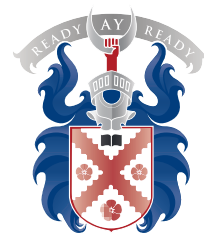


MERCHISTON MESSENGER

2014/15



The first school
to represent Scotland
at the ISF Tennis
World Schools
Championships

A School
for each and
every type of boy
Mungo Dunnett
Associates

Top A Level
School in
Scotland

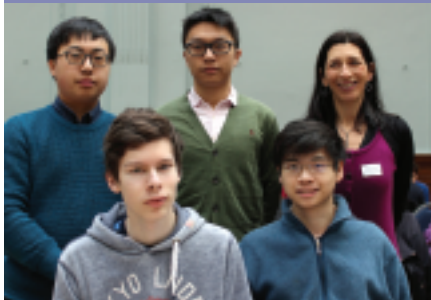
Merchiston
pupil capped for
the England U18
rugby squad

Joint
National ISGA
Junior League
Champions

Science is a
great strength
Tatler Schools
Guide

SENIOR TEAM MATHS CHALLENGE NATIONAL FINALS

A team of four travelled to London for the Senior Team Maths Challenge Finals. They had to make a poster incorporating materials prepared in advance, whilst addressing related questions given out on the day. Out of 79 teams, Merchiston came 49th, a good result for our first time in the National Finals.



MATHS FUN DAY

Merchiston's annual Maths Fun Day again attracted 30 teams from prep and primary schools. George Heriot's emerged victorious by a narrow margin.

SCHOLARS' DINNER

At this year's Scholars' Dinner, Simon Mills, Rector of Robert Gordon's College, Aberdeen, spoke on the theme of scholarship in the age of globalization.



OXBRIDGE AND IVY LEAGUE SUCCESSES 2015

Every year, we have an ambitious group of talented pupils, determined to test themselves in the highly competitive University arena. This year boys not only decided to test themselves by applying to Oxbridge, but also top 10 ranking and Ivy League Universities in America. We are delighted that this year four boys have successfully been awarded places at Oxford, Brown University, and Amherst College. The offer of a place at Oxbridge or a top American University is a triumph for the pupil and his teachers and we are delighted with the successes of this year. Attaining a place at university is the next step in their educational journey and to achieve a place at any university requires hours of studying by the pupil and support by their teachers to accomplish the necessary grades.

HISTORY ESSAY COMPETITION

This year, Retrospect, the journal of Edinburgh University's History, Classics and Archaeology Departments, ran a competition aimed to encourage school pupils interested in a career in journalism. Lower Sixth Former Ruairidh was awarded first prize for his article on the Scottish Independence Referendum.

ACADEMIC DISTINCTION

Outstanding
IGCSE/GCSE
results, 70% A*/A,
a School record!





ENGINEERING

This has again been a successful year in Engineering and Electronics. Lower Sixth Formers came second with their speed camera in the Engineering Education Scheme. Meanwhile, in the 10th Robotic Games at Selex, Fifth Formers were awarded the Rampaging Chariots Engineering Prize for the best assembled robot. And finally, Fourth Formers competed in the annual Go4Set Competition, achieving second place.

DNA WORKSHOP

Upper Sixth Biologists spent a stimulating day carrying out advanced genetics procedures – activities which tied in perfectly with the A2 course. Currently, we are the only School in Scotland equipped to carry out PCR and genetic fingerprinting, both activities that are usually only encountered by students at university.



GEOGRAPHY WORLDWISE QUIZ

In this year's Geographical Association WorldWide Quiz, Cameron captained the A Team, and Xander the B Team. Had they been allowed to be in the same team, they would undoubtedly be on their way to the international final. Both teams did very well in the area heat, coming 3rd and 4th. However, only one team from any school is allowed through, and so our B team had to exit the competition. Our A team then came joint 3rd with George Watson's, missing out on going through to the National Final by only 1 mark to Loretto.

SOLAR ECLIPSE

With clear skies, boys were able to enjoy viewing the solar eclipse in several different ways: looking directly at the sun through solar eclipse glasses; through a system set up using binoculars to project the image of the eclipse onto a white screen; and through one of the AstroSoc's telescopes, equipped with a solar safety filter and a DSLR camera.



'Top Scottish School for A Levels, 2014'
www.best-schools.co.uk

Academic Results 2014-15

- 100% pass rate at A Level
- 40% gained A Level grades A*/A
- 76% gained A Level grades A*- B
- 98% pass rate at IGCSE/GCSE
- 70% gained IGCSE/GCSE grades A*/A
- 89% gained IGCSE/GCSE grades A*- B



Senior and Junior drama productions at Merchiston, in addition to an impressive staging of Twelfth Night at St George's



WEST SIDE STORY

This year's senior production, in conjunction with St George's, was West Side Story, the tragic tale of young love. Cast and crew performed with passion and professionalism, creating an extremely memorable and moving show. This was an ambitious project, tackled with enthusiasm and energy, and left the audience thoroughly entertained and with more than a tear in the eye.

THE DRAMATIC EFFECT

THE BOY WHO FELL INTO A BOOK

This year's junior production was The Boy Who Fell Into A Book. The boys demonstrated superb comic timing and total commitment to their characters, with some exceptional individual performances: James - the sleek and sinister villain; Ben - the star-struck Kevin; and Johnny - the 'indestructible' Rockfist Slim. The quality of their performance on stage belied their ages, handling their presence in every scene with enviable ease and learning an unbelievable number of lines with maturity and total dedication. The backstage crew was also slick and professional in its approach.



AUTHOR VISITS

Early in the Autumn Term, the first author visit of the year took place. Michelle Paver, author of the best-selling series, The Chronicles of Ancient Darkness, visited to talk to a large audience from Pringle and Chalmers West and local Primary Schools. Michelle talked mostly about her current series of books for young people, Gods and Warriors, which is set in Ancient Greece and about the research involved in her writing.

In February, Shane Hegarty visited. Shane's first book had just been published, to great critical acclaim. The boys from Merchiston Juniors enjoyed hearing about Darkmouth and huge numbers bought and read it. Shane also ran a creative writing session with some of the boys in Shell on the theme of 'Unforeseen Circumstances' and this was followed by lunch with some of the Sixth Form, when careers in writing, publishing and journalism were discussed.



