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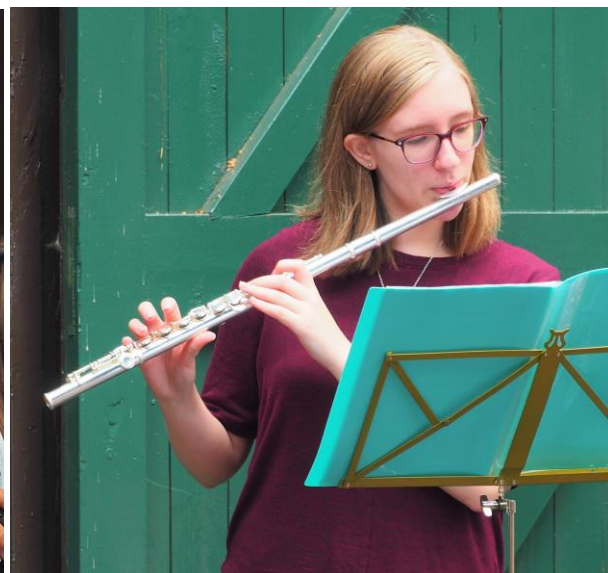
# Firrhill News

October 2018

 Follow on Twitter @FirrhillMusic

## Art in the Park

On Sunday 2 September Firrhill's Soul Band gave a great performance at Colinton Village Events Group's, "Art in the Park". This event features lots of stalls, including: arts and crafts, second-hand books, food and drink, and continuous live entertainment.



Thanks to music teacher Mr Courtney who runs the amazing Soul Band.

Colinton Village Events  
**CVE** Group

## Music Exam Success

Congratulations to the following on their recent Trinity / Associated Board music exam passes

- Amy Downie – Grade 6 clarinet
- Caitlin Bratby – Grade 5 violin
- Joanna Walke – Grade 5 alto saxophone (Distinction)
- Emma McDermaid – Grade 3 trombone (Distinction)
- Catherine Bruce – Grade 3 flute (Distinction)
- Anna McCallum – Grade 3 flute (Merit)
- Richard Allen – Grade 2 clarinet (Merit)
- Kirsten Buchan – Grade 2 clarinet (Merit)
- Amy Gibson – Grade 2 clarinet (Merit)







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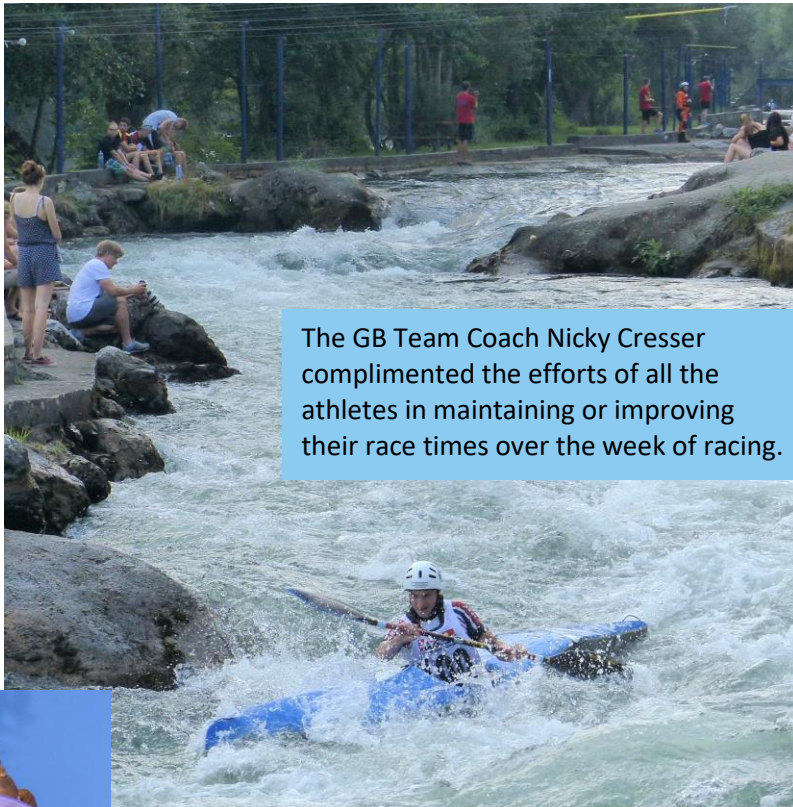
 Follow on Twitter @FirrhillPE

