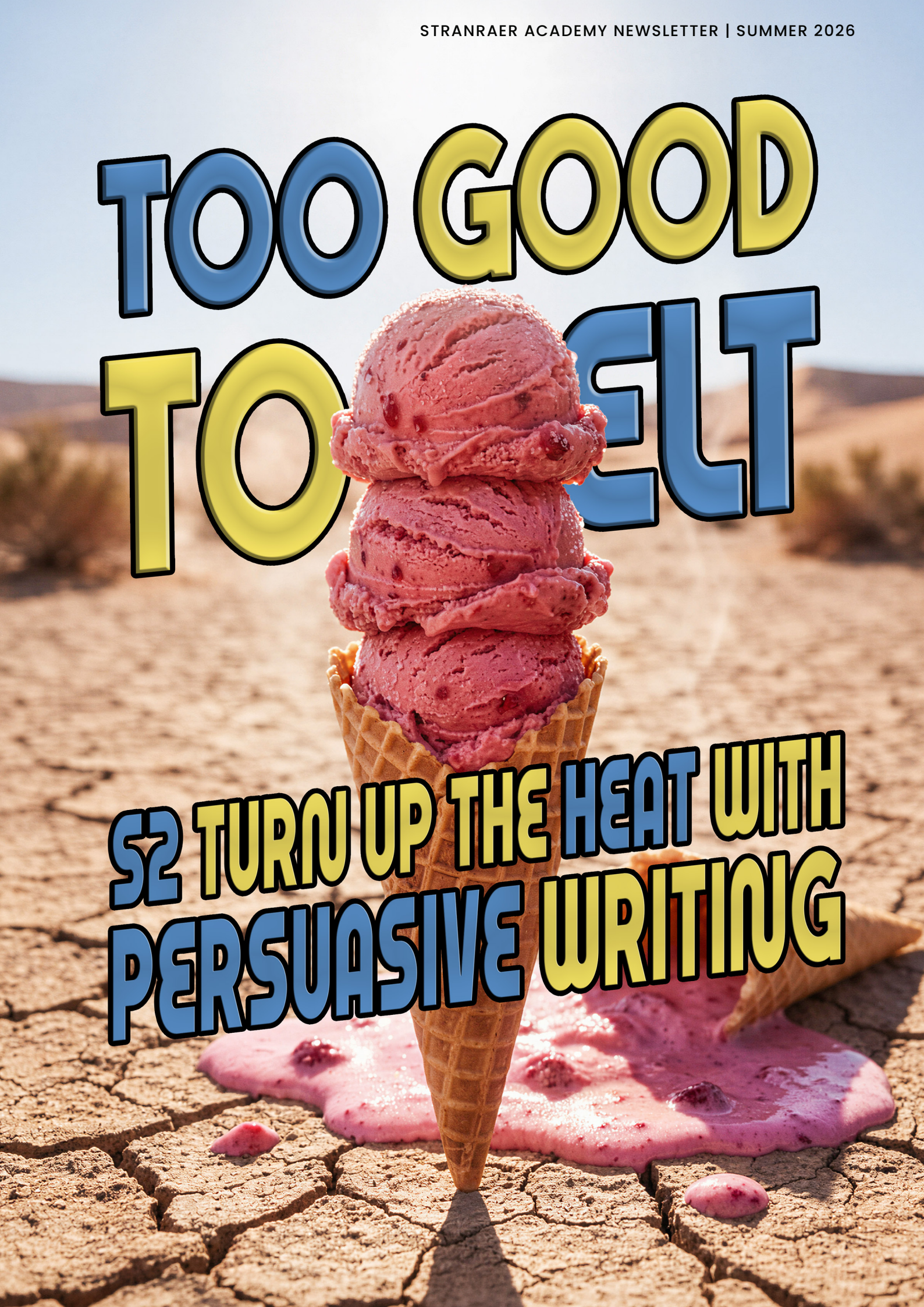
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE HAT?



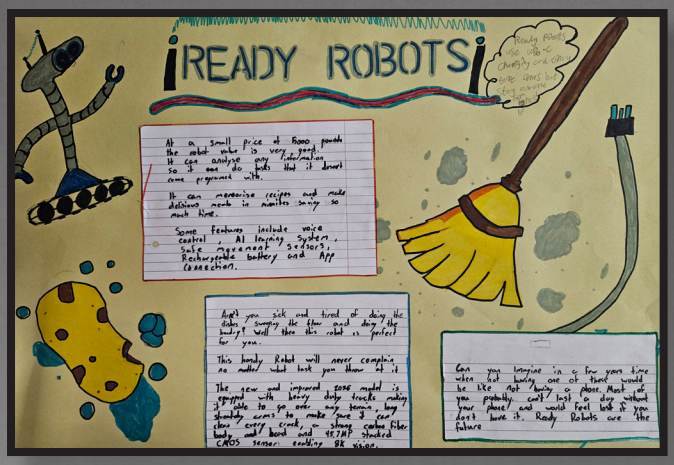
Advanced Higher 'All My Sons' performance

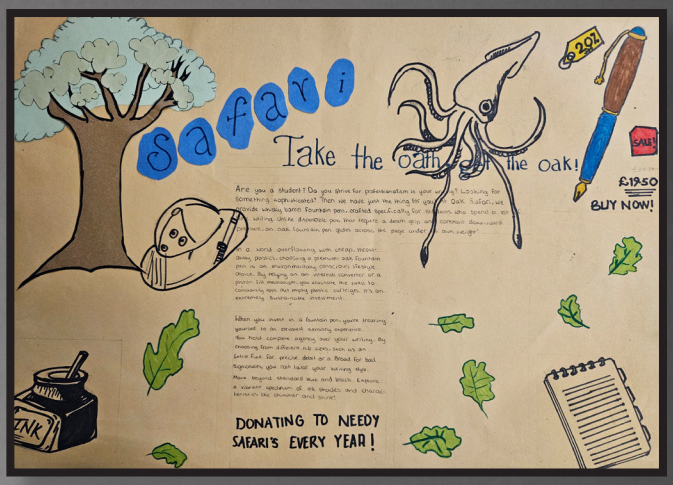
The Advanced Higher English class travelled to Newton Stewart Cinema to take in an 'as live' streamed showing of Arthur Miller's 'All My Sons', which they studied for the Literary Study paper. The show starred Brian Cranston of 'Breaking Bad' fame, and was a sensitive and engaging performance, with students particularly enthralled by the tense build-up to the title line, delivered with passion by Cranston, although the choice of hat made for lively discussion on the bus home!

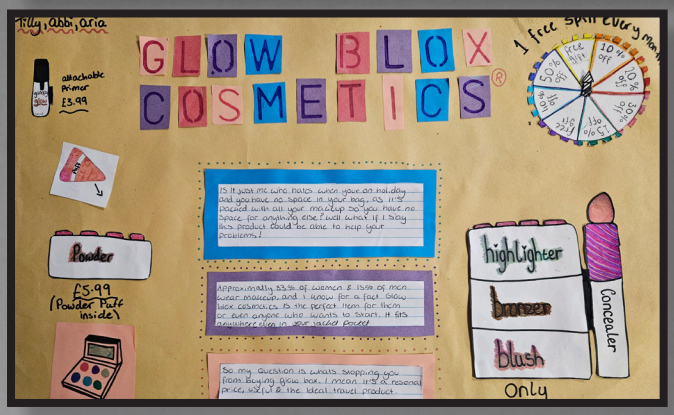
TOO GOOD TO ELT



S2 TURN UP THE HEAT WITH PERSUASIVE WRITING

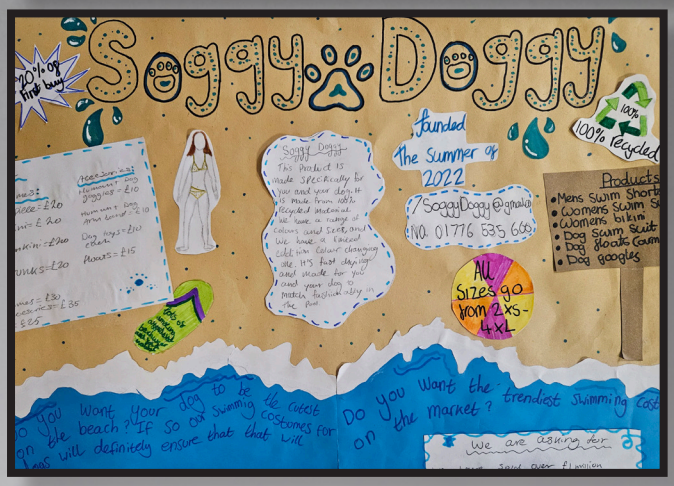
















S2 English classes have been learning how to use persuasive language effectively. Pupils in Mrs Kelly's class were challenged to invent or design their own product which they had to then 'sell' to their peers using a range of persuasive techniques. Pupils worked in small groups to create power points, posters and presentations to show off a range of innovative and exciting products, including dog and owner matching swimwear, a housework robot, a travelling bed, lip balm of all flavours, cosmetic products and various other fantastic products. The standard of the presentations was exceptionally high, with some pupils even including video endorsements and reviews from staff across the school. Pupils were truly invested in their products and were able to handle a wide range of challenging questions convincingly. We had a thoroughly enjoyable few lessons listening to the presentations and scrutinising all the products before deciding that that 'Super Scoop' non-melting ice cream was the one that would have us making an offer!

MARKING THE PAGE IN STYLE



We recently ran a **"Design a Bookmark"** competition for our S1–3 pupils, and as you can see from the wonderful entries, the standard was exceptionally high. The creativity, colour and care that went into each design genuinely impressed us — so much so that we're delighted to announce the return of our Books & Bakes sale later in the year, where these bookmarks will be available to take home for a small donation. Keep an eye out for the date.

A huge well done to our bookmark winners:

Zara Hamilton — £10 voucher for the new Daisy Chain bookshop in Stranraer
Niamh Castle, Emma Lindsay, Katie Fletcher, Jenny Cameron and Abi Gratton — each receiving a goody bag

Congratulations to everyone who took part!

Linked by the Sea







Visiting Poet

S2 pupils recently had the exciting opportunity to take part in a poetry workshop about the Solway led by renowned Scottish poet Hugh McMillan. The sessions introduced pupils to the Japanese poetic form known as renga, a collaborative style of poetry in which writers work together to create a linked sequence of verses.

