

A View to a Hill

Firrhill High School's Student Newspaper. Issue 1 / Spring 2023



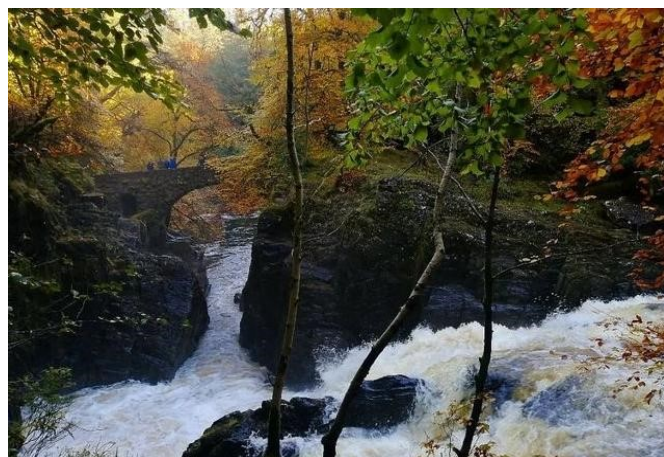
Windows of opportunity

Arts, activism, tournaments and trips
... all the insights you need to know

2: DEDICATION & CONTENTS

Mr Broadfoot

We were all deeply saddened by the news of Mr Broadfoot's passing in December. The whole school community has been affected and we encourage one another to reach out if you need someone to talk to. Our thoughts are with his family at this time.



Above (left) 'Nature' by Chloe Shek, one of the winners of the school's autumn photography competition. Turn to page 11 to see the other winning entries. Right) 'Spring Flowers' by Agnes Newton

News

An overview of all the key events at the school across the second half of 2022.....3

Find out more about the range of clubs, committees at Firrhill and their recent activities.....4

Features

Insights into strengthening digital access and how students might be benefitting.....5

A report on recent trips and activities by the Geography, Politics and History departments.....6

How a spotlight on equality, diversity and inclusion is contributing to positive change.....8

Arts

Insights into the Christmas concert, which returned last December after a two-year break.....10

From dogs to frogs, the crop of competition-winning photography collected for you.....11

Sport

A snapshot of recent successes for our football, netball and hockey teams.....12

Analysis of all the highs, lows and drama from the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.....13

Back pages

Horoscopes: find out what your immediate future holds in store14

Crossword: test your knowledge of Firrhill and Edinburgh.....15

Contributors: meet the team behind this edition of A View from the Hill.....16

Cover photograph by Isla Davidson, Back photograph by Diana Bogdanova

Next issue: June 2023

To ask about contributing an article, email the editor Stella Small: 110613679@ea.edin.sch.uk

Back on track

From celebrations of social justice to band performances and acts of remembrance, it's been a busy year on the hill, writes *Mackenzie Di Nella*

The end of 2022 marked the conclusion to a busy year for Firrhill High School. To celebrate the first full year since 2020 with no Covid interruptions, the school was eager to take part in a variety of events. From open evenings to ceremonies, guest speakers to visitors, and sports to expressive arts, pupils had no shortage of things to get involved with!

Before the summer holidays, the Expressive Arts Night saw fantastic performances from pupils across the school, in music and drama, while the art department displayed clothes and designs produced by fashion students.

Back in August, we kicked off the new term by hosting the P7 Open Evening, attended by local parents and P7 pupils. Senior Prefects did a great job of leading the tours and making sure everything ran smoothly, and each department organised taster sessions of the subjects on offer.

Achievements were not lacking as the term progressed. We said a massive well done to Rights Respecting School's members Alex Daly and Alisha MacLeod who won the Saroj Lal award. This award is named after the first woman of colour to teach in a Scottish primary school, who taught at South Morningside in the 1970s. Saroj was a pioneer and fought to end discrimination, so this award is given in her memory to those who work exceptionally hard to promote equality, diversity and social justice.

