



Term 1 Newsletter 2016-2017

NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2016

Welcome – Head Teacher’s Reflections

Whilst the summer holidays seem somewhat distant already, this term has seen summer weather providing a pleasant back-drop to a very busy eight weeks. The term has of course mainly been about focussing on our core business of learning and teaching but as you will see elsewhere in the Wider Achievement Newsletter a tremendous range of additional activities are available for young people at the school.

The provision of such opportunities is a reflection on the commitment shown by colleagues here, and for that I am very grateful. Similarly, having joined the school in August I have been greatly impressed with the attitude of many of the pupils and their willingness to take responsibility and to seek leadership opportunities. Indeed such themes have been promoted by myself and senior colleagues at assemblies this term. In whatever time it is that I am in place as Acting Head Teacher, pupils taking a pride in the school and their community is a theme I will pursue consistently. Linked to this, and detailed in a separate recent letter is the request to support the school through all pupils maintaining expected standards of uniform. Thank you for your co-operation in this.

One of the other key messages communicated to pupils this term has been the need to work consistently in S1-3 rather than to do so when examinations loom in the Senior Phase. With regard to this, I am very happy to report that on visits to classrooms, across the school I have seen pupils working in a very diligent way.

That context is of course dependent on having staff in place to appropriately support and challenge learners. As indicated to you recently we still have a few unfilled vacancies but will continue to do all we can to attract and recruit staff. Below you will find details of recent staff changes including the latest news regarding the appointment of a permanent Head Teacher.

Finally, as said at a recent very positive meeting of the Parent Council, to all parents and carers thank you for your support and interest in the school. Your engagement in the improvement agenda for the school is vital and I wish you all and your children every success in your partnership with the academy.



Ian Parkin
Acting Head Teacher

Head Teacher Update

It is with sadness that the school learnt of the resignation of Ms Linda Evans from the post of Head Teacher at Inverurie Academy. Following on from her time as Head Teacher at Mintlaw Academy, Ms Evans had been at Inverurie since January 2012 before illness led to her absence from the school last year.

Pupils and staff alike will have been grateful for the caring and calm approach exhibited by her and on behalf of all here I wish her health and happiness in the future.

Meanwhile, it is the case that her permanent replacement is currently being recruited with the scheduled interview process expected to be completed in mid-November. Parents and carers will be advised as soon as possible regarding the successful applicant and the agreed start date.

Staffing Update

As indicated previously we continue to face challenges in filling teaching positions in some curricular areas. However, I am pleased to confirm that after the October holiday Mrs Wendy Elrick will be joining the English Faculty and also Dr Sarah McKenzie is returning to the Science Faculty following her maternity leave.

In terms of support, this term has also seen learners benefit from the input and leadership of Mrs Sarah Kammer in her role as Acting Principal Teacher of Support for Learning. She, supported by Mrs Gemma Hadden, has had real impact in supporting a wide range of learners at the school.

Next term will also see the appointment of an additional Depute Head Teacher. This will be a part-time role to primarily assist with aspects of the new build programme as well as working as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Other expected appointments will include a Principal Teacher of Achievement, an Acting Principal Teacher of Creative Arts and a music teacher to work within the Creative Arts Faculty.

Sadly, leaving the staff in October will be Mrs Karin Miah. She has been an Administration Support Assistant in the school office for nearly a year and we thank her for her work here and wish her happiness and success in the future. Her replacement will be Mrs Lynn Watson.

To all our staff, a huge thank you for their efforts in supporting young people in such a wide range of ways.

Parental Engagement – Maths and Numeracy

Education Scotland have produced a helpful reference point for parents to assist them in supporting young people to make progress in maths and numeracy. The link below offers advice regarding focus areas and terminology and may be useful in supporting dialogue.

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/learninginscotland/curriculumareas/mathematics/glossary.asp>

Public Exhibition: Extension to Garioch Sports and Community Centre

The school has been asked to publicise the fact that a Public Exhibition of proposals for the extension to Garioch Sports and Community Centre will take place on Tuesday, 11 October 2016 – 7.30 am – 9.00 pm at the centre itself. All interested parties welcome.

S6 Driving Ambition

Safe driving was the subject of this exciting day for S6 and the 'Driving Ambition' sessions had 'food for thought' for every pupil involved. Everyone thought that it was a useful day to have had the privilege of taking part in.

