

'Fa's That?': House Competition Continued

On the other hand, people seemed to think this was one of the harder questions even though we thought completely differently. The answer that people got most commonly wrong out of all of them was Mrs Ogston! People seemed to mistake her for Mrs Cookson, Mrs Turnbull or Mrs Gibson!



Mr Jones, Head Teacher

Top Teams!

neighbour at the time. She is now a nurse and her father, the Governor General of the island!

We also had to give a special mention to rock star Mr Littler, pictured below! What a photo! And finally, we could not miss out our Head Teacher, Mr Jones, pictured above.

- 1st:** 3S2
- 2nd:** 6C and 5D2 (joint)
- 3rd:** 6H, 4H1 & 4B1
- 4th:** 1B2, 1S2, 3B2, 4H2 & 5B2
- 5th:** 1C1, 2D1, 3C1, 6B & 6S

A special mention goes to 1B2 and 1S2 who did really well to be placed fourth when they have been pupils at Inverurie Academy for such a short period of time.

Thanks to all of the register classes (and staff!) for their participation and congratulations again to the winning classes.

By Ben Sharp, S3



Mr Johnston (right)

I bet many people didn't think that this picture had an interesting story behind it, but it does. This wee blondie is Mr Johnston, deputy head and guidance teacher extraordinaire. The picture was taken in the Solomon Islands and pictured with Mr Johnston is his



Mr Littler, Guidance Teacher

Deputy First Minister Visits New School Site



Deputy First Minister, John Swinney (pictured right)

On the 29th of August our school, along with the Robertson group, hosted the visit of Scotland's deputy minister and cabinet secretary of education, John Swinney. His visit was to celebrate the "Topping Out" which is the installation of the last steel works in our new school.

To attend the ceremony ourselves was a great privilege and gave us an insight to the dedication the government has to our local community. The ceremony allowed for Mr Swinney to talk to two representatives from our school, Shayne Omale (S2) and Kirsty Hay (S6, school captain). John Swinney spoke to them about their thoughts on the new build and the benefits it holds.

Mr Swinney was also invited by Robertson to a site visit where the Provost of Aberdeenshire, Derek

Shewan (Chief Executive of Robertson's Construction) and John Swinney signed the final beam for our school. Before the beam was lifted Mr Swinney spoke to our local press and construction workers about the build then

eventually watched the workers install the beam before heading back to his duties.

Speaking to the Evening Express Mr Swinney said "teaching vacancies are unacceptable; however, they are at very low levels compared to other countries." He also mentioned how he is very focused on trying to identify how we can secure the additional teachers required.

In addition, councillor Leslie Dunbar, vice-convenor of Aberdeen City Council's education operational committee, told us how great she thinks it is that we are receiving such fantastic facilities and the recent investment for support teachers will benefit our school massively.

Also attending was Provost of Aberdeenshire, Councillor Bill

Howatson. Mr Howatson told us "I was delighted to welcome Deputy First Minister John Swinney to this modern facility and it was a pleasure to show him how Aberdeenshire Council is investing in the best possible buildings." He also said "This will improve opportunities for everyone, and it is a demonstration of Aberdeenshire Council's commitment to investing in Inverurie; maintaining what makes this a great place to live and work through the construction of modern multipurpose spaces."

Moving on, our new £55 million build is one of the biggest school build projects in Scotland and looking outside you will see the rapid progress Robertson are making on it. Upon completion, we will have state of the art facilities including all weather pitches and a new 6 lane swimming pool.

The investment made by our council here is truly amazing and John Swinney's visit is only a mere milestone compared to what the end result will look like and we hope his priorities in supporting the north east and our community will remain.

By Luke Wraight and Ben Sharp, S3

O Captains! Our Captains!



School Captains, Kirsty (left) and Brodie (right)

Just before the summer holidays, Inverurie Academy's new School Captain interviews went underway, and the results swiftly followed. As a result, our new School Captains are Brodie Wylie and Kirsty Hay, with Ben Cunningham and Ben Tribe as our Vice Captains.

