



# The Banter

## Issue 1 – October



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

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### Message from the Acting Rector...

It has been a very eventful and strange but unforgettable term at KGS. The return to school has seen a much more operational focus than usual with health and safety for all being paramount. Risk Assessments are reviewed and updated regularly and Health and Safety meetings taking place weekly to address any concerns. Our initial priorities have been getting one way systems, entrances and exits, ventilation and sanitisation right. A major change we implemented was with the introduction of wearing face coverings in communal areas. Thank you to everyone who has complied with all this disruption and helped us protect everyone.

The toll of lockdown on mental health and wellbeing is evident and has had to be a huge focus for all staff. We are using nurture principles as a trauma response and staff are mentoring those with stress. Pupil Support staff are working flat out to support young people and families. School staff have also been volunteering to patrol/ monitor pupils outside at breaks to ensure everyone feels safe.

We are also aware of the financial and social impact of COVID on families and will do all we can to work with partners to help alleviate this. We are also aware of the importance of reducing the cost of the school day by not making demands on uniform, or for fees for subjects or materials. We will not be charging for practical subjects in the BGE (S1-3) this session.

Staff workload is a concern with online work having to be set as well as teaching in class. Time has been set aside from the Working Time Agreement to allow for this. Parents nights are cancelled for the foreseeable future which allows some extra preparation time. Staff are ready for possible absences or a lockdown situation with materials prepared and ready for any eventualities.

We ask that parents and pupils allow teachers a bit of leeway at the moment. Phone calls might take longer to be returned, homework may not be handed back straight away (paper needs to be quarantined for a start, and teaching time has been reduced because of sanitising and cleaning constantly).

The SQA reverting to teacher judgement as the basis for awards for 2019-20 was a great relief for us as many pupils did not do as they were predicted or deserved to do in the original results which were released. We were happy that our teacher judgements were robust and realistic so were devastated for our students when they were downgraded. This change by SQA has been much fairer and equitable for our students.

We continue with strategic work as we can looking to increase attainment by improving learning and teaching, our curriculum to respond to local need and supporting wellbeing.

Although things are strange, there are signs of recovery and we have been happy to see young people enjoying the fresh air and each other's company; working outdoors in PE; having languages fun with a virtual and actual library quiz; a People and Society class trip round the Green Roadies; and our Rights Respecting School team getting started on plans to celebrate children's rights and promote sustainability and responsible world citizenship. You will see some of this in this edition of the Banter.

We have also just appointed our Student Leadership Team and have great plans for how they can contribute to the school as well as develop their own skills and experiences during the rest of the year.

Lots of great things are still going on at Keith Grammar School. It has been a long and tiring term for all but we are making progress and have coped brilliantly so far. 2020 is not a write off and can still be the year of KG yeS.

We begin a new chapter of the KGS story after the October break, with Alan Bruce appointed as Head Teacher this week. Mr Bruce is Acting HT at Nairn Academy.

I wish to thank everyone in the KGS community for the support and effort you have all shown in recent times. I want to let you know what a privilege it has been to lead the school since Jamus Macpherson's sudden illness last year and throughout the COVID-19 situation this year. I have been amazed by the efforts, resilience, hard work, cheerfulness and just the amount of care and kindness at KGS. Thank you all.

Mrs Bain

Acting Rector

### Rights Respecting Schools

In 2015 we were awarded the Bronze Rights Respecting Schools Award. We are now starting to work toward the Silver Award. Our first step has been to put together a pupil steering group that is made up of two pupils from each year group. We started out by meeting weekly during lockdown and have continued to meet since returning to school to gather information about the award so that we can plan our journey based on the rights that concern our school community.

- Rights Respecting Schools virtual assemblies are being delivered in PSE along with a survey that will help us to plan our Silver Award journey.
- At the moment we are organising a Shoe Share which focuses on Article 28 of the Convention for The Rights of The Child - Access To Education. The idea behind the campaign is to collect old or unwanted shoes, which are sent for re-use. For every tonne of shoes collected, a donation is made to Unicef which goes towards education programmes around the world.
- We are also in the process of contacting other schools in Europe and hope to work together to make a documentary that will highlight the experiences of young people during lockdown. KGS pupils will be interviewed and encouraged to shed light on some of the issues that they faced in relation to accessing their rights and to their education.

The aim will be to make good progress towards embedding children's rights in to the school's policy, practice and ethos.



## Shoe Share

Shoe Share - We will be collecting shoes from Monday 2nd November to Friday 6th November. Old and unwanted shoes can be handed in at the school reception. For every tonne of shoes that are handed in Clarks will donate much needed resources, teacher training and money to build schools so that all children can access their right to an education.