SPAWFORTH LIBRARY

SPAWFORTH LIBRARY BOOK GROUPS

In June 2014, three Book Groups were launched, Merchiston Juniors, Middle Years and Sixth Form. A summary of their thoughts about the books is published after each meeting which is displayed in the Library and also can be read on the intranet. The favourite books for this year have been The Bone Clocks overwhelmingly amongst the seniors, Noble Conflict for the Middle Years, although St Agnes' Stand was a very close second, and a very split decision from the juniors between Trash and The Enemy. All the groups wish to continue with the same format next year so the number of book groups will be extended to five. There will be individual groups in Merchiston Juniors, Fourth Form, Shell, Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth.

This initiative has been a wonderful addition and complement to the vibrant reading culture of Merchiston.



SPECIAL EVENTS

During the Autumn Term, Mrs Williams held break time poetry and book readings led by staff on the theme of Home, which included a very moving excerpt from the diary of Helen Thomas, the wife of poet Edward Thomas, who was killed during the First World War, describing a time her husband spent at home on leave from the Front.

Inspired by this event, the senior boys, led by George, organized book readings on the theme of When We Were Younger. And so in March, at break, sessions of readings took place led by some of our senior boys to recommend books they loved when they were younger and encourage some of the junior boys in the School to read them too. Large numbers of boys attended these sessions enjoying the readings, recommendations and refreshments.

BAG-A-BOOK

Four very successful book sales have been run this year. The two, in November for senior pupils and March for the whole School, when members of the Library committee and staff personally select the books from Blackwell's, were particularly well received and enjoyed.





MERCHISTON JUNIORS

CAMPING AT LOCH TAY

During the Summer Term Pringle enjoyed three camps to Loch Tay led by Mr Harkins. Boys got the chance to do activities like kayaking, gorge walking, and a high ropes course! Several campfires were enjoyed with the traditional toasting of marshmallows as well as making some delicious banana splits.



The Pringle 1XI was unbeaten this season

The Upper Sixth Form students are an integral part of the leadership and pastoral care in Pringle House



BBQ

Pringle House enjoyed a BBQ after the Boarders' Service on 31 May, courtesy of Mr Blair. The boys enjoyed games of football and touch rugby, before tucking into tasty burgers and sausages.





Playtime with Prefect, Zach



Roald Dahl Day in the Pringle Centre



COOKERY

Boys love their food and therefore appreciate the chance to learn how to cook and bake. Weekly sessions in Pringle House involve learning the necessary kitchen skills to prepare delicious meals and treats. The boys love eating their creations and there are always others loitering in the background in the hope of extras on offer.

ESCAPE FROM PRINGLE!

All Third Form boys participated in this exciting annual event. The game began with a lengthy explanation from Mr Lucas of the rules. It was clear early on in the game that cells of prisoners had not listened very carefully to these as they struggled to work on a plan for their escape! In the end, and after some very unobvious hints, all managed to solve the mystery, load and then hide in Corporal Harkins' laundry van, before finding the hidden maps! For the first time in history all teams arrived back at base, checked in with General Waldron, before returning to the House for well-earned chips and more chips!



JUNIOR CECIL STAGG SOCIETY

The focus of the first Merchiston Juniors' Cecil Stagg Society meeting of the new year was 'Logical Thinking' and the boys approached the difficult tasks with boundless enthusiasm and determination! The next meeting in February comprised 'The Great General Knowledge Quiz'. Other activities have included a mental maths race, spelling bee, debating session, and world trade challenge.

NEON DAY

Merchiston Juniors were louder and brighter than usual on Friday 3 October. Boys raided cupboards to find bright neon clothes for the day. Many extended their wardrobe to include wigs, sunglasses and even tights! Parents' running gear was particularly useful, as was the odd 80's costume, long hidden since those loud days! The boys were raising awareness and money for Guide Dogs, a very worthy and important cause. Well done to all: £100 was donated to this worthy charity by Merchiston Juniors.



ROCKS AND REELS

Mrs Hunter, Headmaster's wife, organised a successful 'Rocks and Reels' evening in the marquee, attended by a large number of parents. It opened with a sparkling reception in the Memorial Hall, entertained by jazz pianist and Head of Biology, Matthew King. The parents raised £1,250 for the 'Art Room Project' in Edinburgh in the 'Heads and Tails' competition. After dinner, Merchiston's talented rock musicians entertained the guests. Reels followed, completing a very enjoyable and successful evening.



CELEBRATIO



OPENING OF THE PAVILION

Following a major renovation project, the cricket pavilion was officially renamed and designated as the '1914-2014 World War I Centenary Pavilion'. A new frontage offers splendid views, from its elevated position, across the playing fields.

Following an introduction by the Headmaster, Chairman of Governors Malcolm Gourlay spoke briefly of his father's service first as a sportsman at the School, and then in both world wars, before he officially planted a new tree (a willow, appropriately of the type cricket bats are made from) alongside the pavilion.



PRINGLE TREE PLANTING

We are always planting saplings at Merchiston. The beauty of this campus really matters to us and we must ensure that we look after the campus for the boys, the staff and the parents and future generations! The Headmaster therefore took the opportunity to visit the Pringle Centre for the planting of a silver birch by Captain of Pringle, Alan.



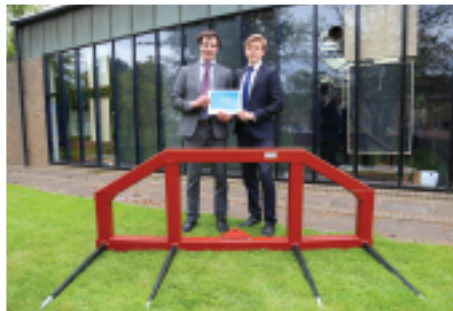
COMMEMORATION EVENTS



SENIOR RUGBY DINNER

The Celebration of Senior Rugby Dinner was held at the end of the season to congratulate the players of our 1XV, 2XV and 3XV. The hubbub of the Dining Hall was wonderful as boys, parents and staff gathered to congratulate each other. The Headmaster shook hands with every member of the 2XV and 3XV, and presented shirts to members of the 1XV. Awards were given out to the following boys:

- Mair Sword for Tackling: Cameron
- Players' Player of the Year: Dan
- Commitment to the 1XV: Ben
- Player of the Season: Zach



Guest speaker, Anna Sloan, Scottish Curler and Olympic bronze medallist addressed the boys and presented awards.

NS

The weekend opened on Friday evening with the Art and Design Technology Exhibitions. A concert followed, with six ensembles and four soloists contributing. Afterwards, parents had an opportunity to view our impressive Sport and Leisure Facilities Development Plans. Whilst these events were taking place, the 1XI was winning its cricket match against the Merchistonians.

