

NVERURIE
ACADEMY



Term 2 Newsletter

2017-2018

Head Teacher's Reflections

Welcome to the December 2017 edition of the Inverurie Academy Newsletter.

The purpose of this newsletter is to celebrate just a few of the many activities of groups and individuals connected with the school and also to provide you with information relating to important future events in the life of the school. We are immensely proud of the students of Inverurie Academy and we are sure that you are too.

Whatever your plans are for this festive period, I wish you all the very best!

Mr M Jones
Head Teacher

Parent Council Update

At our AGM in September, we voted on a new Committee and since then we've also held a couple of meetings. Minutes of Meetings are posted to the Parent Council section of the school's website. The dates and Head Teacher topic for our programme of Committee Meetings have been set for the year and our next get-together is on Thursday 1st March. All parents/carers with pupils at the Academy are welcome to come along! These meetings are great opportunities for parents, pupils, teaching staff and local Councillors to share their views and ideas to develop the policies, procedures and general experience of being at our school for the benefit of pupils and their families.

Highlights from this term include our involvement in two Depute Head Teacher recruitment panels, our continuing participation in the consultation process for the Inverurie Community Campus and our contribution towards the Inclusion, Quality Improvement and School Uniform Parent Focus Groups.

This is an exciting time for the school! Look out for updates on the Parent Forum Inverurie Academy Facebook page and let us know your thoughts/comments/views by dropping us a line at **inverurieacademypc@gmail.com**.

Festive Greetings
Inverurie Academy Parent Council

Core Values Evaluation & Ideas Week – 8 – 12 January 2018

It is really important to us at Inverurie Academy that we gather a 'progress report' from parents, students and staff every year to ensure that we continue to make the right improvements to the school.

We use two different methods of gathering views from the school community as described in the graphic below.



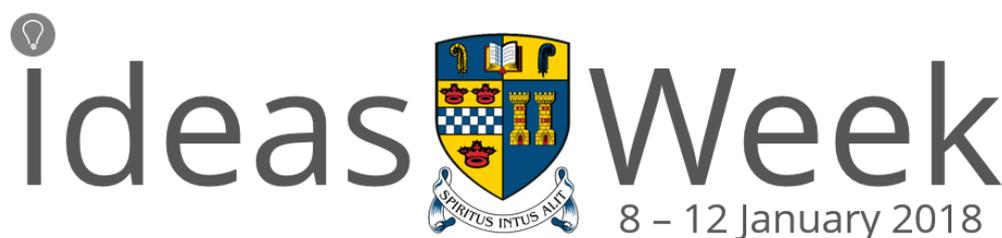
This year then, we are focusing on an evaluation of Inverurie Academy based around the Core Values of Ambition, Inclusion, Integrity and Respect. During the week of 8 January 2018, there will be two values related opportunities for parents to get involved.

Evaluation Focus Group

On Tuesday, 9 January 2018, from 5-6 pm, we invite you as parents to participate as a focus group to consider two questions for each of the Core Values; what are we doing well and, what more could we be doing.

Please sign up to the Eventbrite link below to participate in this activity:-

<http://bit.ly/ParentValuesEvaluation>



Every person involved with Inverurie Academy can contribute to making the school a better place. From 8 – 12 January 2018, the rear wall of the Assembly Hall will be covered with flip-chart paper. Whether you are a member of support staff, business contact, teacher, parent or student, you are welcome to come into the Assembly Hall during this week and record your ideas on the rear wall. These ideas will be discussed on Friday and some of these ideas will then form a part of our Improvement Plan for 2018-19. Your voice counts!

For parents, this opportunity will be available from Monday – Wednesday between 9.00 and 10.30 am, and then from 4.00 – 5.00 pm.

Mr M Jones
Head Teacher

Staffing News

In any large organisation, there are changes in staffing during the course of a year. Inverurie Academy is no different. During the course of the last twelve months, we have welcomed Mr Rutkowski, Mrs Milne (both B & IT), Mrs Sarran (English), Miss Waite (HWB), Mr Campbell (Humanities), Mrs Walkey, Mrs Stefan (both Modern Languages), Miss Carnegie, Mr Duncan, Dr Duncan (All Science) and Mr Duthie (TVE).

Among the goodbyes are some who have been with us for a significant period of time. Mr Hamilton has been at Inverurie Academy for the past thirty years, and for a significant portion of this time as Depute Head Teacher. He will leave us at Christmas and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his service and wish him all the very best in his retirement.

