



Introduction

We have made it to the last few days of term and the end of the school year. Looking back over this year and particularly this term it has again been unlike any other with existing and new challenges to navigate. There have been many highs and lows experienced by all associated with our school and whilst not everything has been straight forward and gone as we'd have wanted there have been many successes to share and celebrate. We have been responding to the daily challenges of an ongoing pandemic the best way possible to ensure we continue to deliver high quality learning experiences to our young people. There have been many new skills learned by pupils and staff alike over this session, especially with another period of lock-down to contend with. The commitment and resilience of all staff at KGS has been astounding where everyone has gone above and beyond where we ever thought we could to ensure the support for our young people has been our primary focus.

The summer holidays are a welcome and much needed break for everyone to rest, recuperate, recharge and take stock of the year that has gone. It has not been easy to deliver distance learning again and then prepare Senior Phase pupils for a period of assessment to determine their predicted grades this year. I believe all teaching and support staff have been incredible in helping our young people through this extremely challenging and anxious time. I cannot thank all staff enough for their support, hard work, resilience, tenacity and dedication over this period and I feel privileged to work with such an amazing team of people!

Health and Safety

Post Summer Arrangements

There is much to do to get ready for the new session and we continue to working tirelessly to prepare as best we can in an ever-changing context. Looking ahead the challenge continues to be great but not insurmountable. We are again carefully planning our road to recovery and this will have a continued focus on our safety measures across the school.

Even though we are currently in level 1 we continue to hear about rising COVID cases in other schools across Moray and in other Authorities. The Scottish Government guidance has not changed for schools even though we are currently in level 1.

The current measures that will continue are:

- Social distancing, staying 2m apart from pupils and staff.
- Face coverings must be worn in all indoor spaces where we are in the company of others.
- Lateral Flow Testing must continue as this is another measure that has proven to help identify cases more rapidly. (see additional note below).
- Good ventilation in classes to ensure a flow of fresh air throughout the day in every class.
- Regular hand washing and routine application of sanitiser throughout the day.
- Following the one way system.
- Staggered lunch break.

It is unlikely that there will be significant changes on week one of our return. Depending on the further updates over the summer break we may have changes to implement, but these will be after we return.



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Lateral Flow Testing

A recent letter was issued to all parents from the NHS Public Health team. The letter outlined the offer to continue Lateral Flow Testing over summer. This is optional for all pupils who wish to continue as part of the universal testing offer. If your child wishes to continue Lateral Flow Testing over the summer break they should collect sufficient test kits to see them through this period.

We have noticed a drop in the number of pupils who have opted into lateral flow testing yet have not collected further test kits. This process is a vital part of our safe and continued return to school and normal life. Please encourage your child to continue with testing to keep our school community safe.

Over the summer break test kits are also available from the following website as part of the universal testing offer:

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Normal testing routines should continue for all staff and pupils on **Sunday 15th August** before our return. Please ensure your child has sufficient test kits for whichever option you are undertaking.

Whole School Information

SQA Alternative Certification Model (ACM)

This week we completed the final quality assurance and accuracy checks in order to process the provisional grades for all Senior Phase pupils as part of the SQA Alternative Certification Model this year.

With the removal of a formal exam diet this year, the Alternative Certification Model has been a significant piece of work by our school to ensure our young people attain the qualifications they deserve. This year our learners grades have been judged by the teachers and lecturers and these have been based on assessment evidence. At every stage of this process we have ensured a robust quality assurance process that has involved cross marking, professional discussion, analysis of results, looking at sources of evidence, all of which has been presented to the Central Education Team at Moray Council to ensure our processes have been rigorous.

Provisional grades were given or posted to all pupils showing their final results achieved this session. These grades will be subject to final validation by SQA after 25 June 2021 and SQA Results Day will still be on **10th August 2021**.

A letter was included with all provisional results explaining the awards as well as further details of the SQA appeals process.

All queries regarding results should be sent via e-mail to the Keith Grammar School admin e-mail address. A member of SLT will then be in contact to discuss this further.

P7 Transition

Once again our transition programme has been carried out as a virtual programme with some enhanced transition to support learners. It is certainly not the experience we had hoped to provide for our new S1 cohort, however as with all things at present, the restrictions in place made it necessary. Further transition opportunities are being planned for August to support our new intake to settle as quickly as possible and successfully navigate their next phase of learning.



