New Head Team and Prefects
Planning
School Improvement 2019-20

Congratulations to Head Team Tom Forster and Georgia Main, Deputes Anine Stevenson and Eilidh McMenamin. Not only have they overcome the challenges of Leadership week and an application process including a pupil vote and a staff vote, our new Head Team also faced an interview panel made up of S2/3/4 members of the Pupil Council before surviving a final interview with Mr Bryson and Mrs Thomson. Congratulations also to our new Prefects who are already planning the year ahead.

A House System for Everyone!

The Student Leadership Team- Head Team and Prefects- are already working to develop the House system at SHS to ensure it is really inclusive and everyone is involved. They are working with the plan developed by S6 leaver Chloe Dickson who designed a House system website and a points system. The Leadership Team want House Captains in every year group to ensure every member of the House contributes to an ambitious programme of weekly events developed by the Prefects. Watch this Space!

Georgia, Anine, Tom and Eilidh will be leading the new SHS House System 2019-
On the 31st May 2019 Mr Lyall, Ms Roy and Mr Murdoch along with 27 students left Selkirk at 5.45am to the South of France. After a pleasant bus journey and ferry crossing we arrived at Mimosa with the sun shining and temperatures mid 20s. We met our group leader Becky who took us to breakfast before giving us a site tour and organised our accommodation. We headed to the beach where we met Mike our beach leader and participated in a Splash session which consisted of lots of fun and games in the sea. In the afternoon we were on Catamarans and headed along the coast with a bit of speed in the wind. Our first evening activity was a Dragons Den activity where we had to invent something to make our everyday lives easier.

The next day we headed back to the beach and were involved in a ‘fun boat’ session where we learned to sail with a partner and were left to our own devices in the sea with a bit of instructor help when needed. The afternoon session was along at Vendres Port where we had fun with the Stand Up Paddle Boards and Raft Building. That evening we participated in a competitive game of the Cube. Each team had 6 players and 15 lives and you would compete in a variety of challenges from rolling a ball into an area, throwing the ball into a bucket, swapping balls from one bucket to another and flipping cups.

On our last day in Mimosa we were down on the beach bright and early and were out on the banana boat and sit on kayaks. We learned some skills on the kayaks that would assist us on our adventure down the Ardeche Gorge in a two days time. The afternoon involved our last sailing session on the Picos and involved a few capsizes along with some fantastic follow the leader.

The following day was our transfer day and we headed up to Segries. We stopped for some culture at a massive Carrefour French supermarket to buy gifts and stock up on anything we needed. We spent the afternoon on a nice beach next to the Ardeche river before heading to our campsite. Our first activity on centre was a River Talk where we got soaked as the river team explained about the rapids and rules in the Gorge.

On Wednesday we were up early and headed for the Ardeche Gorge. Due to being an able and small group we managed to canoe 16km on Day 1. We stopped for a very scenic lunch at the side of the river and were involved in rock jumps and games as we paddled downstream. At one point we were blown back up the river so decided to pull our canoes up to the next corner. At the end of the day we had to climb up La Mas and we were one of the quickest groups so far making it up in 30 minutes. That evening we went in to town to experience some of the French culture and spend the last of our money.

Our last day and we were back in the scenic Gorge. Today was an easy day paddling with fast currents and a tail wind. Mr Lyall bought us all an ice cream at the end as we had made it down in fantastic time. Back to pack and then we were off home. What a fantastic experience we all had!

By Ella
Selkirk High School

Values In Action

Bronze LGBT Charter/Rights Respecting Schools

This year’s Rights Respecting Schools committee, led by Gordon Hamilton, Catriona Temple and Olga Burt-Smith (S6) have spent this year leading the school to our Bronze LGBT Charter and working towards our Silver Rights Respecting Schools Award.

One of the highlights of the year for the group was our Whole School Human Rights Day (coinciding with LGBT History Month and the week before Purple Friday). The organisation of the entire day was in the hands of the students (with a bit of support from Miss Swan) and what a fantastic job they did! Staff and students were encouraged to wear something purple to show solidarity with the LGBT community.