This leads on then to changes in the Leadership Team at Inverurie Academy. Following the news about Mr Hamilton leaving, I am delighted to let you know Mr Paterson was appointed to the post of Depute Head Teacher and subsequently Mr Johnston has been appointed to the temporary post of Acting Depute Head Teacher (0.5). This means that the Year Head remits will be amended to the following:-

S1 - Miss Lynch	S2 - Mr Johnston	S3 - Mr Paterson
S4 - Mr O'Connor	S5 - Mr Paterson	S6 - Mrs Fraser

We are currently in the process of appointing a temporary (0.5) post in Guidance to cover for Mr Johnston and a permanent PT Faculty Humanities. Further information on these appointments will be made in due course.

Mr M Jones
Head Teacher

Bank of Scotland – Business Class

This past year has seen the start of a sustainable partnership between Inverurie Academy and the Bank of Scotland. Here are just a few of the activities that the Bank of Scotland have supported over this session.

Selection of School Captains 2017-18

In June 2017, Mr Alex Drummond was involved in an interview panel to select the best candidates for School Captain at Inverurie Academy in 2017-18.



School Captain Mentoring

Since September 2017, Mr Vladimir Ghita has been beginning to meet with the School Captains to provide them with support in their leadership role. To-date, this support has included CV writing and interview skills, with a plan to support some training in public speaking early in the new year.

Leadership Training

The Bank of Scotland will also be providing leadership training as part of community learning and also access to some online leadership materials to support teaching staff at Inverurie Academy.

Mr M Jones
Head Teacher

Assessment Period (15 – 26 January 2018)

The National Qualification Assessment Period (formerly known as 'Prelim' examinations) for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels will take place over two weeks in January. Pupils have been issued with a timetable and instructions for this period of time. Your son/daughter has been asked to ensure they share these with you at home. (Copies are available on the school website if they have not as yet done so!)

We intend to run this period of assessments as close to the final SQA examination procedures as possible to give pupils an experience of these prior to the examination diet in May. Therefore, many of the expectations will remain the same. For example:-

- It is the responsibility of pupils to bring the necessary equipment such as pens, pencils, rulers, calculators etc for each examination. Some spare stationery items will be available for emergencies. Pupils should be sure to bring only what is permissible for each exam, and to carry them without a pencil case.
- Mobile phones, i-pods and smartwatches are strictly forbidden in the assessment room. (NB - Pupils found with any of the above items in an exam venue in May are likely to have their qualifications withheld by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.)
- It is vitally important that pupils arrive in school in good time before the start of an assessment. A minimum of 10 minutes before the start time of the assessment is recommended to give time to double check the room venue, etc. Pupils waiting for an assessment should gather at the Study Room (R40) from where they will be registered and called forward to the hall, or other room, by a member of the SLT or Invigilator.

These assessments will allow your son/daughter to gain experience of the 'style' of examination period which will take place in May 2018 and will allow teachers to assess their progress to date. In addition, they will help to create evidence should your son/daughter be unable to sit an exam in the May examination period. However, they will not form the basis of an 'appeal' in August as, in 2014, the SQA introduced two Results Services which replaced the appeals process, and I would like to take this opportunity to inform/remind you how these new procedures work.

- The Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service will operate throughout the May examination period. If a pupil is unable to sit an exam, for very good reason, such as a family bereavement or serious illness, or if performance in an exam is badly affected by circumstances such as these, parents should contact the school immediately. Where exceptional circumstances have affected a pupil, the school will then put the pupil forward for Exceptional Circumstances Consideration. In such cases, the school will forward alternative evidence – such as samples of the pupil's work and/or 'prelim' assessment paper(s) – to the SQA, to support the request for a qualification to be awarded. The award granted, however, may not be the same as that estimated by the school.
- The Post-Results Service may be used by schools where a pupil's grade is significantly different from that expected. Based on the evidence the school holds about the pupil's performance throughout the course, a school may request a

clerical check and/or an SQA marking review. The pupil must, however, give permission for this in writing.

- A clerical check is a check that all questions have been marked and all marks totalled correctly.
- A marking review is where an SQA senior examiner will review the marks awarded to each question to ensure that the original marking is in line with national standards: the work will not be re-marked.