We also welcomed Councillor Griffiths (Education, Children and Families Convenor) and Amanda Hatton (Executive Director of Education and Children's services), who were very impressed after their visits to our school.

"The music department has held many exciting events."

For the 11th of November, we hosted our annual Remembrance Assembly. Led by our Head Boy and Head Girl, the assembly was an opportunity for our school to collectively remember those who fought, those who died, and those who survived wars. Pupils from all year groups paid their respects, whether that was reciting a poem, a song, a reading, or laying a wreath. This is an important event for our school, especially because a lot of Firrhill pupils come from armed forces families.

Recently, the music department has also held many exciting events. Firrhill's Christmas concert, back after three years, was something truly something special. In December, the Thursday Band and the Big Band had fantastic performances at the Jazz Bar on Chamber Street, and senior wind pupils brought some festive cheer to Caiystane Court with a rendition of carols.

We look forward to what the new term has to offer!

Below Left: Sarah, Alisha, Alex and Mr Murray receiving their award

Below: The Thursday Band performing at the Jazz Bar (Picture: Alice Bailey)



Join the club

***Finlay Turnbull* explores Firrhill's best extracurricular activities.**

Firrhill High School has a wide and diverse mix of clubs and committees run by various teachers spanning multiple faculties.

Think your club deserves an article? Let us know and we'll write one in the next edition.

Eco Committee

Run by Maths teacher Mr. Welford, the Eco Committee has had a busy time so far this school year. In a bid to make the school more sustainable, the fabric classroom was provided with a new textile recycling bin. They have also installed three hedgehog houses on the school grounds as well as refilling bird feeders and getting rid of old nests out of the bird boxes.

A visit to Damhead nursery meant the purchase of plants to fill the planters at the front of the school and over twenty bags of litter have been collected from the school grounds. The school's vegetable patch has been weeded and vegetables have been planted. All this hard work and effort from the Eco Committee has earned Firrhill High School the Eco Schools Green Flag award. Plans for the remainder of the school term will see thirty trees planted!



Multi-Cultural Club

Geography teacher Ms Summers runs the multi-cultural club, which has a long list of achievements from this school year. To help people navigate the school when English is not their first language, a ThingLink tour of the building was made available in different languages explaining where different departments are. On European Day of Languages, the Multi-Cultural club ran stalls selling European sweets. Photo booth pictures were taken to remember the event. For Diwali, an informative PowerPoint was created and shown as part of the bulletin in registration classes.

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“The Committee has been focussing on increasing discussion and the visibility of mental health.”

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Additionally, a lantern competition was run with the winners getting Indian Diwali sweets as a prize.

For 2023, work will start with the Anti-Racism pupil group on creating a multicultural day event for June where pupils and families will be able to come to the school and share traditional music and food amongst other things.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Committee

Led by Miss Neilson and Mr Smith, the Health & Wellbeing Committee has been focussing on increasing discussion and the visibility of mental health. The group have created a Pupil Well-being Calendar, which involves S5/6 pupils hosting various events each month to promote positive wellbeing. At the heart of the events is the ‘5 ways to well-being’ – give, take notice, learn, connect and be active.



Events held by the committee have included Beat the Goalie, the Autumn Photography Challenge (see page 11) and a Mega Just Dance, all of which received a positive uptake from pupils and had great feedback.

Pupils from the Health & Wellbeing Committee also delivered an information evening for over 100 parents/guardians around the topic of Mental Health & Wellbeing, which was deemed to be a huge success and led to some meaningful group discussions between pupils and parents /guardians.

Finally, for the month of December the Health & Wellbeing Committee created a wellbeing advent calendar which included daily activities to complete in registration. Examples included thank-you notes, meditation and random acts of kindness.

For 2023, there will be assemblies for some pupils on mental health and well-being delivered by people who are part of the Health and Wellbeing Committee, and projects will continue to be developed in school to boost wellbeing for all.



