

INVERURIE
ACADEMY



Term 1 Newsletter

2019-2020

Head Teacher's Reflections

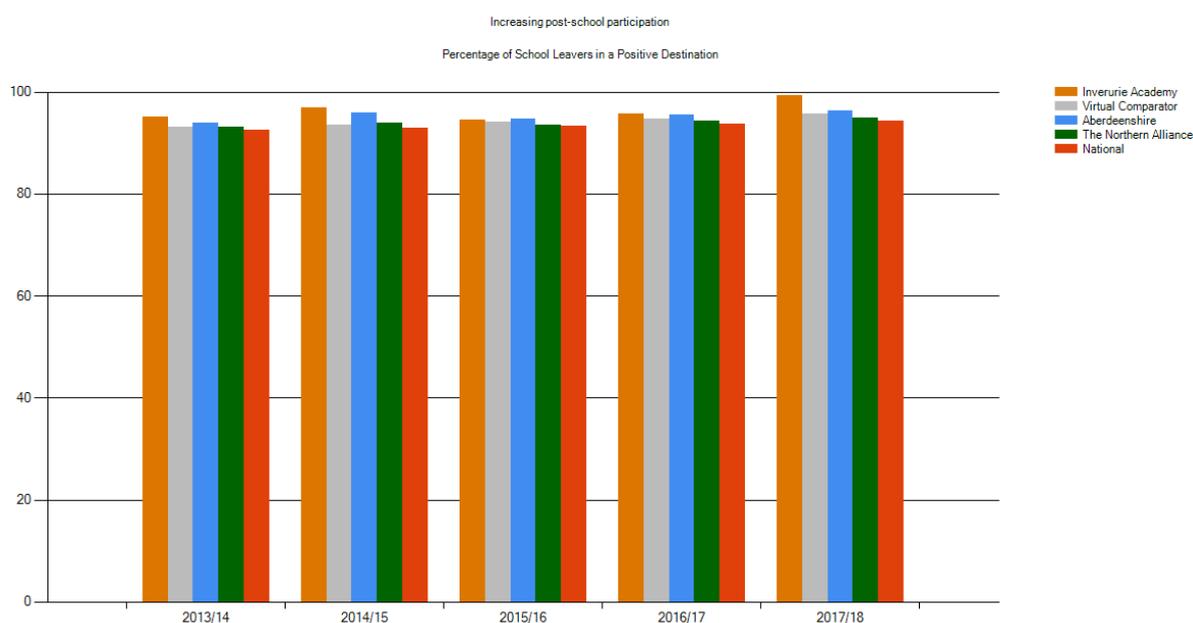
Then and Now

There is an old saying 'can't see the woods for the trees' – apparently this dates back to the sixteenth century but the relevance reaches all of us. There are chunks of time when we carry on our lives doing the things we think are right without seeing the bigger picture because we are so concerned with the detail. Then, occasionally, we are able to look up and see that bigger picture. Well, this is such a time for me as I look back on the last eighteen months at Inverurie Academy. I've picked out a little of this 'big picture' to share with you...

Ambition

Over the past eighteen months, we have been focusing on our attainment levels during SQA exams and particularly with our S4 cohort. In the two most recent attainment cycles, the S4 attainment has improved across the various measures, and specifically five or more passes at National 5. In this measure, we have seen a 17% improvement in two years. This demonstrates the ambition of our students but also recognising the dedication and support provided by our staff team here at Inverurie Academy.

Another measure that is used as a benchmark for schools is to identify the percentage of young people who leave Inverurie Academy and go on to positive and sustained destinations. Inverurie Academy has traditionally been strong in this measure, and this year we achieved a figure of 99.3%. This is ahead of all comparisons and an increase on previous years.



Inclusion

Eighteen months ago, we were a school with a plan for our curriculum that promised much but still had a tendency towards better support for those who were seeking university as a chosen destination. We challenged ourselves to start to change our offer to be more inclusive with a suite of qualifications that catered for all students. Our faculties responded fantastically well, with a set of 17 new National Progression Awards, Skills for Work Courses and Foundation Apprenticeships. These courses are a popular part of the S5/6 offer for 2019-20 and make a real difference to how well our curriculum caters for all young people.

I also reflect on how our challenge to students to be more ambitious carries with it a responsibility to ensure we provide better support for students when they need it. In the last eighteen months, we have started a number of great partnerships and initiatives to provide such support; we have engaged with a partner MCR Pathways to provide a suite of coaching and mentoring opportunities for young people, an ACIS Counsellor now works in the school to support students two days per week, we have a Breakfast Club, S5 and S6 mentoring from members of the community, and our S1 students are mentored in their skills by our S6 students.

