



8<sup>th</sup> June 2018

## Important Dates

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### June

- 11 **5<sup>th</sup> Grade Leavers Assembly, 8:30am in The QET**
- 12 **MS Fun Day:**
  - Cardboard Boat Races 10:00am**
  - MS Pool Party 10:30-11:20am**
  - House Challenges 12:00-1:45pm**
  - MS Awards 2:00pm, in The QET**
- 12 **Grade 11 Extended Essay Working Breakfast, 8:30-11:30am**
- 12 **Pre-School End of Year Celebration, 10:00am**
- 12 **Last Day for Pre-School, Dismissal at 11:00am**
- 13 **ES Closing Assembly & Slide Show, 8:45am in The QET**
- 13 **MS/HS Assembly, 10:15am**
- 13 **EARLY DISMISSAL AT 11:00AM – Start of Summer Holiday**

### July

16-10 Aug **SUMMER CAMP**

### August

16 **Start of 1<sup>st</sup> Semester, 2018-19 School Year**

## ► From the Head of School

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**Dear Parents,**

### Surveys

Presented in this issue of the Thistle Talk are summaries of the parent and student surveys conducted this year. The feedback from all of these surveys is shared with the School Board and school administration/staff. The feedback we receive is used at all levels to help us in our planning to improve student learning at ISA.

### Yearbook

Congratulations to Chandra Gair and her Yearbook class for putting together such an excellent yearbook for the rest of us to enjoy.

### Departing Teachers

Each year, we say goodbye to families and students as they depart ISA. This is also a reality for staff who become such an integral part of our school, whether they are with us for a short time or many years. All of these teachers/staff members have made great contributions to ISA and our students. I want to say a heartfelt thank you to every one of them and wish them the best with their future plans. Thank you for all your efforts to benefit our students.

The following teachers are leaving ISA for new adventures. We wish them the best.

Matthew Barry — MS/HS Assistant Principal/Math and Design Tech Teacher

Philippa Bramley — Grade I (Formerly ES PE)

Margot Buchan — MS French

Jason MacMillan — MS English/Social Studies/Computers

Helen Perrell — French/CNED

### **Families Leaving ISA**

I want to wish all the parents leaving us this year our very best and I thank you for your support. I wish all of our leaving students the best of luck in your new schools and hope that you will remember ISA fondly. As one of the families leaving ISA, our family cannot adequately express our gratitude for the opportunity to be a part of the ISA community. Working alongside dedicated faculty and staff, wonderful students and supportive parents, in beautiful Scotland has been an absolute privilege. Over the past five years, Matthew and I have dedicated as much of ourselves as possible to ISA, and our greatest reward has been seeing the students at the school learn and flourish, including our own children, whose teachers and friends we cannot thank enough.

### **Summer**

Students, you have worked hard this year. Have a safe and enjoyable break!

Faculty and staff, thank you for your never-ending dedication to your work and the children. I hope you are able to relax and rejuvenate during the summer.

Kind regards,

**Sarah Bruce**

Head of School

## **► From the MS/HS Principal**

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### **Dear Middle/High School Parents,**

What a great night on Wednesday! Wonderful performances showcasing the artistic talents of the Middle School students. As a relatively small school, we are able to give each student the chance to show what they can do at evenings like this and every musician, artist and actor put on a great show. Sound and lighting were well supported by our MS Tech Team and, of course, none of it would have been possible without the hardwork of our Fine Arts' teachers. I hope you were fortunate enough to be a part of the large audience.

We finish at 11:00am on Wednesday and prior to that, at 10:00am, will have an end of semester assembly. Students have prepared presentations to revisit highlights from the year and we will say farewell to our leavers. On Tuesday, the MS Fun Day will see the students build boats that they will then race in the pool to mark the culmination of this year's House Challenge. The MS Awards will be presented later that day at 2:00pm. Grade 11 students should remember that they have an Extended Essay breakfast at 8.30am that day, too.

Sadly, we are saying goodbye to Matthew Barry, Margot Buchan, Helen Perrell, and Jason MacMillan. I would like to thank them for their service to the School and the positive impact they have had on our students. Sarah Bruce, our departing Head of School, has had an incredibly positive impact on our school community in the five years she has been at ISA. Before taking on her current post, she was the Middle and High School Principal, and your children still benefit from the many excellent initiatives and programmes she built during her time in that role. She always

puts children at the heart of any decision, and will be greatly missed by colleagues and students alike.

