

# MERCHISTON

EDINBURGH | Boys first



## Koinonia Report 2017-18

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## AIMS

### HISTORY OF MERCHISTON

Merchiston has a rich heritage of learning and achievement. Ever since Charles Chalmers took lease of Merchiston Castle, the former home of John Napier, in May 1833, the School has prided itself on the ability to provide a secure and encouraging environment for its pupils. Throughout the years, Merchiston has grown in size, and in 1930 the School moved to its present location close to the village of Colinton. Here, boys enjoy both a country setting as well as convenient access to the cultural benefits of Edinburgh.

### ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION – 2010: OBJECTS OF THE SCHOOL

“The objects for which the Company is established are to advance education including, but not limited to, the provision of a day and/or boarding school(s) or colleges(s) in or near Edinburgh, or at other such places as the Governors may think fit.”

### MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is: *“to lead young people in the pursuit of personal excellence through a well-rounded education”.*

**We develop this statement with the following Aims:** To give each boy in his way the capacity and confidence to live in an uncertain world, and to make that life as rich as possible; more specifically, to encourage him to work hard and take a pride in achievement, to think honestly and independently, to face up to challenges, to accept responsibility, to show concern for others and the environment and to develop wider skills and interests.

Our main objective is always to motivate pupils to try their hardest and to strive to achieve the highest levels possible in all areas – first, academic, and then cultural, sporting, leadership and simply living together as part of a community. They are encouraged to make the most of their talents, and to look after one another in a safe, caring environment, to ensure that the school years are a happy time for all. The ethos of Merchiston is concerned with people and relationships, and particular importance is attached to the development of personal character, and moral and spiritual values in our pupils. In the pursuit of excellence, we place great emphasis on two critical relationships – between the boys and the staff, both within and outwith the classroom, and between the School and the home of each boy. Thus, we can all give encouragement and confidence to our pupils and prepare them for the challenges and opportunities ahead in an extremely competitive world in which they will be required to demonstrate commitment, flexibility, teamwork, clarity of purpose, and integrity, whatever their chosen field of endeavour.

Our **Vision** for the School, ie what we believe we are all trying to do together, is simple:

- to provide the best possible pupil support and pastoral care in a boarding school which has day pupils within it, supported by high quality child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures;
- to achieve the highest possible academic standards;
- then to achieve, within the sport-for-all philosophy, the highest possible sporting standards and to instil a lifelong love of sport;
- to achieve, within a wide degree of participation, the highest level of cultural standards and a love of art, drama and music for life;
- to help our pupils to develop their communication skills;
- to enable our pupils and young men to become leaders and have a sense of adventure and of service, of belonging to the world and a desire to contribute to society;
- to help our pupils develop an awareness of environmental issues and an understanding of how to live in a sustainable way;
- to ensure that our pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, between decent and poor behaviour; that they respect each other as being different and unique; and that they understand the importance of Manners Makyth Man – in other words, we wish to help them to develop as good people;
- to foster in our pupils a sense of the spiritual and encourage them to value relationships.

# PUBLIC BENEFIT

The School actively strives to attain the highest of standards in the independent schools' sector, partly through networking with other major schools and partly through peer group studies of the evaluation of quality and performance improvement methods. The School also co-operates with local schools and other organisations in its ongoing endeavours to widen public access to its education, to optimise the use of its cultural, sporting and other facilities for local public benefit and to awaken in its pupils an awareness of the social context of the all-round education they receive. Although the charity functions primarily as a school, consistent with the Objects for which it was founded, it is involved in many other activities which are of public benefit, eg links with local schools, widening access to Merchiston. Community initiatives focus on three areas: Koinonia (Teamwork with the Community) by pupils and staff, both locally and further afield; the provision of staff expertise to other educational agencies; and the provision of facilities on a non-profit basis for community use. Furthermore, Merchiston continues to make available means tested assistance to a significant number of pupils. At the forefront of our minds are the concepts of social inclusion, social mobility and the fairness agenda. On a daily basis, we try to live to these principles.

## 1. Academic Contribution

Merchiston provided education for an average of 448 boys aged 7-18 over the three terms of the academic session 2017/18.

- 94% of all Sixth Form leavers entered Higher Education
- Of our applicants and re-applicants who gained university offers:
  - 85% gained grades which enabled them to accept the offers at their first choice of university
  - 95% of applicants secured offers from either their first or second choice courses.

24 Universities form the 'Russell Group' of selective universities: 69% of successful applicants in 2017/18 took up places at 'Russell Group' universities along with Bath, St Andrews and other world-leading international institutions. Included in these successful applicants are 2 pupils who have fulfilled and taken up their offers to Oxford and Cambridge universities.

A high proportion of our students study Mathematics and Sciences which are shortage/STEM subjects. For example, in 2017/18 we had 140 Sixth Form students, and of these 56 studied Mathematics, 20 Further Mathematics, 37 Biology, 53 Chemistry and 36 Physics.

### Examination Results (2017/18)

#### GCSE and IGCSE

Reformed GCSE subjects are now marked on a numeric 1-9 scale, where a 7 equates to an A, an 8 to an A\* and, going some way beyond the old A\*, a 9 is reserved only for the most exceptional of candidates. Almost half of the papers which our pupils sat this year were marked against these new demanding criteria. The following are the combined results for unreformed and reformed GCSEs:

- 97% pass rate (A\*-C or 9-4)
- 41% grades 9/8 or A\*
- 66% grades 9/8/7 or A\*/A

Within the reformed GCSEs only, 32% achieved the very exclusive 9 – an achievement matched by only 3.6% of boys nationwide. Among a number of success stories, the Merchiston English Department, which has a long-standing tradition of excellence at this level, performed particularly well in the new papers, delivering a spectacular 52 grade 9s across their two papers: indeed, in the English Language paper every single pupil achieved the equivalent of an A or higher.

#### SQA National 5 Results

In 2018, 34 Merchiston pupils sat SQA National 5 examination papers in French, German and Spanish. The average pass rate (A-C) for these subjects was 95%.

#### A2 and SQA Advanced Higher

- 100% pass rate
- 21% gained A\*; 50% A\* or A; 77% gained A\*, A, or B grades

SQA Higher (Upper Sixth Pupils)

- 95% pass rate A-C
- 51% gained A; 79% A or B

SQA Higher (Lower Sixth Pupils)

24 Lower Sixth pupils sat SQA Highers in Cantonese, French, German, Mandarin and Spanish and they all achieved a grade A.

