



*Merry Christmas!*

Newsletter 2015

## Winter Weather

When adverse weather conditions present a potential threat to the normal opening on Inverurie Academy a number of procedures are implemented to make decisions both on the running of school transport and whether or not, or to what extent, the school will open.

If conditions are very poor the transport operators may make their decision the evening before. Other contractors either call us or we call them around 6a.m. By this time a number of operators have already been out driving the bus routes to determine their safety. We also take account of a special Aberdeenshire Council Roads department forecast, Traffic Scotland road reports, police reports and various weather forecasts. A member of our janitorial team is on site from 6am and can give us a report on the conditions around the school. When we have all this information a decision is made and we post the notice on the Aberdeenshire Council School Closure Website and on the phone line. Every attempt is made to do this by 6.45am. These bulletins are updated immediately we are informed of any change to transport or circumstances.

You can keep up to date with the Website by subscribing to the School Closures RSS feed or following Aberdeenshire Council on Twitter. Links to these are on the closure website.

**The Website** is [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/closures](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/closures)

**The Telephone Information Line** number is **0870 054 4999**. You will be asked for the school PIN number. It is **021060**.

Given that we are extremely busy communicating with transport providers and staff who are update us on their progress to school it is extremely helpful if you use either of the services above for information on the status of school transport and opening and avoid calling the school office directly.

Teachers will have informed pupils of work that can be done if they cannot get to school and we will use 'Show My Homework' and Glow for this too. Pupils have been asked to re-set their Glow Passwords this week– just in case! Senior Students will also be able to make use of the Scholar Website. The support and encouragement of Parents/Carers in ensuring that pupils work at home to minimise any time lost through adverse weather is greatly appreciated by Teachers in the school.

As we wind down for the Christmas Holidays, I would just like to take this opportunity to thank Pupils, Staff and Parents for welcoming me to Inverurie Academy. I look forward to sharing in the successes of our young people when we return in 2016. To you all, a safe and happy holiday.

Mr G Cowie (Rector - Acting)

## **Glow and Snow**

All pupils have been given instructions last week re how to reset their Glow passwords. 'Snow closure' folders have been created on Glow for pupils to access instructions and materials, as appropriate, during periods of adverse weather. In addition, a number of staff have started to use the new Glow site to upload materials for some courses/homework tasks and have been directing pupils to these. I am sure that the new Glow site will continue to evolve over these next few months, and the weather may deteriorate in January, so it is important that all pupils log in and update their password to one of their own choosing as soon as possible.

Pupils can currently log in with their username (as per the one they use to log into all school computers) and password: Password#2016. They will then be prompted to set their own password.

Your support would be appreciated ensuring that your child has reset their password, at school or at home, and checking that they can access the site from home prior to any adverse weather. If they have any difficulties, please ask them to see myself or Mr Littler (PT Guidance).

As always, pupils who do not have internet access at home are welcome to ask teachers for paper copies of the materials on Glow to complete at home during adverse weather.

Mrs P Fraser (DHT)

## **Show My Homework**

We are aware that our Show My Homework system has ongoing data errors.

At present, pupils have been advised to use the website as per initial instructions, by filtering the menus to find their teacher/subject/class rather than using their individual log-ins to ensure they can access all of the information they require.

Show My Homework have updated their system in December with a new version of the system that is easier to use. We hope that all of our updated data (ie new pupils and staff details) will be in the system in January so that pupils and parents/carers can go back to using the individual log-ins.

A text will be sent to parents/carers and pupils will be informed via the pupil bulletin once the system is up and running fully again. We apologise for any inconvenience during your/ your child's use of the system this term.

Mrs P Fraser (DHT)

## Internet Safety

A lot of work goes on in school to ensure that pupils are given up to date and relevant information about how they can safely work and socialise online. We regularly use resources provided by CEOP (the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency). Their information for parents and carers has recently been updated and can be found at [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents). The new site offers a completely refreshed suite of articles and guidance on all aspects of child internet safety.

Whilst most of our young people are very responsible online, there are times when they can make mistakes. Families can visit this site to access advice and support on how to keep children safe from sexual abuse, both online and off. Articles provide guidance on topics as diverse as: challenging harmful sexual attitudes and promoting positive behaviours; helping a child with autism negotiate life online; supporting a child who has been sexually abused; and dealing with a range of online issues such as sending nude selfies and viewing pornography. Users will find films, downloadable guides and useful links to support organisations.

Families can also use the website to access the CEOP Safety Centre ([www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)) where they can report abuse and exploitation direct to CEOP.