Hugh encouraged pupils to experiment with language, imagery and different ways of expressing their ideas. His engaging approach helped build confidence and showed that poetry can be both accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

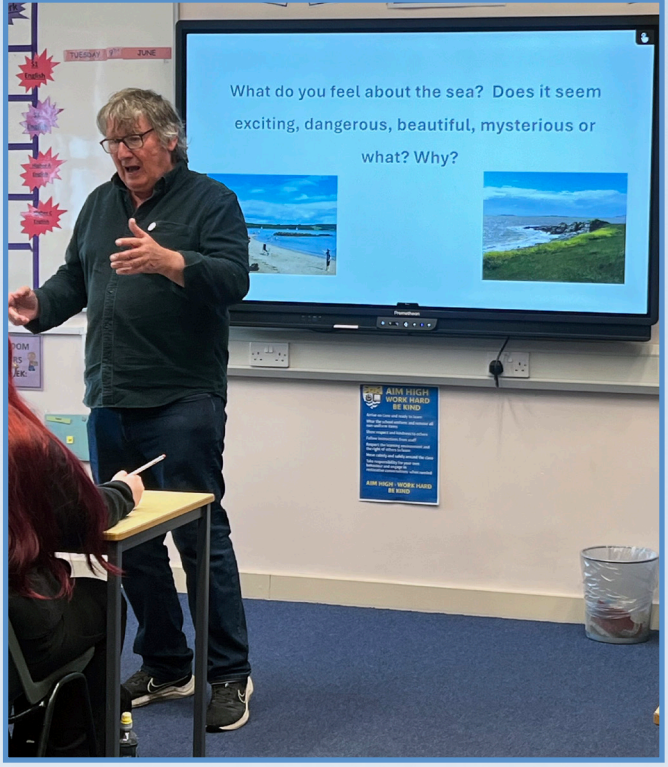
The workshop was a valuable experience for our S2 English classes, giving pupils the chance to learn from a professional poet while developing their own writing skills. The result was a collection of unique and often surprising poems that reflected the creativity and enthusiasm of our young writers.

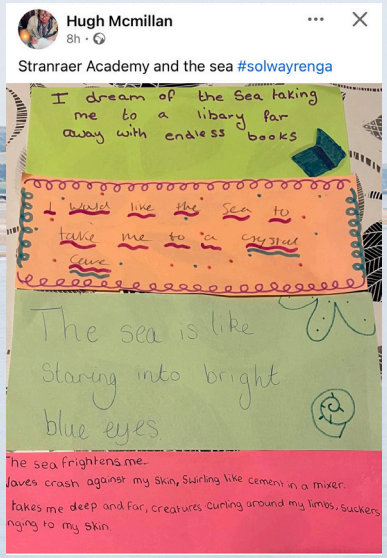
We would like to thank Hugh McMillan for visiting our school and inspiring our pupils through his passion for poetry and creative writing. After seeing the enthusiasm inspired in our younger pupils, we have invited Hugh back again later this term to meet with our senior pupils. We look forward to seeing how our young poets continue to develop their skills in the future.

Pop by the Wigtown Book Festival to catch the Solway Renga of 2026 on display and see if you recognise any of the verses written by our own young people.

By Jennifer Moses









Dream
by Hugh McMillan

Midnight and phone dead,
the Innocent Tunnel is a wormhole,
the walls slick and vivid.
I am in Scotland like some vein:
up there all the weans are quiet
and the streets are gaunt and rain
washed and the poets are scheming
and the politicians are sound asleep.

The paths sprout like capillaries.
I take the one that leads to sages,
Tim Propp, Robert Louis Stevenson,
Big Mary of the Songs.
They are talking silently:
there are ruins but no culture, they say,
there is hatred but no criticism.
there are crowds but no community.

Where are our people, the bard asks.
Despite all our most fervent
tweeting we are not saving the world
not even this small part Scotland,
land of glaur and thrawn misery
where the people feast on each other.
We stare at the gas lamps which make
a gauze like glow and the umbers deep

in the well of the bar where we are reflected
over and over again with that beard
or shawl or bicycle receding to infinity.
We sit in mid century silence and
our thoughts turn to those who occupy
our heads like a sullen army. We raise
our tall shining glasses to the dead,
to the list that is unending, to the faces.

I hear my daughter playing a lament:
she has been practising for years
and is now good enough to break my heart.
The tunnel is narrowing into a point
of throat like the foam and then the rest
of a pint might, like being unborn back
into the depths of the atomic soul.
Day will cover the city like a fire blanket.

Making Their Mark

OUR YOUNG WRITERS TAKE CENTRE STAGE

The Young Writers competition has become a highlight of our school year. Open to all pupils from S1 to S3, it invites entries in any genre — and every year we're treated to a wonderful range of creative stories, reports, poems and persuasive essays. This year was no exception, with the judges facing a genuinely difficult task before settling on three outstanding winners.

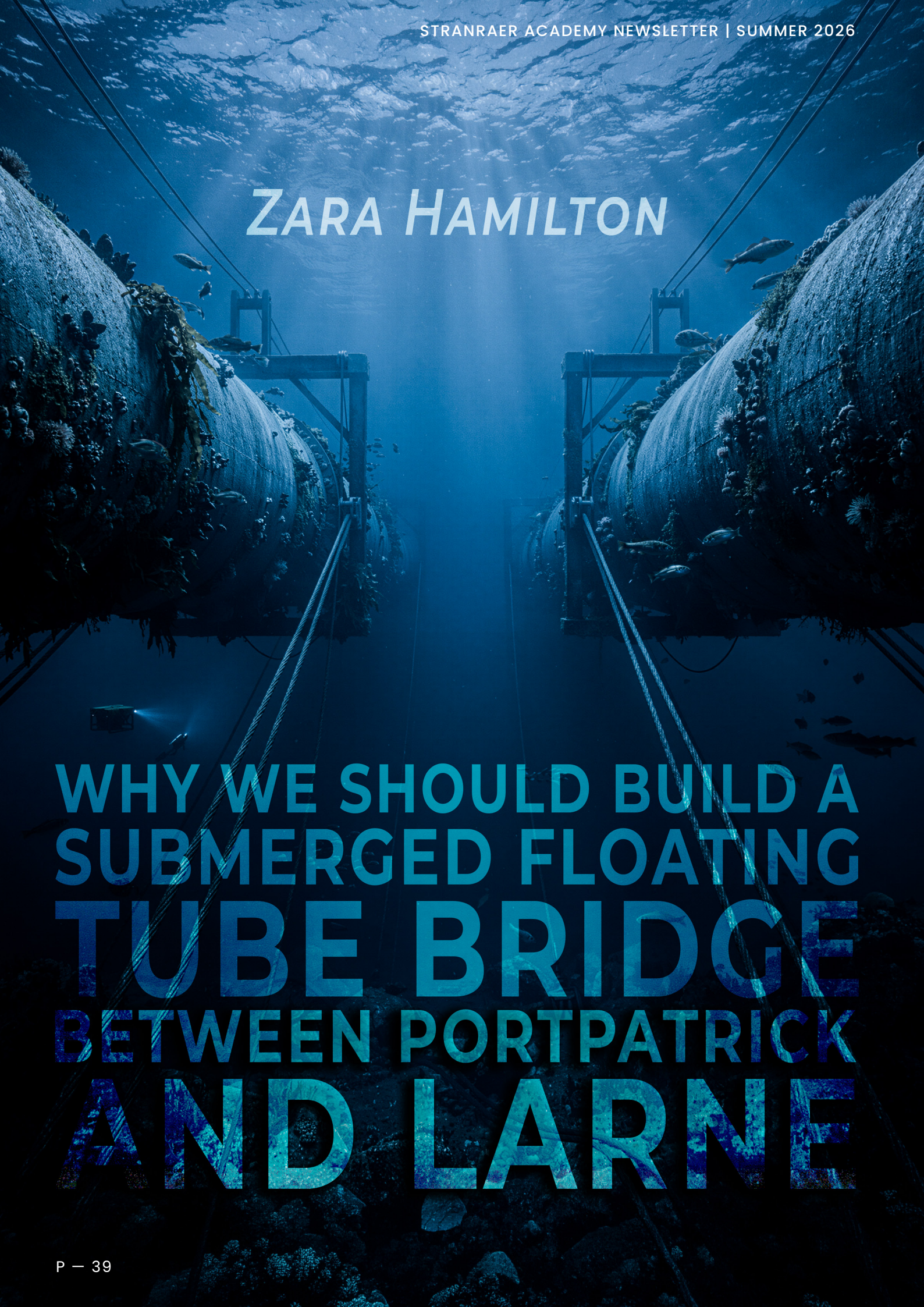
Taking first prize was S2 pupil Zara Hamilton, for her compelling persuasive essay Why We Should Build a Submerged Floating Tube Bridge Between Portpatrick and Larne. It is an exceptional piece of writing, packed with original ideas and powerful persuasive language. The judges were especially struck by her choice of topic — one of real local interest — which required extensive research, evident passion, and, for one so young, a remarkably bold vision for the future of our area. Zara is a very worthy winner, and takes home a £30 voucher along with our Young Writers shield.

Second prize went to Hannah Keith (S3) for her atmospheric story The Note, earning a £10 voucher and a goody bag. Third prize was awarded to Bethany Siebenaler (S1) for her evocative poem Dreamer, who also receives a £10 voucher and a goody bag.

There's more to celebrate, too: as a result of her competition entry, Bethany has been nominated as our Poetry Champion, and will represent the school alongside Erin Caldwell (S5) at this year's Wigtown Book Festival — a fantastic achievement for one of our youngest writers.

Our thanks go to Mrs Fay, PTC of English and Languages, who generously donated all of this year's prizes. Congratulations to every pupil who took part — your creativity and enthusiasm are exactly what this competition is all about. We can't wait to see what next year brings.