<https://youtu.be/aAaEIXDVxqU>

**SHOE SHARE**  
unicef | Clarks



**We are hosting a shoe collection on**

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All you need to do is bring your old and unwanted shoes into school with you.

We will then deliver the shoes to Clarks, who will donate money to Unicef to help children around the world – just like you – to be able to go to school!

## People and Society Green Roadies Field Trip



## European Day of Languages – European Fact Hunt and Duolingo competition

In addition to our library quiz, we also had two competitions to celebrate on one side the diversity of the European Union and on another the beauty of learning new languages. Both competitions were open to all year groups, as well as staff, and were running over two weeks: from the 21st of September until the 2nd of October.

To invite everyone to learn more about the diversity of the European Union, we had 27 posters displayed around the school: one poster in each classroom. Each poster represented one country of the EU and gave facts involving languages, history, geography, and general knowledge. Pupils had to hunt specific facts hidden in each of the posters and hand in their fact sheet before the 2nd of October. We were really proud to see the enthusiasm and energy our pupils put into this competition as some really turned it into a race. Well done to: Mihandri Van Straaten, Craig Dick, Caitlin Mckerell, Catriona Mckerell, Abigail Shand, Amber Cordon, Skye Davie and Kirsty Simmers who all received a certificate.

For the Duolingo competition: pupils and staff were using the app Duolingo which is available on mobile phones and computers. Everyone had to collect as many points as possible (called XP by Duolingo) over the two weeks. We were really impressed by the amount of time some of our pupils and staff spent on Duolingo to practice either a language they were already learning at KGS or learning a totally new one. The languages people decided to practice/learn through this competition were mainly French, German, Spanish, Gaelic, Danish, and Swedish.

After counting down all the XP earned by each pupil and staff, we are delighted to share that the three winners within the pupils are Sophie Riddoch (with 3000xp), Bent Michielsen (with 1271xp), and Craig Dick (with 975xp). We are also very proud of Ferre Michielsen, Sadie McWilliam, Mihandri Van Straaten, Caitlin Mckerell, Amber Corden, and of course not to forget Dr. Barclay (Chemistry teacher) and Mrs. Cunningham (Physics teacher) who have all shown that they were really enthusiast linguists. They all received a certificate as well as a prize for the three winners.

To know more about Duolingo, please visit <https://www.duolingo.com/>

Merci / Danke / Gracias / Taing do / Go raibh maith agat / Tack / Thank you for taking part everyone. It has been a great pleasure organising these three events in honour of the European Day of Languages – 2020 EDITION.



European Day of Languages 2020

### Duolingo competition

Well done to the three winners of our Duolingo competition!

Sophie Riddoch  
Bent Michielsen  
Craig Dick

Modern Languages Department

duolingo

duolingo

"Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things." Flora Lewis

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart." Nelson Mandela

European Day of Languages 2020

### EU COUNTRIES FACTS HUNT

27 EU COUNTRIES: AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, BULGARIA, CROATIA, REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS, CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, IRELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA, NETHERLANDS, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN AND SWEDEN

The Modern Languages Department is really proud of all of you who collecting so many facts on all the 27 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

European stars of this autumnal term

Mihandri Van Sraaten,  
Craig Dick,  
Caitlin Mckerell,  
Catriona Mckerell,  
Abigail Shand,  
Amber Cordon  
Skye Davie  
Kirsty Simmers

## PE Department News

It's been a strange old term for us in PE. There's been lots of hand sanitizer, lots of cleaning equipment and no getting changed. It's taken us all a while to get our head round things (teachers and pupils). But in true KGS style our pupils rose to the challenge! That's resulted in lots of smiles, lots of resilience, lots of creativity and lots of understanding. We've enjoyed tennis, athletics, bowls, football, Danish longball, softball, rounders, ultimate frisbee and so much more. Our certificated classes have completed their first activity block and some have even done part of their practical assessments. A very productive term for KGS PE dept.



Outdoor Learning have transformed the school quad this term. They have created a habitat for insects and birds with their insect hotel, planting, feeding station and bird bath. They've even made some wind some windchimes to make the space sound amazing as well as looking great. Some superb team work, creativity and problem solving from an excellent class.



## European Day of Languages Quiz



As part of the celebrations of European Day of Languages in Keith Grammar School, the school library and Modern Languages department joined forces to organise an S1 and S2 Quiz on Tuesday 29th September. The quiz took place at lunchtime in the school library, with six teams taking part. The quiz featured five rounds each of five questions with rounds on vocabulary, numbers, flags, country outlines and general knowledge. All the teams involved performed strongly, with only 3 points separating the top 4 teams! After marking the answer sheets the results were announced with Team KCK coming out on top with 24 points! Team members Kirsty Simmers, Caitlin Mckerell, and Kate Mitchell (all Laidlaw house) were delighted with their win. Mr Leitch, Miss Begou and Mrs Bayliss were very pleased with how the quiz went and the enthusiasm that the pupils and for taking part.

