



The Banter

Issue 4 – July



The Newsletter of Keith Grammar School, School Road, Keith, Moray, AB55 5GS

Tel: (01542) 882461 E-mail: admin.keithgrammar@moray-edunet.gov.uk

Web: www.keithgrammarschool.co.uk Twitter: @KeithGrammar

<https://www.facebook.com/keithgrammarschool/>

Message from the Acting Rector...

This goes down in history as the strangest year yet at KGS...

It has been strange, stressful, uncertain, unsettling and full of constant change.

I have been amazed by the ingenuity and adaptability of the teaching staff in providing lessons for children at home. Our support and admin staff have also worked miracles in keeping our systems going. The work we have seen produced by students at home has been very impressive. We know that a lot of the credit for this goes to parents for supporting the young people to do this work.

I want to thank everyone for all your efforts. This has been a massive team effort and it has shown what can be achieved when times are hard.

I know that for many of you it hasn't been easy and I hope for better times ahead and look forward to being back to some normality after the holidays.

We are planning for a full 100% return on 12th August. More on this inside. In the meantime, we wait anxiously for the government announcement at the end of July regarding schools returning.

I wish everyone a restful summer break to recharge the batteries and get ourselves ready to learn together in August.

Take care.

Liz Bain

Acting Rector

Return in August

We are very much hoping for a full return to school in August if it is safe to do so. I sent out information about the contingency plan should this not be possible. We are also looking at ways to accommodate 50% of pupils per week as part of contingency planning. Details of how this will go ahead will be sent to you during the holidays as soon as anything is confirmed regarding the return. I apologise again for this uncertainty as, believe me, I know it is not easy to make plans with so many factors remaining unknown.

Day/Date:	Details:
Monday 10th August	In-Service Closure
Tuesday 11th August	In Service Closure
Wednesday 12th August	Start of Term
Friday 9th October	End of Term

Lockers:

At KGS we take pupil and parent suggestions seriously and had been considering for a while how to make sure all belongings were secure for pupils. We have now invested in new lockers for ALL students. Thank you to Parent Council who have helped to fund this development. The removal of coat pegs has made a big difference in the corridors making them more open and welcoming for all.

All pupils will be issued with a locker free of charge. There will be a charge of £7 for missing keys. Those who already have lockers and have paid their £5 deposit, should keep their lockers and be refunded the £5 when they leave school and return the key.

As we will still be looking at some restrictions due to COVID regardless of what stage we are at on the route map, pupils are unlikely to be issued with lockers immediately on our return and will probably have to carry all belongings with them at all times.

Once we are able to allocate lockers, all personal items/books/bags etc should be stored safely in the lockers and nothing should be left lying around in corridors/classes. This will mean less clutter in communal areas and encourage responsible and careful behaviour.

School Wear:

Thank you to Parent Council who have again funded ties for all new S1 pupils. These were distributed to local primary schools last week. Anyone who has not yet received a tie will be given the opportunity to collect one once we are at school in August.

We understand that during lockdown it has been, and may continue to be, difficult to buy new school wear. This may be down to inability to travel, lack of stock in shops, shops closing, financial issues and so on. Our usual policy is for black bottoms and white tops with a black sweater/ cardigan. School ties are optional but are provided to welcome students to the school and can be worn either every day or for special occasions. On our return we will be understanding of pupils unable to wear school wear every day. Please don't feel you have to buy everything new- wear what you have and replace through the year as you can.

Our Guidance team can help with referrals to Moray School Bank and we also collect used items for them. Don't throw away old school wear as we can collect it in the new session for the charity. We also have a stock of basic school wear in black and white and if you need anything from our stock, please either get in touch with the office or have a quiet word with your child's Guidance teacher. This is free of charge for anyone struggling for any reason. Please let us help.

Senior Course Renegotiation:

Year heads will meet with PTsG on the Monday in-service to discuss which pupils need a conversation regarding their timetable. We will then allocate time slots for pupils to come in on the Tuesday to discuss. Parents/pupils will be contacted at this stage, telling them which time to come in on the Tuesday.

Buddy and Prefect Applications:

Information is going home and on the website this week to senior students regarding applying to be buddies for S1 pupils and also prefect and student leadership roles: house captains, senior and head prefects. I urge as many seniors to apply as possible. There will be no interviews this year given the circumstances we are in and selection will be done on the basis of the application form and staff consultation. These roles allow students to get involved with the wider life of the school, volunteer at various events and to take on responsibility to develop their skills and confidence. There is no prefect 'type' and no one should underestimate the contribution they can make to the school. Buddies will help in the first week back and beyond with S1 as they settle into the new school routine.