ZARA HAMILTON

WHY WE SHOULD BUILD A SUBMERGED FLOATING TUBE BRIDGE BETWEEN PORTPATRICK AND LARNE

Why We Should Build a Submerged Floating Tube Bridge Between Portpatrick and Larne

When I imagine a thriving town, I picture colourful shopfronts, bustling streets, and a community proud to call it home. However, Stranraer tells a different story. Our high street is lined with empty buildings; opportunities are scarce and young people have little reason to stay. When visitors reminisce about holidays here, and adults talk about how the town "used to be," it becomes painfully clear how urgently we need change. In 2012, the ferries relocated, shrinking the local economy by 33%. Meanwhile, just six miles away, the new ports at Cairnryan have become the sixth busiest in the UK. Every year, 400,000 lorries rush past without stopping, offering nothing to the shops, cafés, or services. Stranraer has become a place people bypass, not a place they enter. As an aspiring civil engineer, I believe we can change that. A submerged floating tube bridge (SFTB) could transform Stranraer from a forgotten town into a vital gateway once again.

In 2018, a fixed link between Portpatrick and Larne (nicknamed the "Boris Bridge") was proposed but eventually scrapped due to technical and political concerns. When the Eurotunnel was first suggested, critics called it a "suicidal dream". Today, it carries over 20 million passengers each year and handles a quarter of all UK–EU trade. An SFTB offers solutions where previous ideas failed. It is the only type of bridge that fits the geography of this location, as the North Channel is too deep for a traditional bridge and too rough for a floating bridge. The design uses large concrete tubes floating around 30 metres below the surface, safely beneath waves and shipping routes. High-tension cables anchored to the seabed keep the structure stable. Crucially, this design avoids Beaufort's Dyke - an area containing over a million tonnes of discarded explosives - while remaining below surface turbulence, allowing the link to operate all year, even during ferocious storms. Moreover, the concrete tubes will be designed with cavities and textured surfaces to provide habitats for sea life.

Stranraer desperately needs new opportunities, especially for young people. More than half of local teenagers plan to leave; a fixed link could change that. Transport Economists estimate that the bridge would create around 35,000 jobs and apprenticeships, giving young people a reason to build their future here. Furthermore, the impact would reach far beyond our town. A direct connection between Glasgow, Edinburgh, Belfast, and Dublin would strengthen the UK's trade with Northern Ireland and Ireland - the UK's fifth-largest trading partner. The benefits are personal, too. Most of my extended family lives in Northern Ireland and I rarely get to visit them because the ferries are extremely expensive. A £20 half-hour drive is far more accessible than a £200 ferry that does not even run on Christmas Day. At a £50 lorry toll, the 210,533 lorries using the route in 2017 alone would have generated over £10.5 million.

Meanwhile, Stranraer itself urgently needs regeneration. Almost one in five shops in the town centre now stand empty, and our region has the highest outward migration in Scotland. Astonishingly, 87% of residents in the eastern part of the town live within 500 metres of a derelict or vacant site. We have lost basic hospital services and major retailers like M&Co, New Look, and Clarks. Even our infrastructure reflects this decline: the A77 and A75 are among the most dangerous roads in Scotland. A fixed link would finally force the government to give these roads the upgrades they desperately need. Additionally, better transport links would also boost major events like the Oyster Festival and Skiffie World Championships, bringing thousands more visitors into the town.

Even with all these benefits, some people still argue against building the bridge. Many say it would be too expensive, but a £20 car toll and £50 lorry toll would generate steady, predictable income. Others claim Beaufort's Dyke makes the project too dangerous. However, modern technology can map the seabed with millimetre precision. As for the idea being too new, Norway is already building SFTBs in fjords twice as deep and far more volatile than the North Channel. If they can do it, Scotland has no reason to dismiss the idea as impossible.

Stranraer cannot afford to wait another decade for change. A submerged floating tube bridge is not a fantasy but a realistic, modern solution to the challenges holding our town back. It would bring jobs, investment, safer roads, stronger trade links, and a future young people can believe in. Engineering has always been about solving the problems others call impossible in order to improve people's lives. Now the only question that remains is whether we are brave enough to build it.

Written by Zara Hamilton, Young Writer Award Winner 2026

CHAMPIONS IN THE RAIN



Stranraer Academy Athletes Shine at National Championships

Eleven young athletes from Stranraer Academy travelled to Grangemouth Stadium on 3rd June to compete in the Scottish Disability Sport National Junior Athletics Championships — one of the biggest events in the SDS calendar, bringing together young athletes with disabilities from schools across Scotland.

Organised by Scottish Disability Sport, the National Junior Athletics Championships are held annually at Grangemouth Stadium and offer young competitors the chance to test themselves at a national level across a range of track and field events.

Despite challenging wet conditions on the day, our pupils gave outstanding performances across three disciplines: long jump, sprint (100m or 50m) and throw (shot putt or softball throw), competing against strong opposition from all corners of the country.

The team returned with an incredible seven medals between them — a testament to their determination, training and team spirit.

Silver medallists: Jasmine Young, Catherine Day, Riley Hollis and Ryan Kelly

Bronze medallists: Logan Corrigan, Casey Messenger and Scott Ritchie

Every one of the eleven pupils who attended gave their absolute best, and the whole school community is incredibly proud of their achievements. Representing your school at a national championship takes real courage, and this group showed it in abundance.

Congratulations to all who took part — you did Stranraer Academy proud.

BRONZE AND BRILLIANT

Regional Netball Finals Day

Our senior netball team travelled to compete in the Regional Finals at the end of March, facing Annan B in the third and fourth place play-off. It was a nervy start as Annan came out strong, racing into an early lead and finishing the first quarter 9–4 ahead. The pressure was on, but the girls refused to let it get to them. From the second quarter onwards, the team found their rhythm. They started working together more effectively, moving the ball with greater confidence and tightening up in defence. By the time the third and fourth quarters came around, Stranraer had pulled away convincingly, finishing with a final score of 26–19. Romy McCutcheon was named Player of the Match for her outstanding performance on the day, while Rosie Thompson earned the Overall Player of the Match award — a fantastic individual achievement in a brilliant team effort. A great day for Stranraer netball and a well-deserved bronze medal for the girls.



COURT STARS
END OF YEAR
NETBALL HONOURS

End of Year Netball Awards

Another fantastic year for our enthusiastic netball players. Very proud of the commitment they make to training on a weekly basis and the day trips to travel for league games/festival days.

Junior Players' of the Year - Freya Jamieson

Junior Coach's Player of the Year - Niamh Castle

Junior Players' of the Year - Ava Stevenson

Junior Coach's Player of the Year - Lucy Kelly

Senior Players' Player of the Year - Rhianna Bodle

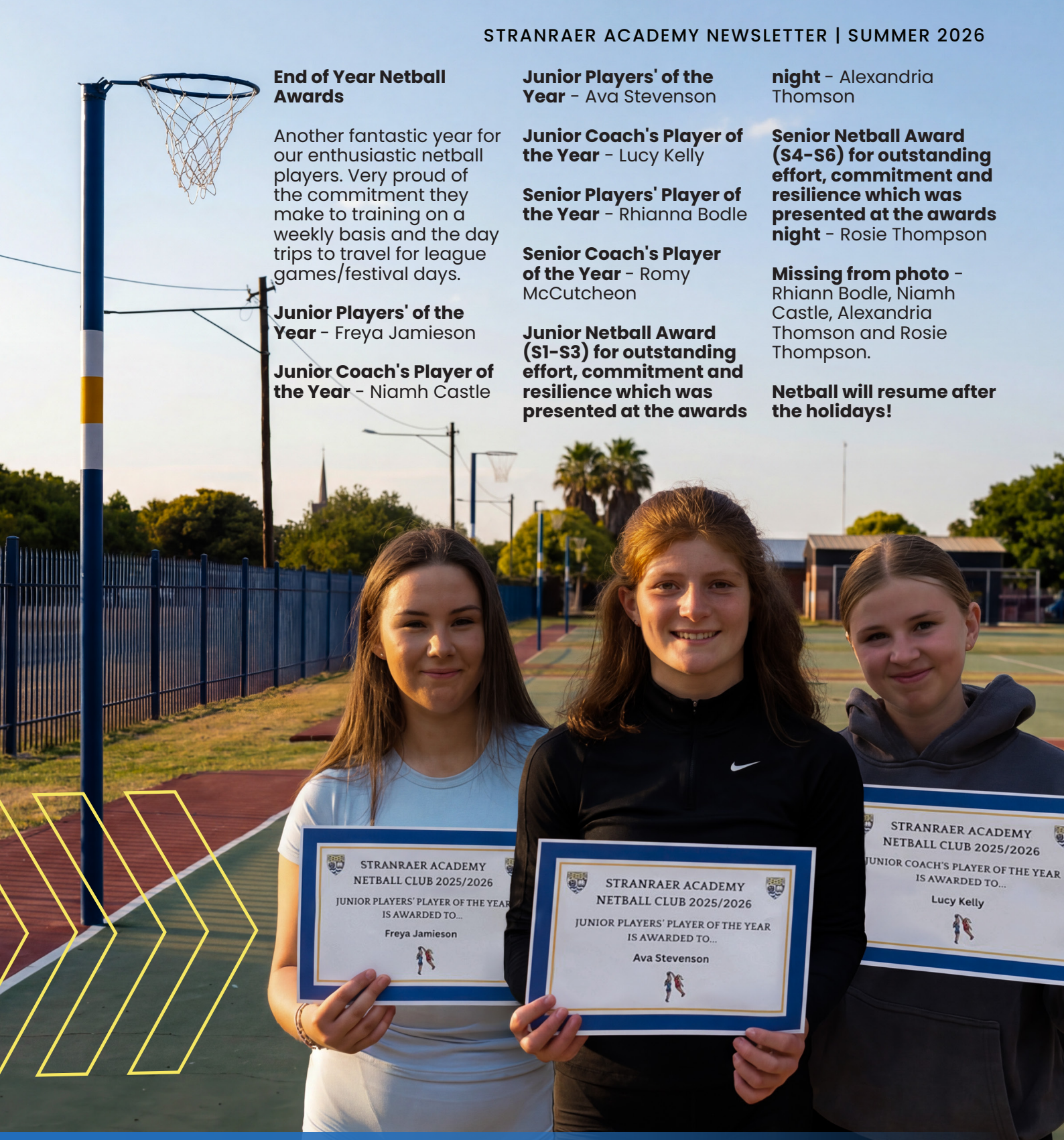
Senior Coach's Player of the Year - Romy McCutcheon

Junior Netball Award (S1-S3) for outstanding effort, commitment and resilience which was presented at the awards night - Alexandria Thomson

Senior Netball Award (S4-S6) for outstanding effort, commitment and resilience which was presented at the awards night - Rosie Thompson

Missing from photo - Rhiann Bodle, Niamh Castle, Alexandria Thomson and Rosie Thompson.