Ms D Lynch (DHT)

## School Website

As you may have noticed, there are ongoing improvements and updates to our school website. We hope that this means that you are more easily able to access information, and know what is happening within our school. We also hope that you find the addition of the Daily Bulletins helpful in supporting your child at home. Please keep checking regularly!

<http://inverurie.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/>

Mrs P Fraser (DHT)

## **Town Twinning**

The town twinning project continues with a significant amount of work being done in terms of preparation over the last few months. Letters of intent have been exchanged with Bagnères de Bigorre to confirm the partnership, and lots of exciting plans are being made for the future. If you use twitter, please visit and follow the site for regular updates from the steering group:

<https://twitter.com/TwinInverurie>

Ms D Lynch (DHT)

## **Learning Through Work Week 2015**

Learning Through Work Week took place between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> November this year with a focus on Modern Apprenticeships. Led by Skills Development Scotland, the aim was to raise awareness of the range of apprenticeship routes that are now available to young people as they prepare for life beyond school.

All S5 students were invited to presentations from two very different employers. Wood Group joined us on 18<sup>th</sup> November, and Rubberatkins on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Each presentation shared information on the benefits of on-the-job formal learning, the reality of modern apprenticeships, and some company specific information. Pupils present were given the opportunity to ask questions at the end of each session.

One of the benefits of the Modern Apprenticeship Route is that apprentices learn skills and knowledge whilst working (and being paid) in a real life context, rather than learning about the theoretical aspects of a specific job or career. Apprentices work through a highly structured training programme, and work towards gaining industry developed and recognised qualifications. Modern apprenticeships come at four different levels of qualification, ranging from entry level right up to the equivalent of a university degree. In the past, apprenticeships were mostly in the trades, but today it is possible to undertake an apprenticeship in any one of several hundred different jobs, and many of these are available in our local area.

To find out more about Modern Apprenticeships and to search for apprenticeship vacancies please visit [www.apprenticeships.scot](http://www.apprenticeships.scot) or follow @apprentice\_scot on Twitter. Pupils of all ages may approach Ruth Berry, SDS Careers Advisor for advice or information during any of her drop in sessions in school, or by requesting an individual appointment. Miss D Lynch (DHT)

## **Pupil Ill Health**

As we get further into winter, we are having an increased number of pupils coming down with winter illnesses such as the cold. If any pupil begins to feel unwell during the school day, they must report to reception where they will be seen by a first aider. If they are too unwell to remain in school, parents/carers will be contacted and must make arrangements for their son/daughter to be collected from school. Pupils will not be released to travel home unaccompanied if they feel unwell. If first aid advice suggests that more urgent treatment is required, please be assured that we will contact the Health Centre or Ambulance Service as appropriate. Ms D Lynch (DHT)

## **S5 Safe Drive Stay Alive Event 2015**

**Date 5th November 2015 Location: Beach Ballroom, Aberdeen**

The majority of our S5 pupils left Inverurie around 12 Noon in three coaches to attend a national event at the Beach Ballroom on Thursday 5 November 2015. Accompanied by the Guidance Team and other Staff, they attended the event as part of a PSE programme to raise awareness of driving and associated concepts. This event is held annually and is now in its 11th year in the UK. All Aberdeenshire, Moray and Aberdeen schools can attend the event and this year over 5000 pupils attended the event over 4 days. This year there was also an opportunity for the public to attend the event on the Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm.

The official description of the event "Safe Drive Stay Alive is primarily targeted at all S5 pupils in Grampian, to make sure that when they get behind the wheel for the first time, they are aware of the responsibility they are taking on and the issues which could affect their safety and that of their passengers". It is also aimed at alerting pupils to their responsibilities as passengers in a vehicle.

Safe Drive Stay Alive is an innovative Theatre Education Project, exploring the circumstances and consequences of a road traffic collision. S5 pupils who attend the show witness a film of a crash in the local area which has been specially prepared, with roads and hospitals familiar to local students. As the drama unfolds and the Emergency Services arrive on the scene, the faces on film literally step onto stage. Pausing the film for a moment, they speak to the audience about their experiences, the reactions of the driver and passengers, the medical implications and how seeing such trauma affects them personally. Until the end, the audience is unsure which of the car's occupants will make it. This year's event had an A&E Surgeon from NHS Grampian, Lillian Shanks, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, PC William Wallace, Scottish Police Force and ex Elgin City Footballer Chris Tucker presenting their side. Also involved was the mother of a crash fatality, telling her story.