On Saturday, parents and invited guests assembled at the refurbished pavilion for refreshments and a presentation by the Headmaster about the Facilities Development Plans. All these events culminated in the Commemoration Service. After a saxophone solo, and Gaudeamus Igitur, sung by the Close Harmony Group, the service followed.

A School for each and every type of boy



SHAMI CHAKRABARTI VISIT

On Tuesday afternoon, prominent political campaigner Shami Chakrabarti, Director of Liberty and leading expert in Human Rights, visited School to work with senior pupils. She had lunch with members of the Lower Sixth Form Cecil Stagg Society, who had written essays based on her recent book, *On Liberty*, earlier in the year, before giving a lecture for the Fifth Form and above in the Memorial Hall. The boys were impressed by Shami's energy and incisive arguments and asked a range of pointed and thoughtful questions. Based on a reading of Shami's book, the boys were challenged to consider how they might update the Magna Carta for 2015. It was a stimulating, thought provoking and inspiring visit.

INSPIRING VISITORS



COMMEMORATION DAY SPEAKER

This year's Commemoration Day Address, entitled 'Heroes and Heroism', was given by Mr Peter Mackay. It focused on the question 'What makes a hero?', with particular reference to the life of Rev Arnold Spencer-Smith, Merchiston member of staff from 1904 to 1914, who took part in and died on Sir Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic expedition. A plaque was then unveiled and dedicated in his memory. It has been hung in the Old Library.



The evening had an exciting start, with each of the speakers giving a 5 minute introduction as to why we should vote for their side. Gordon MacDonald, an MSP for the SNP, was the first to speak. He was followed by Labour MSP Sarah Boyack, who, by the volume of the crowd, obviously had more support. Then to get away from all the usual political dialogue, Michelle Thomson, Managing Director of Business for Scotland, spoke with an interesting twist to her talk, focusing it around what she interpreted as facts. The final introductory talk was by Gavin Brown, a long standing Conservative MSP. He gave a good final introduction to start the first round of questions. This was where the guests could ask questions of the opposing side in order to open discussion. Each guest was given one question. After this, the questions were opened to the floor, allowing students to ask members of each side to defend their decisions and comments. Afterwards, Mr Brown and Mr MacDonald stayed with students of the Politics Department and Mr Thompson for dinner: this was filled with interesting conversations which carried forward from the debate and gave the boys the opportunity to ask further questions.



SPANISH TRIP REPORT

In the Easter holiday, a group of Fifth Form and Shell boys, led by Mr Horrocks and Mrs Bowman, headed to spend 6 days in Spain, to enhance their language skills, and to enjoy the Spanish cuisine as well as the glorious weather. The first three days were spent in Madrid, visiting the world famous Museo del Prado, the Palacio Real, and playing touch rugby at Parque del Retiro. The second part of the trip was spent with host families and attending two mornings of lessons. On one of the afternoons, the group went kayaking, which was undoubtedly the highlight of the trip!



AS GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP TO CUMBRIA AND MORECAMBE 2015



TRIPS



SKI TRIP 2015

The Easter 2015 Ski Trip to Passo Tonale in Italy was a huge success and a great time was had by all. In addition to the skiing, the boys enjoyed a whole raft of evening activities, including swimming, night skiing, a quiz night and a karaoke evening.

A 'taste' of the numerous trips away from Merchiston – opportunities for all, too numerous to mention



In late January, the two AS Geography sets travelled to Morecambe, led by Mr Hall and Dr Bower, to learn about rebranding strategies in the surrounding areas and a bit about the sea defences in the area. The first two days were spent in Milnthorpe and Kirby Lonsdale, accompanied by a field guide who instructed the boys on their investigations. Having built up a profile of the two towns, the boys then had to compare and contrast them. This was followed by an investigation of farms in the area which have diversified to bring in more money in order to survive. The final day saw a visit to Morecambe to learn about the history of the town, what is being done to bring visitors back, and what is being done to protect the town from coastal flooding. The history was based around the flagship hotel (the 1930s Art Deco Midland Hotel – a feature in many a Poirot Film!) which is situated on the Promenade and has attracted a wide range of visitors and celebrities over the decades.



MIDDLE YEARS

CHALMERS WEST BARBECUE WITH KILGRASTON

Chalmers West welcomed Kilgraston down to Merchiston for a BBQ and summer games. The evening did not get off to a good start, with an extremely heavy downpour but Mrs Marshall and Mr McCorkell braved the wet weather to make sure the burgers were cooked on time. The clouds soon cleared, leaving perfect playing conditions for rounders, frisbee and football.

CHALMERS WEST QUIZ NIGHT

On a Wednesday evening in the Lent Term, after a shortened prep, the boys in Chalmers West were treated to a quiz. Each of the tutors produced a round of 10 questions on wide-ranging topics. Mrs Pyper cooked cocktail sausages and chicken nuggets as a mid-quiz treat. The winning team scored 37 out of 55, showing that they still have a bit to learn!



ON EXCHANGE FROM INDIA

Sikander came to Merchiston as an exchange pupil for the first half of the Summer Term from the prestigious Doon School, Dehradun, India, and stayed in Chalmers East. Highlights for him were the food, the friendships he established with the other boys in the House, the cricket, and the Headmaster's Middle Years' Gathering. He thoroughly enjoyed the socials, and having the opportunity to see the sights of Edinburgh. It took him a while, however, to get accustomed to the Scottish summer weather!



Follow @MerchiCW, @Merchi_CE and @MerchiRog to keep up-to-date with the latest Middle Years news.

DINNER IS SERVED IN CHALMERS EAST

One of the main requests from the boys from the Chalmers East House Council has been for more socials with girls. Mr Timms, Housemaster, therefore arranged for Paul Gunning, Head Chef at Purslane Restaurant, Edinburgh, to come and help the boys cook, entertain and host a guest of their choice in Chalmers East. Boys sent out a formal invitation to a friend and invited her for the evening. Paul helped the boys to design a three-course menu, source ingredients and then prepare and cook for their guests. The menu which they prepared is detailed below:

Salmon rilette with melba toast
Roast chicken with fondant potatoes;
Vichy carrots, mange tout and mushroom sauce
Chocolate mousse with berries



ST GEORGE'S FIFTH FORM BALL

Thirty-nine lucky boys were invited by the girls of St George's School to attend their annual Fifth Form Ball. The boys made a huge effort and looked incredibly smart. The evening involved two sessions of Highland Dancing (proving that our reel practices are invaluable) and a buffet meal in the middle of the evening. The couples had a lovely evening and were superbly hosted by the St George's girls.

