



'Rooted in Nature, United in Community, Growing in Kindness.'

Head Teacher Friday Blog (8) – 3 October 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach the October holiday next week, I want to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a restful and enjoyable break. This is a valuable chance to recharge, reconnect, and spend quality time together.

Looking ahead, it is really important that our **Senior Phase pupils** make the most of the weeks ahead. With only **four and a half weeks until the start of the assessment window**, staying on top of revision and preparation now will make all the difference. We encourage pupils to return after the holiday refreshed, focused, and ready to give their very best in the upcoming term. With dedication and support, I am confident they will continue to achieve great things.

On our return, I am also delighted to share that we will have access to the brand-new 3G Astro pitch. This is a fantastic addition to our school facilities, providing first-class opportunities for sport and physical activity. It is, however, vital that we all take great care of this new facility. In particular, pupils must ensure that no food or drink is brought onto the pitch at any time so that it remains in excellent condition for years to come.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We look forward to welcoming everyone back after the holiday – rested, motivated, and ready for the challenges and opportunities of the term ahead.

Important Dates

Tuesday 7 October – S1 Parents' Showcase Evening

Monday 27 October at 6.00pm – Parent Council Meeting. Held in school in the McLaren Room, just off Main Reception and via Google Meeting Link: meet.google.com/smr-osfe-ccw. Barclay Milne is the new the Parent Council Chairperson and Kieran Brennan is the Vice-Chair this year. If you have any points, you would like to discuss about parental involvement or any other specific issues please contact Barclay or Kieron via email at mclarenpc465@gmail.com. Minutes of the Parent Council will be available on the McLaren High School website, located in the Parent Council tab.

Tuesday 28 October - PTA AGM will take place on at 6.30pm in the McLaren Room. All parents welcome.

Friday 31 October – S1-S3 Sportathon

Life-Saving Skills at McLaren – Congratulations to Our S6 Leaders

This week our S6 Leaders have been making a huge impact across the school by delivering CPR training to pupils in every year group. Their commitment, preparation, and enthusiasm have helped equip our young people with one of the most valuable skills they can carry with them – the ability to save a life.

Through the sessions, pupils learned:

- What CPR is and why it is vital in an emergency.
- What an AED device is and how it can be used to restart a heart that has stopped.
- How to recognise when someone needs CPR, from checking for responsiveness to assessing breathing.
- How to give effective CPR, with clear steps to follow in a calm and confident way.
- How to use an AED device safely and quickly when one is available.

Our S6 Leaders also introduced pupils to the acronym DR. SCAB as an easy-to-remember first response checklist:

- D – Danger: check for any risks around you.
- R – Response: see if the person reacts when you speak or gently shake them.
- S – Shout: call for help immediately.
- C – Catastrophic Bleeding: control any major bleeding first.
- A – Airway: make sure their airway is clear.
- B – Breathing: check if they are breathing normally.
If not – start CPR straight away.

Learning CPR is far more than just a practical skill. It gives our pupils the confidence to act in a crisis, the knowledge to make a difference, and the reassurance that they could one day save the life of a family member, friend, or even a stranger. In a world where emergencies can happen at any time, these lessons empower our young people to step forward, not step back.

We are incredibly proud of our S6 Leaders for stepping up and sharing these vital life skills. Their leadership and service embody the very best of McLaren High School, and we know the younger pupils have benefited greatly from their time and dedication – Murray McGuire, Gordon Crichton, Tabi Mackenzie, Emma Anderson, Ossian de Artoxa Dougall, Anna Mchedliani, Steph Antczak, Esme Gilmour McLeod, Emily Marklew, Rose Campbell, Charlie Spriggs and Ellie Inglis were our seniors leading the training.



UKLA Book Awards – Exciting News for McLaren High

We are delighted to share that Mrs Wilson is leading a team of teacher judges in the **11–14+ category** of this year's UKLA Book Awards. Thanks to her involvement, every submission – including all of the longlisted titles – will be added to our school library. That means **100 brand-new books** for our pupils to enjoy.

We are also thrilled to welcome two more teacher judges from our department:

- **Ms Sleight**, joining the 11–14+ category team
- **Mrs Jackson**, judging in the Information Books category

Both will play a key role in shortlisting 20 longlisted books in their categories down to just 6 finalists. This is a wonderful opportunity for McLaren High – not only does it enrich our library with a wealth of high-quality, contemporary literature, but it also puts our staff and pupils at the heart of a national celebration of reading. We cannot wait to see the impact these books will have in sparking curiosity, discussion, and a lifelong love of reading across our school community.

Scholastic Book Fair at the S.T. Connell library

The English Department are hosting a Scholastic Book Fair, in the library, between the 3rd and 7th October. All pupils will have access to the fair during lunch throughout the event, and our S1&2 classes will be visiting during their English periods. There are some great books on offer; many of the titles are available for under £5 and all sales will help support the library.



S1-S3 Sportathon

This event on 31 October will be a fun-filled day of a variety of sports aimed at promoting teamwork and our school ethos, while raising much-needed funds for our extra-curricular sports clubs. We are also excited to host this to mark the official opening of our new all-weather pitch! This is due for completion on 26 September.