## Kayaking

Michael Denvir S6 was selected to represent Great Britain in the U18 K1 classic (3.5km race) and 200m sprint. Michael competes in wild-water racing, which is fast and dynamic, in a solo kayak (K1). The kayak is 4.5m long and made of carbon fibre, making it lightweight and strong to resist collisions with rocks. They are fast on the river but are unstable and hard to turn. Paddlers need to read the river conditions and take the best line, often through very rough water, whilst paddling at full speed.

The best young European wild-water canoeists and kayakers were in Skopje, Macedonia over the summer to compete in the U18 and Junior U23 European Championships 2-5 August. Athletes from 16 countries took part in races on the Treska River in the beautiful Matka Canyon about 15 km from Skopje.

Congratulations to Michael  
on his amazing achievement!



The GB Team Coach Nicky Cresser complimented the efforts of all the athletes in maintaining or improving their race times over the week of racing.

The GB team arrived early and spent four intensive days training on the river before the opening ceremony in Macedonia Square. The team trained early morning and evening to avoid temperatures in excess of 30°C during the day. Michael competed in the opening classic race on Thursday morning, completing the 3.5 km course in just under 11 minutes – an excellent result as his time beat all of the other U23 GB kayakers. In the sprint event on Saturday morning, Michael completed the 200m sprint in just over 50 seconds.







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## Southeast Asia Expedition

During June and July 13 senior pupils took part in an exciting expedition to Southeast Asia, featuring three phases: trekking in Laos, history and culture in Cambodia, and volunteering and R&R (rest and recuperation) in Vietnam. The pupils shared leadership roles, supported by the staff team. There was always plenty to see and do. The journey from Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) to Hanoi was an epic train journey of 34 hours, covering two days and one night on a sleeper train. This proved to be a really enjoyable experience for the pupils and was a unique opportunity to see another side of Vietnam.

The accommodation ranged from good to very good indeed, given that we were using hostels rather than hotels. The opportunities to try new and exotic foods provided some real highlights: the night markets in Vientiane and Phnom Penh, and the food served at the villages in Laos during the trekking phase, was always varied, delicious and eaten with chopsticks, sitting in a big group on mats on the floor. The food served up at the Thai Hai stilt village was also of a very high standard, with plenty of variety of local dishes three times a day. The vast majority of what we ate was local style food rather than Western food.

The trekking phase in Khammouane province (Laos) provided our team with a number of challenges: heat, humidity and carrying full back-packs for 15-20 km a day through jungle, open grassland, paddy fields and rivers, supported by super guides and cooks. The history and culture phase in Cambodia allowed us to make trips to Angkor Wat, the floating villages at Tonle Sap lake, and the genocide museums in Phnom Penh.

The project phase at Thai Hai stilt village in Thai Nguyen province (Vietnam) was very well planned and gave our pupils the opportunity to teach pupils English or teach topics using the English language. There were also plenty of physical tasks to undertake, such as helping to create a herb garden on disused land, cultivating bananas, picking tea, chopping logs and planting bamboo. This helped us to appreciate the amount of hard work required in maintaining a sustainable community, and enabled us to give something back to thank the community for their hospitality and the chance to work in the local school.



The Thai people were an incredibly welcoming ethnic minority community, who opened their arms to us. We were always greeted with smiles, children were delighted to be taught by our group, and we were shown excellent hospitality throughout our visit. This village showed us what a self-sustaining community can really be.

Thanks to the Firrhill staff who arranged this exciting expedition for travel, education and personal growth.