Please note:-

- the decision to ask for a marking review rests solely with the school;
- as a result of a clerical check and/or marking review, the pupil's grade may stay the same or be amended up or down.

It is important that parents understand that the school will not be able to submit alternative evidence, like course work or prelim examination evidence, to support its request for a review. Decisions about the grade awarded will be made solely on the pupil's performance in the SQA examination.

The SQA has recognised that the Post-Results Service is a significant departure from previous practice and so have put in place more stringent checks of each markers' work to ensure that final results are as accurate as possible.

It would be very helpful if you could discuss information contained in this newsletter article with your son/daughter.

Finally, on behalf of Inverurie Academy staff, I would like to take this opportunity to wish your son/daughter every success in the Assessment Period in January.

Mrs P Fraser
Depute Rector / SQA Co-ordinator

Rights Respecting School Award



For the past few weeks we have been working along with some staff and pupils in the school, trying to put together a committee dedicated to achieving “Rights Respecting School” status in our school. We have delivered an introduction to the award to all staff on the recent In-service day and have delivered assemblies to each year group.

The outcome, we hope, is the Rights-Respecting Schools Award. We hope to see a school where everyone feels valued and protected and with the values of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child at its heart.

A Rights Respecting School is a school where young people gain self-esteem by learning about the rights they have from birth onwards and where young people learn the difference between wants and needs and that we all have a responsibility to preserve ours and others’ rights.

Some issues we have raised include:

- Everyone in the school must use the language of rights, respect and responsibility. Adults and young people model rights-respecting behaviour and language.
- If young people have a right to be protected from conflict, cruelty, exploitation and neglect, then they also have a responsibility not to bully or harm each other.
- Young people should become active global citizens by learning the universality of human rights, establishing an identity and challenging injustice, inequality and poverty in the world.
- Pupils should participate and use their voice. It is important in a school for young people to have a say in how it is run. This can be done through school council, house council and committees. Real change can be made if pupils make their voices heard.

To become a Rights Respecting School we are required to: develop a rights-respecting ethos, give young people the lead in creating rights-respecting classrooms, equip young people to take a lead through rights-respecting training and allow students and adults to work in partnership.

There are four overarching standards we are required to meet:-

Standard A: Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management.

The best interests of the child are a top priority in all actions. Leaders are committed to placing the values and principles of the UNCRC at the heart of all policies and practice.

Standard B: The whole school community learns about the UNCRC.

The Convention is made known to children and adults. Young people and adults use this shared understanding to work for global justice and sustainable living.

Standard C: The school has a rights-respecting ethos.

Young people and adults work together to develop and maintain a rights-respecting school community, based on the UNCRC, in all areas and in all aspects of school life.

Standard D: Children are empowered to become active citizens and learners.

Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously. Young people play an active role in their own learning and speak and act for the rights of all to be respected locally and globally.

When the school has conducted a self-evaluation of its progress using the standards, it invites an Education Officer to conduct an external assessment. Following the external assessment, a judgement is made and a verbal and then a written report is given.

We have learned that benefits of becoming a Rights Respecting School include: creating improvement in pupil's well-being, removing the reasons for bullying, giving greater organisation to school improvement strategies, enhance positive behaviour and self-esteem, reducing classroom aggression, empowering young people to participate effectively, and a sense of school community is formed through shared values. We will be linking this to our school 'Core Values' throughout the process.

Many classrooms are now displaying a Summary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Global Goals for Sustainability for staff and pupils to refer to. All countries in the UN have signed up to these. As part of the work towards gaining Rights Respecting School status, the group will be asking staff and pupils, and other members of the community, to consider getting involved in projects to raise awareness of these later in the session.

Libbie Allison - 6D

Fraser Johnston - 6C

Daniel McGladrigan - 6D

Josh MacRae - 4H2

THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development



Uniform Refresh

I am pleased to announce that the New Uniform Group have made considerable progress with the journey towards a new uniform for Inverurie Academy. A wide ranging survey has taken place amongst students, staff and parents and has gathered almost a thousand responses. We have also conducted a parental focus group and are close to identifying a supplier. By the end of term we hope to be able to provide several possible uniforms to choose from and to have held a vote among students, staff and parents to finalise the new uniform for the Academy. I hope to make this very exciting announcement early in 2018.



Mr C Paterson
Depute Head Teacher

Project Paws

Our Therapet dogs Breagh and Noodle have begun work in the school and are proving to be a great success. This year will be a pilot of the project and I hope going forward that we will be able to add extra Therapet sessions and extra Therapet dogs to the life of the school.