Integrity

We understand integrity to mean 'doing the right thing even when others might not be watching'. At Inverurie Academy, our staff team are changing the culture of the way we improve as professionals. In the last eighteen months, we have introduced a series of initiatives designed to open our practice up to becoming better at what we do; all teachers are now part of a Learning Trio and commit to regular visits to fellow professionals with the common aim to better support students in our care.

Respect

Finally, I love how our Core Values of Ambition, Inclusion, Integrity and Respect are coming off the page and embedding into what students do outwith the classroom. None of us are perfect and we will still be able to find examples where we let ourselves down, however, these will increasingly be replaced with stories of values in action. Here are a few examples of recent communications from members of the local community:-

- One member of the public emailed in to say that he dropped a significant sum of money and three senior boys called him back to let him know that he had dropped this – he commended them on their behaviour.
- A lady shopping in a local supermarket was impressed to be invited to go ahead in the queue of a group of students who were incredibly polite to her.
- Two instances recently have detailed how students have seen a member of the community hurt and stopped to help.

It is only when you have a chance to look back and see the woods for the trees that we realise how much progress there has been in the last eighteen months. Thank you for your part in this, for the part that your young people have played in this. If you are keen to get more involved, please do get in touch!

Mr M Jones
Head Teacher

Save the Date – A Celebration of Inverurie Academy

Inverurie Academy would like to invite all past and present staff and former students to join us for a celebration of our school in February 2020.

On Saturday, 8 February 2020 during the day, there will be an opportunity to sign up for a tour of the existing building; perhaps to see some familiar corridors and classrooms, to get access to some areas of the school you might not have seen before and to hear from informed tour guides. These tours will be offered in return for a fundraising donation with signup available through Eventbrite from 1 November 2019.

Later on in the evening, what better way to celebrate the new chapter for Inverurie Academy than coming for an evening of food and entertainment, to share stories and reminisce about the good old times of this historic building that has been at the heart of our community since 1909.

Tickets for our evening celebration will be available from 1 November 2019 until 20 December 2019.

For further information please contact the school via the following email address:-

inverurie.aca@aberdeenshire.gov.uk



Inverurie Academy House Crests



Last week, the House Assemblies saw the launch of the first ever Inverurie Academy House Crests. In March 2018 our whole S2 cohort entered a competition in partnership with our Creative Arts Faculty to design a House Crest with an animal theme. This was followed by a community-wide vote. The winning designs were digitised by partners C P & Co with input from the students.

We are incredibly proud of these new House Crests and recognised the following students with a presentation of a framed version of their design:-

Barra Bees	Ellie Blackaby
Crichtie Chameleons	Fergus Christie & Seb Bailey
Davah Dragons	Chloe Ross, Heather Jackson, Niamh Cruickshank
Harlaw Hawks	Rebecca Mann
Selbie Stags	Daniel Roberts-Haritonov

Mr M Jones
Head Teacher

N5 Assessment Period (20th – 29th November 2019)

The National 5 National Qualification Assessment Period (formerly known as 'Prelim' Examinations) will take place 20 – 29 November 2019. Pupils will be issued with a timetable and instructions for this period of time on their return from October holidays. Your son/daughter has been asked to ensure they share these with you at home. Copies will also be available on the school website if they do not do so! We have split the N5 assessment period from Higher and Advanced Higher as almost all pupils have been undertaking these qualifications since January 2019. The Higher/Advanced Higher National Qualification Assessment Period will run from 8 – 17 January 2020, where the same advice will apply.

We run this period of assessments under conditions as similar to the final SQA examination procedures as possible to give pupils an experience of these prior to the examination diet in April/May/June 2020. Therefore, many of the expectations will remain the same. For example:-

- It is the responsibility of pupils to bring the necessary equipment eg pens, pencils, rulers, calculators etc for each examination. Some spare stationery items will be available only 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, iPods, smartwatches or any similar small electronic devices 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.
- Pupils should report to the SQA noticeboard at the Barra Base area, a minimum of 10 minutes before the start time of the assessment to give time to double check the room venue, etc. Pupils waiting for an assessment should gather at the S5 Study Room (opposite Barra Base) from where they will be registered and called forward to the hall, or other room, by a member of the SLT or Invigilator. If a pupil is in a timetabled class, they will be released 15 minutes before the exam start time. If the exam overlaps part of break or lunch they can be released for the time they miss – up to 15 minutes (break) or 30 minutes (lunch) to allow them this period of rest time.

These assessments will allow your son/daughter to gain experience of the 'style' of examination period which will take place in April/May/June 2020 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 main 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 April/May/June 2020 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 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/carers understand that the school will not be able to submit alternative evidence, like course work or assessment 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 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 communication 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 forthcoming Assessment Period and hope they can make use of some of the holiday period for revision purposes.

