

# THE EAGLET



OPEN EVENING REVIEW 2015

## Headmaster's Address – Katie Munro

A full hall and a quiet hum of chatter awaited the Headmaster's address tonight, the 12th of November 2015. In the background a slideshow was shown, with pupils donning their St Aloysius' uniform with pride: playing sports; winning medals; smiling. A senior school pupil played the old Scottish song 'Wild Mountain Thyme' in the background.

Before the Headmaster began his address, the audience were treated to the Schola Cantorum's rendition of 'New York, New York'. Following this, Fr. Banyard began with a prayer, demonstrating the school's Catholic roots.

During his speech the Headmaster spoke of his own background in music. He related this to the school life, reminding us that "You're only as good as your last performance," and thus every experience a pupil faces is important in their development as a person. He spoke of the school's five main areas of focus: personal excellence; delight in learning; faith and value; care and respect; and making a difference. Further, he spoke with great pride of the school's strong involvement in charity work, mentioning the Lourdes trip, Children's Fund, and Arrupe programme. There was also reference made to the new school sports facility, which after an investment of £7.5 million, should be ready for use next year, as well as the new organ donated to the church. The Education Scotland Inspection this March, and their comment that St Aloysius' was "sector leading", was also mentioned, although not without stress that this does not mean there is no more work to be done.

The address was drawn to a close with a speech from S6 student Niamh Mullarkey, in which she discussed her experience of attending St Aloysius' College. She spoke of her own personal struggles and praised the school for their understanding that exams don't mean everything. A light-hearted comment regarding our infamous green blazer raised a smile: despite its smart appearance, it can smell a little like a wet dog when caught in the rain! Perhaps the most telling line of her speech was that with which she concluded, making reference to the letters we write on each piece of work: 'Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam', 'For the greater glory of God'. Niamh explained, "The College has made me, and has transformed my friends into men and women for others."

With that, the excited prospective parents and students made their way to their tours, and began an evening of discovery in the College.



## Geography – Ruaridh Culligan & Marcus McRae

The Geography Department was full of life, telling visitors about the amazing skills and opportunities the subject can offer. Geography offers its students knowledge of places, and of the world. Practical skills like map-reading and knowledge of towns and cities can lead to careers in estate agency, town planning, surveying and architecture. There is also a strong Christian perspective in our school's Geography department, particularly when students study development and trade. The Geography Department play an important role in developing men and women for others in their work.



## History – Marcus McRae

Tonight, History took visitors on a whirlwind tour of the past. Their lively displays transported us back to the 1300s, at the time of the Scottish Wars of Independence, before leaping forward to discuss the mistakes made and problems solved in the years leading up to the Second World War. History provides a variety of transferable skills, from essay writing and source analysis to interpretation and knowledge recall, all providing opportunities to learn independently.



## Physical Education – Ruaridh Culligan & Lucy Docherty

Physical Education took over the boardroom of the school this evening to showcase their fantastic work. It's not just about the pursuit of sporting excellence in PE, with students learning about anatomy and the science behind sport and exercise. Mr. Tearney, the Director of Sport and a PE teacher at the school, explained: "You can gain so many skills from PE. It helps you aim for specific careers which require physical fitness, like the Police, but it also teaches social skills through teamwork, independence, and emotional balance, as well as the obvious health benefits."



## Classics – Marcus McRae

Classics is one of the most interesting subjects on offer in St. Aloysius' College, with connections to so many other subjects covered through the themes available. Having a qualification in classics will aid you well in a number of university courses such as architecture, law and politics. Mr. Baker, a teacher in the Classics Department, told us that students follow the Cambridge Course books 1-5. They are a great help to the students. Sometimes, people think that it is a study of things from a long-forgotten past, but the lively Classics Department demonstrated that it is very much a modern subject for our students! Mr. Baker told us that Classics "is embedded in modern society. It's especially useful for learning other languages."





## Chemistry - Daniel McArdle

Visitors to the Chemistry Department were astounded by the intricate knowledge of the students, particularly the Advanced Higher chemists such as Clare Corrigan and Lucy Gilhooly. The visitors were fascinated by the wondrous experiments they saw on display, and as you can see from our fantastic cover photo, it's little wonder! The students were very involved, providing a welcoming atmosphere and plenty of information, as well as allowing visitors to see and learn for themselves what the Chemistry Department is all about.