Sunday activities can range from cinema trips to international rugby matches



Hot chocolate in the Chalmers East kitchen



"We have had loads of really fun trips, from wakeboarding, to ice hockey, to go-karting, to paintballing. But the highlight is probably just the time spent in the House with the boys in the evenings, and at the weekends. There has been an atmosphere of good fun, whilst at the same time supporting each other. This for me is what boarding is all about."

Robin Pyper (Chalmers West House)



"If I had to choose a superlative to capture the year group this year, it would be the busiest; the boys have been involved in such an eclectic range of activities and they have always given their best. The highlight was winning the Merchiston 7s."

Jonny Timms (Chalmers East House)

"The 2014-15 Rogerson boys have had a fantastic year: every boy has achieved a personal goal and they are now ready to don their suits and continue on the Merchiston Journey in the Sixth Form. My highlight was the Nepal Charity Cycle, seeing the boys all pull together to ride from Edinburgh to Kathmandu (4597 miles) in 23 hours."

Martin Kemp (Rogerson House)





ATHLETIC ABILITY

This has been a memorable season for Athletics as the squads have been very busy with matches against Edinburgh Academy, Fettes, Stewart's Melville, Strathallan and RGS Newcastle at Gateshead arena. Merchiston Juniors has excelled and the squad has proved to be a force to be reckoned with. This was particularly evident in an impressive win over Compass, Lathallan and Riley House Prep at the end of the season. All fixtures have been excellent, but the most memorable was our O17/U17 win against Fettes and Strathallan at Pitreavie Stadium. We also had success at the Edinburgh Schools' Individual Athletic Championships and Scottish Schools'.

THE GAMES

The Games were a huge success, with a record number of participants. There were a number of excellent performances and there were two new records set. The first was set by James, who recorded a distance of 25m.45 in the discus, which broke the record of 25m.00 which has stood since 1979.

The second was in the Under 17 Long Jump, in which Jamie and Henry had a 'jump off'. Henry broke the games record first, after which Jamie extended the new record, until Henry finished off with a distance of 6m.26, breaking the games record of 6m.10, which was set in 1972.



EDINBURGH SCHOOLS

GOLD

Hamish - O17 Javelin
George - U15 Javelin
Zach - O17 Shot
Cameron - U15 Discus
- O17 4 x 100m

SILVER

Tom - O17 1500m/800m
Kayau - U17 100m Hurdles
Benjamin - O17 Long Jump
Cristobal - O17 Javelin

BRONZE

Joe - O17 800m
Tom - O17 Long Jump
Cameron - U15 Shot
David - U15 High Jump
Jamie - U17 Long Jump
Hector - U14 Discus
James - U14 Shot

SCOTTISH SCHOOLS' ATHLETICS

GOLD

4x400m Champions
(Tom / Joe / Duncan / Kyle)

SILVER

Duncan - 400m Hurdles

BRONZE

Sam - Shot
Cameron - Discus
Cameron - 110m Hurdles



ST JOSEPH'S RUGBY TOURNAMENT

The National Schools Festival at St Joseph's in Ipswich is a highlight of our rugby calendar. The tournament tests the boys on a national stage, adding to development of the team. This year, our group matches were against RGS Newcastle, Brighton College, and St Joseph's, only losing to St Joseph's. This took the team into the Cup, in which we were drawn against Bedford, Millfield and RGS High Wycombe. There were good wins against Bedford and High Wycombe, but a loss against Millfield. Overall, we achieved 3rd place in the tournament and we were delighted for Zach being awarded the Player of the Tournament award.



MERCHISTON SEVENS

In March, Merchiston again hosted the largest schoolboy Sevens Festival in Scotland. Merchiston had a successful Sunday. The U11 and U14 teams both won against Ardvreck Prep School and Edinburgh Academy respectively. The U15 team was also victorious with a convincing win over Stewart's Melville. The U16 lost in the semi-finals to Dollar Academy and the 1VII lost to George Watson's College in the final. It was a brilliant and well organised day.



RUGBY IS CRUSHINGLY GOOD HERE...

TATLER SCHOOLS GUIDE 2015

1XV Coach, Roddy Deans, became Head Coach for Scotland U16

1XV SENSATION, NUMBER 8, ZACH

Zach has gone from strength to strength in his final year of schoolboy rugby. He started the season by being awarded 'Player of the Tournament' at the prestigious St. Joseph's tournament. His outstanding performance meant he was quickly snapped up by scouts and signed a contract with the Senior Bath Academy and secured a place in the England U18 squad. This summer, as well as starting his pre-season training at Bath, he travelled to South Africa with the England U18 squad. Zach



commented about his time at Merchiston: "I'll be sad to be leaving Scotland and Merchiston because of what it has done for me. Being here for the past two years has given me the chance to play against the best schools in Scotland and England which challenged me and made me improve."

MERCHISTON U16 XV WINS THE SCOTTISH SCHOOLS CUP

Merchiston qualified for both the U16 and U18 finals of the Brewin Dolphin Scottish Schools Cup at Murrayfield for the second time in three years, whilst George Watson's was looking for its third successive win in the U18 competition. Dollar Academy, meanwhile, was involved in the U16 final for the first time since 2011 and looking to extend its unbeaten run in all competitions so far in the season. In the U16 final, Merchiston beat Dollar 25-24 in the final minute of a nail-biting match, whilst in the U18 Final, Merchiston lost to Watson's 23-17. U16 coach Freddie Main commented: "We are incredibly proud of the boys and the amount of work they put in".



CHINESE DAY AT ST GEORGE'S

Three Chalmers West boys joined five other schools to celebrate Chinese Language and Culture at St George's. There were five workshops, including Taichi and shuttlecock-making, from which everyone chose three.

ARCS AND SPARKS AFTERNOON AT HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY

Seven Upper Sixth students visited the High Voltage lab at Heriot Watt for a demonstration of Tesla Coils, Pylon Insulator Testing and Lightning Simulation - a fantastic display of light and sound! They then studied several phenomena related to Electromagnetic Induction, applying some of the concepts studied at A Level to some unusual and incredible effects, testing both practical and communication skills.



LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

A LEVEL ART VISIT

A Level Artists went to see Merchiston's Artist in Residence's exhibition at the Patriot Hall Gallery, which included painting, sculpture and photography, providing a great opportunity for them to interact with contemporary art. Arran delivered a most engaging and inspiring critique of his working practice, followed by a question and answer session. He is currently working with our Lower Sixth Artists on a similar set of 'River' paintings to those in the exhibition.

LVI CLASS CIV: A 'TRAGIC' TRIP TO LONDON

During their Classical Civilization visit to London, the Lower Sixth explored some Greek pots for evidence of the ancient Greek theatre, and had a foretaste of the A2 Greek art course, viewing the awesome Parthenon sculptures. After lunch, they saw Sophocles' Antigone at the Barbican, commenting on the minimalistic modern set, the atmospheric but often puzzling use of video clips, the unique handling of the chorus, the fine acting performances, and the pros and cons of the new translation.

SHELL GEOGRAPHERS AT THE RIVER

Shell geographers travelled to the River Knaik, near Stirling, to hone data gathering techniques in preparation for their GCSE Controlled Assessment. Depth, width and velocity data was gathered at sites along the river.

FORTH CROSSING EDUCATION CENTRE VISIT

Third Form boys went on the Design and Technology trip to the New Queensferry Crossing Education Centre. They were shown the Design Team's office, where the team of engineers work on the daily challenges of building such a huge structure.

They were then given a presentation detailing the design of the new cable-stayed bridge and were taken through the trouble shooting process faced when laying the foundations of the three towers.



THE ROGERSON 24 HOUR CYCLE TO NEPAL

Rogerson completed this year's 'Cycle to Nepal' in the marquee in 23 hours, covering 4597 miles. Finlay racked up the biggest mileage and was given the honour of cycling the last mile into Kathmandu. The cycle was completed with some help by former international rugby player Chris Paterson as well as many members of staff. They raised over £4,500 for the charity, The World is With You Nepal, set up by mountain guide Issy Inglis, linking individual villages in Scotland to an individual village in Nepal. Any money raised in Scotland goes directly to a partnered village in Nepal.



KOINONIA
TEAMWORK IN THE COMMUNITY

HEARTS & BALLS FUNDRAISING FUN RUN IN SUPPORT OF CONNOR HUGHES, MERCHISTONIAN (07-12)

On 13 September 2014, in his first university rugby game of the season, Connor sustained a life changing injury, leaving him quadriplegic with no sensation from his shoulders down. The Merchiston community came together to run approximately 4.5km in aid of Connor. The grand total raised for Connor from the Fun Run was £2,243.33.



FAIR TRADE FORTNIGHT

In order to mark Fair Trade Fortnight, Mr & Mrs Milligan (parents) visited Rogerson with their stall of Fair Trade goods. There was a huge range of goods, from clothing and gifts to the very popular cookies and varieties of chocolate. £278 was raised in an hour, and boys in the Middle Years gained an understanding of Fair Trade's mission to help producers in less developed countries.

FUNDRAISING FOR NEPAL

Various fundraising efforts have been organised to raise money for the victims of the Nepalese earthquake, including chapel and house collections and a fundraising ball arranged by former Deputy Head, Mr Houston. This has a particular significance for us because we have members of the domestic staff who have been directly affected by this disaster.

A Nepalese lunch was provided in exchange for donations from staff and pupils. This was arranged, coordinated and cooked by Meena, one of the senior kitchen staff. It was generally agreed to have been an excellent meal. The grand total raised by all our fundraising efforts is £2,419.



The grand total raised for a number of different charities in 2014/15 was **£33,983.60**



CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

This year's choral concert opened with Schola Cantorum, the joint St George's/Merchiston Choir, involving senior singers from both schools. The centrepiece was a Choral Society performance of arrangements of Beatles Songs, accompanied by both rock and classical instrumentalists, directed by Stephen Dennis. 'Hey Jude' was the clear favourite.



CHORAL AND INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT

The first main concert of the year saw performances by Choral Society, Close Harmony Group, Orchestra, Jazz and Pipe Bands. Solos came from Charlie and Alasdair (piano), Alan (flute), Antoni (violin) and Ruaridh (kit) as well as further popular songs by guitar duo Mykhailo and Mark.



MUSICIANS AT ARDVRECK

In February, Merchiston musicians travelled to Ardvreck Preparatory School to perform a concert for its pupils, staff, and parents. A varied programme was presented, at the end of which the Pipe Bands from both schools joined forces for a rousing finale.

BEATING RETREAT

Once again, Pipe Band members played in the Beating Retreat by the Massed Pipes and Drums of the Combined Cadet Force in Scotland, against the magnificent backdrop of Holyrood Palace.



MUSICAL HARMONY

SUMMER PIPE BAND CONCERT

In the Pipe Bands' Summer Concert, the Pringle Band played first, to a very high standard. Then a group from South Morningside Primary played some Marches and a very impressive Drum Salute. These children are part of the "Sounds Like Friday" initiative which Merchiston sponsors by providing free tuition, again strengthening links with the local community. After duo Tom and Jamie, Pipe Major and Sergeant, had performed, the Senior Band played its competition selections and some jigs. All joined together for the Grand Finale.





MCLEOD CUP AND FORBES BOWL COMPETITIONS

In the McLeod Cup, Charles (piano) came first, with Ben (cello) second. In the Forbes Bowl, Angus's impressive performance on the piano of Paderewski's Minuet in G placed him first, Ethan second for his performance of the song 'Our love is easy', and equal third came Alan (piano) playing Brubeck's 'King for the Day' and Antoni (violin) performing Borowski's 'Adoration'.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS' MUSIC EVENING

At the annual Primary Schools' Music Evening, we welcomed children, staff and parents from Craiglockhart, Balgreen and Bonaly Primary Schools, and St George's, and the Merchiston Boys' Community Choir.

Thank you to the external adjudicators who came to judge our competitions

ROGERSON LUNCHTIME CONCERT



Following the success of the Autumn concerts, in Rogerson's concert, pupils performed a programme featuring piano, guitar, trumpet, and cello, and a piping trio.

ONY



JUNIOR MUSIC CUP

26 musicians competed for the Cup, adjudicated by Kirsteen Straine from Ardvreck School. They had clearly all practised hard, making her job far from easy in picking the winners. These were:

J4/5: Andrew (trumpet)

I Form: Paul (trumpet)

II Form: Angus (flute)

III Form: Rory (piano)

Overall winner: Hector (saxophone) playing 'Aria' by Bozza.