## 1.1. The curriculum

Merchiston teaches a primarily English Curriculum, ie GCSE, IGCSE, AS and A Level, and we continue to promote traditional academic subjects, particularly in the Sixth Form, such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and Further Mathematics, Design & Technology and Languages, including French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian.

We also teach less common subjects, such as Classical Civilization, Latin, Greek, Mandarin, Computing Science, and Economics.

Maths is studied by 54% of the Merchiston Sixth Form.

Mandarin and Chinese are very successful subjects here:

- A2 Chinese – 11 A\*s and 1 A, ie 100% A\*-A
- Higher Mandarin – 13 As, ie 100% A
- Higher Cantonese – 1 A, ie 100% A
- GCSE Chinese: 6 A\*s and 3 As, ie 100% A\*-A

In December 2017, the Captain of School gave a presentation to the Scotland China Education Network (SCEN) Advisory Council on his experience of learning Mandarin and its importance.

## 1.2. Co-curricular activities

In addition to outstanding academic success and developing the capacity in young people to become successful learners, the School's ethos of all-round personal development places great emphasis on participation and active involvement in co-curricular activities. In line with *Curriculum for Excellence*, Merchiston understands the importance of the recognition of wider achievement, which aims to give credit to achievement in non-academic areas, as well as to attainment in examinations. We believe that the co-curriculum forms the one third of the total curriculum where the children and young adults are given the chance to experience a wide range of opportunities outside the classroom. This allows them to explore and find their talents for the School to nurture. These may include sport, drama, music, outdoor education and other activities.

- The School ran 171 clubs and societies during 2017/18.
- In 2017/18, there have been 75 different teams, of all abilities, playing competitive fixtures across 16 sports: a total of 480 fixtures. More impressive is that 88% of all pupils from 7-18, have represented the school in sport at some stage this year. Also, in Merchiston Juniors (7-13), 99% of the boys have represented the school in a number of sports throughout the year. 16 boys gained international honours in cricket, rugby, athletics, golf, tennis, polo and skiing.

### Drama

- In December 2017, the school staged a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Approximately 19 pupils were involved in various capacities, along with 9 girls from St. George's.

### Music

- 205 boys participated in School choirs, orchestras, ensembles, and bands, and performed on public occasions in Edinburgh and elsewhere.

- Each week, pupils participated in 210 instrumental lessons in the School.
- 1 pupil was in the National Youth Choir of Scotland

### Outdoor Education

- In taking part in a large variety of outdoor pursuits, the pupils are involved in increased physical activity, hopefully developing healthy hobbies for life, as well as an understanding of Scottish culture in relation to hill walking, stalking, fishing, land clearances, Gaelic place names and archaeological features, the flora and fauna of Scotland; and such aspects as conservation, ecological awareness, and sustainability issues. Outdoor education provides space for learning beyond subject boundaries so that boys can develop their organisational skills, creativity, and teamwork, helping them to become confident individuals and effective contributors. Many of our pupils took part in the **Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme** last year. 3 boys completed their Gold Awards, 8 boys completed their Silver Awards and 27 boys completed their Bronze Awards.

### Sport

- The Tennis Academy completed its eleventh year of operation and 5 players competed in European events. The programme has continued to allow elite players to combine their tennis schedule with their education and in 2017/18 the Academy comprised of 21 pupils. Access to this opportunity is available to talented pupils and means tested assistance is offered if required and if funds remain available. In 2017/18, 7 players in the Tennis Academy were in receipt of Means Tested Assistance with fees. Our Tennis Academy Head Coach, David Brewer linked with Tennis Scotland and ran the National Representative trip to specific tournaments around the UK. In 2017/18 the Tennis Academy had another successful year. The U13 and U15 teams achieved second and third place respectively in the UK National finals. The U18 won the UK finals resulting in The Academy being ranked number one in the UK in the LTA Team Tennis Schools rankings, 2018. Tennis Scotland continues to support Merchiston in the delivery of the outstanding provision for the boys. The lead coaches work in collaboration with Tennis Scotland to ensure that the programme is sector leading.
- In its seventh year, the Golf Academy continues to go from strength to strength under the guidance of Alan Murdoch and his team of fellow instructors. We launched our Golf Academy programme in 2011 and 1 pupil received a means tested bursary in 2017/18 to allow them to attend our Golf Academy. In 2017/18 the GA consisted of 26 pupils from six different countries, tailored with their own golf and academic programmes. The Golf Academy is the number one ranked Junior School and the number one ranked Senior School in the ISGA UK rankings.
- The rugby programme caters for nearly three quarters of the School. The pupils are dedicated to being the best they can be and rugby is often used as a vehicle to engage with the community in terms of coaching young children and fixtures against local state schools. In 2017/18 the 1XV won 85% of their fixtures and this included achieving third place at the St Joseph's College National Schools Tournament in Ipswich. The U14 A Team had an unbeaten season at 15 a side and won the inaugural Lisbon Sevens.
- To date, no fewer than 66 Merchistonians have played rugby and 24 cricket at full international level; we see this as an important part of fostering the development of sport outside Merchiston at national level.
- In March 2017, we hosted our annual Merchiston Sevens competition which attracted some 38 teams involving 456 players. We completed 64 matches on 9 pitches.

### 1.3. Expertise of staff

We provided 7 markers/examiners/moderators/paper-setters for the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), Edexcel, and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA); Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR), and providing marking for 10 different papers in the summer of 2017. Our Mandarin Teacher was also the SQA Principal Assessor for Higher Chinese.

Our Head of Science and Technology is on the **British Physics Olympiad Committee** and writes the Physics Challenge paper, set to approximately 4,000 GCSE level students nationally. In addition, he is one of the main leaders at the experimental training camp at Oxford during the Easter break and helps to train the

British Physics Olympiad team through mentoring during the Summer Term. In the Easter holiday of 2017, he was one of the leaders of a five-day training camp in Oxford for the British Physics Olympiad team.

Two members of staff, our Head of Careers and our Skill Co-ordinator, are members of a **skills development working group** with Education Scotland and Skills Development Scotland looking at how skills profiling could have greatest impact in schools.

Our Mandarin Teacher ran a workshop at the National Chinese teaching conference at the University of Edinburgh. She was also appointed the SQA Principle Assessor for Higher Chinese for 2017/18.

We have been fostering our relationship with **Excelsior Academy** in Newcastle, an Academy which opened in Denton, a deprived area of Newcastle, in September 2008. **Lord Laidlaw**, the sponsor of our Laidlaw Scholarship scheme, is also the sponsor of this Academy which incorporates 4 schools and a Sixth Form College on one site, with over 1800 pupils on the total roll. At present, the Laidlaw Schools' Trust consists of 6 academies and 4 primary schools.