Brodie is studying three subjects this year: Higher Modern Studies, Higher Politics and Advanced Higher English. Brodie says she has a keen interest for current affairs and politics because "there's always something new happening!". "It helps me to understand different places in the world with their whole political atmosphere and outlook which I am fascinated by." Brodie said that this year she really wants to spend her final year of secondary school doing the things she's really passionate about, hence her subject choices. As well as her interest for current affairs,

Brodie has a passion for rugby and really enjoys photography.

Brodie says that she used to play rugby when she was younger, having picked it up after her brother became interested in the sport. Nowadays she prefers to go to watch rugby matches, with two of the teams she follows being the Scotland national team and the Glasgow Warriors. When asked if she believes there should be more attention on women's rugby, Brodie said that there absolutely should be as women are just as capable and skilful as men are, yet there is still inequality in the publicity that the great women who take part get in comparison to their male counterparts. It could be said, then, that the Fit for Girls group which Brodie helps to run on Wednesdays after school is extremely important in keeping girls engaged with sport and giving them a friendly atmosphere in which they can build their confidence and self-esteem, all the while making friends and feeling included.

In school, both Brodie and Kirsty are both very active members of groups and activities. Brodie will soon be joining the Rights Respecting Schools steering group, which Kirsty chairs. Kirsty has been doing Rock Challenge since she was

in second year. Kirsty and Brodie have been involved in preparation and running of events and activities organised by the Amnesty International Group and the Debate Society for the past year as well.

This year, Kirsty is studying Higher Dance, Higher English and Advanced Higher Music. She says that these are all things she really enjoys and that music and dancing are both very large parts of her life, as she has been dancing since she was around two years old, and has been playing piano since the age of eight. She says that "dance really helps with doing music, as it improves my musicality". Kirsty has taken her creative talent and insight to the Creative Arts Committee, which she now chairs.

When asked about future plans, the School Captains do not hesitate to outline their ambitions for the future. Kirsty says that she would like to take a gap year at the end of sixth year to work, before auditioning for dance schools with the aim of getting a dance degree. She also says she is considering becoming a dance teacher. Brodie said "I'm not one-hundred percent sure on a career path yet but working for the UN or something like that would be amazing."

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'Fa's That?': House Competition



Mrs Mackintosh (pictured right), English and Guidance teacher

As you should all know, this edition of the newspaper The Academy Star has run another house competition but this time, with a difference! We decided that we were going to run a competition not as an individual task but as our register classes. As a bit of fun, we thought trying to guess the Inverurie Academy Staff member from a tricky photo (baby or older) would make for an exciting competition.

To heighten the competition, we

awarding 250 house points for the winning class, 100 house points for 2nd place and 50 house points

for 3rd place. Every class had very good guesses and it was close between the lead teams 3S2, 5D2 and 6C. However, we are very pleased to announce that this year's winning register class is 3S2! Congratulations to the winning team! 5D2 and 6C received joint second place.

Now what was the funniest entry we received from the teachers? Well, we did enjoy so many but the photo of a very serious Mr