Staffing Changes

As is normal at this time of year we see a number of staff changes where we say farewell to respected colleagues and friends who move on to new opportunities. While it is sad to see colleagues leave us it is also an opportunity to welcome new staff to the KGS team. This year is no exception!

Staff leaving at the end of session:

Mrs Smith (PT Humanities) – At the end of term we sadly say goodbye to Mrs Smith as PT of Humanities. Mrs Smith will retire from her post after an incredible 18 years of service to our young people and Keith Grammar School. Mrs Smith's passion for her subject and commitment to the department and pupils has been a real credit to her and the school. Mrs Smith will be a tough act to follow and she will be greatly missed by all. We hope she enjoys her retirement and that all of her travel plans quickly come to fruition.

Mrs McBean (Acting PT Biology/Chemistry/Science) – Mrs McBean also leaves us after a year covering for Mrs Wiseman as the PT of Biology/Chemistry/Science. Mrs McBean has led the department through one of the most challenging periods in Education and has done it with quiet composure, professionalism and most importantly, positivity. Mrs McBean has been a great asset to the Science department and will be missed by staff and pupils alike. Thank you to her for her leadership and contribution to the education of our young people.

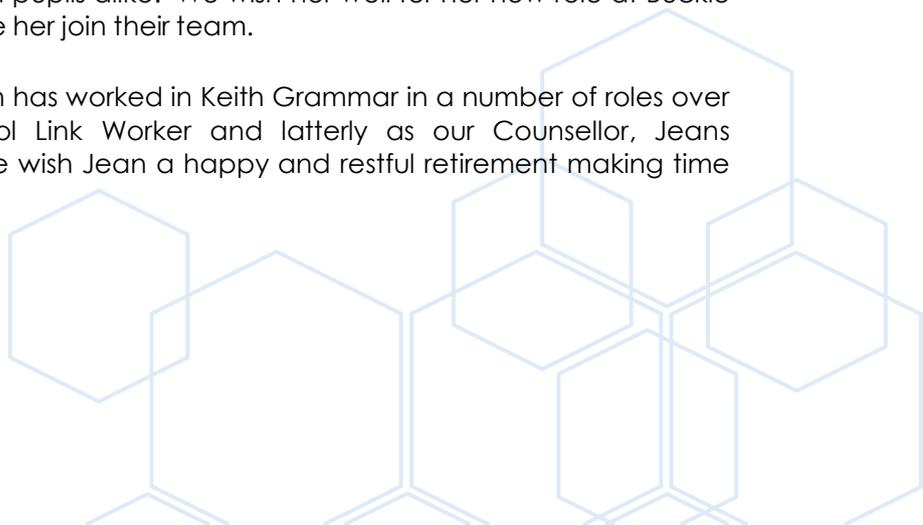
Ms Souness (PT Guidance) – Ms Souness has been with the Guidance team since 2016. This year Ms Souness has started to implement our Nurture programme in school and has made massive strides in developing a strategy we are excited to move forward. Ms Souness is moving to Buckie High School to join the Guidance team along with other Pupil Support duties. We will miss Ms Souness and know that our loss will be Buckie's gain.

Mr Kay (Teacher of Biology) – Mr Kay has been teacher of Biology with us for a little over five years. Mr Kay's contribution to science has seen the subject grow considerably with a significant number of Senior Phase pupils opting for Biology each year. This is testament to the popularity of Mr Kay that he leaves the department with young people interested and enthused by the subject.

Dr Marchi (NQT Chemistry) – Dr Marchi leaves us at the end of his probation year. Dr Marchi has quickly become a respected member of staff with both colleagues and pupils. We wish him well for the next stage of his teaching career. We hope Dr Marchi's plans to see family over the holidays come together, especially after such a long time apart.

Miss Laing (ASN Teacher) – Having been with us since October working with our young people in Support for Learning, Miss Laing's contribution as ASN teacher has been significant in such a short period of time. We have greatly appreciated Miss Laing's work and the manner she has diligently supported staff and pupils alike. We wish her well for her new role at Buckie High they are extremely lucky to have her join their team.

Jean Murdoch (Counsellor) – Jean has worked in Keith Grammar in a number of roles over the years. From PSA, Home School Link Worker and latterly as our Counsellor, Jean's contribution has been significant. We wish Jean a happy and restful retirement making time for herself for a change!