This is the link to the application form:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKQNAkG3qGH5LjmRRlc1RBjlUMUU2M0xOMDdENIZSRURaSDIQRIVWQ1BBMi4u>

Senior Phase College Students:

Moray College UHI Senior Phase courses will not begin back on 12th August, and so all college students should attend school that day. A timetable will be provided for the day.

Leavers

We were very glad to receive a lovely leaving video from S6 students and to be able to have a virtual 'leavers ceremony' this week. Many messages wishing them luck for the future were received and included in the video.

I would certainly have liked it better had I been able to shake the leavers' hands and hand them a leaver's certificate but COVID had other ideas. Many of this year's leavers started at KGS in August 2014 at the same time as myself. I personally can't really imagine KGS without them as they have literally always been here since I started. However, things change and we have to move on.

In 2014 none of us would've believed how their days at KGS would end. I wish them all the best in whatever path they follow and hope that the knowledge, skills and experiences they have gathered whilst at KGS will stand them in good stead throughout life.

Mrs Bain

Staff News

Sheila Whyte retires from our English department at the end of term. Anna Wiseman PT Biology, Chemistry and Science goes on her maternity leave as well and we wish them both all good wishes for the future. Margaret McBean joins us to cover for Anna's maternity leave. Shelley Lockhart stays with us full time permanently having been our NQT in English this session. We will also welcome a new teacher Jack Marchi to the Chemistry department after the summer. We are delighted to welcome new staff and that others are able to stay with us. Anne Cunningham will stay as Acting PT Physics and is really looking forward to actually meeting her pupils as she has not met them in person yet having joined us in lockdown!

Awards Ceremony

Our Awards Ceremony this year took a very different format due to circumstances no one could have predicted without the ability to travel in time. My favourite film when I was at secondary school was 'Back to the Future' which was based on the premise of time travel and in it, young Marty McFly hops around in time in a DeLorean sports car souped up by his inventor friend, Doc. A major theme of the film is that your actions affect the future. Think about how your actions and efforts in your school days can affect your future. So, seize every good opportunity which comes your way and make your future a good one.

Of course, unexpected things such as COVID can affect you as well. It is how you deal with things that really counts. Last year when Mr Macpherson was taken ill I took over as Acting Rector. It wasn't anything I had ever planned to do and I wasn't entirely sure that I really wanted to do it if I'm really honest. However, I saw an opportunity to provide stability for the school and to ensure we kept moving forward with all our plans and so I took on the challenge. What started as a sad situation has turned out to be the most challenging but satisfying year of my career. This past year has had more plot twists than 'Back to the Future' but I am proud of how we have survived as a school and still achieved many great things.

I am proud to be acting Rector and part of the KGS community. I am also proud that our awards celebrate not just academic but personal achievements and who you are as people. It's what is inside that counts and that is certainly true for the school as you, the people, are what makes this a school community. Without you KGS is just an empty building. The community is us, wherever we are. I am so pleased we were able to celebrate what makes us KGS and your achievements even though we are temporarily apart.

I'm sure many of you will have seen memes in which Marty is warned by Doc never to go to 2020. However, we need to think more positively. It has been a very difficult time for many of us but we are living through history right now and it is a time we will never forget. Things have slowed down for us and for many it has given us time to think about what is really important for us and an opportunity to do things differently. Instead of making 2020 a write off, let's look forward and make 2020 the year of KG-YES.

Yes to moving forward.

Yes to making plans.

Yes to opportunities.

Yes to TAKING things as they come and MAKING the most of it.

Congratulations to all our award winners and I look forward to being able to congratulate you in person soon.

Mrs Bain

Acting Rector



LIST OF PRIZES

S1 Awards

S1 Gold, The Stewart Wilson Prize: Jessica Morrison
S1 Silver: Ferre Michielsen
S1 Bronze : Caitlin Brown, Ryan Gerrie, Rachel Low
Merit Awards: Siena Clark, Abbie McWilliam, Chloe McWilliam, Amy Noble, Beth Wallace

S2 Awards

S2 Gold, The Reidhaven Prize: Ben Kidd, Kate Porter
S2 Bronze : Abbie Kellas
Merit Awards: Jasmin Hunt, Tom Palmer, Kate Rettie , Megan Riach