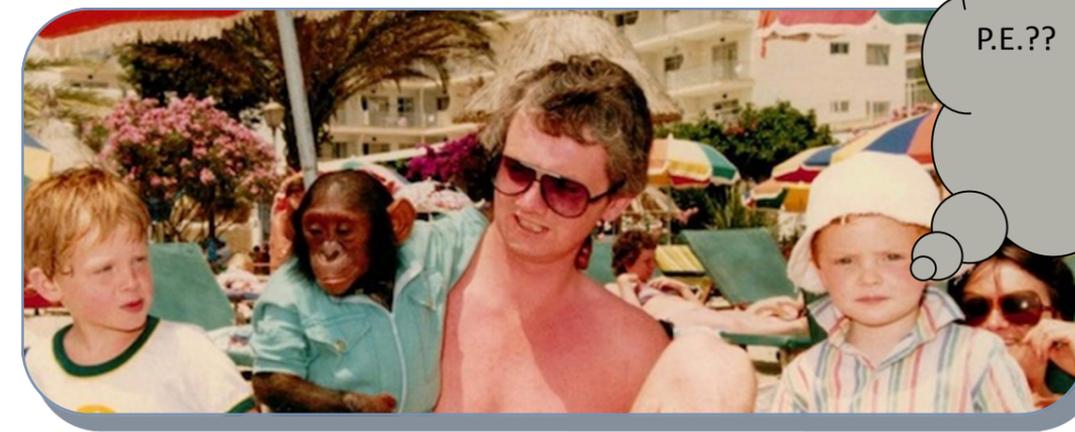
Cowie with a monkey really did take the biscuit.

Everyone obviously thought these teachers were really easy to distinguish from their picture. This was Mrs Elrick (first picture below) and Mrs Mackintosh (left), of course!



Mrs Elrick, English Teacher

Hmm... I wonder if the monkey is good at P.E.??



are Resplendent in stripes and a stylish sun hat is Mr Cowie (right), Head of PE

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In the Middle of a Chain Reaction



In the month which marks four years since the divisive Scottish independence referendum, a lot has changed for young people since that historic vote on 18th September 2014.

This is not a 'big P' political article, at least it is not intended to be so. September 2018 marks the quadrennial anniversary not only of the referendum, but also of my first involvement in community work. In that time, I have been involved in numerous groups and organisations, including the Scottish Youth Parliament and, until recently, Inverurie Community Council.

I have faced many challenges in these roles, but I'd like to think that they never got the better of me. I was the youngest Chair of a Community Council in Scotland – as far as we know, at the time of writing – and that was something of a learning curve, if not a steep

line. Many saw me as too young to take on the role; I called it bringing a fresh perspective.

The truth is that the independence referendum started a chain reaction. It was the first time in British political history that sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds had the opportunity to vote in an election or referendum. Research shows that about three-fifths exercised this right, disproving the fallacy that is political disinterest among young people universally. What followed was legislation lowering the voting age to sixteen for all elections to the Scottish Parliament and local councils. Similarly, the age to become a fully-fledged Community Councillor has been lowered to the same, with a new membership type being opened exclusively to fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds, in the form of Junior Members.

These actions have opened the door to young people to participate in decision-making. There are many role-models to choose from: Andrew Bowie, a former Inverurie Academy pupil, was 30 when he was elected as the MP for West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine; his predecessor, Stuart Donaldson, was only 24. Ross Greer, a former Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament, was elected in West Scot-

land two years ago. Elected at 21, he is the youngest MSP in Holyrood's short history. Let's not forget Mhairi Black, whose barnstorming maiden speech has gone down as one of the most-viewed of its kind. She holds the record as the youngest person to be elected to Westminster, when she became the MP for Paisley and Renfrewshire South in 2015, at just 20 years of age.

I am not suggesting that you have to be a political junkie just to make a difference in the local community. Instead, I have tried to demonstrate that, with ambition, passion and optimism, young people can make a difference anywhere. Indeed, many organisations now welcome the input of young people, as a means of motivating an otherwise often stagnant mentality.

In this Year of Young People, make 2018 the year in which you decide to play a more active role in the community. With so much going on, there has never been a better time to get involved. So, what will you do?

Josh MacRae, S5: columnist to *The Academy Star* and MSYP

O Captains! Our Captains! Continued

Reflecting on being chosen as School Captains, Brodie and Kirsty say it's "fantastic". Brodie and Kirsty both agree that there was a sense of accomplishment as "we feel like we have achieved it on our own merit". Kirsty says being a School Captain feels "Good, really good. I hope that two boys will be School Captains someday, but of course it's all down to the interviews". The School Captains also agree that they couldn't have asked for better Vice Captains than Ben Cunningham and Ben Tribe as they play a key role in making sure that everything runs perfectly, such as their help in

preparing assemblies and prefecting. They would really like to take a moment to appreciate all the work they do and the valuable and close-knit team they all make. Kirsty said that she feels the School Captains and Vice Captains are "making sure the school is well represented and working to make sure the school feels proud."