MOUNTAIN BIKING

A group of keen bikers spent a day at Glentress. After practising gear change, brake use and general riding technique, they headed off on the first trail of the day. The trails became increasingly complex, and by the end, all seven boys were riding with confidence, aggression and real enjoyment.



Appalling weather made the Bronze D of E practice expedition challenging and eventful.

GOLD DUKE OF EDINBURGH NAVIGATION DAY

This exercise took place in the Pentlands. The boys worked on back bearings, catching features, orientating the map, setting bearings, working out scales (using compass and map) and how to interpret them on the ground, before working through various first aid scenarios, including hypothermia, sprains, breaks and burns and how to manage these situations.

CLIMBING AT RATHO

A group of boys spent a day rock climbing at Ratho. They completed some impressive and demanding climbs, and returned tired but satisfied that they had given a good account of themselves.



The Silver D of E practice expedition took place around Peebles, starting at Romano Bridge and finishing at St Mary's Loch.

OUT AND ABOUT!

CANOEING TRIP

A group of boys of mixed ages headed to Peebles to spend the day on the river. On arrival, they were quickly on the water and soon found out how fast flowing the River Tweed was. Everyone got to grips with the pace of the river and key skills like turning the boat and ferry gliding were being performed by all.



A highlight of the Gold D of E practice expedition was camping by the Falls of Tarr.



ROGERSON HIGHLAND BALL 2014

170 boys and girls from Merchiston, St George's and Kilgraston spent an enjoyable evening showing off their dancing skills in the Memorial Hall. After the welcome reception, the first dances began with prefects on hand to disentangle any confused eightsome reelers. The buffet supper proved to be very enjoyable and Denis gave the vote of thanks. The second set of dancing was over in a flash, and carriages arrived. A great time was had by all.



Strong links
with our girls'
schools for all
age groups



TIME WITH GIRLS



THIRD FORM LEAVERS' BALL AT ST GEORGE'S

Third Form boys donned their bow ties and dress suits to attend the Leavers' Ball at St George's. The evening's theme was Film Premiere: the boys certainly looked the part, striking many poses for the camera before setting out. All enjoyed an evening of ceilidh and disco music and dancing. Simon gave the vote of thanks, thanking the girls and staff at St George's for a wonderful evening, before the boys headed home. It was clear on their return that all had enjoyed a tremendously entertaining evening.



SIXTH FORM

2014-15 has been a fantastic year in Laidlaw. Splitting both year groups between Laidlaw North and Laidlaw South, boys from the Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth Forms integrated extremely well, and there was a real sense of community as all boys were working towards their important AS and A2 examinations. Some fun inter-house competition was introduced, with Laidlaw North and Laidlaw South competing in a variety of events such as football, basketball, table tennis and general knowledge.

Laidlaw South Housemaster, Matthew Hillier, comments:

"The highlight for me was going to watch Zach play against Fergus in the England U18 v Scotland U18 rugby match – two boys from the same boarding house playing against each other at international level: an extremely rare occurrence!"



Laidlaw North Housemaster, Chispa Prini Garcia, reports:

"There was a happy atmosphere in Laidlaw North throughout the year. The Upper Sixth Formers have been an outstanding group to look after, remaining very happy with and very committed to Merchiston life to the very end. We will miss them."



Follow @Merchi6th to keep up-to-date with the latest Sixth Form news.

UPPER SIXTH FORMERS GRADUATE IN STYLE

After post-examination breaks, members of the Upper Sixth Form re-gathered on the evening of Thursday 25 June for the events which traditionally mark the end of a Merchiston pupil's career. First came the meeting with the Merchistonian Club: to this was added Captain of School Alex's amusing and anecdotal review of the year group as it has moved up through the School. A barbecue organised by the Sixth Form Housemasters followed. After activities out of School on the Friday, they gathered with their families and guests for the End of Year Service and First Prizegiving, which concluded with the hand-shaking ceremony for the leavers and their parents. This was followed by the Leavers' Ball in a packed marquee. An excellent dinner was served, short speeches followed, and entertainment from the Sixth Form Rock Band, which performed astonishingly well! The evening concluded with dancing and fireworks. Saturday's Prizegiving featured our leavers in the Pipe Band, as prizewinners, and in their graduation ceremony. It was inspiring to see such a close knit and happy year group – we wish them every success.

All boys are given a rich balance of responsibility and freedom





Overall Winner and Winner of the VI Form General Photography: Antoni

“Wow. This is a stunning shot. All the elements collide perfectly in this stunning picture - perfect timing, capturing the passing moment of the flash of red hitting the low winter cloud as the sun sets. The colour is strong, but naturally strong, the composition is pin sharp with very good resolution. It is technically and aesthetically very impressive. A beautiful picture!”



**Overall Runner-Up and Winner of Middle Years
General Photography: Andrew**

“The winning pick of Andrews’s fantastic submissions has to be the wild garlic shot. Beautiful lighting, pin sharp macro work, and, I love the refracted prism top the photographer captured. Great!”



Winner of the Junior General Photography: Mackenzie

“Several shots by this talented photographer really caught my eye - the hermit crab, the macro shot of the tiny frog and I did really love the mystery of the atmosphere conjured in the picture of the dark scary dell. A great and expressive use of the camera!”



Runner-up of the Junior General Photography: Tom

"A great shot, stunning subject matter, and, beautifully captured."



Runner-up of Middle Years General Photography: James

"This work is technically very adept and commendable. I love the strong rich palette too."



Runner-up of VI Form General Photography: Morgan

"A beautiful shot and this submission offered something quite different. A great gritty use of black and white, tonal range and I love the textures too."

HEADMASTER'S PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2015

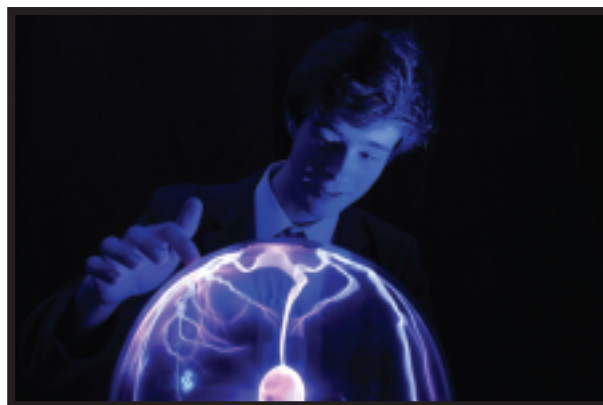
JUDGED BY IAIN STEWART PHOTOGRAPHY,
COMMERCIAL / FINE ART WWW.ISPHOTOGRAPHS.CO.UK

Send your photos to Mr Turner to enter!