The former Executive Principal of Excelsior Academy, Mrs Philomena Marshall, serves on the Merchiston Governors' Education and Pastoral Committee, and Andrew Hunter, our Headmaster in 2017/18, served on the Board of the **Laidlaw Schools' Trust** for the past 8 years. Neither educational sector has monopoly on good practice or wisdom; both schools can learn from the other. We hope to be able to dispel perceptions about the independent and state sectors and encourage genuine respect between the staff and pupils of each school.

The Headmaster has been a member of the **Board of Governors at Ardvreck Preparatory School**, Crieff, since 2008 and previously served on the Boards of Kilgraston School, 2007-09, and Newcastle School for Boys, 2009-11.

Our Head of Juniors was on the **Board of Governors at Atkinson Road Primary Academy**, Newcastle-upon-Tyne during 2017/18.

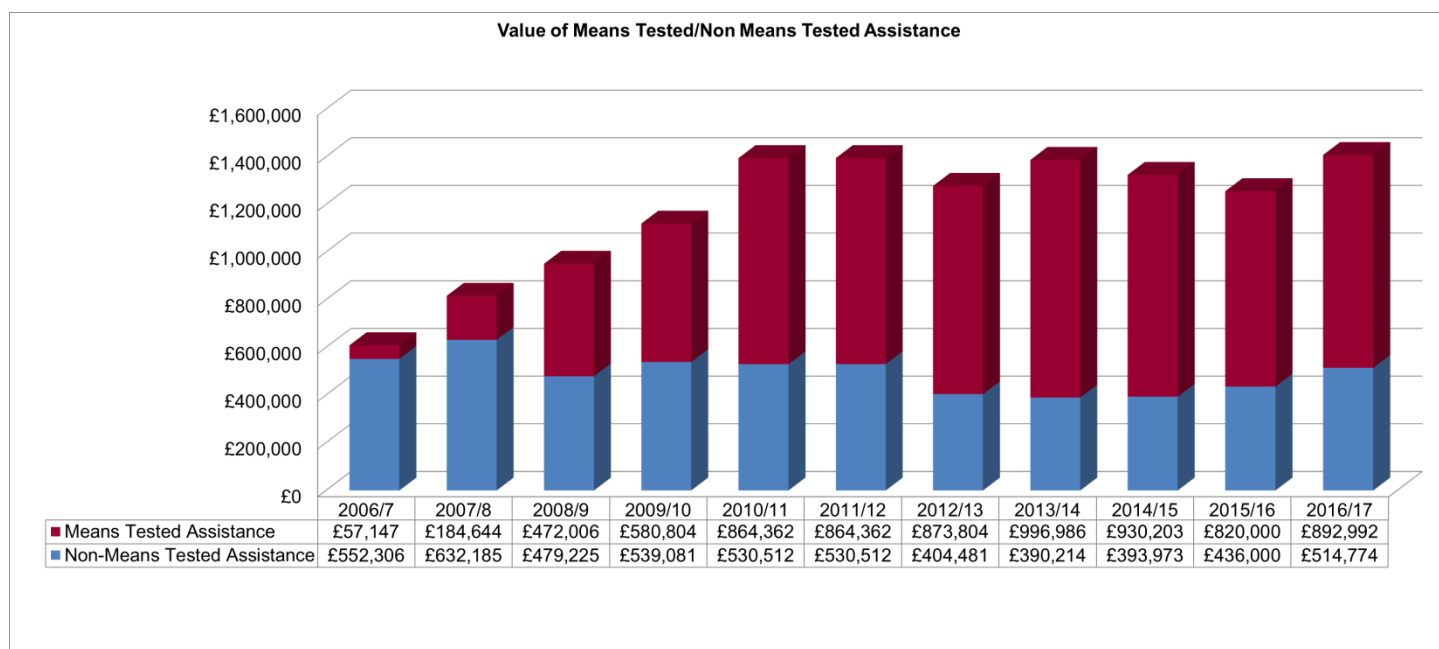
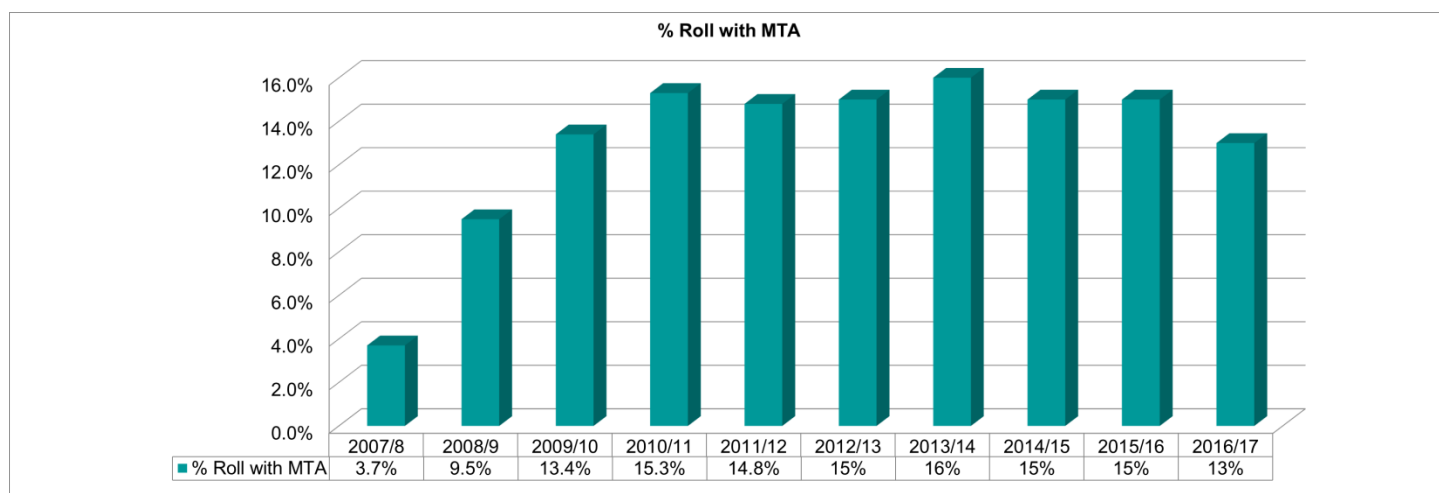
We provided a placement for a Mandarin, a French and a German Assistant Teacher.