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Other Staffing Changes

Mrs Wiseman – Mrs Wiseman will return from her maternity leave to lead the Biology/Chemistry/Science department. There have been many changes since Mrs Wiseman left, but we are sure she will quickly adapt and continue to lead the department capitalising on the great work by Mrs McBean and the team.

Mr Pirie (Depute Head Teacher) – Mr Pirie will re-join us in August following his secondment as Acting Quality Improvement Officer. We hope he enjoyed his time with the Central team but we are delighted to see his return to resume his Depute Head Teacher duties.

Mrs Bayliss and Miss Garden - Mr Pirie's return will mean both Mrs Bayliss and Miss Garden will return to their departments as Principal Teacher. Both have undertaken the DHT role at one of the most difficult times in Education and during one of the most stressful terms in the year and yet they have both done it extremely well. Both Mrs Bayliss and Miss Garden have acted with professionalism, calm composure and demonstrated the qualities required to be effective managers and leaders. I cannot thank them enough for their support and hard work and I hope they have enjoyed every moment of this experience, the highs and the lows.

This session we have a number of new staff joining our team and we would like to extend a warm welcome to them all. We hope they love working at our school and we know they will very quickly be made to feel part of the team. Staff joining us in August:

Mr Martyn Cowie – Mr Cowie will be taking up post as Principal Teacher of Humanities in August replacing Mrs Smith. Mr Cowie is returning to Moray after a period of teaching in a number of schools in Glasgow. We are delighted to welcome Mr Cowie to KGS and we know he will do an incredible job, capitalising on the incredible legacy left by Mrs Smith.

Mr Mark Musil – Mr Musil will be taking up post in August following a successful interview on Wednesday for our Teacher of Biology post. Mr Musil has completed his probation year at Inveralmond Community High School in West Lothian. We are looking forward to Mr Musil joining the team at KGS and know he will be a real asset to Biology/Science and to the school.

Ms. Deborah Cowie – Ms. Cowie will be the newest member of the Pupil Support Team as our recently appointed Home School Link Worker. Deborah will be a key part of the team linking families with school to improve attendance, experiences and opportunities for our young people. We are delighted to have Deborah join us and we know she will make a significant contribution to our school.

Newly Qualified Teachers

This year we are welcoming five Probationer Teachers to our school. We are extremely lucky to have so many join us and we are really excited to support them through their first year in the profession. We wish them well and hope they enjoy their time at KGS from August.

- **Miss Kate Harvey** – Miss Harvey will be joining the Science department as our Biology NQT
- **Miss Kirsten Stewart** – Miss Stewart will be joining Home Economics department
- **Miss Laura George** – Miss George will be joining Digital Learning as our Business Studies NQT
- **Miss Natalia Robak** – Miss Robak will be joining the Art and Design department
- **Miss Shannon Campbell** – Miss Campbell will be joining the English department

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Awards Ceremony

We have yet again been unable to hold a full awards ceremony as would have happened in previous years where we can invite parents, carers and members of the community to join us in this celebration of pupils achievements.

Even though this is a very scaled down ceremony, it doesn't mean we are celebrating any less. We are extremely proud of all our pupils for successfully navigating their way through a difficult period in their learning. The number of awards presented across every year group is testament to the hard work, diligence and resilience displayed by many of our young people. We would like to congratulate them all on their achievements this session. A massive thank you to Mrs Bain, Mrs Jenkins and Mrs Winchester for pulling the ceremony together and giving our pupils a celebration to be proud of.

We would also like to pay a special thank you to our award sponsors. If it was not for their continued generosity and support for our school community, the awards ceremony would not be possible. We hope they are as proud as we are of our young people and their part in celebrating achievement at Keith Grammar School.

A last wee note...

Attached with this briefing you'll find our Celebration of Achievement newsletter showcasing the work of our young people over the term. What better way to celebrate the end of term with some excellent examples of work across a range of subjects.

I would like to wish all young people, staff and parents time and space for rest, recovery and renewal. You have all been incredible in how you have supported us through this time and shown how united the Keith Grammar community is in working together for our young people.

Please take care and stay safe.

Best wishes

Alan Bruce

Head Teacher