As School Captains and Vice Captains, Brodie, Kirsty, Ben C and Ben T have many responsibilities. Some of these include chairing and taking the minutes of School Council meetings, attending Parent Council and some SLT

meetings. This is key to their role as School Captains as they have to have a good insight into what is happening in the school in order to fulfil their duties and carry them out effectively. Furthermore, the School Captains must make sure that prefecting goes smoothly, which is done by organising the prefect rota.

We would also like to wish both the School Captains and Vice Captains the best of luck in their roles; we are all looking forward to seeing their excellent work in the school this coming year.

By Sam Weston and Blair Center, S6

Join The Academy Star!



Editors, Ben Sharp and Luke Wraight

The Academy star produces the school newspaper each term. Over the course of each term, we work together to create various articles and pages about the school and local events. Once the term is almost done, we then go around selling the newspapers that we have created.

The group could be considered perfect for anyone who enjoys writing, photography, sports, interviewing or reporting on school events. Luke Wraight, S3, one of the editors said "It is a privilege to be a part of the paper and my literacy skills have improved so much. Being part of the team is a rewarding task."

Ben Sharp, the other editor, said,

"The newspaper is a very enjoyable experience. We have a good team of writers and editors including the teacher. We all stick together and try to do our best to get a better edition of the paper out every term."

Mrs Milne, the teacher who helps support the newspaper team, said, "If you are interested in writing or journalism, this is the club for you. Not only do you learn invaluable skills for life and work, you will also become a part of a brilliant team! We are always looking for new members to come and join us."

By Hannah Reid, S4

Starting S1: The Myths and the Lies



From left to right, S1 pupils Daniella and Miranda

The transition from Primary to Academy is very intimidating for almost all the primary 7s and maybe evens some primary 6s. You go from being Top Dog to Baby Pup over the period of just 6 weeks.

There are many good things about the transition and some maybe not so good things as well. For example, you get lost easier in a big building like our Academy. However, having different classes is a refreshing change when you have been cooped up in a port cabin for 7 years and furthermore, if you don't like one of your teachers, it is not such a big deal. I think it is important to address that different people can take longer to adjust to the gargantuan transition than others, and something that definitely doesn't help are

nasty myths about coming up to the 'big school'. For example, 'everyone gets bullied', or 'the food is the most disgusting thing ever' (which it isn't, I've eaten it myself!).

Anyway, the bottom line is, it is a big change and no-one can be blamed for feeling nervous about it. For the first few weeks the S1s are not allowed down the road for break and lunch so that they have time to settle in and find their bearings and also the teachers can get a grasp on their behaviour before letting them out in the community to represent the Academy.

Another thing is that S1s may not understand how assemblies work and if you are an S1 reading this, the following may be helpful: S1s have an S1 assembly every week on Monday, but every 4 weeks or so, all years have a house assembly week, meaning you go to assembly on possibly different days, depending on which house you are in.

Another thing regarding houses is

house points. Every year each of the houses compete to win the Millennium Cup, a feat that shows all of the school values, and if you win, you get bragging rights to all your fellow friends that aren't in your house. Another bonus for winning is that you feel good about yourself and you know that you contributed to something big happening for you house.

On interviewing two willing S1s, Miranda Wilson and Daniella Hardy, we found that they enjoyed the food and they said 'the brownies are legendary!'. Reassuringly, they said that the transition between Primary and Academy was easy, even going as far as saying that it was fun. They said that they especially enjoyed Modern Studies. Then the big question: 'so far, do you prefer Primary School or The Academy?' They said that it was debatable, where they liked only having one teacher as opposed to about 10-15; however, they said that they prefer the massive range of subjects that the Academy brings to the table.