Winner of Merchiston School Life: Ruairidh

"What a superb action shot and a fantastic, dynamic composition. Great capture! Couple of other really strong rugby shots by the same photographer deserve a mention too."



Runner-up of Merchiston School Life: Andrew

"Again any number of pictures by this photographer could have taken second spot. Consistently very strong work."



THE PUPILS'
ART GALLERY





CRICKET ROUND UP

Although it was a very blustery and cold Summer Term, the weather stayed dry, allowing the majority of the fixtures to take place. Some wonderful matches were played, and it was a delight to see so many boys out enjoying our splendid grounds and pitches.

The new WW1 Pavilion and electronic scoreboard were a huge success, whetting the appetite for future 1XI cricketers. We were able to run 17 teams and squeezed in over 120 fixtures across all ages into the ten-week term. The 1XI won all 40-over Saturday fixtures bar one, against Fettes. It also qualified for the last four of the Scottish Schools' T20 competition. Dan was the pick of the batsmen, scoring four half centuries, and Lewis, Alasdair and Alan were all impressive with the ball. Fifth Former, Chris, also bowled very well, picking up record figures of 8 for 31 against Loretto. The School continued to field three senior cricket sides, and this season saw an increase in the number of fixtures for the 2XI and 3XI teams.

Elsewhere, the Pringle 1XI and 4XI remained unbeaten. The Pringle 1XI won all of its twelve games, which was a fantastic achievement. This brilliant season was rounded off with a mini tour down to play

Sedburgh, also providing an opportunity to watch the England ODI match against New Zealand. This season, there were again four teams at the top end of Merchiston Juniors, which is something it is hoped will continue. Both the U14As and Bs had over an 80% win ratio. However, more importantly, there were over 40 boys playing in both sides. The U15XI had a good year, after a slow start. It also qualified for the Scottish Schools' T20 Finals Day in Perth, beating George Watson's and Edinburgh Academy in the qualifying tournament, hosted at Merchiston. This year, the School also hosted the annual cricket festival with King's Bruton, Nottingham High School and Glenalmond. This was a huge success. Merchiston batsman, Rufus, received the prize for Batsman of the Tournament, with a total of 122 runs.

Cricket continues to flourish at Merchiston: with the investment made to the pavilion and scoreboard, it should again go from strength to strength next season.



The 1XI went on a mini tour to Northumberland and Durham

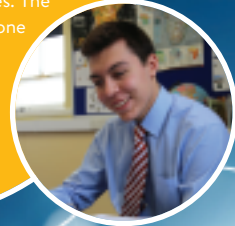


JOE

British (parents live in Brunei)
Age: 17

Joined Merchiston's Fourth Form in 2011

"Since arriving here, I have enjoyed boarding life. As a teenage boy, it is great to have the opportunity to live with your mates. The result is that there is always someone to go and play football or rugby with and it has allowed me to make really close friends that I know I will keep in contact with for life."



JOHN-ROSS

British (parents live in Grand Cayman)
Age: 13

Joined Merchiston's Fourth Form in 2014

"I definitely think I have changed, even in the short time I have been at Merchiston! I am much tidier and I find myself calling all adults 'Sir' or 'Ma'am' without thinking. I would recommend Merchiston to any boys thinking about boarding. It is an extremely caring School and after a few days I felt like I had been here for years."



CAMERON

British (parents live in Luxembourg)
Age: 15

Joined Merchiston's Third Form in 2013

"It is very easy to stay in touch with my parents in Luxembourg: all I have to do is call them on my mobile or, if my phone is not working, use the phone in my boarding house, Chalmers East. Since joining Merchiston, I have become more independent and hard working."



AROUND THE WORLD

RILEY

Scottish (parents live in Hong Kong)
Age: 13

Joined Merchiston's Fourth Form in 2014

"I have loved all the activities on offer at School. I do debating regularly, have done some white-water rafting, and the amount of great trips that we do every Sunday at School is fantastic. My favourite subjects are History, Geography and English, in that order."



OWAIN

Welsh (parents live in Kenya)
Age: 14

Joined Merchiston's Fourth Form in 2014

"When I first started here at the end of last summer, I found it a bit hard to settle in, but I quickly got used to the School, and within two weeks, I was familiar with the facilities and the School itself. The School gives its pupils lots of things to do and this meant that I did not get homesick at all in my first term or since."



To read more
by our boys
the Student
section of o

ND WORLD

case studies
please visit
Experiences
our website.

DANIEL

Chinese (parents live in Hong Kong)

Age: 17

Joined Merchiston's Sixth Form in 2014

"My favourite subject is Chemistry, and experiments in lessons are always amusing and exciting. Dr Pettigrew, my Chemistry teacher, is really patient and willing to answer your questions until you understand, and his vibrant teaching style always motivates me."



MARCUS

Scottish (parents live in Geneva)

Age: 13

Joined Merchiston's Second Form in 2013

"The term before I joined, I flew over and had a 'taster' visit so I could get the feel of Merchiston life. I would definitely recommend doing this as it meant I got to know some of the boys in my year quite well.

I enjoyed experiencing classes at Merchiston because I realised what a step-up it was in comparison to my own school."



ROSS

Scottish (parents live in the UAE)

Age: 16

Joined Merchiston's Fifth Form in 2014

"I decided to leave the UAE to further my rugby, and, to this day, it has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. Before coming to Merchiston, I was playing rugby to what I thought was a high level in the UAE, playing for a club called the Dubai Hurricanes, but since arriving in Scotland, I have learnt that the level of commitment, skill and passion for the sport is at a much higher level here."



JAMIE

Scottish (parents live in Singapore)

Age: 14

Joined Merchiston's Shell in 2014

"There are many reasons why I joined the School, one of the main ones being the sport and the opportunities that sport can offer. One sport I particularly enjoy is rugby: I knew that at Merchiston I would have plenty of opportunity to further my rugby skills. Rugby here in Scotland has been a big step up for me and I have really enjoyed it."



Merchiston is situated close to the City Bypass and only a fifteen minute drive from Edinburgh International Airport, which has over 100 direct routes and is only a 1-hour flight from London, Paris or Amsterdam.

