

Grantown Grammar School

Cromdale Road, Grantown-on-Spey PH26
3HU
Tel: (01479) 872649 Fax: (01479) 873649
E-Mail: grantowngrammar@highland.gov.uk
Web Site: www.ggschool.com



THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE NA GAIDHEALTACHD

PARENTS' NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2013

As we near the end of session 2012-13, I send this newsletter to provide you with some key dates, events and information as well as to wish all pupils and their families an enjoyable summer break.

Keep Your Child Safe – Important information for all Parents/Carers

I have enclosed a letter from Highland Council and Police Scotland which provides some very important information about mobile technology and how to help keep your child safe. Given the number of issues that have come to my attention with respect to cyber bullying and the transmission of inappropriate images, I urge **every** Parent/Carer to read the enclosed document.

End of Session - arrangements for last day of term

This year the summer break is a week longer than normal at seven, rather than six weeks.

- **Friday 28 June is a Non-Uniform Day** in aid of CLIC Sargent. Pupils are asked to support this charity by wearing pink and white and donating a £1. Cakes, kindly donated by Just Delicious, will be on sale at break time and there will also be other fundraising activities, so pupils are asked to bring some small change with them.
- The school will close for the summer on Friday 28 June at 12.30 pm, slightly earlier than usual.
- Any pupil wishing a school lunch on Friday must pre-order it by contacting the canteen staff on or before morning break on Thursday 27 June.
- Most school transport will run as normal, however, the Rattray's transport to the Braes and Skye of Curr will leave the school at 12.45 pm.
- Activities will be arranged in the Craig MacLean Leisure Centre and/or the school field, from 12.40 pm to 1.15 pm for school transport pupils who wish to remain in school. All pupils who remain on the school grounds must report to the PE department at 12.40 pm **after** collecting their lunch.
- Pupils may leave the school and return for buses at the normal Friday lunchtime, or use the later 4.00 pm bus. Parents are asked to discuss these options with their sons/daughters.

New Session

Pupils return to start lessons at 8.55 am on Tuesday 20 August. Monday 19 August is an In-Service Day for staff.

Examination results

Pupils who sat SQA examinations in May/June will receive their examination results on 6 August.

As we would like to minimize disruption at the start of the new term, pupils in S5/S6 who wish/need to request a subject change **as a result of exam results** are invited to contact the school in advance of their return. This will allow their new timetables to be ready for the first day back. Guidance Staff will be available to meet with affected pupils **between 11.30 am and 12.15 pm on Monday 19 June**. Pupils who are unable to come into school on Monday may contact the school to leave a message with office staff. The school office will be open for such messages on the mornings of **Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 12–14 August**. Messages should provide as much information as possible along with a follow up contact number.

Pupils who wish to change their **course level in English and Mathematics** need not make contact in advance. They should discuss this directly with their English/Mathematics Teacher on their return.

Staffing Changes

At the end of this session a number of our staff are moving on and I wish them all the very best in the future.

- Mrs Denise Roberston, Principal Teacher of Support for Learning, and Mr Jimmy Ross, Head Janitor, are both retiring after working at the school for 25 and 19 years respectively. We are interviewing for Mrs Robertson's replacement next week. Mr Frank Anderson is to replace Mr Ross as Head Janitor.
- Mr Johnny Croall (PE) has been appointed as Depute Head at Millburn Academy on a permanent basis.
- Ms Judi Oates (Biology) is joining the staff of Millburn Academy and Miss Lindsay Cameron (Home Economics) will be moving to Golspie High School.
- Miss Iona Paterson (Maths), Miss Jen McKenna (Maths) and Mr Lewis Wicksted (Art) have successfully completed their probationary year and I congratulate them all. Mr Wicksted will join the staff of Balerno High School, Miss McKenna will be travelling before looking for a teaching post overseas and Miss Paterson is starting a Masters degree in Mathematics and Biology.
- In August we will be joined by: Mr Jon Goulding (Biology, Chemistry and Science), Miss Elisabeth McQueen (Biology and Science), Miss Donna Shaw (Art and Design), Miss Rachel Maurice (French), Miss Laura Logan (Maths) and Mr Ross Cameron (Maths).

Highland Young Musician of the Year Final

Our congratulations go to Finn Smith, who has just finished S6, on reaching the finals of the Highland Young Musician of the Year. He was presented with the 'Most Promising Talent' award at the event where his performance on the tenor trombone was outstanding.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 21 June	School Show 2014 - Auditions Grease Auditions for everybody, 1.45-4.00 pm Main Hall
Monday 24 June	Annual Sports Day, 12.30 pm Arrangements have been made for an early lunch from 11.22 am to 12.15 pm. There will be no morning break. Pupils will register with tutors at 12.15 pm then go to the field. As a number of fund raising events are being organised by S6, pupils may want to take some small change with them. Pupils will be released at the end of the Sports event, which is planned to be around 3.45 pm.
Tuesday 25 June	Flexible Afternoon We are looking forward to an exciting afternoon organised by our new School and House Captains. Early plans look like it will include an entertaining event in the hall, followed by Inter House Activities, either on the field or in tutor groups (depending on the weather).
Wednesday 26 June	Sports Awards Fitting in the presentation of medals and trophies on Sports Day itself has been problematic in the past, so this year we are trying a different approach. We are holding a Sports Awards for pupils before morning break on Wednesday 26 June. Unfortunately, the size of our hall means that we cannot open this event to parents.
Thursday 27 June	Music Concert, Main Hall 7.30 pm Tickets from School Office and Bookmark from Thursday 20 June Adults £4 Concessions £3