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## Southeast Asia Expedition (cont'd) to read more visit <https://fhsvietnam2018blog.wordpress.com/>



The R&R phase of the expedition had to be reworked at short notice when an impending tropical storm forced us to cancel our planned boat trip. Instead, the time spent at Ninh Binh, shopping, eating and exploring in Hanoi, and enjoying Hanoi water park, was a great experience and provided a wonderful end to our expedition.

Whenever dealing with locals without English, a combination of smiles, pointing, drawing pictures and acting got us through and was fun to do as well. Our pupils made good use of the few phrases they had picked up, were always polite and friendly to local people. We were fortunate to have a highly skilled leader who took every opportunity to allow the pupils to learn and grow, while also enforcing good standards around timekeeping, behaviour, and care of self and others. By the end of the expedition every pupil had grown in confidence and experience, and the feedback from them at the end of the expedition was extremely positive. The expedition was a huge success.



Firrhill has now run expeditions to Ecuador, Borneo, China, Bolivia, Canada, Venezuela and Laos/Cambodia/Vietnam. Where will be next?





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## Running Success

Follow on Twitter @FirrhillPE

Finlay Ross S2 is a member of Harmeny AC and a member of the Firrhill Athlete Support Programme. He recently competed at the Scottish National Championships in Aberdeen and won gold in the U13 1500m race. At the start of August, he ran a British Milers Club race in Leeds and became the fastest ever Scottish U13 with a personal best time of 4:27:72 for the 1500m. He is now looking forward to the cross country season which starts in October.

Congratulations to Finlay for his efforts, commitment and well-deserved running success!



## Green Flag Award

Eco Schools is part of "Keep Scotland Beautiful".

In December 2016 Firrhill achieved the prestigious Eco School's Green Flag Award. This is due to be renewed in November through a process called an "interim application". The application takes the form of a PowerPoint, recording the eco work done over the past two years. Information is required on three eco topics, one of which must be litter. Additional topics we have worked on may be added but are not essential. Copies of our action plan for each of the three topics are required and our curricular audit – a document showing how every faculty teaches pupils about important environmental issues. The PowerPoint presentation can be completed by pupils but must include: photos, measurements of outcome, and "links" – such as to the *Firrhill News* which publicises many of the school's extra-curricular activities. Recently, the school resited its flagpole to a more prominent position to fly our hard-earned Green Flag!







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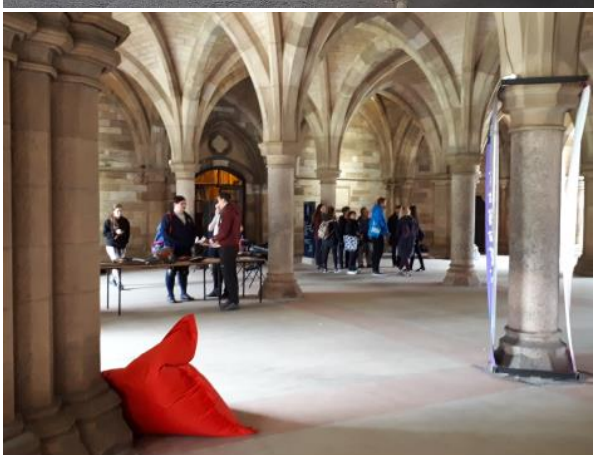
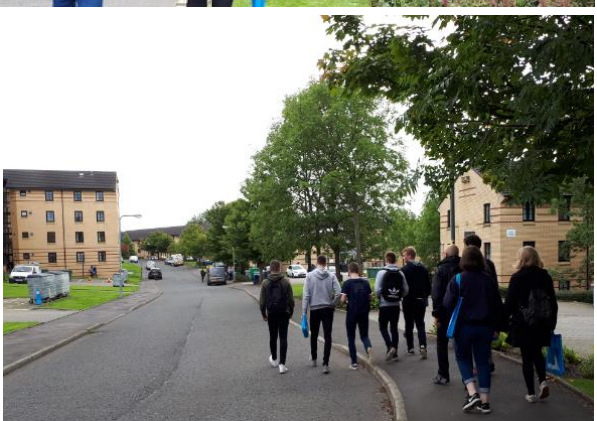
## University Open Days

<https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/scottish-university-and-college-open-days>

*Please open the link for more information.*

The S6 pupils, as well as undertaking their studies, need to decide what they will do after leaving school. Some take a gap year and others seek employment, but many choose further education. In order to decide where they would like to study, they need to visit a few universities. There are a number of open days with a welcome desk, maps, timetabled talks by various departments and the opportunity to meet students and lecturers and ask questions. It is important to see the student accommodation, students' union and other facilities, including the library, refectory and gym.