Left-hand page (top and bottom): planting by the Eco Committee; (this page) teachers get creative with Ms Gilbert's clay workshop and (right) the Mental Health Committee presenting at an assembly

iPads – a worthy investment?

Chelsea Baird investigates Edinburgh Council's Digital Access scheme



October of 2022 brought the long-awaited technological takeover to Firrhill as the iPads finally arrived in the first week of the month. The council's 17-million-pound, city-wide investment allowed for all 1,300 of Firrhill's students to receive their own devices, and we've seen the iPads become integrated in classrooms across the school gradually in the months since. However, the delayed introduction of this scheme begged the question: Is this programme to increase digital learning worth the money?

The iPads have a variety of functions, having found uses in the wide range of departments across Firrhill. In Computing, classrooms will be able to put them to use to code and program Sphero Bolt Robots. Through installing Sphero Edu in the council's Self-Service app, robots are completely under the iPad user's control. Students will be able to progress from simple straight-line races to programming more complex courses for their bolt robots.

Mrs Mariani, the head of Modern Languages, says, "The iPads have allowed pupils to be independent in their learning and work at a pace that suits them in class. We use the iPads to get pupils to carry out Listening tasks and they are able to pause/start the audio as required.

The iPads allow pupils to carry out individual research on Cultural topics to learn about how the subject relates to different countries in the world. For example, when pupils were carrying out the topic of school, pupils researched how the French, Spanish and German school systems differ from our own and then they use the target language to explore and comment on the differences and their opinions of these. Being able to research the different information and compare and contrast allows them to learn independently or with others if working in pairs."

The iPads were also vital as a part of the school wide survey completed by all pupils in December, which aims to improve learning and teaching.



Left and above: iPads in action

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"The iPads have allowed pupils to be independent in their learning and work at a pace that suits them in class."
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- Mrs Mariani

Social subjects on tour: from icebergs to independence

Geography

"Over three separate trips, the Geography department took the whole of S2 (over 200 kids) to Dynamic Earth. Kids had the chance to further explore their Earth Forces unit through attending a workshop, a magnificent cinematic experience and explore all the exhibits and experiences on offer. Feedback from the pupils was overwhelmingly positive with the iceberg (some even licked it) and the 3D cinema being the highlights."

- Mr Smith, Geography



Above: Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Stone, from the early peoples exhibit in the National Museum of Scotland

Right: Daniell Johnson, Labour MSP with Ms Thomas and sixth year students visiting the Scottish Parliament.



Politics

"During our trip to the Scottish Parliament, our Higher Politics class got the opportunity to meet several MSPs, asking them a range of questions about their work and their views on key political issues. The MSPs were impressed with the topics highlighted which kept them on their toes, from Scottish independence to funding for languages and media in schools. The Education Service also provided a good session on the work of Parliament's committees. Afterwards, we watched part of the day's parliamentary business in the Parliament Debating Chamber. It was a great afternoon out and we hope it will become an annual tradition for our Politics pupils."

- Ms Thomas, Politics & Modern Studies

History

"Firrhill's Advanced Higher History Pupils have enjoyed four private tours of the National Museum's Early Peoples collection.

Accompanied by curator Fraser Hunter and others, they were given unique insight into the nature of Celtic, Roman, Pictish and Viking society."

- Aaron McKay, S6

Spring into action

A range of Firrhill clubs champion equality and diversity. *Matt Jamieson* hears from the pupils and staff raising awareness and leading change



Feminism

“At Feminist Society so far this year our members have taken part in lots of activities: from making Christmas decorations and decorating biscuits for International Women’s Day, to looking at how we can promote ideas about gender equality across the school and discussing developments in the news affecting human rights, like the USA’s Supreme Court ruling on abortion and how the media views celebrities like Amber Heard. We have also looked at positive social role models for pupils and in the new year we will be visited by Katie Horburgh, a former Firrhill pupil who now works for Zero Tolerance, a charity working to end violence against women. We have members of all gender identities from S3 to S6 because we believe it’s up to everyone to play a role in tackling gender inequality. We’re always keen to welcome new pupils along. We meet on Wednesday lunchtime in Soc 10 so hope to see some of you there!”