SCHOOL TRIPS ABROAD

A number of foreign trips are being planned to run over the next couple of years and I would like to thank all our staff, who are continuing to offer such fantastic opportunities to our pupils, despite significant workload issues for teachers, as we move to the new curriculum and new qualifications.

One of our aims this year had been to provide better information in advance to parents about all the trips likely to be on offer for the forthcoming session. Unfortunately, this has not been as easy to achieve as we had hoped, mainly due to short timescales for bookings which can mean increased costs if bookings are delayed. We still aim to try to improve our communication with respect to school trips, however, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of the following trips.

Paris Trip – October 2013	A place has become available on this trip. Any S5/S6 pupil who is interested in taking up this place should see Mrs Shearon immediately.
New York Trip – October 2014	The demand for this trip was significantly greater than anticipated and there is already a waiting list. Any pupil who wishes to be included on the waiting list for places should they become available, must return their slip to Mrs Shearon before the end of this term (no deposit required).
Alaska Trip – Summer 2014	Pupils of Grantown Grammar School are being invited to join pupils from Banchory Academy for a three week experience of a lifetime. The trip will go to the Kenai Peninsula and the Harding Icefield. Two weeks will be exploring the Icefield, the second largest in North America and one week will be spent with the Wildlife and Fisheries Protection Service on a conservation project. The trip, which will take place during the summer holidays, is open to pupils who are over 16 by July 2014 and have some mountaineering experience. GGS staff member Mr Jas Hepburn, as well as suitably qualified staff from Banchory Academy, will accompany the group. Anyone interested should contact Mr Hepburn for more information, if possible by the end of term, but by the end of the first week back at the latest.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Updated Parent Council Website	GGG Parent Council website has a new look! It is accessible by clicking on Parent Council on the school website. Members of the Parent Council can be contacted by using their Moderated blog: choose a user name and click on Open Forum on the main page. Alternatively you can contact the Parent Council by leaving a note at the school office.
Thanks/Can you help?	I would like to take this opportunity to thank Andy Liggat for supporting our work to improve communication with parents. Andy is stepping down from his position as Vice Chair (Communications) at the end of the term. With Andy moving on, the Parent Council are really keen to find someone who is willing to support them with communication via Internet and paper. This does not require someone to attend Parent Council meetings but the skills to support their website would be an asset. (I know there are many of you out there – can you help?)
Feedback from Reports	Thank you for returning forms giving us feedback on school reports. I'm pleased to say that, in general, these have been very positive. One or two issues have arisen as a result of feedback, in particular with relation to homework. We will be looking at addressing these in the new session.

Highland Council Parental Engagement Survey

Highland Council are keen to support schools to improve communications with parents. To help in this process they are keen for parents to give them feedback about some possibilities. Please spare a few minutes to complete their on line survey on:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/69KJ5LT>

The survey will remain live until 9.00am on Monday 8 July.

A paper version of the survey can also be requested from the school office. It needs to be returned by 25 June.

SUMMARY OF KEY DATES AND EVENTS

Grease Auditions	Friday 21 June
Sports Day	Monday 24 June
Sports Awards – pupils only	Wednesday 26 June
Music Concert	Thursday 27 June
End of session	Friday 28 June – 12.30 pm
S5/S6 post exam - change of course requests	Monday 19 August 11.30 am – 12.15 pm
Pupils return to school	Tuesday 20 August

TERM DATES FOR SESSION 2013-14

	SCHOOL OPENS ON	SCHOOL CLOSES ON
1st Term:	Monday 19 August 2013 (<i>Staff only</i>) Tuesday 20 August 2013 (<i>pupils</i>)	Friday 4 October 2013
2nd Term:	Monday 21 October 2013 (<i>Staff only</i>) Tuesday 22 October 2013 (<i>pupils</i>)	Friday 20 December 2013
3rd Term:	Monday 6 January 2014	Friday 4 April 2014
4th Term:	Tuesday 22 April 2014	Thursday 3 July 2014

(Good Friday 18 April 2014 and Easter Monday 21 April 2014)

Additional Holidays

Mid-Term break: Monday 17 February and Tuesday 18 February 2014
May Day: Monday 5 May 2014

In-Service Days

Monday 19 August 2013
Monday 21 October 2013
Wednesday 19, Thursday 20, Friday 21 February 2014

(Note: School is closed to pupils on all In-Service Days)

Mrs I Carson
Head Teacher