In conclusion, the transition seems to have been positive this year and a good success.

Written by Andrew Cunningham, S3

What happened to our Ambition?



to be continued

Healthy Eating: Making Better Choices

Over the last few years teens' healthy eating has been a very relevant topic. With this in mind at the Academy Star I have decided to look at the options available.

To begin with I spoke to fellow students at Inverurie and surrounding schools. I gathered that the idea of 'eating healthy' is not easy. When I asked them about the options available the first thing they said was how the cost of fruit is far too high compared to the relatively cheap chocolate and cake. They also mentioned how we are always encouraged to make good choices through posters but the affordable and healthy options aren't available. Improvements could be made by providing the healthier options at a more affordable price.

Looking at the cost of an apple (around 40p) compared to the cost of a bag of crisps (from 20p to 60p), the cheaper crisps are more desirable for our budget. Another example is a large sharing bar of chocolate is around £1 whereas an average sized pre-made fruit salad is over £1. The healthy options throughout the country are not available at the same or cheaper price than the unhealthy choices.

Moving on I spoke with our local assistant catering officer who very kindly provided me with a nutritional breakdown of some the

food sold. I found this incredibly useful and was surprised to learn that I have been making wrong and uninformed choices for my entire time at secondary school for lunch. I first noticed this when I discovered that an 'oatie' biscuit has a significantly higher fat and sugar content than a shortbread which we would think is more unhealthy. The issue we face in our country is the lack of information to allow us to make informed decisions for our health.

A potential solution is to have a separate section in the canteen for buying cold pastas, baked potatoes and salads to ease queuing. This could possibly be a solution to encourage some students to change the way they eat. If there was less queuing time for a salad, I would personally buy it regularly as I value my lunch break!

On the other hand, we are given healthy and tasty main course options and we should definitely take advantage of that rather than spending our budget in local shops like Poundland.

So far, I've been talking about eating healthily to save our "health"; however, I haven't explained how having a poor diet can affect your long term health. The most obvious risk is obesity and is caused by lack of exercise and

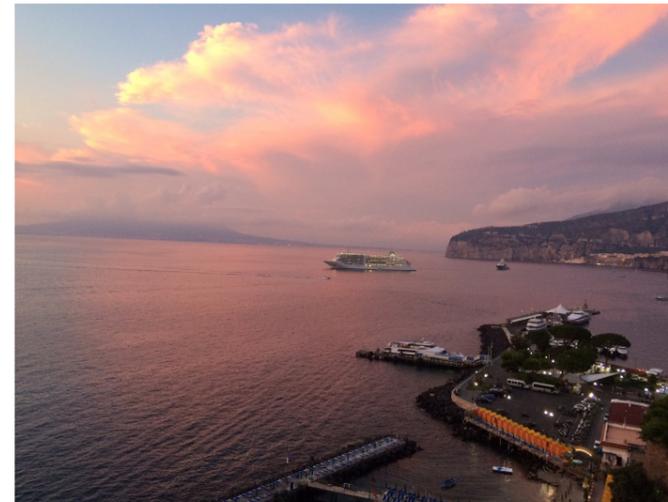
eating too many sugars and saturated fats. Being obese can lead to many health risks, making your life shorter and more difficult. Health problems associated with obesity include diabetes, high blood pressure or increased heart disease risk. Obesity also has mental impacts such as low self-esteem/ depression or insomnia.

From a teenager's perspective, money saving is a higher priority than healthy eating. The government has tried to deter people from making bad choices by introducing the likes of the sugar tax for sugary drinks but what about our food choices? And is raising the prices really going to deter people from choosing the unhealthy option? I think not. Better education may be the key here so we really understand the dangers of what we are putting in our bodies. It would also be nice to be able to buy healthier snacks and lunches without compromising our budgets.

