



## Message from the Headteacher

Over the past few weeks the school has been a hive of activity with a number of events and celebrations taking place including 'Christmas by Candlelight', the school Christmas fair, S4-6 parent information session and the Advent services which have been running all week. On top of all this, the school has been raising funds and collecting food items for our festive charity appeal. All money, toys and food items raised are currently on their way to our charity partners including the SVDP, West Lothian food bank and the Forth 1 toy appeal. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generous donations and to the staff and pupils who coordinated this year's charity appeal.

As we look to the year ahead, our attention turns to the prelim exams for our senior pupils which start on the 9th January. All young people have access to revision materials and resources online and should make best use of these during their study and preparation.

2019 is also a significant year in the life of the school as we celebrate 25 years of St Margaret's Academy in the current building. There will be a number of events organised throughout the year and an opportunity for former pupils to get involved in the celebrations. I'll be in touch in the New Year with more details.

I would like to thank you all, our parents and carers for your continued support, and wish you all a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

G.McDowall

## Christmas by Candlelight concert

This year's annual Christmas by Candlelight concert was (and I'm sure all would agree!) a wonderful success. With the atrium bedecked in Christmas snowflakes and decorations planned and dressed by the Art Department, the scene really was set for a magical evening. Greeting the audience as they came in (and freezing their chatters off!) were our young pipers and drummers, senior pupils met audience-goers at the door and led them into the atrium where they took their seats at candlelit tables, all set for the entertainment to come.

Following on with tradition, Mrs Melville narrated an Advent reading while senior pupils lit our wreath, and what followed was a feast of singing, dancing and musical performances that set everyone in the mood for the holiday season. Featured in the programme were all of the school choirs, ably led by our music department (Mrs Platt, Mrs Allan and Miss Saunders – our newest member of staff). The senior and junior brass bands made their annual appearance under the baton of Mrs Downs, our brass teacher and Miss Mason and Miss Benezra showcased their woodwind pupils. A special mention should go to our woodwind soloists Louis MacDonald (saxophone, S6) and Morgan MacLellan (saxophone).

No Christmas concert would be complete without our wonderful junior and N5 dancers – they really did Miss Stryke proud as always. The guitar ensemble showed their prowess once again and Mr McDowell (the other Mr McDowell!) led the team in two pieces – Frosty the Snowman and Morrison's Jig. With Mr Kelly's percussionists joining the junior choir for an African Lullaby. The first half was concluded and the audience invited to enjoy some mulled wine and mince pies (whilst buying a raffle ticket!), the stall hosted by a lovely team of volunteers – Mrs Casey, Mrs MacDougall and Mrs MacDonald.

With the sounds of the communal song Winter Wonderland ringing in everyone's ears it was time to say good night and wish everyone a happy and Holy Christmas. See you all again this time next year!



## St Margaret's Academy Christmas Card design 2018



Congratulations to our Christmas Card design winner this year  
Oskar Zielonka class 1.5

## Make Your Mark with a Tenner challenge

The yearly pupil Christmas Market was a huge success once again! Our S3 business management pupils and S6 Young Enterprise teams had a brilliant selling event with a wide range of product and lots of creative ideas. All pupils and staff had the opportunity to visit the market and make some unique purchases. Our pupils and staff raised over £220 for the Malawi fund! Well done everyone and thank you for your support once again!



## J.P Morgan presentation

Our senior pupils had a speaker in from J.P. Morgan last week who gave great insight in to careers in STEAM Technology. Two of our former pupils who are current apprentices in J.P. Morgan joined in answering any questions about work and study balance. We received some great feedback from our pupils, if you are interested in upcoming apprenticeship opportunities in technology please see Miss O'Hare or Miss McIlwraith.

## Curriculum spotlight - S1 Creative Technologies

Within the DMG Department pupils have been developing their Computer Aided Design/Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAD/CAM) skills over the last few weeks. Pupils have individually created their own card model of a Christmas t-light holder before transferring their designs on Autodesk Inventor (3D Modelling Program) and finally having them manufactured using the Laser Cutter. Mrs Pettigrew (DMG Teacher)

So far in Creative Technologies we have enjoyed making tea light holders in different shapes. We drew our template design onto card. We could chose a Christmas themed idea, some of us made snowmen some of us made them Christmas trees. When we finished making them on card we put our designs on the computer and then the teacher printed them on the laser cutter. It was really good fun to see our designs go from card to computer and then to see our own designs being printed on the laser. We had never used a 3D modelling program before or seen the laser working. Aniah Abbas And Neave Anderson S1



## S2 Book and Bake

S2 pupils in Ms Renfrew's class ran their Christmas Book & Bake event in the library on Wednesday morning this week. The event was open to youngsters of S1 and S2 and all had an enjoyable morning in the library taking part in various activities, such as pinning the red nose on Rudolph, guessing Santa's favourite book, guessing the number of pages in Christmas themed novels as well as reading magazines and books and watching the Snowman film. Perhaps best of all was the delicious cakes made by S2 pupils and their parents. Thank you very much to all who helped make this an enjoyable Christmas event. Our S2 organisers have raised £104 for school library resources. Well done S2!

## A Day of Dance

A huge well done to the National 5 Dance class last week, who organised and delivered a 'Day of Dance' for our cluster primary schools. The N5 pupils were absolutely brilliant and delivered a fun, creative and enjoyable session - which our primary 7 pupils loved! We are looking forward to delivering another session in 2019, as well as visiting our cluster primaries for our annual 'Dance Showcase'.

## Attainment award winners update

Congratulations to Eilidh Fleming and Kirstin Clark (s5) who were amongst the large group of pupils who achieved 7 National 5 A grade qualifications last session. Unfortunately, their achievement was not recognised at the awards ceremony in November, however, we thought it was important to recognise their success. Apologies to Eilidh and Kirstin and their parents.



**Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year from pupils and staff at St Margaret's Academy. Pupils return on the 7th Jan**