European Day of Languages takes place on the 26th September every year, and is a celebration of languages in Europe and also an opportunity to learn more about languages and their importance. To find out more visit the EDL website: <https://edl.ecml.at/>

## Young Ambassadors

Young Ambassadors have the role to promote sport in school and to get more people active. We have been Keith Grammar Schools YAs since the summer of 2019 and are currently continuing our role. Our first plan is to organise something for Active Girls day which is on the 30th of October and we aim to encourage more girls to get involved in sport. We have set up a Twitter page to get information about different plans and events we have out to everyone in school. For more information follow us

@KGSYAs

We would also be so grateful for any ideas anyone has so please get in touch! To add to our role we were also successful in applying to be a part of the Young Ambassadors Conference Delivery Team. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 we are unable to have the conferences but we are meeting (virtually) regularly to find different ways to help new YAs in their role.

Katie Dunbar & Cassie Findlay







## KGS Virtual Library Website

Make sure you visit the KGS Virtual Library website. The site contains lots information on reading choices and book recommendations, book request service, information links for school subjects and careers advice as well as lots of library information. You can access the website from home at the following web address: [www.tinyurl.com/kgslibrary](http://www.tinyurl.com/kgslibrary)

If you have any queries, questions or suggestions please contact school librarian Mr Leitch.



 Education, Communities & Organisational Development Libraries & Information Services		
<h1>KEITH LIBRARY</h1>		
<p><b>Order and Collect appointment system is currently operating for returning and borrowing books.</b></p>		
<p><b>The item reservations system has now been re-instated.</b></p>		
<p>Appointments can be made online at: <a href="http://www.moray.gov.uk/libraries">www.moray.gov.uk/libraries</a> or by telephoning 01343 562600.</p>		
<p>Keith Library Union Street Keith AB55 5DP 01542 882223</p>		
 <a href="http://www.facebook.com/moraylibraries">www.facebook.com/moraylibraries</a>	 <a href="http://www.moray.gov.uk/libraries">www.moray.gov.uk/libraries</a>	 <a href="https://twitter.com/librariesmoray">@librariesmoray</a>



Parent Councils have been around for years but many parents may be unaware of what the Parent Council is and what it can do for them.

The main duty of the Parent Council (P.C.) is to represent the views of the parents in the school and to create a strong link between the school and parents.

Some reasons why it's important to have a Parent Council are:

It provides an appropriate time and environment to discuss issues that are important to parents and the school.

Helps the school take the views of parents into account when making decisions on new policies and development plans.

Gives the school an opportunity to explain decisions to parents.

It promotes and supports the work of the staff for the benefit of our children and school.

Organising social and fundraising events to fund or subsidise opportunities and activities that otherwise may not be available to our children.

The school benefits from the varied skills, interests, knowledge and experience that parents can offer.

It facilitates the development of a partnership between home and school so that everyone works together for the benefit of the school and pupils.

Keith Grammar School Parent Council is always looking for and welcomes new members.

An A.G.M is held every September to elect new office bearers. This year's AGM has already been held so you do not have to worry that you'll end up with an office bearer role if you don't want one. Normally the P.C. meet in the KGS staff room and enjoy a cuppa and a biscuit (or 2) while discussing the matters that impact on our children but during the pandemic we have been holding virtual meetings.

Provisional dates for the next parent council meetings are:

10th November 2020 (virtual meeting)

19th January 2021

23rd March 2021

The winner of the September draw is holder of lucky number 104, Gillian Hendry, who will receive £101.00 (half of the money taken it at the time of the draw). You can see the live draw on the KGS Facebook page.

Here are our previous winners:

March, No. 92, Lynette Chapman, £101.00 (202 members)

April, No. 52, Fiona Alexander, £101.00 (202 members)

May, No. 55, Laura Simmers, £101.00 (202 members)

June, No. 129, Susan Macpherson, £101.00 (202 members)

July, No. 189, Jenni McWilliam, £101.00 (202 members)

August, No. 69, Muggie Milne, £101.00 (202 members)

The October draw will take place on Saturday 31st October and can be seen on my Facebook page and then shared on KGS Facebook page. Good Luck!

Thanks for your support!

Stay Safe!

Laura



**Senior Art Work in Progress**



<b>Day/Date:</b>	<b>Details:</b>
Monday 12th — Friday 23rd October	October Holidays
Monday 26th October	Start of Term
Tuesday 10th November	Virtual Parent Council Meeting (Provisional)
Monday 16th November	In-Service
Monday 21st December—Tuesday 5th January	Christmas Holidays