As part of the day, students participated in workshops in mixed groupings (S1 – S6) with senior students fully embracing their leadership role. We had a variety of speakers come to the school to deliver engaging workshops including ‘An Introduction to Sign Language’ with Councillor Elaine Thornton Nicol; A session on political activism by Councillor Gordon Edgar; the co-founder of Social Bite gave an enthusiastic presentation about eradicating Homelessness; two LGBT activists discussing transgender rights as well as some very moving stories of their own experiences growing up locally and our whole school (students and staff) received LGBT awareness training. Local MP John Lamont, who sadly was unable to attend, even sent a video message all the way from the House of Commons!!

GREAT NEWS! We have just been informed that our efforts to achieve the Bronze Award have been successful. This is a wonderful reward for the hard work of the LGBT group and the whole school who have made great progress in ensuring Selkirk High School is a place where all students can be who they want to be without fear of prejudice.
S1s have been gaining their confidence in the workshop and computer design skills.

In Employability, students have been developing their understanding of our Golden Skills. These have included skills such as resilience and communication which have been developed during Exodus week at Newcastleton.

S2s have been designing and developing their problem solving skills as part of their Technologies course.

S3s have designed Trophies for the Selkirk Souters for their Hatfest in September.

Our Senior School Students have been broadening their skills in preparation for their final qualifications.

Graphic Students had a visit from Alix Lunn a Graphic Designer.

Design and Manufacture students have been designing lamps for one of our partners, Oregon Timbers.
In S3 Skills for Life, students have participated in a number of challenges across the year to develop the SHS Golden Skills, with particular focus on social skills, such as Communication and Teamwork. Highlights include putting on a Christmas Bake Sale, and a walk up to the Three Brethren.

In Business Education, students have undertaken a wide range of activities, which have provided exposure to the world of business. Many have demonstrated Golden Skills, with a focus on the Employability skills pertinent to the course including Creativity and maintaining a Positive Attitude to their learning. Senior Business Management students have also taken part in external feedback sessions, including providing their views to the Scottish Parliament on the proposed South of Scotland Enterprise Bill in a visit from Sarah Rowlinson.
A group of our new S3 and S4 pupils visited Edinburgh University this June to attend a Maths Inspiration Lecture. During this fun and interactive show, some of the best Maths communicators inspired our pupils, by showing them the beauty and applicability of Mathematics. The lecture covered a range of areas from the numbers people choose for the lottery and how likely they are to win to, game show theory and how a mathematician influenced the decision of where to place bullet proof reinforcements in world war 2 planes.

We also ran 2 maths circle events this year in Knowepark Primary and Philiphaugh Primary. This was for children aged 5 to 16 and their families to come along and play games, solve puzzles and do some hands on maths. We will be running these again in 2019/20 session.

Our S1 and S2 pupils sat the UK Maths Challenge in May and did very well with such a difficult test of mathematical reasoning. Those who received certificates where:

S2: Best in School, best in year and Gold to EDENCOLLINS, Silver to Lily Byers, Bronze to Charlotte Tuckwood, Sam Lawrie, Brajan Kubik, Murray Bradshaw and Angus MacIntyre.
S1: Best in year and Silver to IONE LAING, Bronze to Isla McCulloch, Freya Burgess, Braden Collins and George Brownlie.

Eden Collins did so well that Leeds University invited him to take part in the next challenge (called the kangaroo challenge), and he has also sat the Olympiad Challenge (a 2 hour exam) which we eagerly wait for the results of.
MODERN LANGUAGES

Lots of exciting things have been happening in the Languages Faculty this year…

Macbeth Trip
In October, 30 students from all year groups watched an incredible performance of Macbeth at the Festival Theatre in Edinburgh. From the incredible staging to the perfect portrayal of Macbeth and his wife, it was a great experience for those studying the play to see it brought to life.