## 2. Facilitated Access

### 2.1. Means tested assistance

Merchiston has always tried to make places available to pupils whose parents are unable to afford the full fees, although, unfortunately, we are not a wealthy school in terms of endowments provided by previous generations of Merchistonians. However, in order to enable parents from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible to have their sons educated at the School, means tested assistance is available on admission to the School or during the course of a boy's schooling. This is granted, when appropriate, to the parents of boys who pass the entrance assessments, and the assistance is subject to regular review in order to ensure that disbursed funds go to those who genuinely have need of them.

We advertise the availability of means tested assistance on our website and details are also available on application to the School. In 2017/18, a total of **£942,000** was disbursed to **132** pupils in **means tested assistance**. An important issue in this regard is our desire to attract talented pupils to the School. However, scholarships no longer carry an automatic financial element but are awarded for the honour only, so that we



can increase the level of assistance we provide to parents who are in financial need. Should parents require means tested assistance, they may apply to the School for this through our means testing process. A set percentage of income is set aside for this purpose. In 2017/18, **29.3%** of pupils on the school roll were in receipt of means tested assistance with fees.

- The Headmaster was a member of the **Royal National Children's SpringBoard Bursary Foundation Advisory Board**, which aims to put together sources of funding for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend independent schools who demonstrate a need, and source a School which can support such a need. In 2017/18 we had one pupil who was in receipt of the SpringBoard Bursary.
- Merchiston participates in the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference Projects in Central and Eastern Europe scholarship scheme and we offer means tested assistance where applicable. In 2017/18, we had **1 HMC Scholar** in the School.
- Merchiston also seeks the assistance of a number of outside Trusts to help its pupils who are in financial need. In the last year, The MacRobert Trust, Royal National Children's Foundation, John Watsons Trust and the Buttle Trust supported **1** of our pupils. **The Rogerson Scholarship** of £1000 was also awarded to 1 pupil.



- Moreover, we compete successfully for **Arkwright Scholarships** in the field of Design Technology on an annual basis. An Arkwright Scholarship is worth £1000 to the pupil over the course of his Sixth Form career, and the school is also awarded £500 per year. In 2017/18 we had two Arkwright Scholars in the School.

## 2.2. Use of our facilities by school age children

Merchiston has always worked hard to include other schools and our local community in events and activities held in the School and in our Koinonia projects at home and abroad.

In order to illustrate the School's level of engagement with children and young people who are not pupils here, we have, where possible, counted and recorded the number of **'child visits'** for which there is no fee or charge and where, more often than not, Merchiston provides some kind of refreshment or support which has a direct cost to the School, notwithstanding the cost of staffing such events.

We also provide a venue for other children's groups such as the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, through their use of our accommodation during school holidays. This provision not only allows the School to do all we can to ensure our fees are kept to a minimum, but through leasing school accommodation, these groups save their participants a considerable amount in comparison to a commercial let, making attendance at such 'camps' much more affordable. For example, the cost per head for National Youth Choir of Scotland for a full board let, (including, bed, breakfast, lunch, dinner, linen, towels, cleaning, practice rooms, performance halls, use of leisure facilities) was £41.50 per head this summer.

Merchiston's dormitory accommodation lends itself extremely well to use by children's groups. We count the number of child visits for which there is a small fee or charge separately.

The records in this respect are noted below:

	<b>Child Visits Free of Charge</b>	<b>Child Visits at Reduced Cost</b>	<b>Direct Cost to MCS</b>
2008/09 achieved	6329	26762	£10,687
2009/10 achieved	7158	27603	£20,022
2010/11 achieved	9367	27596	£28,824
2011/12 achieved	9395	31547	£29,111
2012/13 achieved	8010	23383	£26,597
2013/14 achieved	8333	29251	£35,441
2014/15 achieved	10088	32824	£43,080
2015/16 achieved	8006	32187	£39,890
2016/17 achieved	7376	27286	£40,335
2017/18 achieved	7336	28027	£39,666

## 3. Collaboration with the Maintained Sector

### 3.1. Current collaborative working with local state maintained schools

#### a) Place2Be Mentorship Programme

**Organisation:** Place2Be (a charity which offers support and mentoring to school children)

**Aim:** To promote positive mental health in schools

**Frequency:** Weekly from early October to late March (20 weeks), on an annual basis

**What we do:** Merchiston Castle School pays Place2Be to train all the pupils in the Lower Sixth Form as mentors. The pupils learn what is involved in supporting young, vulnerable people, as well as important life

skills such as being a good listener, being non-judgmental and putting yourself second to someone else – skills which are also entirely transferable and are important for developing citizenship. 79 pupils undertook this training programme in 2017/18 at a cost of £5,000. Every year, some pupils decide to volunteer as mentors in local state maintained primary schools that take part in the Place2Be programme. In 2017/18, 16 pupils in the Lower Sixth Form went on to volunteer as mentors on a weekly basis at Balgreen and Longstone Primary Schools. This twenty-week programme starts in early October and runs until late March. The School also raises money for Place2Be throughout the year through various fundraising projects. We have raised over £10,000 for Place2Be over the last seven years. In 2016 we received the following commendation from the President of Place2Be, Benita Refson OBE:

*"We are so grateful for your continued belief in and support of our work. Since 2010 you have raised a staggering £10,000 for Place2Be – the equivalent of 1,428 Place2Talk sessions for children who so desperately need a safe space to address their worries and anxieties. Thank you for helping us make a profound difference to vulnerable children. We are so grateful for your continued support."*

Photos from the buddying scheme at Balgreen Primary:



The Catering Department at Merchiston contributed to a Christmas party for the Balgreen and Longstone pupils at Merchiston. There was Christmas cup cake decorating followed by party games in the Old library and dancing in the Old Library. A special thanks again to chef Simon who made over 40 cup cakes and for the catering team for making this a truly magical event. The tables were decorated and there were a whole host of treats on offer.