- Ms Thomas, Politics and Modern Studies Teacher

Gender and sexuality

“In the Gender and Sexuality Equality Alliance, we’re currently working on a whole school charter. Part of that includes remaking the uniform policy.”

- Ethan Davidson, S6

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“We have members of all gender identities from S3 to S6. because we believe it’s up to everyone to play a role in tackling gender inequality.”

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Anti-racism

“The anti-racism group is open to any pupil. We have members from of all different backgrounds and religious beliefs, and we are a safe space to speak about experiences which allows for people to be honest and vulnerable with themselves.

We discuss how we can bring people together in the school, by sharing ideas for hosting events, as well as training staff and senior pupils on how to handle situations where racism occurs.

The club is held by Ms Kupisz who has made a sincere effort to take this on and work with staff. It should also be recognised that everyone taking part in this club is making a change at Firrhill. Change cannot happen overnight, but it can happen with taking one step forward.”

- Mumzah Munawar , S6



“At RRS, we spread awareness and implement rights in all areas of the school.”

Rights Respecting Schools

“At RRS, we spread awareness and implement rights in all areas of the school. After being recredited with our UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting Award, we have been working on meeting with cluster primary schools and other Rights Respecting high schools.

We had a focus on Black History Month during which we held assemblies presented by some of our group members and made a detailed PowerPoint containing some information about BAME Celebrities that was displayed on the school's plasma throughout the month.

During Anti-bullying week we also delivered more assemblies to spread awareness and implemented Respect Me's theme for this year which was Listen up! Respect our Rights.

Each year we hold a Festive Food Bank during which all pupils were able to bring in suitable items to give in next to reception. We also went into our local Tesco to buy more donations for the food bank using money donated via parent pay.

We also have an active Podcast Team within the RRSA which, so far this academic year, have posted 3 podcasts featuring Deputy Head Mr. Isdale, Women & children's Rights Activist Katie Horsburgh and Olympic Curler Jen Dodds.

Earlier this academic year our podcast also received the Saroj Lal award in the category Activism which was featured on STV after STV came into the school to briefly interview us.”

- Alex Daly, S6



Left hand page (left): members of the RRS group presenting at the Anti-Racism assembly; (right): student volunteers at the Oxfangs Tesco food bank

This page (top): an RRS display board; (above): volunteers at the festive foodbank

Hitting the right notes

Chelsea Baird reports on her first and last school Christmas concert



The day started with a hazardous trek down to Colinton church, with many embarrassing near slips on the ice as I was walking down. With it being both my first and last Christmas concert at Firrhill, I decided to savour the painful weather outside and almost unnoticeable temperature difference inside as all part of the Christmas experience.

Despite the lack of heating, the venue for the concert was charming and its acoustics only added to the already great performances of Firrhill students.



Our entertainment during morning rehearsals, besides the musical talent of course, was card games in the pews; the makeshift table made of bibles was even able to withstand a violent game of Dobble. Once we had finished our group practice we were free until the afternoon run through and took it upon ourselves to try the food on offer at the Colinton Church Café.

The café trip was followed with more eating as we headed to Java Moment for lunch, where the soup of the day was definitely what I needed still freezing from the cold.



Following the run-through we were sent home, expected back at 6 before open doors. We left to wait in the noisy room downstairs as everyone practised their pieces while parents were ushered in to Christmas carols performed by the Wind band upstairs, and soon it was showtime. Being in the first act, I got front row seats to the first few groups before I was up with string group. The hosts of the night, Finlay Ross and Mackenzie Di Nella, helped to keep things running smoothly and their delivery of Mr Courtney's jokes had the audience laughing throughout the night.

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“The encore of ‘New York, New York’ was met with a standing ovation”

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Guitar ensemble were the opening act and then I was up with strings. Our performance included guests from local primary schools who featured on Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, probably outshining us senior pupils.