Scots Language Award
A group of S4 students successfully piloted the Scots Language Award this session. This SQA qualification asks students to consider where our Scots language came from, how Scots has changed throughout history, critically think about texts written in Scots and produce their own piece of writing using Scots dialect words. Students produced some excellent work and it means they now have an extra qualification at SCQF Level 4. The Award will be continued with another group of students this coming session.

Reading for Pleasure
Next session there will be a real focus on encouraging reading for pleasure. Watch this space for a new recommended reading list,

Primary Transition Project – Literacy

During May, S3 students and English teachers visited the cluster primaries to deliver part of the Literacy Transition Project. This project, which was designed collaboratively with primary teachers, gives pupils a shared experience of using the PEE (Point, Evidence, Explain) structure – something used across the SHS curriculum – and a chance to meet their new teachers. We were particularly impressed by the S3 students who helped to deliver this learning – they were enthusiastic, knowledgeable and great role models to the P7 pupils.

Holiday Project in S2 French
Students have recently completed a block of work on the topic of holidays, covering countries, accommodation, time phrases, travel, activities and food. As well as a lot of vocabulary to acquire, it also allowed students to experiment with tenses – not just saying what they usually do on holiday, but also what they are going to do (immediate Future) and what their ideal holiday would be (conditional tense). While this represented a real challenge for students – we were really impressed how well they grasped the new grammar concepts, culminating in some really interesting poster ideas.
Expressive Arts Day

The Expressive Arts Faculty held another very successful Expressive Arts day on Thursday May 16th where P7 pupils experienced a variety of activities in Music, Drama and Art and Design. In the afternoon they took part in a transition Sports Festival led by the PE department.

Pupils experienced performing on keyboard, accordion, tuned percussion and drum kit. They worked together to produce some excellent performances and develop their musical and creative skills.

In Art, they were experimenting with different drawing techniques. Pupils produced some amazing work using continuous line, blind drawing, using their wrong hand and drawing quickly against the clock.

In Drama, pupils took part in an improvised version of the 3 Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf. Comedy was at the fore, as the pupils took on the voices and movement for the roles. Drama was new for many of the pupils and this brief introduction helped them to see

Music Department

A group of Selkirk High School students joined a group from Jedburgh Grammar school to see Roald Dahl’s hugely popular musical ‘Matilda’ at the Playhouse in Edinburgh on Wednesday 17th April.

All the students were thoroughly entertained by Tim Minchin’s fabulous music and the magical Roald Dahl story of Matilda, a precocious 5-year-old girl with the gift of telekinesis, who loves reading, overcomes obstacles caused by her family and school, and helps her teacher to reclaim her life.

Rotary Young Artist Competition

Congratulations to Harry McMenamin who came first in the Rotary Young Artist Competition. Runners up were Jocelyn Jupp and Ione Laing. Artist Rob Hain judged all the entries and was impressed by the quality of work.
STEM

Not Just Sound, Ultrasound

Dr McGurk from the BGH and the RHSC came to show our third year Physicists how to use an ultrasound imaging machine. This is part of our third year Physics course where our students learn about sound waves.

The good news is we found out we are all alive and even have a heart…

This fantastic experience gave our students the opportunity to experience real work experience in the context of their subject.

Rotary Club Technology Challenge

Very early in the morning out STEM Clubbers with the help of Selkirk Rotary set off on a mammoth journey to Eyemouth to improve on their third place in the 2018 Rotary Young Technologists Challenge.

The two teams did a fabulous job with one team (Gully, Charlotte, Eden and Crighton) coming in first and our other (Molly, Shaun, Braydon and Caitlyn) coming in joint second. Well done to everyone who took part.

Looks like those golden skills of Problem solving, Communication and Team work really work for us!
Social Subjects Faculty Highlights 2019

This year started by welcoming some new staff to the department. Miss Todd (Geography), Mr Murdoch (History and Modern Studies) and Mrs Thompson (RME) joined the department and what an impact they have had!!