#### **b) Pupils volunteer as rugby coaches at Longstone Primary School**

**Organisation:** Longstone Primary School

**Aim:** To promote the "sport for all" ethos

**Frequency:** Weekly from early October to late March (20 weeks)

**What we do:** As part of Merchiston's Koinonia (Teamwork with the Community) programme, pupils in the Lower Sixth Form coached rugby to pupils at Longstone Primary School. In 2017/18, 11 pupils attended the school on a Wednesday afternoon to offer core fitness training and an introduction to basic rugby skills to 60 Longstone pupils. This initiative runs alongside the traditional one-to-one support our Lower Sixth offers under the organisational umbrella of Place2Be. Feedback from Headteacher of Longstone Primary School in April 2018:

*"I cannot thank you enough for all that you, the boys and staff have done through your rugby coaching and mentoring. Again this year, the rugby has been a huge success and the highlight of the week for many of our children. I must also tell you how much the children have enjoyed the buddying and I was speaking with one of our P6 boys this week who is really sad that it has come to end as he has enjoyed it so much."*

#### **c) Pupils volunteer as Classroom Assistants at Braidburn School**

**Organisation:** Braidburn School – a state maintained school for children with additional support needs

**Aim:** To promote positive mental health in schools; to develop social skills

**Frequency:** Weekly from early October to late March (20 weeks), on an annual basis

**What we do:** Four Lower Sixth Form pupils attended Braidburn School on a weekly basis to volunteer as Classroom Assistants, helping the children with additional support needs, and acting as positive mentors. The Acting Depute Headteacher gave this feedback on the mentors in 2017:

*"We will thoroughly miss the boys and all the help they have given. They are a complete asset to your school and have shown such amazing skills in communication. I honestly can't speak highly enough of each of them."*

#### d) Sounds Like Friday

**Organisation:** City of Edinburgh Council Youth Music Initiative

**Aim:** To create access to high quality music making opportunities for young people, offer young people the chance to achieve their potential in or through music making, and support the development of the youth music sector for the benefit of young people.

**Frequency:** Weekly during term time, on an annual basis

**What we do:** We provide free-of-charge piping and drumming lessons to pupils in local primary schools on a weekly basis (we call this initiative **Sounds Like Friday**). In 2017/18, 36 pupils from Bonaly, Craigroyston, South Morningside, Buckstone, Oxfangs, St Peter's and Pentland Primaries attended. 24 pupils attended piping lessons and 12 attended drumming lessons. Merchiston provides the services of our piping and drumming instructors, and in 2017/18 the scheme cost the School £8,950. In May 2018, The Sounds Like Friday Development Band joined our own Pipe Band in our annual Summer Pipe Band Concert.

Headlines from the results of a questionnaire given to parents in 2018:

- Sounds Like Friday provides a form of music outreach, giving children the opportunity to learn a musical instrument who have not had this opportunity before. *Roughly half of the children had not received musical instrument tuition before (46%, 6 respondents).*
- Sounds Like Friday inspires children to pursue an interest in performing music. *All the children would like to continue learning a musical instrument once their Sounds Like Friday lessons had finished (100%, 13 respondents).*
- Sounds Like Friday at Merchiston promotes an interest in playing traditional Scottish instruments. *All the children would like to continue learning the chanter or pipe drums (100%, 13 respondents).*
- Cost of lessons is an important factor for the parents when they decide if their child can continue learning a musical instrument after Sounds Like Friday. *67% of parents said that any future musical instrument lessons would need to be free of charge (6 out of 9 respondents).* However, the Sounds Like Friday experience at Merchiston was so good that they would have still taken up the opportunity for chanter/pipe drum lessons if they had to pay for it *(85%, 11 out of 13 respondents)*, although they would prefer a subsidised fee.
- The pupils really enjoy their Sounds Like Friday lessons at Merchiston. *In response to the question, "What does your child think is the best thing about their chanter/pipe drum lessons?" the parents said the following: "Excellent tuition and encouragement"; "Likes being taught in a small group with other children. Likes the teacher"; "He likes all of it! He enjoys the group lesson"; "Great teacher and learns from peers".*

#### e) Swimming Lessons for Oxfangs and Colinton Primary Schools

**Organisation:** City of Edinburgh Council – Oxfangs Primary School and Colinton Primary School

**Aim:** To ensure that every pupil can swim before the end of Primary 7.

**Frequency:** Once a week during term time (Oxfangs in the Autumn and Lent Term; Colinton in the Summer Term), on an annual basis

**What we do:** Oxfangs Primary School and Colinton Primary School send their pupils for **swimming lessons** at Merchiston, withdrawing from the City of Edinburgh Council scheme, thereby freeing up the City of Edinburgh Council to offer additional slots to their schools. Each weekly session consists of 2x 40 minute lessons, with 12/16 pupils in each lesson. To support this mission we commit 2/3 members of staff each week on an ongoing basis. This scheme generated approximately 980 child visits in 2017/18. The cost of transport and of staffing the lessons is estimated at £7,000 per annum.

Feedback from Oxfangs Primary School

P4I class

1. Some pupils have never been in a pool before. Quarter of the class are keen to keep going and

wouldn't otherwise have attended swimming lessons.

2. Some are very able swimmers and already attend private lessons
3. The children love going swimming. Swimming complements our PE provision in school and enables us to deliver 2hrs PE. Swimming provides opportunities to encourage growth mindsets, challenge and developing talents
4. Without this some children would never get to a pool. Now they feel confident and enjoy it they are much more likely to ask a parent to take them swimming.

Quotes:

*'I think the teachers explain it really well'*

*'I'd like to keep swimming' (child had never been in a pool before)*

*'They give you lots of feedback to help you get better' (from a confident swimmer)*

P5C

The children really enjoyed swimming and would love to do it again.

Quite a few children in this class (5 out of 27) do not have the opportunity to go swimming out of school – they found it beneficial.

The children have learned a great deal and have become much more confident. One girl has since joined a regular swimming group.

P5H

Majority of the class would not have accessed swimming lessons outwith school time so have benefitted from lessons in Merchiston.

Most pupils feel that their swimming skills have improved.

All pupils enjoyed the lessons, in particular the last one!

A couple of children felt that their confidence as an early swimmer improved *'I learnt how to breathe under water'*

Hope this is helpful to you.

If swimming lessons are stopped at Merchiston for Oxfords children then we wouldn't have a swimming provision at all. As you can see from comments above we have quite a number of children who would then never have a swimming experience.

#### **f) Deputy Headteacher of Firrhill High School is a member of our Child Protection and Compliance Committee**

**Organisation:** Firrhill High School

**Aim:** Sharing of experience and expertise between private and maintained sector

**Frequency:** Four times a year on an annual basis

**What we do:** For some time now as the Headmaster of Merchiston I have tried to foster links with Firrhill High School, Edinburgh. I have visited Firrhill High School on numerous occasions. The newly appointed Headmaster of Firrhill High School visited Merchiston in September 2016. These links also led to Roberta Porter, Deputy Headteacher of Firrhill High School sitting on our **Child Protection and Compliance Committee** which met three times a year in the 2017/18 session. She is able to share her experience and expertise with us and in turn we hope she benefits from an insight into Merchiston's policy and procedures in this area.