Netball will resume after the holidays!











CURLING

A CLEAN SWEEP ON THE ICE

Stranraer Academy sent four rinks of keen curlers across to Lockerbie Ice Rink on Tuesday 17th February to take part in the annual Andrew McClune Memorial D&G Secondary School bonspiel. The curlers always look forward to this fun and friendly competition, meeting and catching up with other curlers from schools across the region.

All Stranraer Teams played very well and ended the competition with a positive points difference, which is quite a feat against the excellent teams from other schools.

At the prize-giving it was a clean sweep for Stranraer Academy, with Team McLean (Finn McLean, Nathan Sherry, Ramsay McKnight and Murray Stewart) taking overall first place, closely followed by Team Church (Louise Church, Sarah McClymont, Gracie Cook and Holly Church) in runners up spot.

All pupils showed excellent sportsmanship throughout the competition and afterwards, enjoying the excellent hospitality generously sponsored by Andrew's family in his memory.

Many thanks to Deborah Scott and family for their continued support of this competition and to the staff at Lockerbie Ice Rink for accommodating 13 rinks. The future of curling in D&G is in good hands!



CURLING





SCOTTISH SCHOOLS CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

21 teams from secondary schools across Scotland gathered at Dewar's Ice Rink in Perth for the annual Scottish Schools Curling Championship 2026. Both Team Church and Team McLean from Stranraer Academy played superbly well in the round robin stages, going into the play offs unbeaten and sitting top of their respective sections.

Team McLean's draw saw them up against Dollar Academy in the quarters. This was a very close game with excellent play on show from both sides however Dollar just edged the win to go forward to the semis.

After a dominant performance against George Watsons Maroon in the quarters, Team Church moved forward to the semi-finals where the draw saw them against Dollar Academy fresh from their narrow win against the other Stranraer rink. Once again, Dollar managed to take the win in an excellent game enjoyed by the gathered spectators, to go forward to the final.

Huge congratulations to both teams for acquitting themselves so well across three days of Curling and for representing Stranraer Academy so well throughout the weekend. A Scottish Curling official made comment on the excellent manners of the Stranraer teams both on and off the ice which we always knew to be the case but it's lovely to hear from an independent source.

We are so proud of your achievements and hope that you are too. We would also like to thank the parents who give up their time to travel across the country with these teams giving them experiences to remember for a lifetime.

Team Church
Louise Church (skip), Lily McClymont, Sarah McClymont, Gracie Cook and Holly Church

Team McLean
Finn McLean (skip), Nathan Sherry, Ramsay McKnight and Murray Stewart

NET GAINS IN DUMFRIES



Junior Netball Season Closer

On Thursday 28th May, two of our junior teams travelled to KGV, Dumfries, to take part in the Junior Season Closer.

Junior A had a strong morning, winning 3 of their 4 matches and progressing to the Cup Competition in the afternoon. They continued to play some excellent netball and narrowly missed out on a medal position, finishing in a fantastic 4th place

Junior B also played well throughout the day. Despite facing some tough opposition in the morning, they qualified for the Bowl Competition in the afternoon. The team showed great determination and, like Junior A, just missed out on the medals, finishing 4th overall

Players of the Day

Junior A: Katie Gill
Junior B: Cara Jamieson

A brilliant day of netball in the sunshine and a fantastic way to round off the season





PASS, PIVOT, PREPARE

P7 Netball Transition Event

On Tuesday the 26th of May 60 pupils from the cluster primary schools came up to Stranraer Academy for their P7 netball transition event. They participated in netball games in mixed teams of people from different schools. There were 8 teams on the day which had a S1 supporter allocated to each to help with picking positions and making sure everyone was enjoying their morning. This day gave the children an inside look into netball at the academy and an insight as to what the P.E department is like, preparing them for coming up to the big school in August. Throughout the morning the pupils participated well and tried their hardest to play well and win their games. As a result, Team 6 (S1 supporters – Amelia McCallum and Bethany Siebenaler) won the festival. Thank you to Tesco's for kindly donating water for the event, keeping all hydrated. I was helping in the morning by umpiring and sharing my love for the game with the future netballers of the academy. This year was the second time this event has happened and was again very successful and hopefully many more to come.

BY ROMY MCCUTCHEON

MEDAL RUSH IN DUMFRIES

D&G Disability Athletics Championships

Nine young athletes from Stranraer Academy travelled to the David Keswick Centre in Dumfries on Wednesday 6th May to compete in the Dumfries and Galloway Disability Athletics Championships, and they returned with an astonishing haul of medals.

Competing across a range of events including sprints, standing jump, long jump, shot putt and softball throw, every single member of the team came home with at least one medal — a remarkable achievement against strong competition from schools across the region.

The standout performances of the day came from Catherine Day and Jasmine Young, who each won gold in the standing jump alongside silvers in both the 50m sprint and the softball throw. Riley Hollis also struck gold, taking first place in the 50m sprint to go with a silver in the standing jump.

There were impressive multi-event performances throughout the squad. One competitor picked up three medals across the 100m sprint, shot putt and long jump, while Cody B earned silver in the long jump and bronze in the shot putt. Aiden W claimed silver in the 50m sprint and added a bronze in the shot putt.

Scott Ritchie brought home bronze in the 50m sprint and silver in the softball throw, Casey M earned bronze in the long jump, and Logan C took silver in the shot putt.

In total, the team returned to Stranraer with an incredible nine golds, silvers and bronzes between them — a tremendous effort from every single competitor. The whole school community is proud of their determination, sportsmanship and success.

Well done to all nine athletes. You did Stranraer Academy proud.



JUMPING TO NEW HEIGHTS

The Stranraer Academy Athletics Pentathlon Championships took place on Monday 8th June, and the sun made a special appearance for the occasion. The standard of competition was outstanding across all year groups, with some results separated by as little as two points.

A special mention goes to Olivia Turtle, who set a new record in the Senior Girls Long Jump — a fantastic achievement and one for the record books.

Several pupils who met the qualifying standards went on to represent the school at the Regional Athletics Championships in Dumfries, competing against schools from across the region.

The full Pentathlon results are as follows: S2 Girls Champion Alexandria Thomson, with joint runners-up Ava Stevenson and Bethany Siebenaler. S2 Boys Champion Hunter Turner, runner-up Hamish Scott. S3 Girls Champion Melissa Fraser, runner-up Emily Cooper. S3 Boys Champion Rhys Anderson, runner-up Brandon Millar. S4 Girls Champion Gracie Turner, runner-up Casey Longridge. S4 Boys Champion Lee Reynolds, runner-up Frazer Thomson. Senior Girls Champion Olivia Turtle, runner-up Mariella Petrucci. Senior Boys Champion Reece Edgar, runner-up Tyler Rennie.

Well done to every pupil who took part — a brilliant day of athletics.

SOAR BELIEVE UNSTOPPABLE

















Issie Lamberton



STILL RISING

Dancing to the Top: Issie Lamberton's Highland Dancing Journey

Stranraer Academy's Issie Lamberton is making waves on the Highland dancing stage, and at just 15 years old, she is already competing at some of the highest levels the sport has to offer.

Issie's year got off to a flying start when she earned the honour of representing Dumfries and Galloway at the Scottish Area Finals, held in Oban over the weekend of 1st–3rd May. Having secured her place back in October at the Solway Championships, she joined a team of six highly talented dancers and three reserves to take on 16 other regions from across Scotland. Being selected to represent your region is one of the highest privileges in Highland dancing, and Issie and her teammates represented Dumfries and Galloway beautifully throughout the competition. The winning region on the day was Argyll and Bute, but the experience of competing at that level was invaluable.

On the second day of the festival weekend, Issie entered an individual competition against a field of 18 talented dancers and delivered a superb performance, earning straight fifth-place finishes across five dances and a seventh place in the sword dance, picking up generous prize money along the way.

Just a week later, Issie was back in action at the West of Scotland Championship on 10th May — the first Highland Games of the season. She came away with a sixth-place finish in the Seann Truibhas and earned a championship point in the Reel, setting the tone for what promises to be an exciting summer of competition.

More success followed at the Carrick Lowland Gathering, where Issie was named runner-up and earned third place overall in the British Association of Teachers of Dance Premiership — another outstanding result against top-level competition.

With the World Championships, Scottish Open and Northern Ireland Championships all on the horizon, Issie is training hard with her dance teachers Aileen Robertson and Eilidh MacMillan. If her results so far are anything to go by, there is plenty more to come from this talented young performer.

We are incredibly proud of Issie and can't wait to see where her dancing takes her next.



Izzie Lamberton
STILL RISING


BATTLEFIELDS
BATTLEFIELDS
15th Anniversary

Battlefields Trip: A Journey of Learning and Remembrance

This May, pupils embarked on the fifteenth annual Battlefields Trip, combining historical learning, reflection and plenty of opportunities for teamwork and fun. The journey began at the Imperial War Museum North in Manchester, where pupils explored the many different contexts of war and gained valuable background knowledge before travelling overseas.

In Belgium, the group enjoyed a sunny walk around the historic walls of Ypres before visiting the Flanders Fields Museum to learn more about the experiences of soldiers on the Western Front. After an insightful afternoon, pupils relaxed with dinner and an evening of ten-pin bowling. The following day included visits to the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917, a walk along the trench line and time for reflection at Tyne Cot Cemetery. The evening Games Night brought plenty of laughter, with pupils taking part in limbo, keepie uppies challenges and darts.

The trip continued into France, where pupils explored key Somme sites including the Sir John Monash Centre, Lochnagar Crater, Thiepval Memorial and Wellington Quarry. They also visited Lijssenthoek Cemetery and Langemarck Cemetery before enjoying the historic city of Bruges on Wednesday.

A particularly special moment came at the Menin Gate Last Post Ceremony, where Innes Arkless and Zuzanna Abram laid a wreath in honour of the fallen. The final morning included a visit to the Black Watch Memorial, where Lily Steel and Logan Gracie led a wreath-laying ceremony, before the group celebrated the end of the trip with a visit to Bellewaerde theme park.