While I'd like to say my act played the best, the following performances for rest of the night definitely displayed the months of practice that came before. The many bands, ensembles and vocalists within Firrhill each contributed to the night's success. Following an intermission in which the PTA supplied us with free mice pies and squash, the second half also contained many memorable acts such as soul band, a solo by Alice Bailey, and lastly the Big Band.

From the view of the upstairs pews, I got to see the whole of the standing ovation after Michael An's encore performance of Frank Sinatra's 'New York, New York' alongside the big band who were the perfect final act to the concert. The night ended with a speech by Mr Hamilton as the 2022 con cert came to a close.

The concert definitely met expectations after a two year hiatus, and although it will be the last I participate in, Firrhill students will continue to impress guests at the many more to follow!

Left-hand page (top): the String Group, (middle), Big Band, and (left) rehearsals at Colinton Parish Church

Lens flair

Winners of the school's autumn photography competition



Wildlife by Noa U



Texture by Agnes N



Autumn by Kathryn M

See contents page for Chloe Shek's entry.

The biggest game changers...

Callum Mahoney rounds up sporting achievements from the past six months



The Firrhill senior football team beat Balerno 2-1 in their most recent game. It was a close match, but Balerno hearts were broken by a brilliant last-minute goal from Sokari, Dublin-Green to win Firrhill the game. Sokari was the man of the match and is now Firrhill's top goal scorer this season. The senior hockey team sent Clifton Hall packing after Firrhill put on a brilliant display to win 10-0.



Clockwise from top left: the S4 Netball Team; Senior Football Team; Senior Hockey Team; Senior Football Team with coaches; and S2 Netball Team



...and matches made in heaven

Was it worth the wait? *Kieran Wood* tackles 2022's major footballing event

The World Cup. The pinnacle of the beautiful game, watched by billions. It takes over the whole world whenever it comes into town and the recent Men's World Cup in Qatar was no different. This World Cup was one of many firsts: it was the World Cup held by an Arab nation, the first winter World Cup and the first World Cup where an African nation reached the semi finals. Walks Regragui's Morocco who inspired millions, but ultimately fell to Didier Deschamps France side.

There were many surprises in the group stages of this competition. The biggest shock of the whole tournament came when Saudi Arabia beat eventual champions Argentina 2-1. Japan also beat Germany and Spain: two football giants. Morocco topped their group after wins against Belgium and Canada, and a draw against Croatia.

South Korea sent their faithfuls wild after beating Portugal 2-1 in the dying embers of the match. The Aussies were going crazy as a 1-0 victory versus Denmark secured the country's second ever knock out appearance.

There were some very good games and upsets. As the knockouts commenced Portugal sent Switzerland home with an emphatic 6-1 victory with the only hat-trick of the competition coming in this game, from Gonalo Ramos. Argentina edged out the spirited Socceroos.

The Quarter Finals saw Morocco upsetting Portugal, another European powerhouse, beating them 1-0. In the semi-finals, it was a Lionel Messi masterclass to send Argentina through after pushing aside Croatia 3-0 who ended up finishing third after beating Morocco in the 3rd playoff. In the other semi, Morocco's unbelievable run finally ended

after a well-drilled French team defended resolutely and struck two killer blows.

The Final. The most watched sporting spectacle in the world. It was the tale of two individuals: Messi versus Mbappe. Argentina were dominant throughout the whole first half, which paid off with a Messi penalty, and a cool Di Maria finish to put the Albiceleste 2-0 up at half time. The second half would stay fairly similar until Nicolas Otamendi fouled Randal Kolo Muani in the 18 yard box gifting France a lifeline, which Khoisan Mbappe took full advantage of.

Ninety seconds later, France were level with a wonderful volley from Mbappe. It was going to extra time. It was a cagey affair until Messi scored his second, to make it 3-2 to Argentina. It looked like it would stay that way until Mbappe had his second penalty. With the score at 3-3, it went to penalties to decide arguably the best World Cup final ever. It was only ever going to go Messi's way, with the Argentinians winning 4-2 on penalties. He had completed Football. Messi (pictured) is undoubtedly the best male player of all time.