Following on from the Event, the Guidance Team spent a period discussing the impact on the pupils and asked for feedback. On the whole the feedback was very positive. Many pupils especially empathised with the presentation by Chris Tucker, who ended up in a coma following a serious road traffic accident.

Some pupils felt that the event was too short and that they would have liked more information on safe driving tips. We hope to follow this up in S6 with a 1 day event called Driving Ambition which revisits the Safe Drive theme and is more practical in nature.

Hopefully we can take some of the feedback to help to improve our S5 PSE programme in the future.

Thank you to all pupils who attended, you were a credit to the school. And remember: Guidance Team

**“SAFE DRIVE, STAY ALIVE”**

### **Christmas Concert**

On Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December, our Annual Christmas Concert will take place in the school hall. All 10 of our music groups as well as the S3 Music class will take part in this to entertain parents, friends and staff who come along to watch us perform. Everyone involved has been practising hard, both at home and at school, to put on the best performance possible. We will play a wide selection of music - the Orchestra will be playing Beethoven's epic Fifth Symphony, while the Concert Band will play a medley from the musical *Wicked*. Our many choirs will also be singing a variety of genres, ranging from *Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree* to *I Have A Dream*. The concert will begin and end with the traditional Christmas Carols which we invite everyone to join in with.

Alastair Fyfe S6

### **Acorn Centre Recitals**

Over the last month, our Senior Music Pupils performed at the Acorn Centre. We have played there for several years now and it is always a wonderful opportunity to perform in front of a live audience. We played a wide variety of music for anyone who wanted to drop in and listen, ranging from jazz saxophone pieces to classical piano and Scottish folk tunes. The audiences were always very appreciative of our performances, which made the recitals even more enjoyable. Everyone involved found this a fantastic experience which really boosted our confidence in the run-up to our performance exams after the Christmas Holidays. We would like to thank the Acorn Centre for their continued support and for allowing us to perform in such a great venue.

Alastair Fyfe S6



## Kellockbank

On 14<sup>th</sup> December, Inverurie Academy musicians took part in their annual performance at Kellockbank which they have been participating in for 10 years. The Singers started the performance off singing a variety of Christmas songs. Celtacad was next (our Scottish fiddle group) performing some Christmas songs and Scottish Sets. The singers came back out and sang more Christmas songs, the first verse of Away in a Manger was sung by an S1 called Gemma Robson who was picked to sing at the Annual Christmas Concert. Celtacad came back out again playing more Christmas tunes and Scottish sets, Alistair Fyfe, an S6, performed a solo. After performing, all the musicians were treated to some nice pieces and hot chocolate which was very kind of Kellockbank. Overall Kellockbank was a success so we would just like to say a massive THANK YOU to Kellockbank for allowing us to perform there once again.

Megan Stewart S4





## Inverurie Jazz Workshop Garioch Jazz Festival

Musicians from the school were invited to perform in the world premiere of Richard Michael's 'Donric Suite'. We had 3 full on practices of the jazz workshop.

The first one in the Inverurie Academy Music Room (Rm35) where we were first introduced to Richard Michael and the pieces he had written. The second one at the Hopeville Club where we practiced for about 2 ½ hours. Then a 4 ½ hour rehearsal at the Hopeville Club again, and then we went to Thainstone House to perform the actual pieces.

There was a professional Jazz Band on before us (they had come all the way up from Manchester) and there were people up dancing to that. Then we set up our instruments, Richard gave an introduction to the crowd, then we all played.

Euan Banks S4

## **So You Want To Be A Doctor?**

Five Inverurie Academy pupils – **Georgia Gow 4B1, Francesca Land 4D1, Connor McKay 4C1, Liam Ritchie 4B2 and Corin Stansfield 4B1** attended the “So You Want to be a Doctor” event at the Suttie Centre, University of Aberdeen Foresterhill Campus on Monday 2 November 2015. The event was for all S4 pupils across the region who may be interested in studying medicine.

Francesca Land 4D1 kindly agreed to write a report on the day’s activities:

“Having the opportunity to attend this event with other students from across the region who are also interested in a career in medicine, was extremely beneficial.

The day was organised into different workshops. These included an interactive trauma session & an interactive anatomical clinical case discovering the internal organisation of the human body and how it can be affected by disease or trauma.

We also experienced a workshop that used a demonstration model of a body to show the pulse and the movement of the lungs. In another workshop we learned how a person can be greatly affected by a trauma. For example, if a person has a brain injury, in some cases many can lose their sense of touch and can struggle with everyday activities, such as tying a lace or picking up a pencil. We experienced the difficulty of this by carrying out these tasks by wearing a pair of gloves. We also learned how much of an impact not wearing a seatbelt can have in a car accident.