It was an unforgettable experience filled with learning, respect, friendship and lasting memories. We are already enrolling next years trip and look forward to our adventure in 2027!



They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we shall remember them.

- Laurence Binyon

BATTLEFIELDS

BATTLEFIELDS







> When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today
>
> - Unknown soldier inscription, Kohima

BATTLEFIELDS 15th Anniversary





Leading Ladies

The Student Leadership Team






Maddy Erskine Romy McCutcheon Rosie Thompson Shauna Kinahan

Romy McCutcheon

Hi everyone, I'm Romy McCutcheon and I am so excited to be your head girl this year. Becoming head girl has always been one of my biggest aspirations, and I truly am grateful for the opportunity to represent our school.

One of my biggest goals is that everybody has the most amazing experience coming out of Stranraer academy just like I have. I have always loved school and helping whenever I can. I want to focus a lot this year on children that have a more difficult background than others and need to learn key life skills , because I feel you learn a lot about going to university and colleges and not so much about actual life skills that some children aren't fortunate enough to learn while they are younger. I Feel this would benefit so many children as some don't want to go to university and just want to work when they leave school and this would play a vital role in preparing them for life after school.

As your head girl, I am looking forward to improving the school and making it better as a whole. I can't wait to start working with my pupil leadership team and making a big positive impact by the end of our S6 year. I am going to act as a role model and be an example for the younger years of the school. I am overjoyed to work with you all over the course of the year and I hope to make a huge impact in our school community. Thank you for this amazing opportunity.



Head Girl

Maddy Erskine

Hi everyone! I'm Maddy, and as one of your Head Girls this year, I am looking forward

to working alongside both pupils and staff to help make our school the best it can be. One of the things that matters most to me is being someone that pupils feel comfortable coming to. Whether you have an idea, a concern, or just want someone to listen, I want to be approachable and supportive and help make sure everyone feels heard and included.

This year, I would also love to focus more on promoting health and wellbeing. I think it is really important that we look after both our physical and mental health, especially when school can sometimes feel busy and stressful. I hope to introduce some fun initiatives that encourage people to be more active, get involved, and take time to look after themselves, while making school an even more positive environment.

Another thing that is important to me is making sure pupils feel that their opinions matter. We all experience school differently, and I think some of the best ideas come directly from pupils themselves. I hope to work closely with students across all year groups, listen to their suggestions, and help bring forward ideas that can make a real difference to everyday school life.

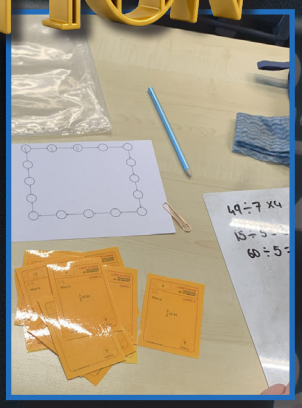
I'm really looking forward to the year ahead and all the opportunities that come with being Head Girl. I hope to help make a positive difference, celebrate the achievements of others, and encourage as many people as possible to get involved in our school community. Most importantly, I want to help contribute to the school environment here everyone feels welcome and supported. We hope to bring in some fresh ideas with everyone involved and make our final year at Stranraer Academy a great one for everyone!!

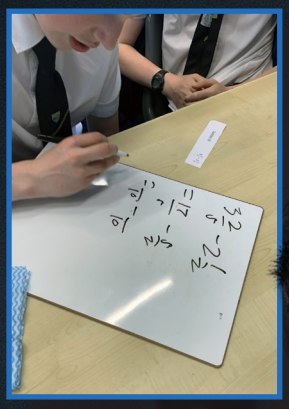


Head Girl

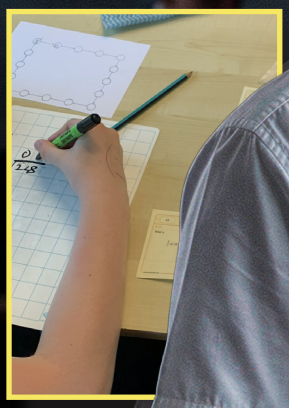
MATHS IN ACTION

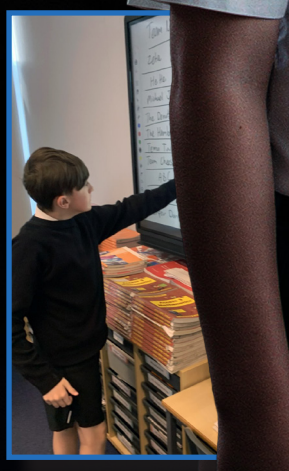


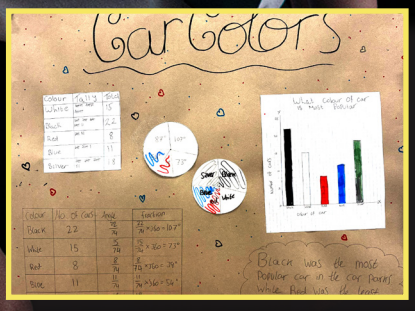












MATHS + BUSINESS EDUCATION

Our students took their learning outdoors this term, making the most of the beautiful weather while developing valuable mathematical skills. Working in the fresh air, they gathered real-world data before returning to the classroom to analyse their findings.

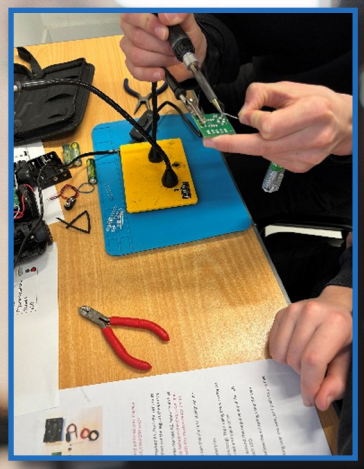
Using the information they collected, learners created a range of statistical displays, including bar graphs, pie charts, and tables. They compared trends, identified patterns, and shared their conclusions, demonstrating excellent data literacy and analytical thinking. It was a perfect combination of hands-on investigation and meaningful learning.

Our S1 learners have been putting their problem-solving skills to the test through relay challenges and loop card activities, working together to apply their mathematical knowledge and reasoning in a variety of engaging tasks.

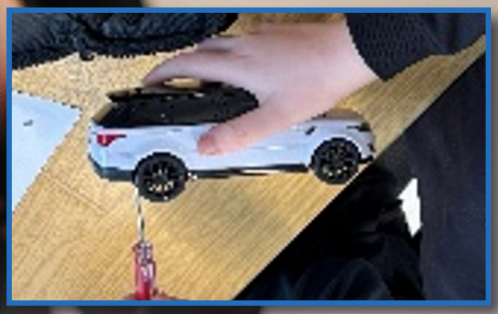
We are delighted to showcase some of the fantastic work our learners have produced and the enthusiasm they have shown in applying their mathematical skills to real-world contexts.

BUILT, FIXED, RACED









S3 Computing Science & Physics pupils attended a STEM workshop for the day in January at Dumfries & Galloway College, Stranraer campus, led by Dumfries House which is the headquarters of the King's Foundation.

Pupils were faced with a navigation challenge using remote controlled cars. They quickly discovered that their cars were not operational and had to undergo training to complete a full inspection and repair of their vehicles working in teams of two. Pupils learnt how to solder and complete an inspection report. In addition, they learnt about different roles with aerospace maintenance and repair as they worked.

MATHS & BUSINESS EDUCATION

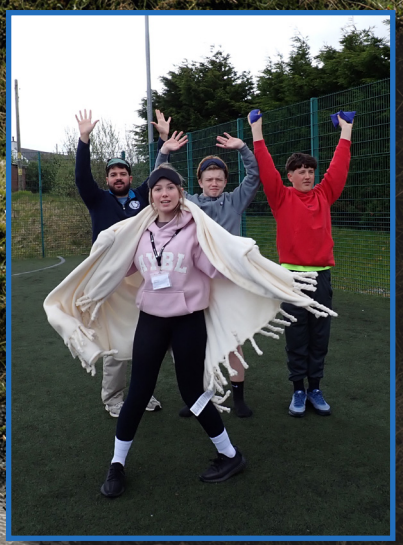
EDGE OF SKYE, EDGE OF COMFORT

FIVE DAYS THAT CHANGED US

Columba 1400

Celebrating Our 25th Year Anniversary





Columba 1400 2026

A mixed group of S2 and S3 students recently returned from a five-day residential trip to Columba 1400 in Skye, where they took part in a programme designed to build leadership, confidence, teamwork and personal values.

Set against the stunning backdrop of the Isle of Skye, the trip challenged students to step outside their comfort zones and reflect on the kind of people they want to become.

Students took part in a search and rescue exercise, where students worked together to solve problems, communicate effectively and support one another under pressure. Students also took part in a values walk, giving them time to reflect on important qualities such as courage, integrity, respect and creativity. Through discussion and reflection, they explored how these values influence everyday decisions and relationships.

During a mug design workshop, students designed mugs that represented the values most important to them. The activity allowed them to express their individuality while reinforcing the themes of the week.

To conclude the week, students worked collaboratively on a presentation for senior management. They shared that the value they found that they all had in common was family, and focused on that to create a plan of how they will carry their values forward in their lives. This Term the students will we working together to create afternoon teas that we hope their families and loved ones will enjoy!

By Jennifer Moses











CHASING THE HEADTEACHER









Inspired by Mr Farquhar taking part in Race Across Scotland this August, the pupils in Aird set themselves their own 215-mile challenge — and smashed it, finishing with an incredible 218 miles.

Over the course of 10 weeks, the pupils walked the full race distance and then some. They measured out two different routes — one indoors and one outdoors — and worked out that walking up and down the street in school seven times equals one mile, while walking around the school and Busy Bees twice covers the same distance outside. Each week the miles added up: 25, 13, 12, 24, 15, 13, 29 and 30 — and in the final two weeks, the class dug deep to push past the finish line. Every single mile was walked by the pupils, with no staff miles included in the total. Mr Farquhar kindly came and joined the team for their very last mile, crossing the finish line together.

Researching the route was just as important as walking it. The class investigated every checkpoint along Mr Farquhar's race route, gathered facts and created items to display on their board for the whole school to see — favourites included making Pringle jumpers and a Sanquhar postbox. Along the way they have learned origami, star constellations, lifeboat facts and bridge construction, to name just a few.