Although from a footballing point of view it was a huge success, people were sceptical of the Qatar World Cup. The whole tournament was shrouded in controversy, with the death of a reported 6,000 migrant workers, U-turns on alcohol and accessibility and alleged bribing to even be able to host the tournament.

This highlights the corruption from high level FIFA officials that shows football is slowly being run into the ground. With the addition of 16 new teams in the 2026 World Cup shows that this isn't changing anytime soon.



Horoscopes

Rebecca McDonald's unique guide to what lies in store for you this spring

Pisces – February 19-March 20:

You will feel a strong sense of gratitude this month as you begin to see the light which the universe has given to you. You will begin to feel more loved, but first you must place energy into those who will reciprocate.

Aries – March 21-April 20:

The planets are shifting in your direction. As they align, so will you, and slowly your queries will be at a loss as you begin to feel a sense of peace which you have never felt before.

Taurus – April 21-May 21:

Despite your fiery personalities, your fears may overcome you; but do not worry, help is near. As you begin to show care for others, the planets will respond and you shall receive it in return.

Gemini – May 22-June 21:

As Mercury changes, your boundaries will too. Your threshold will weaken and so will those around you, tread lightly as you may cross a line. However, if you are careful and precise you may begin to see financial benefits.

Cancer – June 22-July 22:

This month success is hurtling towards you. Despite the positioning of planets such as Uranus and Mars which have shaken your faith, those around you are thankful for your actions and you will be repaid for them; patience is a virtue.

Leo – July 23-August 23:

Romance may not be on your side this month; self-growth is the way forwards. Those who love you cannot do so until you progress individually, and then the spirits will lift you.

Virgo – August 24-September 22:

You will have a new found freedom. The planets have gifted you with joy and good things are coming, but first you must remain calm or you may see no results.

Libra – September 23-October 23:

Kindness will benefit you this month. Your intensity has overcome you and may continue to destroy your life unless you choose relaxation. It's your turn to adventure.

Scorpio – October 24-November 22:

Good karma is hurtling towards you but first, you must share what you wish to receive in return. The universe wishes you happiness however, you must promote others so you can experience it yourself.

Sagittarius – November 23-December 21:

You are on the verge of success in this moment. If you continue to prove yourself there will be positive results. However, jealousy may catch you out, so you must be wary.

Capricorn – December 22-January 20:

As a person you have grown, but don't forget to focus on your relationships. They may be weak if you do not preserve them, but the universe is on your side and Saturn will allow you to succeed.

Aquarius – January 21-February 18:

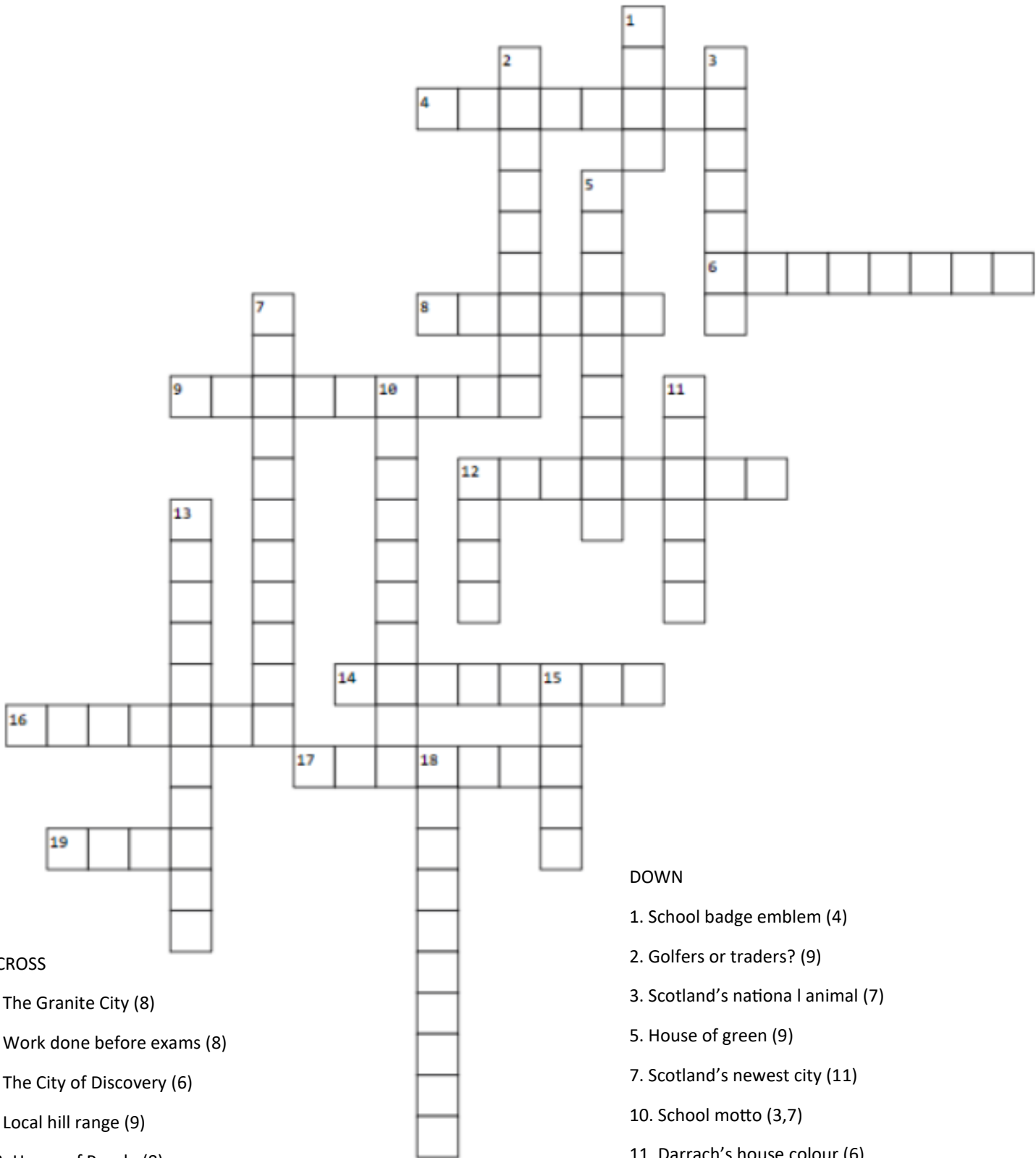
Love is in the air as your birthday approaches. Mars is supporting you, but first you must hold on to the relationships you have surrounded yourself with, and this is where you will find peace.

Need Advice?

In our next edition, we will be featuring a new advice column. To be included, email our Agony Aunt at 110635230@ea.edin.sch.uk. You will remain anonymous and she will provide top tier assistance with whatever qualms, questions or queries you may have!

Crossword

Our brain-teaser on the theme of city and school, compiled by *Jack Murray*



ACROSS

- 4. The Granite City (8)
- 6. Work done before exams (8)
- 8. The City of Discovery (6)
- 9. Local hill range (9)
- 12. House of Purple (8)
- 14. A musical headteacher? (8)
- 16. Scotland’s national emblem (7)
- 17. Nearest primary (7)
- 19. Number of UK nations (4)

DOWN

- 1. School badge emblem (4)
- 2. Golfers or traders? (9)
- 3. Scotland’s national animal (7)
- 5. House of green (9)
- 7. Scotland’s newest city (11)
- 10. School motto (3,7)
- 11. Darrach’s house colour (6)
- 12. Caerketton’s house colour (4)
- 13. Scotland’s national bard (6,5)
- 15. Popular school canteen alternative (5)
- 18. Edinburgh’s nickname (4,6)



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