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Ref: JS/SH

16<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

It is an absolute pleasure for me to write to you as your new Head Teacher of Forres Academy. I hope that you and your family enjoyed our wonderful summer and are looking forward to the new school year.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first week here in Forres and I am very appreciative of the warm welcome I have received from the pupils and staff.

I am very keen to meet parents and carers, just to say hello and also to give you the chance to ask any questions you might have. I will tie these into the Parent Council meetings that are scheduled for this first term and more details can be found further in this letter. I will also be available for S1 parents during the information evening on the 13<sup>th</sup> September.

In particular I am very keen that parents and carers contribute to the future direction of the school along with our teachers and pupils.

As a school, we look forward to another successful year working with you all and as always at the start of a new session there are a number of issues with which I would like to bring you up-to-date.

### **Summer update**

Over the summer extensive electrical work was carried out in various areas of the school. This programme of electrical, gas and plumbing work is a rolling programme that will continue during school holidays for some time to come.

You will have heard in the local press of the break-in during the last weekend of July. It was a great disappointment for Mrs Stuart as she came to the end of her time as Head Teacher, to myself as I started my post but also to the wider staff and pupils of the school. I extend my thanks to staff who helped with the clear up and I am pleased to say that the damage has been repaired and broken equipment replaced.

### **33 Period Week**

Along with all secondary schools in Moray we are now operating under the 33 period week. In the parent section of the school website you can view a letter issued in June that contains the full break down of the pattern of the school day. There will be a lunch service on Friday's for any pupil that wishes to have it, this will be served until 1330. We expect the school buses to be departing at around 1340.

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With the loss of registration in the morning we are reviewing the way we share information with the pupils. As soon as we have confirmed procedures for doing this we will share this with all pupils, parents and staff.

### **Staff update**

As was intimated in the June newsletter (available on the website), there have been a number of staff changes here at Forres Academy, I am delighted to welcome all the new staff to the school. We still have vacancies in English, HE and SfL. These adverts are now live and there are cover arrangements in place in the interim.

Susan Green was due to begin with us as permanent Principal Teacher of Guidance for Edinkille House. Unfortunately Mrs Green is going through some health issues at present. An advert for her temporary replacement is now live and as a school we wish Mrs Green a speedy recovery.

### **Data-capture forms**

To ensure we have the most up-to-date information on all pupils, all outstanding data capture forms will be issued to pupils to take home this week or next. It is vital that this is completed and returned as soon as possible. You will fully appreciate that we require information in case of emergencies, important information on medical conditions/allergies, contact details to ensure effective on going communication etc. We realise these can change from year to year and ask that should these change at some point through this session, then you inform us by contacting the school office. Letters with details of all department charges for this coming session will also be issued to pupils later this week.

### **Parent Council**

We will be holding our first Parent Council meeting of the new session on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> August at 6.30pm, this will be followed by the Parent Council AGM on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September. Any parent is welcome to attend these meetings. It would be nice for me to be able to meet as many of you as possible. Please see useful information on the Parent Council blog on our school website - <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/forresacademy>. In order that we can plan for these evenings I would appreciate it if you can return the slip at the end of the letter or email the school office if you plan on coming along to the August meeting and are not presently a member of the parent council.

### **SQA Results**

Overall our examination results were as expected with some excellent individual and departmental results. Forres Academy remain above the Moray average in all levels of National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. In particular we saw an increase in the % of students gaining 1+ and 3+ National 5 examination passes. At Higher we also saw an increase in our S5 students achieving 3+ and 5+ passes and our S6 results were once again extremely pleasing.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the 9 S4 students who gained all A passes in their 6 National 5 courses. Congratulations also to the 6 S6 pupils gaining 5 A passes at Higher level and also to Duncan Hornsby in S6 for gaining 3 A passes in his Advanced Higher. As with most of our students, the results are testament to their hard work and the quality of support provided by both staff and parents. Whilst as a school we were delighted with these successes you might have seen on social media “#No Wrong Path”. Here at Forres Academy we are very committed to supporting all our students in whatever their pathway and qualifications might look like.

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### **Forres Academy – Extra-curricular Activities – 2018– 2019**

Once again there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities offered to our young people. A summary is available on our school website and information is given to students on a regular basis through our weekly bulletins.

### **Homework**

We continue to use Show My Homework which is an online tool to help you keep track of your son's/daughter's homework. Show My Homework (SMHW) will give you the ability to see the details of all the homework tasks your son/daughter has been set, their deadlines and their submission status (e.g. submitted or not submitted) and grades if applicable. All S2-6 pupils and parents should be familiar with this system and the existing log-ins remain. New pupils in S1 and those joining into other year groups will be issued in the next two weeks, this will include pupil and parent log in. Any parent in S2-S6 who need their log in re-issued, please contact the school.

### **School Dress**

We are very pleased with the way our students adhere to our dress code and thank all parents for their continued support. Here is a reminder of the dress code:

School tie – compulsory

Black skirt or black trousers – compulsory

If wearing a jumper it should be black V-neck

Blazer with school crest (optional)

- Black denims are acceptable as long as they are smart, black and not faded grey
- All shirts/blouses must have a collar so ties can be worn
- No round neck jumpers or sweatshirts
- Black leggings on their own are not acceptable. They can be worn under a skirt
- Plain black cardigans are acceptable
- No logos are acceptable
- Footwear and outdoor clothing are not part of the dress code. Outdoor clothing should be removed in all Classrooms

### **Standards and Quality Report 2017-18**

This leaflet is designed to provide a summary of information about our school's progress over the last year. In particular, it covers four key questions:

How well does our school support our young people to develop and learn?

How well do we work together to lead change and ensure on-going improvement?

How well do our young people attain and achieve?

How well do we ensure wellbeing, equity and inclusion of all our young people?

The Standards and Quality Report for Session 2017-18 will shortly be uploaded to the school website.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that our June newsletter is available on the school website, you will also find a lot of useful information about the school including the annual calendar, school handbook, daily bulletins etc. As a school we also share information via Twitter @ForresAcademy1, I also operate my own Twitter @ForresAcademyHT. We aim to reduce the need for paper copies of letters this session and will be trialling electronic ways of communicating with parents. More details of this will follow when procedures are confirmed.

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I hope all our students have a successful year and if you have any concerns at all please contact us and we will ensure you are able to speak with the most appropriate person. I look forward to meeting you all in the near future.

With kindest regards

**JAN SINCLAIR**  
**Head Teacher**

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**Parent Council Meeting - Monday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2018**

Please confirm your attendance by returning this slip to the school office by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> August.

Parent/Carer Name: .....

**Thank you**