#### **g) Maths Fun Day for primary schools**

**Organisation:** City of Edinburgh Council, local primary schools

**Aim:** To promote amongst young children the study of Mathematics as an academic subject.

**Frequency:** Once a year on an annual basis

**What we do:** We hold a **Maths Fun Day** to which Primary 5 pupils are invited for Maths games and puzzles. In 2018, 92 children from 23 different primary schools attended. This was slightly fewer pupils compared to the previous year due to the event being rescheduled because of adverse weather. We also provide lunch and refreshments for the pupils. This event involved 7 members of Merchiston staff, contributing 25 hours, with an estimated cost of £250. We received the following feedback from the Retired Deputy Headteacher of Pentland Primary School:

*"I am writing to thank you and your colleagues for all your work in organising the Maths Fun Day last week. It was, as always, a really positive experience for the youngsters. Our team members very much enjoyed the tackling the maths problems and liked the different formats. They also appreciated the good humour of the day, as well as the catering (which never fails to impress!)."*

*As an ex-teacher, I'm well aware of all the behind-the-scenes work which is needed to make an event run as smoothly as the Fun Day does. It was particularly good of you to go to the trouble of rescheduling the occasion after the earlier forced cancellation.*

*Please pass on our thanks to all involved."*

#### **h) Primary Schools' Science and Technology Day**

**Organisation:** City of Edinburgh Council, local primary schools

**Aim:** To promote amongst young children the study of Science and Technology as academic subjects.

**Frequency:** Once a year on an annual basis

**What we do:** We hold a **Primary Schools' Science and Technology Day** to which Primary 6 pupils are invited for Science and Technology workshops. In 2017, 222 pupils attended from Bonaly, Cramond, Oxfangs, Pencaitland Primary Schools, and Braidburn School. This event involved 13 members of Merchiston staff, contributing a total of 130 hours. The organisation and preparation took 26 hours of staff time.

#### **i) Science workshop at Pencaitland Primary School**

**Organisation:** City of Edinburgh Council, Pencaitland Primary School

**Aim:** To promote amongst young children the study of Science as an academic subject.

**Frequency:** Annually

**What we do:** The Head of Science & Technology and two other members of the Physics department deliver **Science workshops** at Pencaitland Primary School. In 2018, the organisation and preparation of this workshop took 20 hours of staff time. Feedback from Jessica in P5 (from 2017):

*"Thank you for coming to our school. My favourite experiment was making the periscopes; I have been spying on both of my brothers with it. I found it really cool that the thing that made sounds by bumping up and down really fast. I also enjoyed learning that different colours of light don't make the same colours mixed as paint does."*

#### **j) Prestige Physics Lecture**

**Organisation:** City of Edinburgh Council, Braes High School, Lochgelly High School

**Aim:** To promote the study of Physics in Higher Education

**Frequency:** Annually

**What we do:** An academic in the field of Physics is invited to the School to give a lecture to pupils. We invite pupils from local high schools to attend. In 2017, Professor Malte Gather, School of Physics and Astronomy, University of St Andrews came to speak on the topic of "The Living Laser". 9 pupils from Braes High School and 4 from Lochgelly High School attended the lecture.

#### **k) Christmas Service at Braidburn School**

**Organisation:** Braidburn School – a state maintained school for children with additional support needs

**Aim:** Sharing staff expertise

**Frequency:** Annually at Christmas

**What we do:** We provide staff expertise to support the **Leavers' Service** at Braidburn School. The Head of Science and Technology sets up the PA system and provides audio visual support. The Chaplain does the Leavers' Address.

#### **l) Bonaly Primary School Sports Day**

**Organisation:** City of Edinburgh Council, Bonaly Primary School

**Aim:** To promote the ethos of "sport for all"

**Frequency:** Once a year on an annual basis

**What we do:** Bonaly Primary School holds its annual **Sports Day** in the grounds of Merchiston.

#### **m) Schools invited to talks by visiting authors**

**Organisation:** Scottish Book Trust

**Aim:** To promote reading and creative writing amongst young people

**Frequency:** Generally once a term, although our offers to attend author visits were not taken up by other schools in the academic year 2017/18.

**What we do:** We work closely with the Scottish Book Trust to host **author events** where an author comes to talk to an audience of pupils at the School. The Scottish Book Trust invites other local schools, mostly state maintained, to attend the events. Both secondary and primary schools attend, depending on the age

suitability of the book. Visiting high schools have included: Balerno, Tynecastle, Firrhill, St Thomas of Aquinas, St Margaret's Academy, Holyrood and Wester Hailes Education Centre. Visiting primaries have included: Bonaly, Craiglockhart, Longstone and St Mary's RC Primary School. We offer our School as venue free-of-charge, and the Scottish Book Trust likes to come here because of the facilities we are able to offer. Being a boys' school we can also play a role in promoting reading amongst boys: the large number of boys in the audience can create a shift-change in the mindset of the boys visiting from other schools. We have also developed this successful initiative by arranging our own author events through the Edinburgh Bookshop and directly inviting local schools to attend. The Headteacher of Firrhill High School gave us this feedback:

*"Thank you for the hospitality offered to Firrhill staff and pupils last Wednesday. They all enjoyed the visit and appreciated the attention to detail that had gone in to planning the event which had been organised in co-operation with the Scottish Book Trust. In particular, our staff appreciated the care and attention given to one of our pupils who had a nose bleed. They also liked the welcome with an offer of tea or coffee, the juice and biscuits provided for pupils and the well-organised way the pupils were invited through a group at a time to meet Joseph and have books signed."*

### 3.2. Sports fixtures with state maintained secondary schools

Merchiston had sporting fixtures with the following schools in 2017/18:

- Balerno High School
- Biggar High School
- Carrick Academy
- Dumfries Academy
- Dunbar High School
- Earlston High School
- Firrhill High School
- Hawick High School
- Lasswade High School
- Levenmouth Academy
- Peebles High School
- Portobello High School
- Preston Lodge Academy
- Royal High School
- St Augustine's High School
- St Thomas of Aquinas

As part of these fixtures our visiting teams will always dine with us – promoting a positive inclusive atmosphere and good sportsmanship.