We wish the S6 pupils well as they think about their next destination after leaving school.







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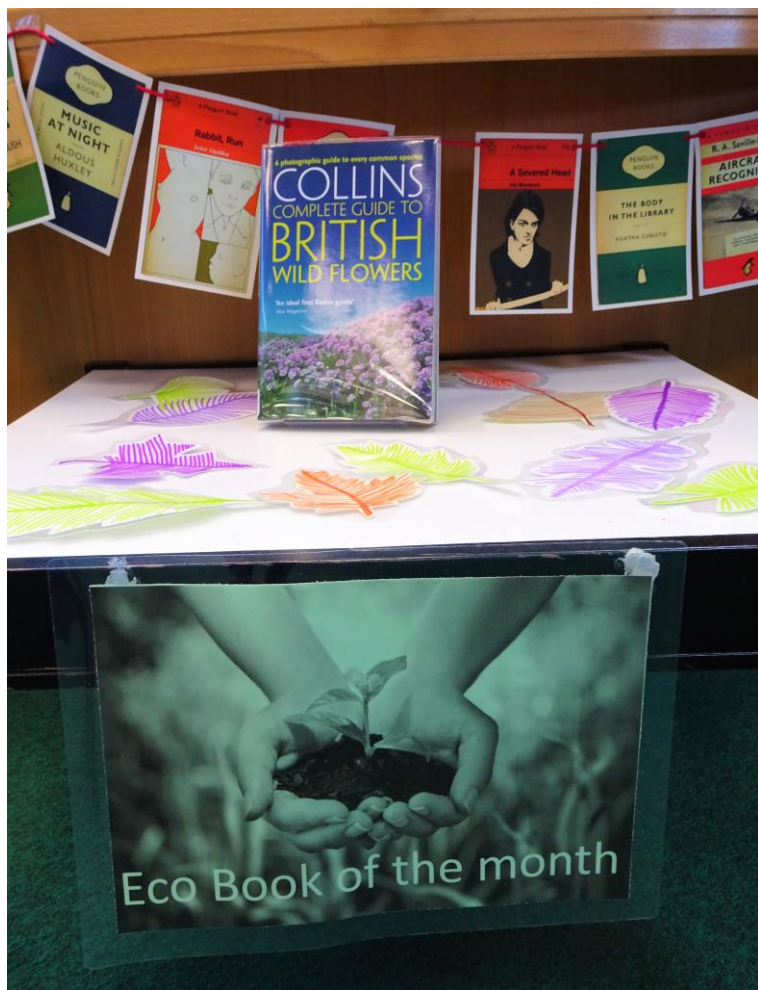
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## Eco Book of the Month

Why not take a look at the Eco Book of the Month and learn more about wild flowers, or ask our school librarian Mr McCann for further recommendations?

Thanks to school librarian Mr Declan McCann, who is continuing to present the Eco Book of the Month.



## Glasses case Give-away

Please take a free glasses case and help to reduce waste!



The Environment Group has placed a box of used glasses cases in the library that are free to take away. This is part of the school's efforts towards waste minimisation – one of the school's chosen topics for the Eco Schools Green Flag interim application. Glasses cases can be given to family members, too!