Upon attending you were greeted by the DAB Plus Team and were hit by the importance of driving safely via a hard-hitting DVD which made us reflect on use of mobile phones whilst driving. The workshops then ranged from First Aid for use in a RTA, to choosing a second-hand car, to considering the qualities that make a good driver. Most importantly was the message given throughout the activities and presentations of the day: drive safely and don't be the next statistic!

All the S6 pupils would like to thank the DAB Plus Team for this useful and informative day.

Jamie Falconer 6C



Online E-payments for School Meals and Other Online Purchases

With your Parent Information Booklet you will have received details re Online E-payments. Details re logging on etc. are also noted below.

Aberdeenshire Council has introduced a secure and easy way of making payments to your Child's Academy for school meals and more. Inverurie Academy is now active on the system. There is no upper limit to the amount you can add to your child's account and if you wish, you can provide sufficient funds for weeks or even months in advance.

If your child is eligible for free school meals, the system will recognise this and automatically allow meal purchases. You can still create an account to see meal purchase histories and to pay for non-food items (trips/activities etc.) when that option becomes available. All users will be required to access the system using "myaccount" which has been set up by The Scottish Government as a simple approach to accessing public services. It allows parents/carers to access online services whilst ensuring their details are secure.

To sign up for and begin using this new system, please follow the instructions below.

Thank you.

Step 1: Visit the **Aberdeenshire Council website** at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk and choose "Pay" from the list of online services, then select "School Meals".

Step 2: If you already have a myaccount, click on the sign-In logo above then move to step 4, if you do not have a myaccount choose "Register" then "Create New Account". (Please note if you have an NEC card you can use this for a quick registration process).

You will be asked to add your name, Date of Birth, email address and home address, and you will be asked to create a username. You can use your email address if you wish. Following this step you can complete further information or bypass this and "Complete registration".

Step 3: You will be sent a temporary password to the email address you provided, follow the instructions in the email by clicking on the link and entering the temporary password. You will then be asked to provide a permanent password. On your first time logging into myaccount you will be asked to share your details, this will allow you to use the same login with future council services. Once you are signed in, you will be directed to school payments system.

Step 4: If you are an existing school payments user and have used the same email address to register through myaccount the system will recognise this and you will be asked to link your logins by entering your original password. Your

login will then be joined and you will be able to continue to use the system. You will only need to complete this step once.

If you are a brand new customer, please choose “Link Childs Account” and enter your child’s reference number from the letter you have been issued with. You can then opt to ‘link further children’ and use further codes to link additional children.

Making Payments: Once logged into the School Payments System, go to the homepage and add items you wish to pay for to your basket. When you proceed to checkout you will be taken to the Aberdeenshire Council Payment Gateway where you can enter your debit or credit card details securely. Please note a 2% fee is applied for credit cards. A receipt will be emailed to your nominated account.

A video guide to the registration process is available online at https://youtu.be/YwH9_3n7O4I. Should you have any queries or issues with registering for this system please contact our helpline on 03456 08 12 02.

Adverse Weather

As we prepare for the winter term and potentially adverse weather that may bring disruption to the school day – we would like to remind you of the various options for finding out whether or not the school is open or closed in such circumstances.

- 1. The Telephone Information Line** number is **0870 054 4999**. You will be asked for the school PIN number. It is **021060**. Once the PIN number is entered, simply follow the instructions (you need a push pad telephone to do so). During bad weather information will be updated each evening at about 6.00pm, or as appropriate.
- 2. The Website** is <https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Apps/Schools-closures/>. The website is easy to use and the information will be updated at regular intervals as appropriate.
- 3. Local Radio Stations** will announce closures. The website is linked to local radio stations and when the school updates a message on the site it is automatically e-mailed to them.

Health and Safety Reminder

Despite previous reminders we are unfortunately still experiencing pupils being dropped off within the school grounds. If you are bringing pupils to school by car you must not bring your car into school either at the Jackson Street entrance or at the West Church entrance. Pupils can be safely dropped off at either the Swimming Pool Car Park or in the Square beside Boots The Chemist. Both of these locations allow pedestrian access to school.

Marion Morrell (Support Services Co-ordinator)

Dates For Your Diary

Monday, 24 October 2016	Start of Term 2
Thursday, 3 November 2016	S2 Parents Evening
Wednesday, 9 November 2016	Open Event re New Build
Monday, 14 November 2016	In-Service Day
Tuesday, 15 November 2016	In-Service Day
Wednesday, 7 December 2016	S1 Parents Evening
Tuesday, 20 December 2016	Creative Arts Christmas Concert

Christmas Holidays
Thursday, 22 December 2016 – Wednesday, 4 January 2017 (Inclusive)