Teachers are currently marking exams and writing reports and the scores and comments will be shared via PowerSchool when it re-opens to parents on Thursday evening. Hard copies of reports will then be posted out shortly after this.

I am grateful to the many parents who have helped out with events at school this semester, and to those that have been so supportive in following up on communications from teachers or myself. I appreciate the strong sense of community that exists at ISA, and look forward to the new academic year in August. Before then, of course, there is the small matter of a well-deserved holiday for our students, and some quality time with family and friends. I hope you have a very pleasant break.

**Angus Carmichael**  
MS/HS Principal

## ► From the Elementary Principal

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Dear Parents,

I seem to ask at this point every year, “*Where has the time gone?*”

This is the last Thistle article before the summer holiday. The school year has gone by so fast. I’ve begun my annual job of putting a slide show together to reflect memories of this special school year. As I look over so many precious moments, it’s easy to appreciate how happy ISA students are and what amazing opportunities they have had all year.

This June, we have our usual turnover of students. Transitions away from a familiar and comfortable home can be challenging, especially when the next assignment is unknown, or there are concerns with school waiting lists. It is my hope, however, that all of our families, both returning and leaving, will look back on the 2017-18 school year with many fond memories. As always, it’s a pleasure to serve as the Elementary Principal at an ambitious school with happy kids, supportive parents and dedicated teachers. I know from reading each report card that this has been a successful year for student learning. I also sense that for our students it’s been a year of strong personal growth, with confidence ‘blooming’, and the capacity for hard work and independent study strengthening.

All of the teachers will be looking forward to a summer break. They have worked so hard for your children and deserve a superb holiday. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for all of their efforts to help make this a successful year. I also wish all of our school families a wonderful summer break. I’ve appreciated your support all year. Your children have earned all of those special days of holiday ahead of them!

A Few Staff Departures:

13<sup>th</sup> June symbolises the start of summer fun, but it is also a time to say goodbye to many friends who will be leaving Aberdeen. At the end of each school year we say goodbye to families, all of whom have meant so much to the life of the School. For those of you who are moving from Aberdeen, we wish you all of the best and hope you take with you many cherished memories of your time in Scotland. Who knows, one day you might be back!

This year in the Elementary School, we also say goodbye to a few staff members. Each of these teachers has made significant contributions to the education of our students and enriched the lives of everyone who worked with them.

Philippa Bramley has been a part of ISA since 2010. During her time, she has been a key member of our PE staff and most recently a first grade teacher for a maternity leave. Philippa is beloved for her enthusiasm and the caring nature she has for everyone, especially the children. Students thrive under her care. We thank Philippa for her time at ISA and, while we will miss her, expect she will return at some point to Aberdeen. For next year, we wish her all the best as she begins a new teaching position at a school in London.

Helen Perrell has been teaching French at ISA since 2010. Always so positive and encouraging she's had a strong impact on students from Pre-School through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. We thank Helen for her dedication to ISA and wish her and her family, all the best on their move to Copenhagen. As with Philippa, we hope to see the Perrells back in Aberdeen in the future.

Sarah Bruce leaves ISA after five years. She is our Head of School, but has also served as MS/HS Principal and teacher within the Upper School. As her colleague, I have greatly enjoyed working alongside Sarah in all of her roles. She has worked tirelessly to support ISA, especially in recent years where many changes have occurred due to declining enrolment revenue. Always eager to listen to a student, parent or a teacher with equal measure, Sarah led the School with great dedication and energy. We've all enjoyed getting to know her family and wish them the very best upon their return to Toronto.

All of our teaching staff has worked with great commitment to meet the needs of every child.

I recently asked some children who are leaving what they will miss most about ISA. The response, for some was "EVERYTHING", but also included, "*The teachers, they give us so many activities and choice, so learning is fun.*" I was also delighted by the observation, "*Everyone is so kind to each other, my class is like one big family.*"

Whether your family is returning next year or moving on to other adventures, I want to thank you for your contributions to the ISA family this year.