Dr A J Drysdale
Depute Head Teacher/SQA Co-ordinator

Google Guardian Summaries

Some of Mrs Clarkson's Maths, Mrs McAndie's Biology and Mr Campbell's Modern Studies pupils will be trialling the use of Google Guardian Summaries after the holidays. This feature allows parents/carers to receive a weekly summary of classroom activity on Google Classroom and as such support/remind their son/daughter to complete this work and also to have any non-completion highlighted. We will look for feedback on this at the end of next term with a view to rolling the facility out more widely next year.

If your son/daughter's class is part of the trial, a direct communication will have been sent to you separately.

Dr A J Drysdale
Depute Head Teacher

#inver = **a** + **a** + **a**

An **Inverurie Academy** lesson is where **all learners** are **actively engaged** and learning at an **ambitious pace**

LEARNING
ambition inclusion integrity respect

SAVE THE DATE – LEARNING & TEACHING PILOT EVENT

Thursday, 28 November 2019 - 6.30 pm – 8.00 pm

Sessions will include:

- Art Folio Exhibition
- Science Practical Activities
- N5 English Close Reading
- Rights Respecting Schools
- Sexual Health and Relationships Education (SHARE)
- Google Classroom
- SCHOLAR
- How to talk so your teen will listen / how to listen so your teen will talk
- Skills Mentoring

Dr A J Drysdale
Depute Head Teacher

Girl On The Train

On 5 September 2019 all Senior Drama pupils attended a production at His Majesty's Theatre of "Girl On The Train" directed by Anthony Banks.

Rachel Watson longs for a different life. Her only escape is the perfect couple she watches through the train window every day, happy and in love. Or so it appears. When Rachel learns that the woman she has been secretly watching has suddenly disappeared, she finds herself as a witness, and even a suspect, in a thrilling mystery in which she will face bigger revelations than she could ever have anticipated.

Adapted from the novel by Paula Hawkins - an international phenomenon selling over twenty million copies worldwide - and starring Samantha Womack and Oliver Farnworth, this gripping new play will keep you guessing until the final moment.

Samantha Womack has starred extensively in television, film and theatre. She is best known for playing Ronnie Mitchell in EastEnders with leading roles in Mount Pleasant and Game On, plus the recent box office hit films, The Kingsman series. As well as his extensive career on the stage, Oliver Farnworth has starred in Hollyoaks and as Andy Carver in Coronation Street.

The pupils really enjoyed the production and the social issues surrounding the play from alcoholism, psychological abuse to pressure from society to be a certain way. The set was adaptable from one living area to another and the lighting and sound added to the tension and suspense of the thriller that ensued.

Overall, the pupils have enjoyed exploring and analysing the production for their course work and have had many discussions and debates about the ending.

Miss C Stewart
Drama Teacher

Football

All football teams have now started their 2019/20 season with a mixture of results. The Senior Boys started their campaign with a win when they played Albyn in the J M Low Trophy and won 3-0. The goals from Cole Goodwin (x 2) and Jack Thomson were enough to see off a stubborn Albyn team. Man of the Match went to Andy Simond playing at CB.

The U14 team has also made a very positive start, comfortably beating both Turriff and Banff in league fixtures.

The new U13 team also started off with a very convincing win against Harlaw Academy.

The Senior Girls were unlucky to lose in a closely fought match away at Alford Academy but they are through to the next round of both the Aberdeenshire and Scottish Cup due to Mackie Academy and Nicholson Institute forfeiting these matches in the first round.

A few individual mentions also go to Adam Gordon, Ross Craig and Christopher Simpson who were all selected for the Aberdeenshire U15 squad which is a great achievement. Also well done to Alex Curry in S2 who was selected for the North of Scotland football squad following two tough trials.

Keep in touch with the latest football news on Twitter - @InverurieSport - and there are already many more games organised for the first few weeks back after the October holidays.

Mrs A Wilson
Teacher of PE



S1 Football



Senior Football

Leaders in Sport

Our new intake of "Leaders in Sport" have been making their debuts this term, with Emma Leith and Megan Robertson beginning their volunteering journey by assisting Rona Main with P1-P7 Yoga, and as always our senior pupil support for Fit For Girls is in place with Alannah Robertson gaining some valuable volunteering experience in her final year at Inverurie Academy.

The first meeting of the 2019-2020 Leaders In Sport Group, supported by I & K Motors Ltd, saw discussions about the Saltire Awards, supporting Sports Day 2020, future volunteering options during the school year and our first group photo of the year.

