

Update



Autumn Update - September 2018

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 @CultsAcademy

Dear Parents/Carers

Our Autumn term is progressing smoothly and I am delighted to report pupils have settled down quickly and are working well. I must congratulate our new S1 intake especially for making a great start to their secondary education. Despite being a larger group (210) than recent intakes they have adapted well to their new routines and been very mature in their behaviour.

SQA RESULTS 2018

As usual our exam results brought welcome good news for many pupils and relieved parents. Overall pass rate has improved at National and Higher. Twenty pupils in S5 achieved 5 or more 'A's at Higher Grade and in S6, 12 pupils received 3 or more 'A's at AdvH which is outstanding. For some pupils however, there was a more mixed result but we invest in additional planning with these pupils at the start of term, especially if timetable choices need to be altered. It is important to stress that disappointing results need not be the end of the world - yes they will trigger a rethink and perhaps a change of direction but the whole experience can also provide an important lesson.

Our full SQA Exam Analysis from Education Scotland will be 'live' on 18/09/18 and I will give a detailed report in our next newsletter.

TARGET SETTING

Our senior school have been discussing Subject Targets with their class teachers and parents will receive a copy of these very shortly. Our Target Setting process is intended to inspire pupils to keep

motivated by promoting aspirational - but achievable - grades appropriate to individual pupils circumstances. They also act as a reference point for monetary progress throughout the year and to flag up any need for intervention to raise pupil achievement.

NEW ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS TO PARENTS

Like all schools, Cults Academy wants to make communications between the school and parents as smooth as possible. Traditionally, when a class teacher wants to alert a parent that a pupil's work of the expected effort, or despite reminders that their behaviour has fallen below acceptable standard, a paper form has been sent home. Those Forms - either a Note of Concern or a Level 1 - also generate a lot of administration in the school. Lost and non-returned forms often lead to further negative exchanges with pupils. In an effort to modernise our approach we are moving to email communications after the September holiday. Two new forms have been created - 'Learning Update for Parents' and 'Behaviour Concern'. Parents will be asked to confirm safe receipt by email.

As explained to pupils at Assembly, these forms will be issued when a teacher feels it appropriate to seek parents' support and involvement. There may be a few hiccups in our new system, until we get it as slick as possible but I hope parents will view this as an improvement.

GDPR

I am sure everyone is familiar now with GDPR - the EU's General Data Protection Regulation which commenced in May 2018. Under GDPR a more detailed notice is required about the use of your personal information. ACC is currently revising its procedures to comply with the new regulations, so that you know how your personal information will be used. When we require information from you we will have to ensure there is a clear explanation of what is required and what it will be used for and how long it will be retained via a Privacy Notice. We are currently working under ACC guidance to incorporate to information into our system.

PARENTAL SURVEY - WEEK BEG 29/10/18

While we always try to gauge Parent views and feedback at Parents' Evenings and informal contacts, as well as via our Parent Council, it is some years since we have conducted a Full Parental survey. As part of our planning for self improvement our DHT Mr David Strang has prepared an electronic survey - which is based on Education Scotland approved questions - the questionnaire will go live during the week 29 October. This will be a major part of our Self Evaluation this year and I do hope all families will participate.

A M Muirhead
HEAD TEACHER

UNIFORM UPDATE

At Cults Academy we like to maintain our reputation for smart uniform. Over the years we have seen a range of 'variations' come and go - at the moment we have an 'outbreak' of skinny jeans, bare feet and black gym shoes. Rather than join this alternative uniform boys are reminded to wear school trousers and shoes. Parental support will be greatly appreciated.



News from Around the school

Well done Sophie

Sophie McIntosh (S2) of Cults Academy was delighted to win a logo competition for her design of a safety logo to celebrate the important milestone that Schlumberger Gateway have reached 1 million man hours without any LTI (Lost Time Incidents). Sophie was presented with her very own polo shirt incorporating her logo, as well as cinema and book vouchers, as the logo which received the highest number of votes.

Her design is emblazoned onto all Company polo shirts including all offshore workers. Below are photographs of the presentation with SLB Gateway Management, and the group shot with all the employees at Gateway.



Tea House Cafe



2.1 have been busy in Home Economics this week running their own lunchtime cafe. The pupils have been working hard over the last 12 weeks to produce various food items following the theme of 'Chalk & Cheese'. The cafe was a great success, well done to all of those involved!



FUND RAISING -

Three of our S2 pupils - Erin Duncan, Colin MacPherson and James Murison - took part in charity events for 'Linda's Loopy Lot', raising money for Cancer Research via a range of fun group activities. This summer they were all team members in 'Relay for Life' and overall have helped the charity raise £6721.07 in 2018. **Well done, what great ambassadors for young people.**

Staff news

Hello from...

From John Mordente - Maths Department

I graduated with a degree in Electronic Engineering. After graduating, he worked at Timex in Dundee and later in the Ford Research Centre in Essex before attending teacher training college. I have been teaching Maths (and some Physics) for 26 years; 19 as Head of Department at the High School of Dundee before a brief spell at Carnoustie High School. I moved to Cults with my wife and 2 younger children to be closer to my wife's family. I was delighted to be offered a job at Cults Academy and have been quoted as saying "Cults Academy is the best school I have taught at". Out of school I am a level 3 tennis coach and still compete in regional and national tennis competitions.