The funds raised from the Sportathon will go directly toward enhancing our school's sports programs, providing equipment, covering travel expenses, sports strips and expanding opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide variety of sports out with the curriculum. Our goal is to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to participate in school sports regardless of economic background. Last year we raised over £2,000 and this has allowed us to pay for referees, buses, affiliation fees and ultimately ensure that access to extra-curricular remains free or at a very low cost to our young people.

We kindly ask for your support in making this day a success through a suggested £5 donation. If you would like to sign your child up, please complete the Google form below by Wednesday 8 October and select the three sports that they would like to take part in. Once the form has been completed, we will add your child's name to Parent Pay for the suggested £5 donation entry fee. If you are in a position to donate more than £5, you can do so. If your child does not take part, timetabled classes will run however it may be that some classes are collapsed due to numbers.

Google Form for entry: <https://forms.gle/2BFk65bBtwhbf7LL8>

Help to 'ACHIEVE' with Exam Preparation

This is a great resource to help your child with their exam preparation and revision. Designed for Scottish students, ACHIEVE online digital courses are broken down into key topics and concepts, each clearly explained and illustrated. There are hundreds of links to free resources and SQA exam questions and solutions. Online assessments test pupils understanding and helps them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Pupils can use ACHIEVE to boost their confidence and hopefully this will help them to pass exams with improved grades.

Benefits of a student account:

- Your child can study and revise using the digital textbooks, which cover a wide range of National 5 and Higher courses.
- Test their subject knowledge with interactive assessments that give them instant feedback.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses for each of their courses using the self-evaluation toolkit.
- Extend their learning using the free web links put together by a team of subject specialists.

- Develop their exam technique by trying SQA past paper questions and solutions.

The link below can be used to allow pupils to sign up to the site. The link to access the site has been shared with pupils via Google Classroom. Any difficulties with logging in should be directed to Mr Campbell, Depute Head Teacher.

<https://achieve.hashtag-learning.co.uk>

DYW Opportunities

Please click [here](#) for local job, apprenticeship and career opportunities for young people in our local area.

Extracurricular Clubs at McLaren High School

We are delighted to share with you the wide range of extracurricular clubs and activities on offer at McLaren High School this session. You can view the full list of opportunities by clicking on the link below:

[Extracurricular Clubs 25-26](#)

Taking part in clubs is a wonderful way for our young people to make new friends, develop skills, build confidence, and strengthen their sense of belonging within our school community. In particular, we would expect all of our new S1 pupils to get involved in at least one club as part of their wider McLaren experience. I want to extend my thanks to the staff, parents and adult volunteers who freely give their time and energy to run and support these activities – your commitment makes an enormous difference to the life of our school.

Lost Property

Today we have sorted through all of our lost property. There are a huge number of unclaimed jackets, PE bags and branded sweatshirts. Some videos have been posted on the school Instagram page today (@mclarenhs) showing these items. If you recognise anything, these can be collected via the main office. Anything unclaimed, will be donated to charity or recycled during the October break.

Pupil Shout Outs

It is always a pleasure to share the successes of our pupils outside the classroom. Please remember to use the link below to let us know about achievements we can celebrate in future blogs.

Scottish Schools Road Race

Well done to our amazing Road Runners who took part in the Scottish Schools Road Race on Wednesday. Ruby (S1), Emilia (S1), Emily (S3) and Fia (S6).

Rugby

Well done to our U14 Rugby Team who played against Balfron High School last week and were involved in a Pitch Up and Play Tournament at Stirling County! They were absolutely outstanding and demonstrated excellent team work. They were well led by their Captain Barclay (S2). Thank you also to our coaches Mr Scott, McLaren Rugby Club and Ms Rolfe.

Forth Valley Schools Regional Trials

Congratulations to Harris McCallum who has been selected to play for the U15 Forth Valley regional football team. Well done Harris.

U14 Football

Our U14 football team played their first league game of the season against a very good Balfron High School. Unfortunately, we did not secure a victory but well done to our goal scorer, Bene Elekes (S1) and thanks to Coach Lynch.

Celebrating Success at McLaren High School

At McLaren High School, we are immensely proud of our amazing and talented pupils who achieve excellence not only in school, but also within the local community and on national and international stages. Their successes — whether in academics, the arts, sport, leadership, or service — reflect the hard work, commitment, and creativity of our young people.

We are always eager to hear about these fantastic achievements and to celebrate them as a school community. To help us do this, we encourage parents and carers to share any success stories with us using the form below. By recognising and promoting these accomplishments, we can shine a spotlight on the many ways our pupils make a positive difference and inspire others.

Celebrating pupil success is an important part of our ethos at McLaren, as it strengthens our values of **inclusivity, community, kindness, and respect**, ensuring that every achievement is valued and every young person feels a sense of pride and belonging.

<https://forms.gle/QaHeFumjzXopjCFL6>

Free School Meals & Clothing and Footwear Grant

If you have a school age child and are on a low income, you may be entitled to support with school meals, clothing and footwear.

[Free School Meals & Clothing Grant](#)

Educational Maintenance Allowance

This is a payment of £30 a week, for young people who remain in school **after their 16th birthday** and meet the eligibility criteria.

[Educational Maintenance Allowance](#)

Quote for the Weekend

‘The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.’

William A. Ward

If you have any questions in relation to this update or any other school matter then please do not hesitate to be in touch with us @ mclarenhs@stirling.gov.uk or on 01877 330156. Thank you, as always, for your continued support in helping our young people achieve their very best.

Kind regards,

Marc Fleming
Head Teacher