Better information of what is in our food is my aim from writing this article and I hope I have changed some peoples' minds.

By Luke Wraight, S3

Academy Adventures Abroad



Picture by Mr Duncan of the Amalfi Coast, Italy

Before the summer our school hosted two trips abroad, one to Italy and one battlefields trip. The trips were organised by our English teacher, Mr Duncan, and History teacher, Mrs Jones.

The battlefields trip lasted 5 days and took the year groups of S4-S6 to famous battlefields. Departing on the 11th of June the "Inverurie Pals Battalion" endured a long drive to Hull and an overnight ferry journey.

The adventure truly began when the group boarded the overnight ferry to Zeebrugge on the Belgian coast. The next day the "Inverurie Pals Battalion" visited the Messines Pool of Peace and checked into their hotel.

After a good night's sleep they visited the Newfoundland Park which is a memorial to all the "Newfoundlanders" who fought in

World War 1. The group visited a few more memorials before visiting Ypres on their last day of the trip. Ypres is located in west Belgium and is surrounded in WW1 memorials which the "Inverurie Pals" visited.

Speaking to Mrs Jones about the trip she told us "It was a pleasure to take such a keen and enthusiastic group of pupils to Belgium to visit such special and memorable sites. Also, every time anyone asked the guide, Andrew, a question about what we were doing, next he would say "we're here because we're here!" It was a real privilege to be part of the famous Menin Gate Ceremony and to watch our pupils lay a wreath at such an iconic site, with a dedication that they wrote themselves." She also told how Mr Shepherd had to make a "rather epic" journey to join them!

The other trip to Italy lasted 8 days and catered for the year groups S2-S6. Mr Duncan took the group to see famous sites such as the Colosseum and the Emerald Caves. The group also visited the water

park "Valle dell'Orso" and the Amalfi coast.

From speaking to Mr Duncan he told us that lots of the pupils most enjoyed going to the Amalfi coast. He also told me "Italy is real favourite destination for me personally. The people, sights, weather and food are all wonderful so I can't wait to take the next batch of pupils in 2020."

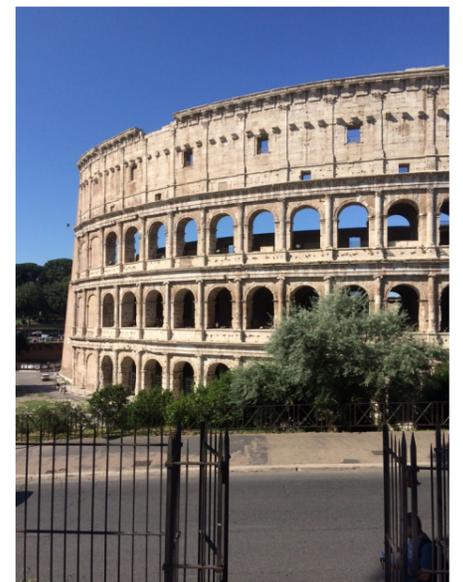


Photo of the Colosseum from the Italy trip

Overall, the trips were a great opportunity for pupils and staff to get to visit such amazing places abroad and if you ever get chance it's obvious you won't regret it.

By Luke Wraight, S3

A Warm Welcome to New Staff



Mr Christie conducting the Aberdeen University wind band in 2017

Many new staff have joined our school. Do you want to know more about them? I asked some of some of the new staff questions about themselves. To those who I have not managed to interview, we would like to welcome you to Inverurie Academy and we hope you enjoy your time here.

Mr Christie

Mr Christie is a new music teacher. His first instrument is the Violin; however, he also plays Viola, Guitar, Piano and a few other instruments. Teaching at Inverurie Academy is his first teaching position. He told me the reason he applied for the job at Inverurie was because 'it was the ideal location for me and having a new school coming was a real positive

for me.' Before working here, he was studying Music at the University of Aberdeen, achieving a Bachelor of Music, a Master of music in Conducting and then a Teaching Qualification.

