



# Tain Royal Academy

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Dear Parent/Carer,

29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

I hope that you enjoyed a good summer and made the most of the sunshine.

I would like to begin by congratulating the pupils in Tain Royal Academy who did very well in their exams this year, there were some excellent results with six S4 pupils achieving 6 A's at National 5 and three pupils in S5 achieving five A's at Higher. I was delighted for them, which was a result of continued hard work and effort throughout the whole year, not just in the run up to the exams. There were many other pupils who did extremely well and were successful in their respective areas of study and these pupils should also be pleased with themselves.

### **Attendance**

We have also seen an improvement in the attendance of pupils in the last year and this will have helped pupils to do well in their exams as they have had the benefit of having teacher contact to help with work and assignments. It is important that pupils attend regularly as absences can lead to pupils missing a lot of coursework in a year. There will be times when this cannot be helped such as illness or extracurricular activities but it is important that any work missed is caught up with, which our staff are keen to help with. If a pupil has 90% attendance for the school year, on the surface this sounds good, but the reality is that the pupil will have missed almost 4 weeks of work. Pupils also need to ensure that they are in school on time first thing in the morning as the number of pupils coming in late is creeping up already and means that they are losing valuable teaching and learning time which will impact on their progress. However, as I said above the attendance is improving and I would like to thank you for your help and support with this. There is an after school study club available to all pupils in our new media lab Monday to Thursday, and supported study for different subjects/stages during lunchtimes or after school.

### **Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting**

As a school, we have been looking at ways to improve our recording and tracking & monitoring of your child's progress throughout the year and are introducing a system called On the Button. We hope that by using this new software, we will be able to identify issues earlier such as pupil performance in subjects and therefore intervene sooner. The system will allow the school to contact parent/carers more regularly about your child's progress and although the school reports will look slightly different this year as a result, they will be more regular in being sent to you. Staff training is underway and we envisage "On the Button" to be up and running by the October holidays. We will keep you informed.

### **Parent/Carer Survey**

Also on our development plan we have liaison with parents as a focus and after discussion with the parent council, it was decided that around twice a year we will email you a small amount of survey questions for you to answer which will help us to gain more regular parental feedback. I am looking for us to have the first survey out just before the October holidays and if not very soon after. Each survey will be on a theme that we as a school are focusing on at that time, for example homework.

### **School Uniform**

It has been heartening to see so many pupils arriving to school looking very smart in their various forms of school uniform and I would like to thank you for your support in this. School Ties are available from school reception £4.50. School Embroidered Hoodies are available to order at present, order forms are available from school reception. All other TRA embroidered uniform is available from MacGregor's Schoolwear in Inverness.

### **School Photos**

Tempest Photography will be at TRA on Wednesday 4th September for pupils to have their annual school photograph. All pupils must wear school uniform.

### **UCAS Event**

On Tuesday 24th September, all of S6 and most of S5 are going to the UCAS higher education exhibition in Inverness (UHI) and would encourage pupils to go along to help them explore the next steps for their future plans. This will also help with pupils deciding whether further/higher education is for them or would they prefer an alternative route to a positive destination such as Foundation Apprenticeships which we also help pupils to move in to.

### **Staffing Update**

There have been some changes to our staffing this year, which is an inevitable part of school life as the years go by. At the end of last term we bid farewell and good luck to Alastair Ansbro from Geography who was with us since August 2006 when he joined as a probationer. Amy McNeil, our History and Modern Studies probationer last year, who has moved down to Glasgow and also Paul Ferrier, RMPS probationer last year, who has moved to work at Lossiemouth High School. We wish them all the very best in the new chapters in their working and personal lives.

This session we welcome new members of staff, Kathleen Scott and Tracy Scorgie join us in the English department, Luke Naunton joins us in the Geography department and Neil Moir is our new History teacher. Alli Craig has joined us as a probationer for Business Studies as we attempt to reintroduce this subject in to the school curriculum. We also welcome back from maternity leave Amy Learmont in RMPS and Asha Eaglesfield in Gaelic. We wish all a very successful year in Tain Royal Academy.

### **Sponsored Walk**

The school sponsored walk takes place on the last day of this term, Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October, and there will be assemblies for pupils with information about the walk in the coming weeks as well as information for parents coming out as letters and on social media. It is a nice way to end the term and brings the school together as one for a whole school event as well as being good for everyone's health and wellbeing. Everyone also has two weeks to recover from it if they find it extremely tiring with the October holidays following immediately afterwards.

### **Well Done**

We feel it is important that we celebrate the success of our young people in Tain Royal Academy and we would encourage you to inform us of anything that we can celebrate as the pupils are a bit reticent in letting us know. Some of the successes that we have been informed of recently and well done to:

Innes MacKenzie who won the Boys Under 16 Championship for a second year in a row. This is the only Boys Only Highland dancing championship in the world - and he competed against boys from Scotland, New Zealand and Australia to win this International Championship for the second year in a row.

Alyth Gollan who came 3rd in the Under 17's 1500m at the Scottish Championships at Grangemouth on earlier this month.

Rhyian Skinner who finished 9<sup>th</sup> in the Scottish Championships in Equestrian Eventing at Blair Castle on 25<sup>th</sup> August.

Our intrepid S6 pupils who ventured out to and managed to return from the Outward Bounds Trip which was in Locheil, Fort William.

Congratulations to Orla Young and Struan Oliver Jones who are our new school captains, ably aided and abetted by their vice captains, Keir Morrison and Isla MacKenzie.

Yours Sincerely



**Mark Jones**

Rector

### **Dates for your diary**

There are several important dates for your diaries for the coming year:

- In service days : 16 September and 17 September
- October holidays : 14 October to 25 October
- In service days : 21 November and 22 November
- Christmas holidays : 23 December to 3 January
- February break : 17 February and 18 February
- In service day : 19 February
- Easter holidays : 30 March to 13 April
- May Day: Friday 8 May (please note that this is a Friday to celebrate VE day)
- In service day : 1 June
- Summer holidays 2020 : 3 July to 14 August