If you see Breagh and Noodle around the school and would like to know more about what they do, feel free to approach their handlers, Diane and Amy, who are always glad to talk about the project.



Mr C Paterson
Depute Head Teacher

STEM – Installation Project

A group of five S6 pupils have been busy working away on their STEM in the Installation Project presented jointly by TECHfest and Nexen Petrochemical. They recently attended the presentation day on 14 December 2017 to have their work assessed by industry professionals. This date just so happened to coincide with the Nexen Christmas Jumper Day in aid of Save the Children!

The teams presented their tender to the professionals in attendance and then offered them the opportunity to intimately scrutinise their work. They also took part in CREST interviews to gain further recognition for the efforts they put into this project.

After a competitive series of presentations, where the team gave a good account of themselves, they were announced as the inaugural runners up! The team were commended for their safety conscious remit and were thus awarded the HSE Prize, with each member earning a £15 Amazon Voucher.

Photograph below of the Team who were:-

Robyn Gray
Bethany Burt
Corin Stansfield
Robert Laverty
Daniel McGladrigan

Mr R Dair
Chemistry Teacher



Robert Gordon Art Workshop

The Robert Gordon University's Gray's School of Art offer senior students across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire an opportunity to attend a printmaking workshop. The workshops are split into two different categories exploring the relief and intaglio print processes. Three of our pupils from Advanced Higher; Kotryna Kralikauskaite, Sarah Ord and Megan Rickard; took up the opportunity to attend an intaglio workshop. The girls took drawings and photographs with them that they would develop into a print. The girls got to print approximately four prints each during different stages throughout the day and found the workshop to be a good experience - they said it was fun and an insight into art college courses. They said it felt like a taster of University life that has inspired them to further their education to tertiary level.

Mrs O Richardson
Faculty Head - Creative Arts



Trainspotting - Higher Drama Trip



On Wednesday, 1 November 2017 the Higher Drama pupils (Jodie Moir, Grace Geddes, Samantha Weston, Bozena Morrison, Ben Cunningham and Alex Milne) joined pupils from Alford and Westhill Academy on a trip to Glasgow's Citizen Theatre to see the Harry Gibson's stage version of Trainspotting. Trainspotting is one of the great, iconic narratives of the last 25 years and the pupils were blown away by this production. They will be studying this performance as part of their higher course work and will use this as an influence for their final performances.

Mrs O Richardson
Faculty Head - Creative Arts

Art Exhibition

The Art and Design pupils have worked exceptionally hard to complete their examination course work in June this year and gained exceptional results for all their hard work. To celebrate their achievements, an Art Folio Exhibition was held at the Academy on Thursday 16th November. The exhibition included work from Advanced Higher, Higher and National 5 Art and Design pupils. The evening was a great success and really showcased the hard work and achievements of the pupils.

Mrs O Richardson
Faculty Head - Creative Arts



Christmas Concert

One of the highlights of the year! A vast number of pupils ranging from the S1 pupils, having their first performance to the S6 pupils on their last Christmas Concert before they leave for University.

This concert featured performances from soloists up to full concert band with a range of festive and popular music. All the pupils put in so much effort and dedication. A special thanks to Eryn Duffus for her wonderful role as Chairperson of the Creative Arts Committee and compere for the evening.

Mrs O Richardson
Faculty Head - Creative Arts



Visit to Inverurie Academy by Colin Clark – MP for Gordon

We were recently happy to welcome the Rt Hon Colin Clark (MP for Gordon) to our school. In visiting the Academy, Mr Clark was treated to a guided tour from Connor McKay and Beth Thom - two of our senior pupils. The tour was followed up with a tête-à-tête between Mr Clark and our school's Head Teacher, Mr Jones.

After having a discussion with Mr Jones, Mr Clark was treated to a grilling interview from Emma Sutherland and Ellie Cook - two of our Advanced Higher Modern Studies pupils. Ellie and Emma were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to interview Mr Clark and seek his opinions on the Scottish criminal justice system.

The Conservative MP was asked questions such as whether he believed prisons were effective; what the purpose of prisons is; whether people with pre-diagnosed mental health disorders should be sent to prison; and whether the Scandinavian justice model could be seen as a more effective way to cut crime and reduce re-offending.