## 4. Other Work in the Community

### 4.1. Current collaborative working with members of the local community

#### a) Pupils volunteer as companions to older people at a local care home

**Organisation:** Davidson House Care Home

**Aim:** To promote positive relationships between the older and younger generations

**Frequency:** Weekly from early October to late March (20 weeks)

**What we do:** As part of our Koinonia programme, 8 pupils volunteered on a regular basis at Davidson House, offering support and companionship to the residents. We received the following feedback from Davidson House:

*"I would just like to say that the pupils were very accommodating to whichever activity that was taking place in the care home. Their presence really benefitted the residents and they also looked forward to the pupils coming. I know it can be difficult coming in to a care home, but the boys adapted to any situation and showed no judgement. They were very kind and engaged well with the residents. On behalf of Davidson House Care Home, we would all like to thank the pupils for their input in making the residents' day a pleasurable one. We would all like to wish the pupils every success wherever their career takes them."*

#### b) Pupils volunteer at a local food bank

**Organisation:** Trussell Trust Edinburgh SW Foodbank

**Aim:** Supporting local people in crisis

**Frequency:** Weekly from early October to late March (20 weeks)

**What we do:** As part of our Koinonia programme, a group of 4 pupils volunteered on a regular basis at a local foodbank on Gorgie Road.

#### **c) External examination candidates**

**Organisation:** Individual members of the public

**Aim:** To enable members of the general public to sit examinations that are not available to them in the state sector – either because they wish to sit English exam board qualifications, or because they are mature students no longer attending school.

**Frequency:** Annually during the exam periods

**What we do:** External examination candidates find it extremely difficult to find an examination centre prepared to enable them to sit examinations in English exam board qualifications such as GCSE, A level, STEP and IGCSE. Merchiston takes its responsibilities to the general public in this regard very seriously, and we try to help external candidates where we can. This year we had 28 external candidates taking a range of qualifications through us, two home-schooled candidates that have taken all their exams here since 2014. Mature students looking for qualifications in English Language and Mathematics to enable them to enter teacher training is a growing constituent of the candidates we help, and others seek to improve their qualification portfolio for employment opportunities or for University entrance. We charge a small fee to external exam candidates, which covers the cost of the exam entry with little or no profit to the school (£30 to register and £5 per exam). A commendation from one of the external candidates in Summer 2016:

*“Dear Mr Hunter, I am not sure if you are aware but three other mature students and myself from Dundee Russian School recently attended the GCSE exam at your school. We were almost timed out in making our applications for applying for participation in the exam but through the kindness and efforts of Dr Tim Lawson who pulled out all the stops and went the extra mile to ensure we could participate. When attending the examination he treated us all in a friendly and courteous manner making us welcome and escorting us to where we needed to be. He contacted us immediately in receiving our results and sent our certificates out efficiently and immediately. His behaviour has been admirable and great asset and ambassador for your school; many thanks to him from us all for enabling us to take part in this experience.”*

#### **d) Pupils perform music concerts for older people**

**Organisation:** Old Farm Court sheltered housing, Colinton Road, Edinburgh

**Aim:** To promote positive relationships between the older and younger generations

**Frequency:** The Pipe Band plays at a Burns Supper in January every year, and musicians perform a concert in the Spring.

#### **e) Upkeep of the Edinburgh United Football Pitch**

**Organisation:** Edinburgh Utd FC

**Aim:** Improving and maintaining the pitch to a professional standard

**Frequency:** Daily to weekly maintenance working depending on the time of year

**What we do:** Since 1 July the Grounds Team at Merchiston have taken over the upkeep of the Edinburgh United football pitch.

## **4.2. Free use of our facilities on a regular basis**

#### **a) Friends of the Pentlands**

**Activity:** Meetings

**Facility:** Old Library

**Frequency:** Twice a year

**Numbers:** 27 adults on 2 November 2017 and 40 adults on 10 May 2018

**Feedback:** “On behalf of Friends of the Pentlands may I thank Merchiston school, your team and David for your help and excellent hospitality which once again contributed to a very successful AGM.”

#### **b) Colinton Amenity Association**

**Activity:** Executive Committee meetings

**Facility:** Old Library

**Frequency:** two-monthly

**Feedback:** “Colinton is not over-blessed with public rooms large enough to take 15 people, and to be able to sit down around a large enough table in such pleasant conditions is a real benefit.” I have been the Chairman since August 2016, and Communications Convenor since 2012; the latter has involved me leading an editorial committee that publishes the thrice-yearly Colinton Magazine, a full-colour glossy magazine. My work as sub-editor of The Merchistonian magazine has stood me in good stead!

**c) Merchiston Castle Reel Club**

**Activity:** Scottish country dancing

**Facility:** Memorial Hall

**Frequency:** Monthly (first Monday of the month)

**Feedback:** “For the record, we ran a Charity Highland Ball in school on Saturday evening. 100 dancers took to the floor and we are sending £1493.67 to the Euan MacDonald Centre at the University of Edinburgh in support of research into Motor Neurone Disease. We continue to run our Reel Club on the first Monday of the month, October - April, with an average of 50 dancers attending. Over the 34 years that it has been running, 992 dancers have attended, the vast majority from outside the Merchiston community.”

**d) Colinton & Merchiston Choir**

**Activity:** Community Choir

**Facility:** Memorial Hall

**Frequency:** Weekly

The Colinton & Merchiston Choir (which largely comprises members of the local community) practises here on a weekly basis, performs two concerts annually and is directed by a member of Merchiston staff.

**e) Rotary Club of Braids**

**Activity:** Music competition

**Facility:** Memorial Hall

**Frequency:** Annually

We provide the facilities and refreshments for the annual Rotary Club of Braids music competition.

**f) Military**

**Activity:** Cadet Training Course

**Facility:** Rifle Range

**Frequency:** Four weekends a year

### 4.3. Activities that benefit the local community

**Activity:** Activity camps in the holidays

**Facilities:** Sports fields, astro turf, sports hall, fitness suite, boarding houses

**Frequency:** Summer Holidays

The School runs activity programmes in the holiday periods. In Summer 2018 we saw 122 children attending Rugby and Golf Camps. The camps provide a great opportunity for children to keep active and integrate with youngsters from their immediate community, and from further afield. The camps also benefit the local community in providing a care service for children during the holidays so that parents can work.

### 4.4. Recent one-off collaborations with the local community (including free hire of our facilities)

**Activity:** The Massed Pipes and Drums of the Scottish Combined Cadet Force’s Beating Retreat Ceremony

**Location:** Edinburgh Castle Esplanade

**Date:** 23 May 2018

In 2017 Merchiston Castle School hosted the Scottish CCF’s Beating Retreat Ceremony at Edinburgh Castle. 12 contingents from the Independent Scottish Schools CCF brigades attended and there were 138 guests which included many officials from the CCF. We received the following feedback from the Vice Chairman of the Combined Cadet Force Association:

“Rather belated I did want to thank you and your staff for the opportunity to attend ‘The Massed Pipes and Drums of the Scottish Combined Cadet Force’s Beating Retreat Ceremony’ in May. What a truly splendid occasion and I was delighted to have been able to travel from London to attend. It was hugely impressive to



see the massed assembly and performing to such a high standard. It was also a momentous occasion for the ceremony to take place on the Esplanade of the Castle – a fabulous location. I was most grateful too for the generous hospitality in the Great Hall. I took the opportunity to chat to some of the performers, proud parents and other guests. Your kind words about the involvement of your own staff and the value of the CCF in your school were inspirational.”