Some of our established Leaders remain in their respective roles with Steven Strachan, Ryan Miller, Kieran MacDonald, Neil Johnston, Emma Leith, Megan Robertson, Alannah Robertson and Natasha Masson all involved in supporting activities and all working their way to various levels of Saltire Awards. The meeting also included Valerie Raagas, Andrew Hoare, Zack Aspey, Blair McLeish, Freya Wilson, Connor Killoh, Jack Thomson and Finlay Moultrie who are in the process of completing their volunteer paperwork and will soon have the famous I & K Motors Ltd hooded top, as they start supporting Table Tennis, Tennis, Basketball, Hockey, Fit For Girls and S1 Football respectively.

Also joining the group were Luke Fitzpatrick and Erin Fraser who are the schools SportScotland Young Ambassadors and they will soon be taking on some new tasks to aid the promotion of sport and physical activity within the school combined with some research to ensure we are delivering the extra-curricular programme that the pupils and our local community needs.

Malcolm Grant

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



Megan and Emma with Rona Main



Alannah being welcomed to her new role by Principal Teacher of Health Mr Cowie

Leaders in Sport 2019-2020



Extra-Curricular Programme

With the Term 2 extra-curricular programme starting after the holidays we still have spaces at Girls Judo and Girls Table Tennis. Mr Milne stands ready to take lunchtime Volleyball on Monday lunchtimes so why not sign up at:-

<https://www.livelifeberdeenshire.org.uk/.../inverurie-netwo.../>

and give it a go.

Malcolm Grant

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





Schools Ski Racing

On Saturday, 5 October 2019 at Alford Ski Centre, the Scottish Schools Snowsport Association Dual Slalom Event took place for Secondary Schools in the area. Inverurie Academy fielded two teams and both raced competitively, with the A and B Teams involved in a race-off for the Bronze Medal position. Inverurie A Team ran out winners after a hard fought contest.

Particular thanks to one of our parents Mrs Aspey who organised and supervised the teams on the day.

Well done to our racers.

Leah (S3), Rhona (S2), Ben (S1), Eilidh (S1), Zack (S2), Antoine (S1), Sophie (S1), Hannah (S1)



SCHOOL CALENDAR
~ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ~

Monday, 28 October 2019	Term Begins
Tuesday, 5 November 2019	Safe Drive Stay Alive (S5) 8.50 am - 12.30 pm
Friday, 8 November 2019	S1/S2/S3 Tracking Reports Home
Tuesday, 12 November 2019	S5/S6 Parent Evening 4.30 pm - 7.30 pm
Monday, 18 November 2019	In-service Day - No Pupils in School
Tuesday, 19 November 2019	In-service Day - No Pupils in School
Wednesday, 27 November 2019	Parent Council Meeting 6.30 pm - 8.30 pm
Wednesday, 4 December 2019	S1 Parent Evening 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm
Friday, 6 December 2019	Christmas Concert Full Technical Rehearsal 9.00 am - 3.00 pm
Monday, 9 December 2019	Christmas Concert Full Dress Rehearsal 9.00 am - 3.00 pm
Tuesday, 10 December 2019	Christmas Concert 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm
Thursday, 12 December 2019	S4 Parent Evening 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm
Friday, 20 December 2019	Last Day of Term

SESSION 2019-2020

Term 2

- Monday, 28 October 2019 Start of Term 2
- Monday, 18 November 2019 In-service Day
- Tuesday, 19 November 2019 In-service Day
- Friday, 20 December 2019 End of Term 2
- Monday, 23 December 2019 to Friday, 3 January 2020 Christmas Holiday
(Inclusive)

Term 3

- Monday, 6 January 2020 Start of Term 3
- Thursday, 13 February 2020 Holiday
- Friday, 14 February 2020 Holiday
- Monday, 17 February 2020 Mid-term Holiday
- Tuesday, 18 February 2020 In-service Day
- Wednesday, 19 February 2020 In-service Day
- Friday, 3 April 2020 End of Term 3
- Monday, 6 to Friday, 17 April 2020 (Inclusive) Easter Holiday

Term 4

- Monday, 20 April 2020 Start of Term 4
- Friday, 8 May 2020 May Day Holiday
- Monday, 1 June 2020 Holiday
- Friday, 3 July 2020 End of Term 4
- Monday, 6 July to Friday, 14 August 2020 (Inclusive) Summer Holiday

holidays

The word "holidays" is written in a playful, bubbly font. Each letter is filled with a different color and pattern: 'h' is orange with yellow circles; 'o' is white with green dashed lines; 'l' is yellow; 'i' is green with pink dots; 'd' is pink; 'a' is white with orange dots; 'y' is yellow; and 's' is pink with white horizontal stripes. Above the letters are various decorative elements: a large pink heart above 'h', a small orange heart above 'i', a white daisy with a yellow center above 'a', and two green leaves on a black stem above 'y' and 's'. Small black dots and a star-like shape are scattered above the 'o' and 'd'.