I asked what attracted him to work at Inverurie Academy and he said "When I came to the interview, everybody seemed so lovely and welcoming that I knew this was the right place to be. Everyone from the cleaner right up to the Head teacher Mr. Jones were so welcoming I knew this was a very supportive team and wanted to work with them." I also asked him how he would describe his first few weeks working here. He said, "Hectic, Stressful and Enjoyable and the most fun I have ever

had all rolled in one! I couldn't have asked for anything better!"

I asked why he chose the subject he now teaches and if he always wanted to be a teacher. His response was "I choose Music because I was good at it and liked playing. At University was when I really found a passion and an appreciation for it. I never thought I wanted to be a teacher but wanted to give it a go. Only since starting at Inverurie have started to believe

this is the right job for me and wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

Miss Murray

Miss Murray is a new English teacher. She is from Cornwall and she says because of this she loves the sea and being on the beach.

She likes spending time in nature, hiking, making things from clay, and swimming.

What attracted Miss Murray to work here was the value system, mutual respect and focus of the pupils. She describes her first few weeks at Inverurie as being busy, with lots to learn but she loved meeting her new classes.

Miss Murray's favourite subjects when she was in school were English, Art and History.

When asked why she chose to teach English, she explained, "I studied English at University and love creative writing. I have always wanted to work with young people - by being a teacher I get to teach self-expression which I think is really important."

Miss Bartlett

Miss Bartlett is another English teacher who has joined the school. She grew up in the countryside outside Oban, which was beside the sea. She used to love exploring the woods and the seaside, when she wasn't reading! She gave me some fun facts about herself. She can stand on her head, and she would like to walk the Via Egnatia one day which is the old Roman road that goes from Rome to Istanbul. It takes three months to walk! But there are many different countries and landscapes to see. She says she would take a tent and a notebook and leave her phone behind.

I asked her what her hobbies were. Her reply was, "Backpacking, yoga, wild camping, reading, writing, drawing, running, sewing...and I just joined knitting club, so knitting too."

Before working at Inverurie she worked in publishing in Edinburgh, London and Oxford. She said, "I

worked for a few different publishing houses and my job was to sell British books to foreign publishers so that they were being read all over the world. I really enjoyed seeing and working with people from a lot of different cultures."

I asked why she chose the subject she now teaches. She told me, "I chose English because I really love reading. But also, because it's a subject where you can follow a lot of different interests and ideas. When you study English you're not just reading the book or poem and talking about the language, you're thinking about all the different ideas as it reflects; ideas from history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, politics...anything! You think about these ideas, but not everyone will agree with your interpretation. That's the bit I love, talking to other people and learning to justify or adapt your ideas based on what they say too." I believe it's a really important skill to have in life, to know what you think and to be able to defend it."

Doctor Drysdale



Dr Drysdale, a new Deputy Head in the school, moved to Aberdeen to study in 1997 and apart from one

year in Shetland, has never moved

since! She did her degree, PhD and PGDE at the University of Aberdeen. She told us that she is married with two children which takes up most of her free time!

Her teaching career started at Scalloway Junior High School, with some time in Brae and Anderson High Schools in the Shetland Islands Council. She then moved to Hazlehead Academy in Aberdeen where she was a Biology and Chemistry teacher, then Principal Teacher of Science and finally, Deputy Head Teacher.

Dr Drysdale's hobbies are pilates, cycling and girl guiding. Her favourite subjects at school were Biology and English.

When asked what attracted her to work at Inverurie Academy, she replied, "I was keen to work in a different school and local authority to continue my professional learning. I've worked with Mr Jones in the past and am excited to join Inverurie Academy as we continue on our journey of school improvement." She also told us that, "My first few weeks have been a huge learning curve getting to know staff, students, parents and other partners. I have loved every minute!"

By Ife Akiode, S4