Unfortunately all three are moving on to pastures new and we wish them all the best in their new adventures.

History
Selkirk Colonial Society

The Higher History class has been working with Ian Clapperton and Selkirk Colonial Society this year again, researching the lives of Souters far and wide. We had a visit from Rosalie Saunders who spent years on a plantation in the Far East; and were most interested in her box of old photographs, stories of pet monkeys and colourful saris to dress up! Ian brought in the original documents from the establishment of the Society and from his own family story, regaling us with stories of forest fires and court cases and the early settlers in Canada. Students then researched and produced their own essays on one of the colonials and were invited to the bussin’ to find out who had won the coveted prize. Well done Alex Turnbull on winning a cheque for £100 and the Colonial Society History Prize Medal, 2019!

Modern Studies

In November, the National 4/5 Modern Studies Class (accompanied by Miss Swan & Mr Murdoch) took a trip to visit the holding cells at Hawick Police Station. We were able to meet Police Officers and ask loads of questions about their day to day work. They even told us about the best and worst parts of their jobs. They even gave us the chance to use their batons in the training hall and ran us through arrest procedures. Callum very kindly volunteered to be the offender (as seen in the photo below). We had an awesome time and thanks to our Community Police Officer PC Ballantyne for organising the trip for us.

Geography

In May, the S3 Geography classes took a trip to Upper Nisbet Farm, where we were able to get a fantastic tour of the farm by the farmer, Robert Neill on his tractor and trailer. We were able to meet all the livestock and find out about a day in the life of a farmer. It was really good as we were able to get hands-on experience of what we had learnt in the classroom and found out about employment opportunities in the agricultural sector. We were even able to get ourselves weighed on the weight crate! It was a brilliant morning.

YPI

This year, we have introduced a brand new project for S2 in partnership with the Employability Faculty. The Youth and Philanthropy Initiative gives our young people the opportunity to explore charitable organisations in the local area and raise awareness. It gives students the chance to put all of the ‘Golden Skills’ they’ve been learning about in Employability into practice by choosing a charity to support, creating a pitch for a panel of judges and competing to win £3000 for their chosen charity, funded by The Wood Foundation.

We look forward to the final presentations during next term!
SOCIAL SPACE DEVELOPMENTS AT SHS

The Pupil Council has been working with architect Gordon Brown and consulting with students to design the major social space developments at SHS.

Pupil Voice feedback last year said very clearly that this was an area for development in the school and we are delighted that it is due to be completed by the end of August 2019.

A key principal behind the design was mental health. This is why the 3 rooms being developed— as well as the amphitheatre which will be situated between the Music School and the Main building— will have lots of natural wood and natural light and ‘living walls’ of plants. The idea is that the new environment will really give students a break from their studies and, because it is such an open and inclusive space, the pupil council hopes it will help break down barriers between year groups as well.

Inspirelearn Project: IPADS arrive at SHS!

The students of Selkirk High School will be the first students in the Borders to receive ipads early in the next session. Selkirk was chosen to launch the region-wide project in large part due to the positivity and engagement of staff who are already developing sensible plans under the leadership of Chris Dolan and Nicola Douglas.

Students will of course be included in the development of the SHS approach to using these devices and training and information sessions are being planned for parents too.

On being asked why Selkirk was chosen first, Mr Bryson was pretty clear: ‘everyone wants this to be a success – I’d have chosen Selkirk too!’

CHANGE AND OPPORTUNITY

We say farewell to Graham Marshall who has served the young people of Selkirk with rare compassion and commitment for 31 years. He will be sorely missed. Graham is a man of wisdom and integrity and he can reflect on a teaching life of tremendous impact.

Taking up the role of DHT will be Vicki Blair. Mr B is delighted: ‘Vicki comes with loads of experience, a terrific reputation for inclusivity and ambition and I’m delighted to welcome her to the Selkirk team which is so promisingly united around some very exciting improvements in Learning and Teaching 2019-20.’