## 20's Plenty



Follow on Twitter @JRSO\_Edin

Lorna Henderson, Road Safety Officer, City of Edinburgh Council helped to present cycling-related careers at the school's recent Job Fair, and then asked some of our senior pupils if they would take part in a photo opportunity tweet to promote the City of Edinburgh Council's "Life is better at 20 mph" campaign. Many of these pupils had been Junior Road Safety Officers at primary school and were keen to help Lorna with her request. Lorna tweeted:

**RoadSafety Edinburgh** @JRSO\_edin · Jun 15

Thanks @FirrhillHS For having us along to speak about all the opportunities in transport. Great to meet all you ex JRSOs too. @safetymagicshow memories! #20mph @Edinburgh\_CC

*Firrhill has just updated its school travel plan and is working towards becoming a Cycle Friendly Secondary School we would like to start offering cycle training to any interested pupils!*







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## Cycling at Firrhill

A sports information evening was held on 6 September, with information, prizes, stalls and taster sessions. The PE Department tweeted about the event, to help promote cycling at school. Follow the dropdown menu on the school website, select "Eco Schools" and then "Cycle Friendly Secondary School Award" to view the [Firrhill High School Travel Plan](#) and cycling information, including "The Wheel Deal" [cycle leaflet](#) and YouTube videos of Bikeability training. <http://firrhillhigh.org/information/eco-schools/cycle-friendly-secondary-school-award>

Members of the Environment Group Stella Thomson and Carolyn Hargest are offering led rides to parents and their children, to demonstrate routes to high school from Firrhill's cluster primary schools. These routes can be found in Appendix 1 of the [Firrhill High School Travel Plan](#) and use quieter roads and mixed-use paths, where possible. A revised version of the Travel Plan will soon be available. For more information, or to arrange to go on a led ride, please contact [carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com](mailto:carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com). We would like to start offering cycle training to any interested pupils. A new Bike Club will start soon. Simon Fagan, Edinburgh Road Club, is pictured here with Stella Thomson, Environment Group member.



Follow on Twitter @FirrhillPE



FHS PE Dept. @FirrhillPE · Sep 8

FHS work towards becoming a Cycle Friendly Secondary School. Would any Firrhill pupils like to have cycle training or go on led rides? Would any pupils like to join a Bike Club? We can offer bike maintenance and cycling skills training and lots more!



3 4 11

## Schools Innovation Competition

Edinburgh Napier University and the Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland have launched a new competition to encourage school children to be creative and describe what riding their bike means to them. The competition winners will be announced at the Scottish Mountain Bike Awards on 23 November, in Aviemore.

*There are two categories:*

*Primary School children – design an A4 poster*

*Secondary School pupils – submit a short film of up to 30 seconds*

They want to know in your own words:

Why do you like riding your bike?

Tell us what the benefits are – physical and mental health, meeting your friends, having fun, being in the countryside – whatever makes you get on your bike. The competition is open to all young people of school age in Scotland.

For secondary school children the first prize is a Trek Marlin 5 bike described as "a trail-worthy daily rider that's perfectly suited for everyday adventures, on and off the trail". There are plenty of great runner-up prizes too!



Follow this link <https://mtbcos.co.uk/competition-2018> for more information, to download the entry forms and to view an example of the type of short film they are wanting pupils to create. Good luck and be inspired to cycle!

Firrhill has just updated its School Travel Plan and is working towards becoming a Cycle Friendly Secondary School. It would be great if some pupils would enter this competition.

The closing date is midnight on 4 November.

If you have any questions regarding the competition, contact [mtb@napier.ac.uk](mailto:mtb@napier.ac.uk)





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## Scripture Union Holiday Club

From 30 July to 3 August, a number of Firrhill pupils, former pupils and parents helped as leaders in the SU Holiday Club held annually at St John's Colinton Mains Parish Church. The club featured lots of action songs, drama, the ever-popular "messy challenge", Bible stories, interviews, crafts and fun outdoor activities. Around 70 P1-P7 children attended and there was a parents' night for the mums and dads. The young people also helped prior to the event in the preparation of craft activities and decorations for the hall.



During the week, the students helped lead groups of primary pupils, performed music and acted in the daily comedy drama. This year's theme was "Teambuilders and sports" and showed that teams work well by combining people with different skills. It was a fantastic community event. Very well done everyone!