## Modern Studies – Marcus McRae

Modern Studies had a busy evening, letting people know just how far-reaching the curriculum in this subject can be. Take a firm grasp of political understanding as you learn about the Scottish legal system and the UK government. Study more international topics such as American politics and global terrorism as you gain a secure understanding of political and social life outside of the U.K. Borders. Modern Studies will give you a variety of transferable skills in analysis, knowledge and understanding, essay writing and the ability to make valued and educated judgements on controversial topics such as welfare, independence and terrorism. It's a subject with its finger right on the pulse.

## Outdoor Education—Abby McLaughlin

Jump straight into the action with outdoor education and do a variety of rewarding yet challenging activities such as kayaking, climbing, canoeing and hiking. Taking part in these activities gives pupils a variety of indispensable skills such as independence, confidence, decision-making and leadership, which pupils can take with them to all areas of life.

## Maths – Ruaridh Culligan & Marcus McRae

The Maths Department is always one of the busiest of Open Evening, thanks to the interesting and exciting displays and activities. In Maths, students learn to be systematic, logical and determined. There are many career opportunities available to students of Maths, including in business, science, accounting and engineering. It's a subject that works so well to help other areas, but as the staff showed tonight, it's great fun on its own too. The visitors to Maths were so pleased with everything on offer in one of our biggest departments.



## Business Management – Peter Scullion

*Our roving reporter, Peter, was working in the Business Management Department during Open Evening. He decided to take the chance to delve a little deeper into the business world with our fantastic teachers.*

Peter asked Mr. Higgins about the importance of an event like Open Evening for the school. "It's essential to give people the opportunity to see not only the physical environment of the school, but also most importantly the fantastic pupils we have."

Miss Savage agrees. "It's very true," she said. "Parents gain a first-hand impression of the school, the staff, and our environment. They can glean an idea of the school's ethos, which is hard to get across in an advert."

As for Business Management itself, Miss Savage and Mrs. Brennan were keen to point out that the most exciting thing visitors would see in their department was the pupils. "They tell our visitors their experience of the subjects of Business and Economics," Miss Savage said.

Mr. Higgins had a slightly different stance: "The most exciting thing in Business is me!" On a serious note, though, Mr. Higgins did say that his favourite thing about his subject was its capacity to grow. "The subject is constantly evolving and changing." Miss Savage and Mrs. Brennan echoed the sentiment, saying that it is exciting, dynamic, and relates to real-world concerns.

The feelings of all were summed up by Miss Savage: "I don't like teaching Business. I love it!"

## Modern Languages – Anna McKenzie

*Anna is a keen student of Modern Languages here in the College, and we asked her if she could sum up her evening for us welcoming visitors to the department:*

I really enjoy Modern Languages as it will help me in my life. It gives me skills that I will use later in life. Mrs. Murray explained: "The Modern Language Department is a very busy, thriving place. We teach Spanish, Italian and French, and we try to have as many trips as we can. Learning a language is one of the best skills you can have!"

Mr. Kyle continued, "We are so proud to offer three languages all the way to Advanced Higher level, and also to have two classes who are bilingual in Italian."

Of course, the Modern Languages Department benefits from having assistants like Maximes, our French assistant. "I really enjoy teaching French here at the college," he said. "There are a lot of lovely students."

Other students who have enjoyed studying languages here are Nico and Alberto, who recognise the skills languages have given them. "It's so useful when you go abroad because you feel like you can cope better, and it opens up the world to you if you would like to move abroad one day," Nico explained.

Meanwhile, Alberto believes languages give him transferrable skills: "Employers are more likely to hire you because knowing a variety of languages shows you have a greater intellectual ability."

The visitors to the department seemed to agree, brushing up on their vocabulary from the lovely displays, and admiring the great opportunities on offer to our languages students. Open Evening was a great success!



## Music – Daniel McArdle, Humzah Razzaq & Eve McLernon

Visitors to the Clavius Forum were tonight treated to performances by our Music Department students. The Jazz ensemble were first up, and were full of rhythm – they were obviously well-rehearsed. Their rendition of ‘Eye of the Tiger’ by Survivor was an interesting take on a well-known song, giving this classic 80s hit an interesting twist.

The opera performance featured fantastic lead vocals with a great depth of voice and a hint of festive spirit. The solo performances allowed our musicians to demonstrate their individual musical passions, showing exemplary leadership by taking the centre stage. The confidence with which these students carried out such a demanding and nerve-racking job was wonderful to see.

These performances gave our music students the perfect opportunity to showcase their variety of talents and skills in the wide range of music genres which were performed.

