



FORTHCOMING FIXTURES/EVENTS

Monday 16th February

School resumes 8:25am

Tuesday 17th February

SMT meeting 8:30am

Wednesday 18th February

U13 Boys hockey training (A) Fettes 2:30pm

U11A Football v Loretto (H) 2:30pm

U12 Hockey v Heriots (H) T'Bank **2:15pm**

U11A Hockey v Heriots (H) T'Bank **2:15pm**

Wednesday 18th February

Board of Governors AGM 2:00pm

Board of Governors Meeting 3:15pm

Thursday 19th February

Online Safety Talk for Parents 7:30pm

Friday 20th February

Squad Cross Country

NOTE FROM THE HEADMASTER

It is show time! We have seen the Middle School put on their production of Peter Pan. As ever these performances were a culmination of months of hard work from pupils, staff and helpful and willing parents, but more on that later.

We started on Monday morning by hearing how Lawrence Antony, a conservationist who owned the Thula Thula game reserve in South Africa, became known as the Elephant Whisperer. The evening before, a BBC wildlife programme had recounted the heart-warming tale of how Mr Antony had rescued a herd of unruly and aggressive elephants, and by gaining the trust of the matriarch "Nana" was able to socialise the animals to allow them to live a natural existence on his 5,000 acre game reserve. When Mr Antony passed away two to three years ago, without any instruction, guidance or human intervention whatsoever, and without explanation, the herd walked 12 miles in silence, in single file, to Mr Antony's residence. They stood quietly outside his property as if they were paying their last respects. We had been told this tale by our Zimbabwean visitors to the school before Christmas, and BBC's programme corroborated the facts recounted by Mr and Mrs Barbour. The message to us all from this tale is that perhaps we underestimate the intelligence of other species, a dangerous mistake to make!

Miss McRae's directorship saw the Middle School rehearsal on Monday and dress rehearsal on Tuesday piece together a most wonderful presentation of Peter Pan. Modern technology, in the form of a drone, was used to record Peter, Michael, John and Wendy's flight, showing the bird's eye view of the four leaving an upstairs boarding house window, flying over the river Tweed, under the swing bridge and back again; a very clever addition to the Disney tale, which was hugely appreciated by all who watched the shows. Our lead actors were superbly supported by the biggest Middle School cast the school has seen for many a year, and by Thursday night there was not a spare seat in the house as word had spread very quickly that this was a most impressive production and one not to be missed.

Rightly Miss McRae paid tribute to her support team of volunteers, from the staff, the parent body and friends of the school, but she too can be very proud of how she has brought so many young people together to present and enjoy this year's Middle School production.

This afternoon we welcome Piers Adams "the reigning recorder virtuoso in the world today" – Washington Post, to give a concert to the school and members of the Melrose Music Society, followed up by a workshop for Forms 3, 4 and 5 pupils, whether they are complete beginners or accomplished recorder players. As I write, we look forward to hearing how this initiative has gone.

Whilst the arts have dominated this week's blog, I can assure you that pupils have been working very hard in class, with many Form 8 pupils finalising preparations for scholarship examinations post half term.

On a separate front, the weather has put paid to our normal games programme, but credit goes to our games staff who have improvised to enable pupils to enjoy the fresh air and some exercise despite the snowy and icy conditions. The cold weather and the ever-demanding educational programme has resulted in your children needing a break. In the final assembly of the half term this morning, I emphasised the need to maintain sensible bedtimes to allow pupils' batteries to recharge.

I was delighted to present five book tokens to Hannah, George B (five book reviews), Eliza, Lucy M and Theo (ten book reviews). Their book tokens are all thoroughly merited, as the standard of work they are producing is very high indeed. Well done Mrs Runciman for demanding high standards of our keen readers.

I conclude by wishing you all a restful half term, and look forward to seeing your children back to school bright and breezy on Monday 16th February.

FORM 5

Please refer to the Half Term Prep letter in your child's brown envelope which outlines set prep and login details for relevant websites. Thank you.

CONTACT DETAILS

Please inform the school office if you have changed your mobile number, landline or email addresses. Thank you.

KINDERGARTEN NEWS

Kindergarten having fun in the snow.



Mrs Berni

UPCOMING WEEKEND FIXTURES

- Saturday 28th February - P7 Hockey Tournament (A) Watsons.
- Sunday 1st March IAPS - Cross Country (A) Belhaven
- Saturday 14th March - U13 and U11 Hockey Tournament at Kilgraston

MISSING

¾ rugby shirt – Sebastian F

Tracksuit bottoms – Joseph W

Two Lovatt jumpers – Wilfie and Dicken

Green school scarf – Tiggy

Yellow water bottle – Anna H

FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S

At the risk of sounding as if we are banging on.... Do please come to the extremely important talk on internet safety for children on Thursday 19th February at 7.30 pm. There are a few (quite hard-hitting) clips/short films relating to this that are on the internet which make quite thought-provoking viewing; if you wanted to have information about these before 19th, please email the office to request the link.