S3 Awards

S3 Gold, The K J Forrest Prize : Elyse Chapman
S3 Silver : Gavin Brown
S3 Bronze : Siobhan Donnison, Katie Dunbar, Cassie Findlay, Beth Smith, Fiona Stewart, Aimee Stronach

S4 Awards

S4 Gold, The Green Prize : Gregor Clark, Kirstie Low, Dodie Simmers
Merit Awards: Georgia Dalgarno, Chloe Gordon, Holly McWilliam, Bent Michielsen

S5 Awards

S5 Gold , Mrs P Roy: Peter Grant, Thonima Mirza
S5 Bronze: Scott Donald, Sarah Green, Duncan MacLure, Lewis Roger,
Dylan Taylor, Tom Watson

S1-3 SPECIAL AWARDS

Sponsored by Glenrinnnes Farms Ltd

Aspirational	Rebecca Shylock, Emma Stephen
Respectful	Heidi Crocket, Ella More
Healthy	Ryan Morrison, Emma Stronach
Responsible	Kenna Johnston, Beth Wallace
Participation	Katie Dunbar, Cassie Findlay
Positive Attitude	Ferre Michielsen, Amy Noble

S4-6 SPECIAL AWARDS

The Robin Winchester Prize for Participation	Ali Nicoll
St Rufus, Botriphnie & Grange Church Prize for Participation	Tom Watson
The Rotary Club of Keith Prize for being Responsible	Heidi Wilson
G & M Whyte Prize for being Responsible	Rachel Dunbar
Keith Community Council Prize for Community Involvement	Abbie Stewart
The Keith Grammar School Prize for being Healthy	Teoni Wright
The R C Henderson Prize for being Healthy	Ceon Still
The Thoroughly Decent Award	Julieann Gartly
M Neish Ltd Prize for being Respectful	Freya Ferguson
Bruce Stevenson Insurance Brokers Ltd Prize for being Respectful	Chloe Gordon
The Macpherson-Allan Prize for Positive Attitude	Alex McPherson
The Seafeld Prize for Positive Attitude	Chloe Gordon
The Macpherson-Allan Prize for being Aspirational	Rachel Dunbar
The Steven Dunbar Prize for being Aspirational	Sarah Green
The Rev. Ranald Gauld Prize for Perseverance	Kelsey Spalding
DYW Prize for undertaking opportunities that develop Skills for Life, Learning and Work	Abbie Morrison
KGS Career Ready Student of the Year	Heidi Wilson

ATTAINMENT AWARD

The Mark Taylor Prize for Cake Craft	Molly Smith
Drummuir Estate Prize for Music	Markus McBain
The Muirton Control Prize for French	Sarah Green
The Paul Nicoll Prize for Practical Woodwork	Angus Gurr
The Tesco Prize for Home Economics (Hospitality)	Kyle Morrison
The Seafield Prize for Physical Education	Olivia Stronach
John G Robb Prize for Modern Studies	Aaliyah Robertson
Shears Hair & Beauty Retreat Prize for Art	Catherine McAskie
Keith North Churches Prize for RMPS	Elyse Chapman
Keith Builders Merchants Prize for English	Sarah Green
The Alan Rettie Prize for Biology	Catherine McAskie
S Simmers & Sons Prize for Mathematics	Reece Mackie
The Rotary Club of Keith Prize for German	Bent Michielsen
Banffshire/Kronach Exchange Prize for Most Improved in German	Holly McWilliam
Peterkins Prize for Administration	Cameron Maver
Dr & Mrs G Sim Prize for History	Sarah Green
The Keith Grammar School Prize for Business Studies	Sarah Green
Clarks Pharmacy Prize for Physics	Reece Mackie
The Regent Prize for Computing	Bent Michielsen
The Muirton Control Prize for Graphic Communication	Connall Dark
Frank McLean & Son Prize for Chemistry	Peter Grant
Mr K Comrie Prize for Geography	Erin Sutherland
The James Bream Prize for Engineering Science	Reece Mackie
The Sean Mulligan Optician Prize for Science	Elyse Chapman
L Jex Prize for Rural Skills	Angus Gurr

EXCEPTIONAL AWARDS

Focus 350 Prize	Bent Michielsen
S6 All Round Prize	Heidi Wilson
Dux	Sarah Green

School looks a little bit different at the moment as we have had to prepare for the eventualities of 2 metre distancing in school.

Here are some photos so you can get an idea of what it might look like in August. Our janitors will finish preparations throughout the holiday period.

We look forward to you filling these rooms and corridors soon!