The class tracked their progress along the Race Across Scotland route with footsteps on the display, so the whole school could follow their journey. Challenge complete — they beat the distance, and they beat the Headteacher.

P — 62

FUTURE THINKERS



YOUNG STEM LEADERS SUCCESS

We are proud to celebrate the achievements of Josh Sullivan and Lewis Miller, who have successfully completed the Young STEM Leader award at Level 7, the highest level.

Lewis Miller explored the project "How can we develop affordable and efficient renewable energy solutions to provide electricity to remote communities in developing countries?", investigating practical and sustainable approaches to global energy challenges.

Josh Sullivan's project, "What steps do companies in the chemistry industry take to improve the disposal and marketability of their byproducts?", examined how industry can reduce waste and develop more sustainable practices.

Both pupils demonstrated excellent research, presentation skills and dedication throughout the programme. Congratulations to Josh and Lewis on this outstanding achievement.

By Carrie White









HANDS-ON BRAINS ON

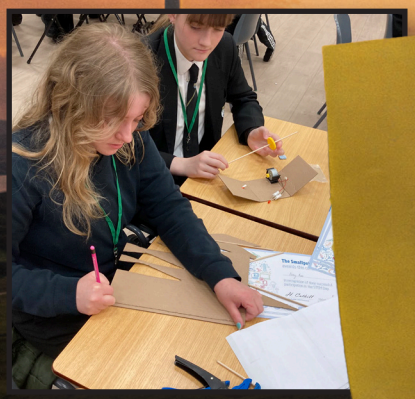


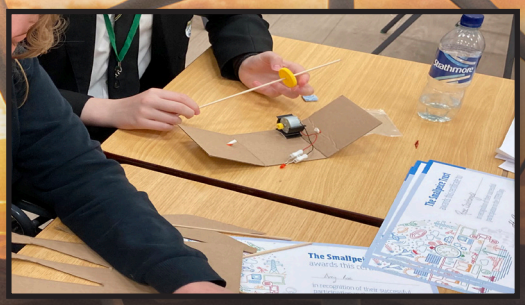
Aird pupils have been very busy in science this term looking at electricity and making simple circuits. They then went onto look at the Materials topic which involved them taking part in many investigations such as testing the strength of shopping bags to see which material was the strongest, deciding what material would be better for a tent and then testing these materials out to see if they were waterproof.

Pupils also completed the Forces topic and found out what a force is and the effect it has on an object. The pupils had fun completing a parachute investigation, bouncy ball investigation and shoe investigation.

More recently, pupils looked at the Human Body. They found out where the different organs of the body are and what they do. Using stethoscopes, they listened to their hearts, looked at the model body, made moveable skeletons and skull masks.

SMALL BLADES BIG IDEAS





STEM

Wind Turbine Challenge

Shaping the Future: The S3 Physics Wind Turbine Challenge

Our S3 Physics pupils stepped into the roles of professional engineers for an immersive, day-long Wind Turbine Challenge partnered with the Smallpeice Trust.

The day began with pupils exploring the physics of power generation, analysing how mechanical energy is transformed into electrical energy, and discussing the critical global need for renewable energy resources to combat climate change.
The Mission.

Working under tight time and budgetary constraints, teams were tasked with a real-world engineering objective: design, prototype, and build a functioning wind turbine capable of generating enough electricity to illuminate an LED.

Engineering Team Roles

To succeed, every pupil took on a specialised industry role:

Project Manager – Led the team and managed deadlines.

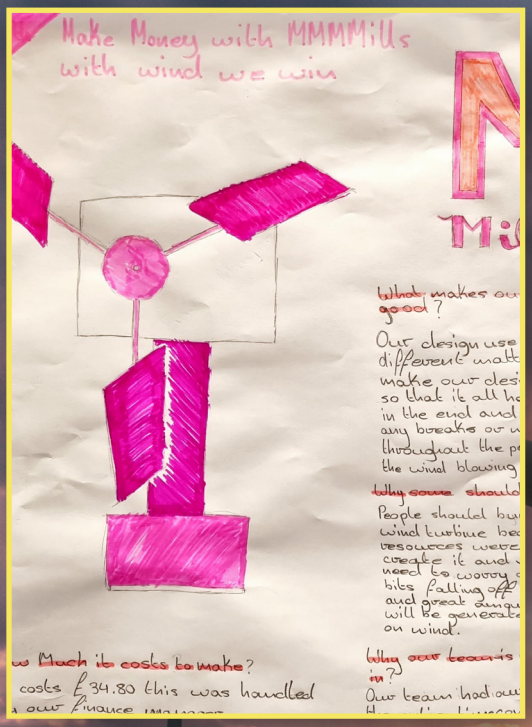
Designer – Optimized blade aerodynamics and angles.

Constructor – Fabricated the turbine and electrical circuitry.

Finance & Advertising – Managed the budget and pitched the final product.

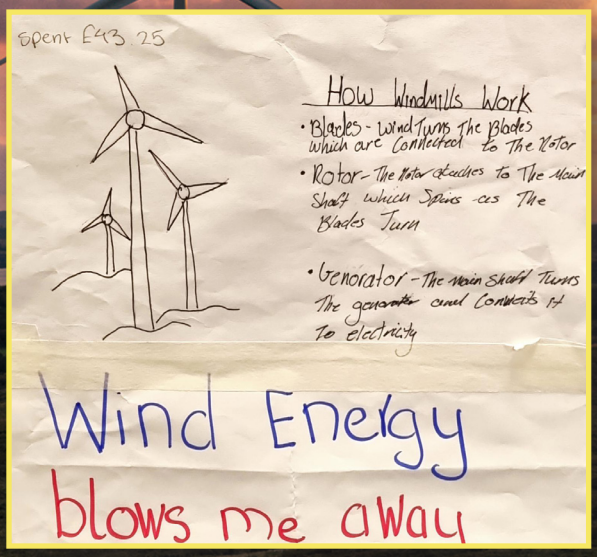
Congratulations to all of our S3 participants for demonstrating the engineering brilliance needed to power our future!