Merchiston's international and expatriate population is drawn from over twenty different countries across the world.



TENNIS AND GOLF ACADEMY AT THE TOP OF THE

Only four years after launch, the Golf Academy has taken part in a number of junior and senior tournaments throughout Scotland and the UK, competing to a very high standard in each, and has now established itself as a premier School for preparing pupils for the next step in their professional careers.

Merchiston qualified for the first time to represent Scotland in 2014-15 ISGA Home Internationals after being the highest-ranked Scottish team at the 2013-14 ISGA National final at Carnoustie, being placed seventh overall. The schools representing the other nations were England's Whitgift, Monmouth from Wales and Ireland's Campbell College. The Merchiston team for the competition was Morgan, Angus, Andrew and Alexander. Sunday's fourballs took place at former British Masters venue St Pierre Country Club, while the second rounds on Monday were at The Rolls of Monmouth GC. Team England won by 13 shots over, meaning Scotland came second with 458, Ireland came third with 472 and Wales fourth with 502. From the individual scores, Angus finished fourth best overall on 154.

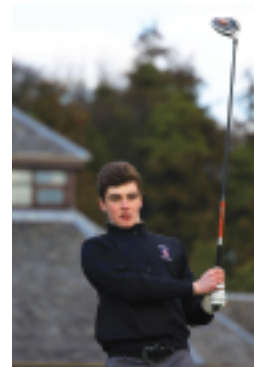
Alan Murdoch, Director of the Golf Academy commented:

"I am delighted with how the boys played. All four boys contributed to the overall team score narrowly missing out to Whitgift. This was a great experience for our Golf Academy pupils and a fabulous opportunity for them to test their game against some of the best players in the UK."

The junior Golf Academy boys successfully competed on the national junior stage at the ISGA National Junior League Finals. Up against many of the UK's top schools, and prep schools from all over England, Merchiston performed well and finished second overall: a truly excellent result for the boys, proving that they are and will be a force to be reckoned with over the coming years. Additionally, the ever-improving Hamish came out on top to win individual honours. He finished with a very strong two over par for his last ten holes, and narrowly won by one shot - a brilliant performance.

Recent accolades:

- The Golf Academy represented Scotland in the 2015 Home Internationals as the highest placed Scottish School and were placed second
- Joint National ISGA Junior League Champions and top Scottish School, 2015
- ISGA Ranking 2013-14: No.1 School in Scotland and No.3 in the UK
- U18 Winners of the Scottish National Open, 2013-14
- U18 Winners of the Scottish Area Matchplay, 2013-14
- U15 Winner of The ISGA Shire Trophy, 2013-14



ACADEMIES PLAY THEIR GAME

The last year has been a triumph for both of Merchiston's specialist Golf and Tennis Academies. The senior Golf Academy boys represented Scotland in the ISGA Home Internationals and the junior Golf Academy boys performed excellently at the ISGA National Junior League Finals. This success was matched by the Tennis Academy, which is ranked number two in the UK in the LTA Tennis Schools Rankings and represented Scotland for the first time at the ISF Tennis World Schools Championships this year in Doha.

Merchiston established Scotland's first Tennis Academy in 2007 with 13 boys. Since then it has grown to around twice that size. These players attend Merchiston in Edinburgh (some boarding, some as day pupils) where they pursue both a bespoke academic timetable and a world class tennis programme. The Tennis Academy provides player pathways from top county level players to junior grand slam level.

Due to the Tennis Academy's year of success it was the first team to be selected to represent Scotland at the ISF Tennis World School Championships. Merchiston's performance in the U15 and U13 age groups at the Aegon Nation Schools Tennis Championships resulted in the U13 team coming out on top and the U15 running a close second to rivals, Reeds School, Surrey.

Merchiston's ranking improved to second in the UK after their triumph at the National School finals this year. Merchiston are also been Scottish School Tennis Champions for the last 6 out of 8 years, making the Tennis Academy undeniably deserving to represent Scotland in Doha.

Former Head Coach, Marcel du Coudray, commented:

"This is a great achievement for these boys to have qualified for this tournament and it will be an experience that they will remember long into their tennis careers. The team aspect is similar to the Davis Cup and all players really enjoy this element of the tournament."

Recent accolades:

- The first school to represent Scotland at the ISF World Schools Championships, Doha, 2015, where they finished sixth.
- Ranked number two in the UK in the LTA Team Tennis Schools rankings, 2014
- Scottish Secondary School Tennis Team Champions, 2014 - Winners an impressive 6 out of 8 years!
- U18 Scottish Indoor Champion, January 2014
- U13 Aegon National Schools Tennis Champions, 2014
- U15 Aegon National Schools Tennis Champions, 2013
- Tennis Scotland Special Award 2013
- Winner of the Highland Spring Hot Shot Award 2013

David Brewer, new Tennis Academy Head Coach was appointed in September 2015. Visit the Tennis Academy section of the Merchiston website to read his coach profile.





EXPERIENCE MERCHISTON

Please come and visit Merchiston. A personal tour around the campus will allow you to experience our unique atmosphere and learn more about our School philosophy. Visitors have the opportunity to meet staff and pupils and gain an insight into the close relationships we create. In addition to a tour, your son may like to spend some time at the School himself, to experience something of life at Merchiston. This involves anything from a day to a week spent here.

PLEASE CONTACT THE
ADMISSIONS DEPARTMENT
on +44 (0) 131 312 2201
or email admissions@merchiston.co.uk

**MERCHISTON JOURNEY
INFORMATION EVENING**

Thursday 4 February 2016

INFORMATION MORNING

Saturday 19 March 2016

THE BIG ACTIVITY WEEKEND

(for boys aged 6 – 12)

Saturday 27 - Sunday 28 August 2016

"He has been very obviously inspired by his teachers, coaches, prefects and the peer group around him, and I am sure the Merchiston magic will continue to get the best out of him, as we have seen so many times before with our sons."

Parent

"I am very happy with my son's Merchiston journey – he has turned into a thoughtful, confident, friendly, ambitious young man, eager to make his way in the world, safe in the knowledge that he has the backing of a group of fellow Merchistonians with whom he has shared his journey. He can stand in any company and speak eloquently with wit and charm and we are extremely proud of him."

Parent



@MerchiNews
@MerchiSport

This magazine gives a flavour of all that happens at Merchiston. To keep up-to-date with the latest news, please visit our website www.merchiston.co.uk and follow us on Twitter.