



# Tain Royal Academy

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25 August 2017

Dear Parent/Carers,

I would like to wish you a warm welcome back to the new Academic Session for 2017-2018. I would like to start off by congratulating the pupils of TRA for the exam results they achieved which has seen us improve overall from last year's results which is very pleasing. Hopefully we can now push on together and continue to improve our results this coming year. That will not be easy but will require a lot of hard work and resilience on behalf of the pupils as well as ourselves but if we all work together in a positive manner then we give ourselves a much better chance of achieving this. Another issue that will have a significant influence on the results is attendance as pupils can miss a lot of work over the course of even just a few days absence. There will be of course times when this cannot be helped, such as due to illness or extra-curricular activities, but it is important than any work missed is caught up with, which our staff are very keen to help out with. If a pupil has ninety per cent attendance, on the surface this sounds good but the reality is that the pupil will have missed almost 4 weeks of work, which is a lot to catch up with. Pupils who are regularly late can also miss quite a bit of work and even 10 minutes a day adds up to one period a week, although I have to say that the pupils are much improved in terms of arriving on time which I fully appreciate and would like to thank you for your help with.

Could I encourage you please to look at your child's school planner each week. Each lesson pupils are given a learning intention which is basically what the teacher intends the pupil to have learned by the end of the lesson. Pupils should write these learning intentions in their planners for every lesson. On a Friday we go through their planners with the pupils in Plus Time, the Plus Time teacher signs the week off and there is also a space for the parents to sign off for the week. I would be grateful if you could do this on a Thursday before we discuss the pupils' progress with them on the Friday.

The pupils have been arriving to school looking very smart in their various forms of school uniform and would like to thank you for your support in this. The new polo shirts and hooded sweaters have proved to be very popular. Items can still be purchased online and are available at MacGregor's School Wear <http://macgregorschoolwear.co.uk/> There will be another order for hooded sweaters later this term and we will keep you informed.

I would like to congratulate Duthus for winning this year's House Competition. It was a very close contest and the sports day went a large way to deciding the final outcome. The PE department as well as a large number of the staff helped make the school sports day a very successful and thoroughly enjoyable day for everyone.

We have some new members of staff joining us for the start of the new session, Mr Chris Pope in the PE department and Ms Laura Keenan in the Technical department. We also have Ms Valerie Paireau with us for the year in the Social Subjects department, from France as part of a Jules Verne programme which will see us establish a link with her school in France.

Sadly leaving us are Mrs Kathleen Sutherland who is retiring and Mrs Vicky Adam both from the Maths department, Mr Derek Young from the Technical department and Mr Dale Nicoll and Mr Ian MacIver from the PE department who are all moving to new posts. I wish them all the very best for the future.

In Service dates for this coming year are as follows:

- Monday 18 and Tuesday 19 September 2017 with Monday 18 being the authority In-Service day
- Wednesday 21 February 2018
- Monday 4 June 2018

The term dates for 2018/19 and 19/20 have also been agreed and are available on the Highland Council website at [http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school\\_term\\_dates](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates)

The buddy trip will take place on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October, more details will be issued nearer the time.

This year's school sponsored walk will be on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October, the last day of this term. We did the same last year and it seemed to work well and was a nice way to end the term. There will be a couple of house assemblies during this term to explain to the pupils what will be happening on the day and when sponsor forms will be issued.

In recent months a number of queries have been raised about insurance cover for school staff and/or parents using their own vehicles to transport children to school events. Each individual's Insurance Policy will be different. Where schools organise either staff or parents to transport children to official school events, drivers should contact their insurer to gain confirmation that their Insurance Policy includes cover for this activity, forms are available from the school office.

Finally I would like to invite you to join the Parent Council. The annual AGM is on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September, starting at 6:45pm so please come along.

Yours faithfully



**Mark Jones**  
Rector