**Activity:** Bang Goes the Borders Science Festival

**Location:** St Mary’s Prep School, Melrose

**Date:** 23 September 2018

The Head of Science took two senior students to the Festival to run technology workshops. Over the course of the day, they ran 20 minute activity slots, during which children from 9 years old could make a working electronic circuit and take it away. 65 children made projects and they all worked.

Organisation	Activity	Date	What we did	Information
	Playing pipes and drums at a memorial service	13 October 2017	2 pupils attended	A parent requested that 2 pupils play at the memorial service of her colleague Professor Chris Freeman
Local independent schools	Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Training	November 2017	Hosted training for teachers from others schools	18 teachers from other schools attended.

## 5. Hire of our Facilities by External Organisations

- The **Swimming Pool** is used by:
  - **Swim Easy** and **Aqualearn** who provide swimming lessons to 70 children from the local community on a weekly basis.
  - **Warrender Swimming Club** for morning training sessions for 100 children.
- For a number of years now, we have provided residential accommodation, catering and practice facilities to various youth and children’s groups during our School holiday periods. Regular lets include **National music bodies** such as: the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, the National Youth Choir of Scotland, and the National Children’s Orchestra of Scotland. The **Edinburgh International Harp Festival** which attracts participants both young and old and is a major annual event. Using facilities and accommodation at Merchiston allows groups and organisations to keep their costs to a minimum to the benefit of all participants.

## 6. Charitable Giving and Fundraising

In 2017/18, **over £11,547** was raised by the School for charity through Sunday Services, collections, and sponsored and other fundraising activities. The full listing is published on our website; many of these donations were directly associated with children and children’s charities.

- The collections from the Chapel Services raised **£4,336.66** for 11 charities
- Our annual Burns Supper raised **£3,400** for three charities: Braidburn School, Place2Be, Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institute.
- The produce donated at our Harvest Thanksgiving Service is donated to **St Catharine’s Homeless Project** on an annual basis.
- The Whole School Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, a Cake Bake and Christmas Jumper Day raised £1,324.31 for Sleep in the Park.

- We sponsor the award of a two year **Arkwright Design & Technology Scholarship** on a bi-annual basis, providing £300 per annum for two years to the pupil and £200 per annum over two years to the scholar's school for equipment and materials. 2 pupils from Firrhill High School, 1 from Alva Academy, 1 from Preston Lodge High School and 1 from Kirkcaldy High School have benefited so far. In September 2016 our scholarship was awarded to a pupil at Boroughmuir High School who is interested in studying Mechanical Engineering, Boat Design and Building or Aerospace Engineering. The previous recipients have gone on to study Product Design at The Glasgow School of Art, Mechanical/Electrical Engineering at Strathclyde University, Engineering Science at Strathclyde University and Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, USA (gaining an extremely generous scholarship).

## 7. Economic Benefit

- In 2017/18, the education of **66** boys aged 8-11 and **231** boys aged 12-18, whose parents are UK residents (out of a total School roll of 468), would have **saved the maintained sector over £1.7 million**, based on a City of Edinburgh Council 2016/17 estimate of £4,105 and £6,252 as the cost of educating a primary and secondary pupil respectively.
- As a boarding school, we can accommodate up to **500** pupils, of whom **440** can be boarders. We started the 2017/18 academic session with **468** pupils, **301** of whom were boarders. A number of pupils board at Merchiston due to difficult family circumstances, and boarding here gives them educational and personal stability and security. We provide high quality schooling for the sons of expatriates working abroad and children of Forces families. The British Council has estimated that foreign students bring £127.9 million to Scotland's economy in tuition fees and the consequent inward investment, benefits to tourism, goodwill etc.
- We provided employment for **199** teaching and support staff at Merchiston at a cost to the School of **£6,866,194** in the year to 31 July 2017.
- The School makes a major contribution to the **turnover** of local food suppliers, utility companies, and travel and transport firms, whilst also supporting local cultural and leisure industries with regular large scale bookings.
- **£340,562** was spent on planned maintenance programmes and a further **£326,045** on associated projects. These works involved **44** local contractors and approximately **49** local suppliers.

## BENEFITS IN SUMMARY

- The benefits of top quality education in terms of the individual personal development of boys and their consequent high level of self-confidence and sense of self-worth, and through this their productivity and, later, leadership and management roles in society.
- The benefit to the well-being of the country and to its gross national product; the benefit also to society of productive, hard-working and involved men who wish to make a contribution in their chosen field of endeavour, and as members of society.
- The independent sector can be seen as an educational pace-setter, encouraging the government to push up standards and to increase spending on education. The sector also plays a strong role in curriculum innovation, safeguarding academic standards, and providing key subject skills, ie Maths and Science, Modern Languages, Music etc.
- Inward investment to the City of Edinburgh, Scotland and the United Kingdom, through the provision of top quality education within the city; this is a major attraction for companies and individuals relocating to Scotland and it is used by some of Scotland's biggest firms in order to attract the best staff to Scotland.
- The benefits to the long term health prospects of thousands of children through the School's promotion of healthy living and healthy eating, and particularly sports, both for its own constituency and for those beyond its membership.

- The reputation of Scotland benefits from a school such as Merchiston, which upholds Scotland's reputation for high quality education and from the activities of many of Merchiston's groups, such as the Pipe Bands, Choir, debaters and sportsmen who act as ambassadors for their country, both at public occasions in the City of Edinburgh, in Scotland, and on trips and tours within the UK and abroad.

## CONCLUSION

We believe strongly in the development of all-rounders; boys who are interesting, articulate, adaptable, marketable and aware of the needs of others.

Merchiston seeks to consider what we, as a school, are contributing to society and to encourage our pupils (and former pupils) to ask themselves if they could contribute more.

Finally, as a School, we endeavour on an annual basis to maintain an agreed level of facilitated access to the School through a mix of Means Tested Financial Assistance and the use of our facilities by school aged children.

These concepts are at the very heart of Merchiston's approach to the provision of education as an independent school, which is also a charity.

To conclude, at the forefront of our minds are the concepts of social inclusion, social mobility and the fairness agenda. On a daily basis, we try to live to these principles.

**Jonathan Anderson**  
**Headmaster**  
**December 2018**