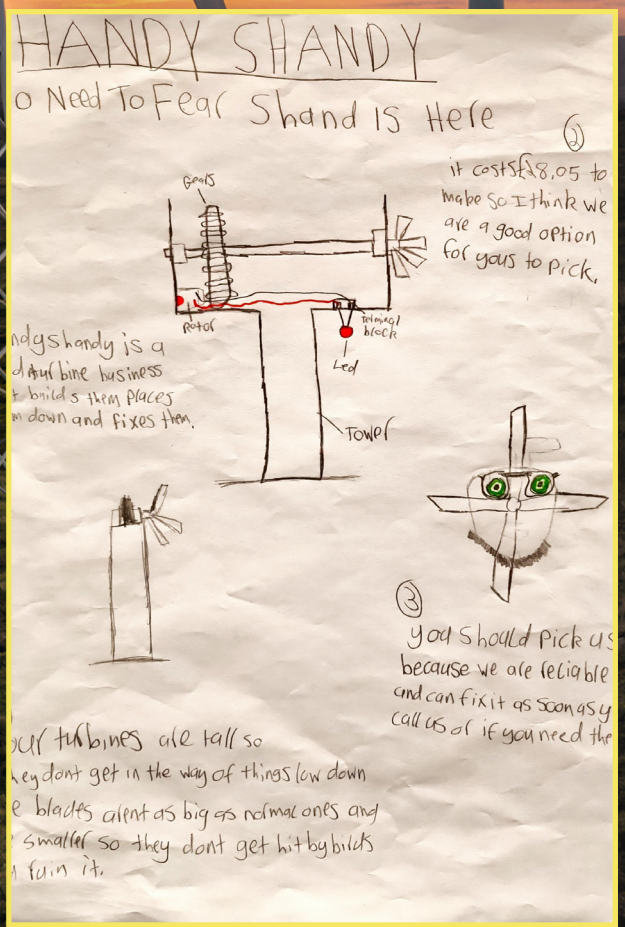
SMALL BLADES BIG IDEAS

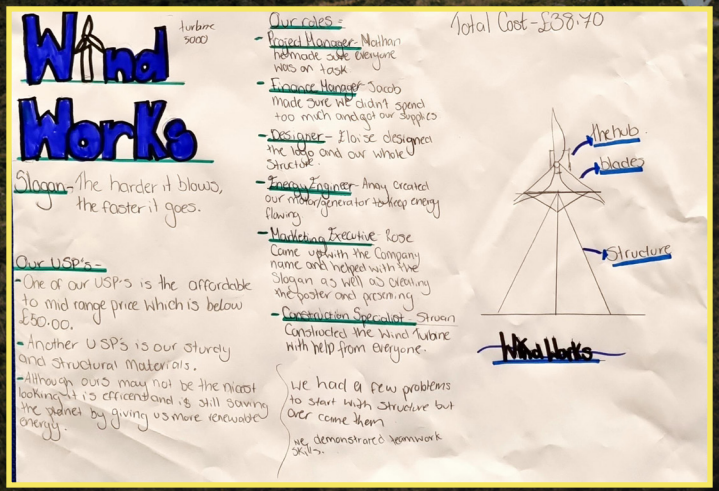


"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

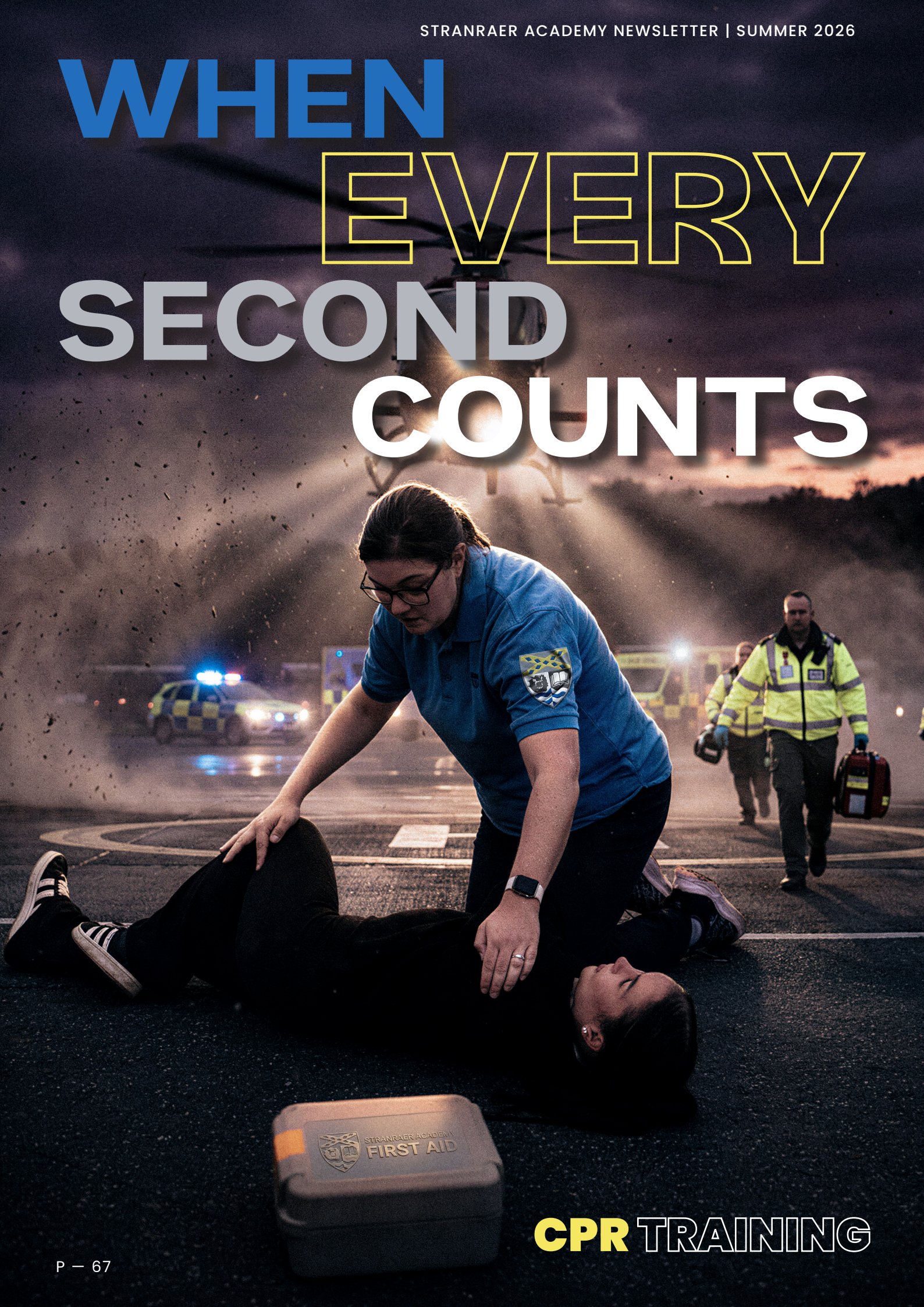
- Benjamin Franklin







WHEN EVERY SECOND COUNTS



CPR TRAINING



The National 5 Health Sector class recently took part in a hands-on CPR training session led by resuscitation practitioner Lynda Nicholson.

During the session, pupils learned how to perform CPR, operate an automated external defibrillator (AED), and place a casualty into the recovery position. Every student had the opportunity to practise each technique and gain the confidence to respond in a real emergency situation.

The class thoroughly enjoyed the experience and came away with vital life-saving skills that could make a real difference. A huge thank you to Lynda Nicholson for giving up her time to deliver such valuable training.







999 PULSE



CPR TRAINING

RISE OF THE GRAVE DIGGER



MR CAMERON'S BATTLEBOTS

ROBOT BUILDING CLUB

This year, the Robot Building Club has had one of its most ambitious and successful years to date. With membership continuing to grow, the club expanded its activities and began building three new battle bots, thanks to generous funding from "The Academy of the Rhins Educational Trust SCIO".

Returning members demonstrated impressive levels of independence, applying the skills they have developed over previous years to lead elements of the construction process. Their progress has been so strong that several projects will continue into August as they work towards completing and testing their robots.

Senior students worked on their robots right up until study leave, developing valuable engineering, design, teamwork, and problem-solving skills along the way. For our departing S6 members, the club has provided practical experience that will support them in future studies, apprenticeships, and careers in STEM-related fields.

One of the most exciting projects currently under development is the latest addition to our battle bot family:

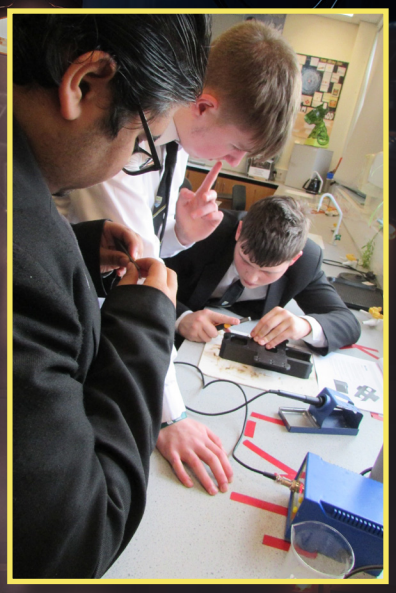
THE GRAVE DIGGER

Weapon: Front-flipping scoop and bludgeoning arm
Length: 70 cm
Weight: Approximately 2–3 kg
Scoop Lifting Power: Approximately 15 kg

As we look ahead to next session, our aim is to continue growing the club's profile and provide an even more rewarding and educational experience for all members. Through hands-on engineering challenges, creativity, and teamwork, students gain practical skills while having fun bringing their ideas to life.

We would like to thank our supporters for making these opportunities possible: Stranraer Academy, EcoGen, and The Rhins Educational Trust.



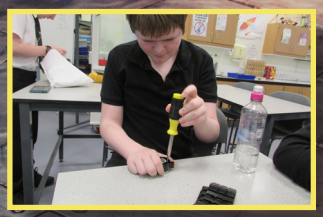




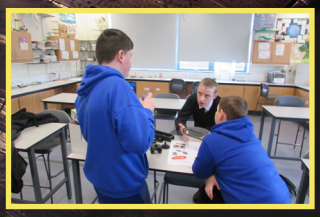


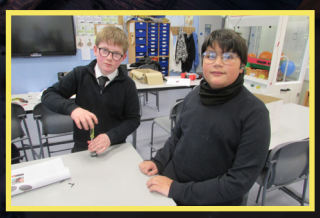












MR CAMERON'S BATTLEBOTS

IN THE GRIM DARK OF LUNCHTIME





















WARHAMMER CLUB

Warhammer Club has successfully completed its second year and continues to go from strength to strength. What began as a small lunchtime activity has grown into one of the school's most popular clubs, with around 24 students attending each week. The club provides students with the opportunity to learn the rules and tactics of Warhammer while also developing their creativity through painting and customising miniature models. Members are encouraged to build their own armies, improve their strategic thinking, and engage in friendly games that promote sportsmanship, problem-solving, and social interaction.

Beyond the weekly sessions, students can join the club's Microsoft Teams group, where they can access short stories from the Warhammer universe, ask questions, share painting progress, and showcase photographs of their armies. This online community has helped members stay engaged and continue developing their knowledge and enthusiasm outside of school hours.

The club has become a rewarding and constructive hobby for many students, providing a welcoming environment where they can meet like-minded peers, develop new skills, and enjoy spending their lunchtime in a creative and supportive setting.

A special mention must be given to Aiden Kyle, whose extensive knowledge, enthusiasm, and willingness to support other members have played a significant role in the success of the club. His contribution has helped create a positive and inclusive atmosphere that encourages both new and experienced players to get involved.

Looking ahead, the future of the club is very exciting. On Activities Day, Tuesday 30th of June, representatives from Wigtownshire Tabletop Club will be visiting the school, bringing armies, gaming resources, and expertise to introduce even more students to this immersive and engaging hobby. This partnership will provide members with a unique opportunity to learn from experienced hobbyists and further expand their understanding of tabletop gaming.

As the club continues to grow, our aim is to build on this success and provide an increasingly rewarding experience for all members, fostering creativity, strategic thinking, confidence, and teamwork through a hobby that combines imagination, artistry, and friendly competition.

Thanks to Andrew Giusti, Kirsty Guisti (Ms McBride), Wigtownshire Tabletop club and Games Workshop (Warhammer – Alliance Scheme) for their support this year.

IN THE GRIM DARK OF LUNCHTIME



GROWING TOGETHER

LEARNING SUPPORT STEPS OUTSIDE







Summer is always the season for outdoor athletics, and once again some of our sporting pupils were selected to represent Dumfries and Galloway at the Scottish Disability Sport National Junior Athletics Championships at Grangemouth Sports Stadium. The weather was not on our side, but that did nothing to dampen the effort and determination on show. The team came home with an incredible eight medals — four silver and four bronze. Everyone should be really proud of their achievements, representing not only the school but the entire region.

"Impossible is just a word thrown around by small people." — Muhammad Ali

On a sunny but cold February morning, pupils from Mr Donkin's class headed to McMaster's Road Park to plant apple trees as part of a community project with the Galloway Action Team and Incredible Edibles. The pupils got stuck in — digging, lifting, positioning and planting the trees. It was brilliant to be part of a project that will ensure the people of Stranraer enjoy the benefits of fresh air, healthy eating and green space for years to come.

ROOTS





COMMUNITY



GROW





To celebrate the end of this year's Forest School sessions, the whole group headed into the woods for a campfire and link sausage rolls. Mrs Heatlie prepared the fire and cooked the sausages while everyone explored, continued their den building and climbed trees. The rolls were delicious and the perfect way to start a Monday morning. A huge thank you to Loch's and Stranraer Meats for their kind donations of rolls and sausages.









FIRE, AND FOREST FOOD


WE WANT YOU
TO SHARE YOUR
SUCCESS
stranraeracademy.org/wider-achievement/

Did you know about Stranraer Academy's Wider Achievement Page. This platform is exclusively designed for you to proudly share your academic, creative, sports, philanthropic, and entrepreneurial triumphs.

Whether it's a creative masterpiece, a sporting victory, or a community initiative, we want to hear about it! Each achievement will be highlighted on our website and in our dynamic gallery, showcasing the diverse talents of our school community.