We were also given vital information about completing an Application for University and how important it is to gain wider achievements and experiences together with the main qualifications.

The day overall was interesting, informative and exciting. We learned a lot and enjoyed the opportunity to talk to people from different areas of medicine. The day certainly reinforced my desire to pursue a career in medicine”

## **Young Citizen of the Year**

We would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Mitchell Wright of 5S2 on becoming Inverurie's Young Citizen of the Year. Mitchell has shown dedication and commitment not only to his school work, but to the wider school community. He regularly offers his personal time to help at various school events and is also an active member of the Business Education Pupils Group. Part of this initiative was being involved in the school's first Business Breakfast, linking up with local Businesses. Mitchell also sacrifices some time in his weekends to volunteer at a local charity shop. He has a wonderful attitude and willingness to help and is well-deserving of this award.

Mitchell will be given the great task of switching on Inverurie's Christmas lights and will have an official presentation mid-December. Congratulations once again Mitchell!  
Mrs D May (PTG)

## **Inverurie Academy Parent Council**

Since becoming your Chair in September, I have been impressed with the work going on at Inverurie Academy and I'm sure you will join me in welcoming Graeme Cowie as Acting Rector and I intend to ensure that the Parent Council and in turn the Parent Forum play their part in supporting Graeme, staff and pupils. This support has started as in 2016 your Parent Council will be sponsoring the second Business Breakfast aimed at enhancing links between the school and local business. We are again putting up £250 for the YPI scheme involving S3 pupils.

2016 will be an exciting year and one which will hopefully see consultation on the new academy and it is important that the Parent Council and Parent Forum feed into this process, so keep an eye on the school website and Parent Forum Facebook page for important dates.

With festive greetings,  
Neil Skene  
Chair, Inverurie Academy Parent Council

**Achievement Record - Inverurie Academy Pupils - Lucy Adams, Kirsten Watson, Samantha McElhinney & Chloe Clark**



**Evolution School of Dance**

15 December at 20:29 · 🌟

CONGRATULATIONS to our 8 fantastic RAD Ballet Intermediate Foundation Vocational exam girls for their spectacular results that came in today! All got merits and distinction in this prestigious professional exam. To pass this exam is fantastic but our Evolution pupils all excelled in their results. We are so proud of you all girls, well done!



Mrs S Watson  
(Parent)

**CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS : Wednesday 23 December - Tuesday 5 January**

<b>2016</b>	
Wednesday 06 January	Term 3
Friday 08 January	Publication of Senior Phase Choice Booklet
Tuesday 12 January	Drop in for parents to meet Acting Rector Times TBC
Wednesday 13 January	Drop in for parents to meet Acting Rector Times TBC
Thursday 14 January	Drop in for parents to meet Acting Rector Times TBC
Monday 18 January	Start of S4/S5/S6 Assessment Period S2 Personalisation Booklets Issued
Tuesday 26 January	DTP & MENc Vaccinations (S3)
Wednesday 27 January	S2 Parents' Evening (6.30pm)
Friday 29 January	Last Day of S4/S5/S6 Assessment Period
Tuesday 02 February	S3 Parent's Evening (4.30 – 7.00pm)
Wednesday 03 February	Start of current S3 Choice Interviews
Tuesday 09 February	S3/S4/S5 Parents' Information Evening (6.30pm)
Friday 12 February	Occasional Holiday
Monday 15 February	Mid Term Holiday
Tuesday 16 February	In Service
Wednesday 17 February	In Service
Friday 19 February	Completion of Target Setting S4-S6 (3)
Friday 26 February	S4/S5/S6 Reports issued
Monday 29 February	Start of S4/S5 Subject Choice Interviews
Thursday 03 March	P7 Parents' Information Evening (6.30pm)
Thursday 10 March	Careers Evening (7.00 – 9.00pm)
Friday 11 March	Final Date For Submission of New S4 Subject Choice Forms
Friday 18 March	Final Date For Submission of New S5/S6 Subject Choice Forms
Monday 21 March	S2 Reports Issued
Thursday 24 March	Final Date For Submission of S2 Personalisation Forms
Friday 25 March	Good Friday Holiday
Thursday 31 March	Creative Arts Showcase (5.00 – 7.00pm)

**EASTER HOLIDAYS : Monday 04 April - Friday 15 April**