Meanwhile, Eve McLernon and Humzah Razzaq spoke to Mr. Christie, the Head of Music. “I’ve been at the school for 18 months, and I must admit, I’m really looking forward to the performances tonight. It’s exciting. The Jazz Band are playing two pieces, and the opera group are having an open rehearsal to give a taste of what they do. I hope it goes well!”

It certainly did go well, with the musicians receiving loud applause from their audiences, and people mentioning the performances as highlights of the evening long after they had finished.



## English – Grainne McGinn

English as a subject represents an important part of education. As students we are immersed in a vast part of our history and culture by studying English. The atmosphere at this year’s Open Evening reflected this well. Our kind and involved staff and pupils made the English department’s display of its key aims both enjoyable and fascinating. The colorful, vibrant artwork and posters on display in the English Department completely encapsulated what makes English so enjoyable and the busy press team writing this newspaper demonstrated the dedication of the subject’s students. English and Media are both subjects which extremely benefit the pupils and the staff that involve themselves within it. English is a very inclusive subject with aspects that appeal to a variety of students. With a competition based on “Books to Read Before You’re 12”, a busy press desk, and lots of samples of work, there were plenty of things to keep visitors to the department occupied.



## Computing - Daniel McArdle

The Computing Department provides a very calm, welcoming atmosphere. The displays are very effective at summing up the experience of being a computing student, from the very basics of coding to advanced projects currently being worked on by S6 students. Mr Harkins commented on the welcoming atmosphere created by students, and mentioned that he felt Open Evening was being run very well by all involved.



# Religious Education – Ruaridh Culligan & Lucy Docherty

Religious studies play an important role in our school community. With links to so many subjects, a strong grounding in religious education gives us skills for lots of other areas, but also encourages us to question and challenge thoughts and beliefs and to really push our own boundaries. As Mr. McKillop from the RE department explains, “RE is not just important for your educational journey, but is important for everything that you believe in for the rest of your life.”

## Interviews from around the school

Mr. Ferrie – English and Media teacher, Head of S6, and Assistant Safeguarding Officer

### **Do you think that Open Evening is going well?**

I do, yes. The hall was full of people, and lots of exciting displays are up which are interesting to look at. The enthusiasm of all the pupils tonight is so gratifying to see.

### **Describe the College atmosphere in one word?**

Energetic

### **Do you think the pupils are a good reflection of the college?**

Yes, they are a great example! They're perhaps better than the teachers!

### **Is there a particular department that has stood out in its presentation?**

Well, I'm obviously going to be biased and say English and Media.

### **We asked Mr. Ferrie if there was anything else he'd like to add:**

I'm always very impressed by the number of pupils willing to give up their time for the Open Evening. They are very proud of their school and it shows.

Daniel Stewart – Marketing, Admissions and Communications Team

### **Do you think that Open Evening is going well?**

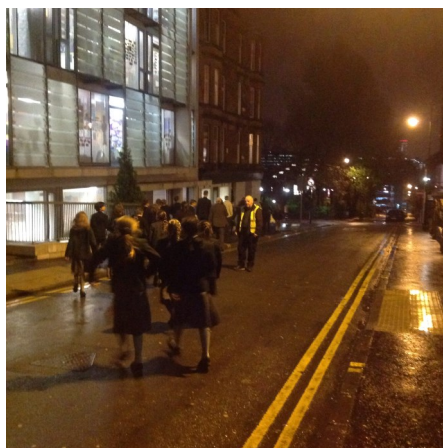
Yes, I think it's going very well. I'm very impressed by the energy shown by the pupils.


### **What did you find most interesting about going between the different departments?**

The diversity between the departments is very interesting and exciting. It's very well set up and run. As the photographer for the evening, I'm privileged: each photo captures important moments between the pupils and staff. It's incredible to witness.

### **Any other comments on this evening?**

The atmosphere has been so alive. There really is a buzz about the place. Everyone is involved and willing to help. It is a true reflection of the school.





*With very many thanks to our journalists this evening:*

*Editor-in-chief—Grainne McGinn*

*Assistant Editor—Niamh McCormick*

*Sub-Editors—Katie Munroe, Daniel McArdle & Marcus McRae*

*Journalists—Humzah Razzaq, Eve McLernon, Lucy Docherty,  
Ruairidh Culligan, Lewis Patrick, Anna McKenzie, Abby  
McLaughlin, Peter Scullion.*

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