This initiative aims to celebrate your successes and inspire others within our vibrant community. Sharing your achievements is easy – simply visit stranraeracademy.org/wider-achievement/ and complete the user-friendly form. Provide details of your accomplishment and upload a photograph or two to accompany your story.

We look forward to celebrating your accomplishments and sharing them with both our school and the local community!

ACADEMIC

Achievements in formal learning, including excellence in subjects, research endeavours, and intellectual accomplishments, highlighting commitment to scholarly pursuits.

SPORTS

Achievements in physical pursuits, showcasing excellence in sportsmanship, athletic accomplishments, and commitment to physical fitness, reflecting prowess and dedication in the realm of sports.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Encompassing a diverse array of accomplishments, providing a platform for our young people to showcase a variety of different endeavours, highlighting the multifaceted excellence within the school and local community.

CREATIVE

Achievements in imaginative and original expressions, including visual arts, performing arts, literature, photography and other innovative pursuits, showcasing diverse and inventive talents in creative realms.

PHILANTHROPIC

Accomplishments in charitable and humanitarian efforts, showcasing commitment to social responsibility, community service, and altruistic initiatives, reflecting dedication to making a positive impact in the world through acts of kindness and generosity.

ENTREPRENEURIAL

Accomplishments in business and innovation, showcasing our young peoples entrepreneurial spirit, ventures, and commitment to creative problem-solving, reflecting dedication to fostering economic awareness and forward-thinking initiatives.

Student Awards Evenings



2026

Pride of the Academy

This year's Awards Ceremonies were a wonderful celebration of the talent, hard work and dedication shown by our pupils throughout the 2025–2026 session.

Held across three evenings, one for each year group pairing, the ceremonies recognised outstanding achievement across every area of school life. Pupils received Certificates of Merit in their nominated subjects, with those earning three or more going on to receive a prestigious Certificate of Excellence. A range of Special Awards were also presented on each evening, honouring exceptional contributions to the school community.

Head Teacher Mr Farquhar opened each ceremony by paying tribute to the pupils and their families, saying that every award signifies outstanding performance and recognition by teachers for ability and attitude. He expressed his hope that the awards would be a source of immense pride for families and pupils alike.

The evenings also featured performances from talented young musicians, inspiring guest speakers, and the announcement of the coveted Students of the Year for each year group. The Stranraer Rotary Exemplary Service Awards were presented to two members of staff in recognition of their voluntary and outstanding service to others — a fitting tribute on an evening dedicated to celebrating the best of Stranraer Academy.

Thank you to all sponsors, families and staff who made these evenings possible, and congratulations to every pupil who received an award. You are a credit to the school.

S1 & S2 Awards

Students of the Year

Congratulations to Ava Stevenson, named S1 Student of the Year, and Zara Hamilton, who was awarded S2 Student of the Year. Both pupils have demonstrated outstanding ability, attitude and commitment across all areas of their school life this session.

Special Awards

Riley Miller received the BLP Overcoming Barriers to Learning award in recognition of the resilience and determination shown throughout the year. Alexandria Thomson was presented with the Junior Netball Award for her outstanding contribution to the sport.

Two reading awards were handed out — Sean McCredie was named Reading Champion for Accelerated Reading, while Becca Reilly took the Reading Champion title for Scotland Reads, both reflecting a fantastic commitment to literacy.

The Donnie Nelson Bequest Bursary, awarded on behalf of Stranraer & District Local History Trust, was presented to Hunter Turner and Rory McKie. Zara Hamilton rounded off an impressive evening by also collecting the Young Writer Award, adding to her Student of the Year title.

S1 & S2 Awards




Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S1
Maya Chruscinska
Award of Merit
Home Economics


Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S2
Carleigh Allison
Award of Merit
Drama










Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S1
Ry Hifferty
Award of Merit
Art & Design


Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S2
Carly Sharpe
Award of Merit
Social Subjects
CDT




Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S2
Consistent upholding
of school values
awarded to
Danny Dougan


Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S1
Lucy Kelly
Award of Merit
Drama

S3 & S4 Awards

Students of the Year

Congratulations to Ness McCulloch, named S3 Student of the Year, and Olivia Turtle, who was awarded S4 Student of the Year. Both pupils have shown exceptional ability and dedication across a wide range of subjects this session, with Olivia also picking up the Montpelier National 5 Business Award on the night.

Special Awards

Taylor Smith received the Andrew Glasgow Computing Award, while Elleigh Ferguson was presented with the BLP Overcoming Barriers to Learning award for the resilience and determination shown throughout the year. The Christine Pickersgill Memorial Award was presented to Erin Caldwell.

Archie McKie and Logan McKie were jointly recognised with the Rural Skills Award. The Donnie Nelson Bequest Bursary, on behalf of Stranraer & District Local History Trust, was awarded to Millie Whorlow for S3 and Bethan Gibb for S4.

The WBS Graphics Design Award was shared between Elouise Percival and Taylor Smith for outstanding work in graphic communication. Sarah McClymont was recognised for her participation in the World Skiffies 2025 Championships.

The YPI Award was presented to Ryan Kelly, Lucie Marshall, Lily McClymont, Kayden McColm, Sophia Schofield and Millie Whorlow for their work on the Youth Philanthropy Initiative.

S3 & S4 Awards


AWARDS
2026
Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S4
Olivia Turtle
Award of Excellence


Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S3
Millie Whorlow
Award of Excellence
History
Modern Studies
Physical Education
Business Management


Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S3
Eden Lowe
Award of Merit
English


AWARDS
2026
Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S3
Miss McCulloch
Award of Excellence


AWARDS
2026
Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S3
Amy Barr


AWARDS
2026
Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S3
Damon McHarrie
Award of Merit
Science


AWARDS
2026
Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S4
Khloe Adair
Award of Merit
Administration & IT
Application of Mathematics


Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S4
Ethan Allison
Award of Merit
Chemistry


Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S4
Bethan Gibb
Award of Excellence
History
Practical Cookery
Music
Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
The Donnie Nelson Bequest on behalf of
Stranraer & District
Local History Trust Award
2026
awarded to
Bethan Gibb


Bethan Gibb
Award of Excellence
Practical Cookery
Kelsye Edwards
Award of Merit
Art & Design
Drama


Aimee McCalm
Award of Merit
Art & Design
Woodwork


AWARDS
2026
Stranraer Academy
2025 - 2026
S4
Casey Messenger
Award of Merit
Personal Development

S5 & S6 Awards

Students of the Year

Congratulations to Rosie Thompson and Ruth Turtle, who were jointly named S5 Students of the Year, and Sofie McCutcheon, who was awarded S6 Student of the Year. All three have shown outstanding commitment and achievement across their studies this session, with Sofie also collecting the Montpelier Higher Business Award on the evening.

Special Awards

Dylan Heron and Conar Ogston were presented with the Let's Get Sporty Award, while the Linda Johnston Memorial Award was given to Jack Cloy. Keelie Handling received the Oliver Lane Award and Rachel Hamilton was recognised with the Parent Council Academic Excellence Award.

Rosie Thompson added the Senior Netball Award to her Student of the Year title, and Romy McCutcheon was presented with the Stuart Binnie Physical Education Award.

The Donnie Nelson Bequest Award, on behalf of Stranraer & District Local History Trust, was presented to Ellie McIntyre, with Bursary awards going to Donna-Rose Pirrie, Iris Walker and Joshua Westbrook. Iris Walker also collected the WBS Graphics Design Award for outstanding work in visual communication.

Six pupils — James Kirkbride, Jack Lawson, Erin Lochery, Erin McCulloch, Mackenzie Robison and Harry Whitelaw — were recognised for representing the school at the World Skiffies 2025 Championships. The Young Enterprise Award was presented to Alex Brown, Abbi Johnstone and Shauna Kinahan.

S5 & S6 Awards







Students of the Year



Rotary Exemplary Service Awards 2025–2026

Each year, the Stranraer Rotary Club presents the Exemplary Service Award to members of staff who go above and beyond in their service to others — reflecting Rotary's motto of "Service Above Self."

This year's awards were presented to Miss True Anderson and Mrs Kirsty McClelland, both nominated by pupils, parents and colleagues for the extraordinary dedication they bring to their roles every single day.

Miss Anderson's commitment to her Art & Design pupils has been remarkable, giving up countless hours of her own time to ensure every student has the support and resources they need to reach their full potential.

Mrs McClelland has transformed the Learning Centre into a place where every young person feels valued, supported and encouraged to grow — creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere that makes a real difference.

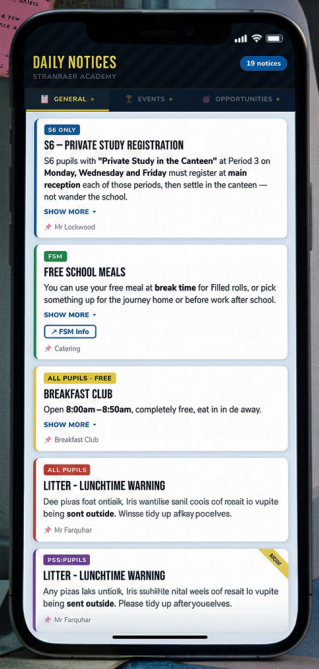
Both are thoroughly deserving winners and a credit to Stranraer Academy.

NOTICES, UPGRADED

DAILY NOTICES

Install as an App
Add to your home screen on any phone or tablet — works like a real app, no app store needed.

Tabbed & Tagged
Notices sorted into General, Events, and Opportunities so you find what matters fast.



NOW IN YOUR POCKET

Countdown Chips
Events show days remaining with automatic countdown — and disappear when they've passed.

New & Urgent Flags
Fresh notices tagged NEW with a pulsing indicator. Urgent items flagged in red so nothing is missed.

1
Visit the page
Go to stranraeracade-my.org/daily-notices on your phone

2
Tap Install
Hit the install banner or use Share -Add to Home Screen on iPhone

3
Done
Opens like an app — all notices at your finger-tips, every single day

Until the Tide Turns

Like footprints on the sand, another school year has left its mark — full of achievement, creativity and a few unforgettable moments along the way. Thank you to our wonderful pupils, families and staff for everything you've given this year. Now it's time to pack up the bucket and spade, rest, and make the most of the summer. We can't wait to welcome everyone back in August, ready to build something new.





WWW.STRANRAERACADEMY.ORG

SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 9

CURATED AND EDITED BY ROSS JAMES