... and

Roseanne Bennett - English Department

Hi, I'm Mrs Bennett and have recently joined Cults Academy, after moving up from the North East of England with my family. I have been teaching English at Secondary stage for twelve years in a variety of school settings and have been an examiner for AQA and Cambridge. My specialism (and passion) is Literature and I love trialling new learning and teaching methods, in order to engage and motivate the young people I teach. I'm really enjoying teaching the bright and inspirational young people of our school, and getting involved with the welcoming and inclusive school community.

NEW OFFICE STAFF

Following successful interviews we welcome new part-time staff:- Sarah Esson; Heather Lamb and Vikki Miller will join our office team, so you will shortly see some new faces.



ART SELECTION...

Fraser Hobbs and Ken Yahathugoda (S2) have had their entry in the 'Young and Powerful Poster Exhibition' selected for display at The Lighthouse in Glasgow. Both boys and guests have been invited to the Awards Ceremony on 22 October.

FAQs by (New) Parents

What do I do if my child is absent from school?

- ◆ Please call the school on 01224 868801 either leave a message on our answering machine or advise our office staff
- ◆ You can also email the school on cultsacademy@aberdeencity.gov.uk

What do I do if I need to take my child out of school for an appointment?

- ◆ As above and if your child is below the age of 16 they **must** be collected from reception if your appointment is during the school day.

What if my child has forgotten lunch/money/equipment, what should I do?

- ◆ If convenient you may drop the item at reception and text your child to collect. However if you are unable to drop off items, your child should come to Accord desk at reception where we can credit up to £3 - which must be reimbursed the next day - to enable them to purchase their lunch.

If you are unable to drop off equipment your child will be expected to apologise within their class and remember in the future.

What if the School Bus is late?

- There are occurrences when the bus arrives late especially during road works or inclement weather
- ◆ When your child gets on the bus and arrives late for registration they must come to reception to sign in
- ◆ In the event of your child waiting for a reasonable amount of time and the bus doesn't arrive please telephone Public Transport Unit (PTU) on: 01224 523760 (Peterculter) or 01467 533335 - option 4 (Shire) Please always let the school know so we can pursue your query by either email or telephone.

CALENDAR 2018/19

Nationals' Parent Eve'	Tue 9 Oct
HOLIDAY	from Mon 15 Oct
	to Fri 26 Oct
School Show	from Tue 27 Nov
	to Thur 29 Nov
S1 Parents' Eve	Wed 12 Dec
Christmas Concert	Tue 18 Dec

2018 - 2019 Holidays

ISCD 2	Fri 16 Nov
HOLIDAY	from Mon 24 Dec
	to Fri 4 Jan 2019
HOLIDAY	Mon 11 Feb
ISCD 3	Tue 12 Feb
ISCD 4	Wed 13 Feb
HOLIDAY	from Mon 1 Apr
	to Fri 12 Apr
HOLIDAY	Fri 19 Apr
	(Good Friday)
HOLIDAY	Mon 6 May
ISCD 5	Tue 7 May
Last Day of Term	Fri 5 July 2019



JEWELLERY IN PE

All jewellery should be removed in order to eradicate that particular hazard prior to all PE lessons or extra-curricular activities.

Pupils should remove their own jewellery, if they are unable to do so then no jewellery should be worn at school.

All jewellery should be removed in line with 'Aberdeen City Council Health and Safety in PE' policy. Where jewellery cannot be removed it must be taped over. It will be the pupil's responsibility to provide tape if this is to be a regular occurrence.

Classes will be regularly reminded of the importance of removing all jewellery, it is the pupil's responsibility to disclose any jewellery which cannot be seen and make safe prior to participation.

CULTS ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Who are we and what do we do --

We are made up of 14 parents/guardians: Tahar Kouider; Michelle Henderson; Kirstin Grove; Robert Brew; Rick Sansom; Daniel Verhamme; Vannin Bloch; Tony Brady; Julia Crighton; Martin Barker; Sonya Angus; Ros Harper; Gill Flett and Oma Okoliegbe. We have all school years represented but another couple of S1 parents/guardians would be helpful. Also on the council are Jim Gauld a coopted local resident and the Head Teacher.

We meet 6 times a years on Mondays at 7pm , the next two dates are 19th November and 21st January. One of the main roles of the Parent Council is to act as a two way conduit between the wider Parent Forum, the school and education authority on generic matters, please talk to any one of us or come to a meeting, they are all open. Or visit our Facebook page or use our generic email address: pccultsacademy@aberdeen.npfs.org.uk. There will be a survey coming out from the school very shortly, please do take that opportunity to provide feedback. Following our first meeting on 3rd September we are looking at the apparent disparity in staffing ratio, at Cults Academy it is 14 pupils per teacher vs 12 average across Scotland and Aberdeen.

With Ms Muirhead's very well deserved retirement coming at the end of the year, the Parent Council will be providing 2 representatives to assist with the interview process for her successor.