The 20-minute interview will form part of the primary research for Ellie and Emma's dissertations, while the experience provided Mr Clark with a question to take to the House of Commons.

During debate on Prison Reform and Safety in the House of Commons, Mr Clark asked, "Do you think that the support on offer to those prisoners who suffer mental health disorders is effective?"

In responding, Bob Neill, the Chair of the Justice Committee said: "All the evidence that our Committee has seen so far suggests that it is not effective. Far too many people in prison suffer from mental health difficulties. David Cameron, the former Prime Minister, rightly emphasised that in a speech that he made back in 2015."

Mr S Campbell
Teacher of Modern Studies (Probationer)

Sports Leadership Continues to Grow

As the school year has progressed the Leaders in Sport Group has reduced to eleven active members:-

Megan Brown S6, Katie Grant S6, Chloe Hay S6, Amy Norval S6, Saphia Wallek S6, Chris Lamont S6, Finlay Ross S6, Layth Abo Zaed S6, Ritchie Laverty S5, Julie Binnie S5, Melissa Jack S4

- Megan has withdrawn slightly due to her existing coaching work in the community which is already at an extensive level and she has achieved 200 hours within the Saltire Award.
- Katie and Chloe have been assisting with Fit For Girls every Wednesday.
- Amy has been running lunchtime badminton and will be joined in Term 3 by Saphia.
- Chris and Ritchie have both undergone CPD with Basketball Scotland and are now volunteering at after school basketball whilst Ritchie is also volunteering at Strathburn Primary School and assisting the Visiting PE Specialist David Fullerton with after school basketball.
- Layth and Julie are due to complete their SFA Development Activities 1.1 Course in early 2018 and will then take on roles with after school football. Julie has already attended a Positive Coaching Scotland Double Goal certificated workshop.
- Melissa is due to receive CPD training in Clubgolf and will begin lunchtime sessions for S1-S2 girls in Term 3. She has attended SportScotland Child Protection training.
- Finlay has recently joined the programme and will be taking a lead administrative role in the schools pending application for the School Sport Award.

With additional Child Protection inputs having been provided by Active Schools we now have a highly trained group of young sports deliverers, supported by I & K Motors, with the real potential to develop even further within the school and wider community, with links to the Garioch Community Sports Hub and BID Inverurie.



The November In-service saw Madeline King, S1 and Steven Strachan and Ryan Miller both S2, attend the "I Can Lead" training programme. Held over two days the pupils all completed the course and after completing some course work and volunteering hours they will secure the certificated qualification. All three are being mentored by Kenny Gibb, UKCC L2 and Aberdeenshire Council Basketball Coach. Madeline is due to start helping with a basketball club at Keithhall Primary School in Term 3 whilst the two boys will be continuing their existing support to the lunchtime and after school secondary basketball sessions with Kenny Gibb.



Malcolm Grant
Active Schools Lead Co-ordinator - Central Aberdeenshire & Inverurie Academy

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 0370 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 6.00 pm, 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, 8 January 2018	Start of Term 3
Monday, 29 January 2018	S3 into Senior Phase Information Evening (6.30 pm – 7.15 pm)
Monday, 5 February 2018	S3 Parents' Evening (4.30 pm – 7.00 pm)
Tuesday, 6 February 2018	S2 into S3 Parent Information Evening (6.30 pm – 7.15 pm)
Friday, 9 February 2018	Occasional Day – No School
Monday, 12 February 2018	Holiday (No School)
Tuesday, 13 February 2018	In-Service Day (No School for Pupils)
Wednesday, 14 February 2018	In-Service Day (No School for Pupils)
Wednesday, 21 February 2018	S1 Parents' Evening (4.30 pm – 7.00 pm)
Tuesday, 27 February 2018	P7 Parents' Information Evening (6.30 pm – 7.30 pm)
Thursday, 8 March 2018	Careers Evening

PLANNING AHEAD!

Easter Holidays

Friday, 30 March 2018 - Easter Friday (No School)

Monday, 2 April 2018 - Friday, 13 April 2018 (Inclusive)

School Resumes

Monday, 16 April 2018



Graduation Ceremony
Inverurie Academy is proud to invite parents of those leaving Inverurie Academy in 2018 to save the date for a Graduation Ceremony on:-

*Friday 27th April 2018
0900 - 1100
Breakfast followed by Graduation Ceremony*



Happy Holidays