Best regards,

**Don Newbury**  
Elementary Principal

## ► **From the Fine Arts Department**

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CONGRATULATIONS to the ISA Middle School for a wonderful and beautiful Arts Night! The evening was spectacular! Well done on all your hard work and effort!!

Thank you to the ISA Community for a great, creative and wonderful year!

**ISA Fine Arts Department**

## ► From the Library

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### Leaving students and summer reading

We hope you and your family will enjoy some relaxing summer reading over the holiday! If your children are definitely returning to ISA in August, you and they are very welcome to borrow library books for the long holiday. All library books that are checked out from now onwards will be due back after the holiday, on 16th August. We also encourage any families spending part of the summer in Aberdeen to consider taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge, which will be running in all public libraries in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

If your children will be leaving ISA, please check that they have returned all of their library books already. If there is any uncertainty about whether your children will be returning to ISA or not, please make sure that they return all their books before the end of term, and do not borrow anything for the holiday.

We wish all of our families a great summer break.

**Josie Crimp**

Librarian

## ► From the Duke of Edinburgh Award Programme

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### Attention all ISA students and parents:

The sign-up process for all levels of DofE participation (Bronze, Silver and Gold) has previously been advertised to end today. If a student plans to participate in any level of DofE during the school year 2018-19, Mr Crock should have received an enrolment form. If an enrolment form has not been turned in, please return said form to Mr Crock by Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> June.

Currently, the following dates are on the calendar:

#### Bronze

**Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018:** Bronze training and planning (10:00–17:00)

Parents please attend from 16:15-17:00

**Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018:** Bronze practice expedition

**Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019:** Bronze route planning (3:15–5:15)

**Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2019:** Bronze qualifying expedition

#### Silver

**Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018:** Silver refresher training and planning (09:00–13:00)

**Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> – Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018:** Silver practice expedition

(Monday is a school holiday)

**Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019:** Silver route planning (15:15–17:15)

**Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2019:** Silver qualifying expedition

If you have any questions related to DofE please direct them to: Bret Crock: [bcrock@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:bcrock@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk).

## ▶ From the School Nurse

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Hi everyone

Just a short note from the Nurse's Office to say have a great summer.

A final reminder to pick up any medication that I may be holding for you, please. I will do my best to track the students down if they don't come to me. However, anything that is left will be disposed of, as I am not allowed to store it.

Good luck to all our graduates and students who are moving on to pastures new. We will miss you all. Take care and look after each other.

See you next term.

**Karen x**

## PARENT AND STUDENT SURVEYS 2017/18

Presented in this issue of the Thistle Talk is a summary of the parent and student surveys conducted this year. The annual survey is conducted in April/May for parents/teachers/staff/students surveys. These surveys are shared with the School Board and school administration/staff. The feedback we receive is used at all levels to help us in our planning to improve student learning at ISA.

Below please find a summary of the parent and student surveys. The Average scores reported are based on a scale of 1-5. (1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree) The questions are worded such that 5 represents the most positive response.

### Annual Parent Survey Summary

| Parents K-12 Total (Current, 17/18)                | Avg.       |
|--|------------|
| Section 1: Quality of the Instructional Program    | 4.5        |
| Section 2: School/Parent/Community Relations       | 4.5        |
| Section 3: Support for Student Learning            | 4.4        |
| Section 4: School Climate/Environment for Learning | 4.5        |
| Section 5: Resource Management                     | 4.5        |
| <b>Composite</b>                                   | <b>4.5</b> |

### Individual Comments/Feedback

The affirmative comments that came up repeatedly by theme included: Positive learning environment, Caring environment; Welcoming atmosphere-safe environment; Teachers and staff; Inclusivity/diversity; Community/Family and quality of Facilities. There were also numerous individual comments for vision/goals for the school, but some comments with higher frequency included : Continue to be strive for excellence; Increase enrolment : Be and Stay Inclusive; Help each individual strive for and reach their potential. All comments are reviewed and considered for school improvement purposes.

**Please use one of the following to describe the overall academic challenge for your child: “too easy” “too difficult” “appropriate”.**

“too easy”—10.0% “too difficult”—1% “appropriate”—89.0%

**Level of participation in school sponsored after school activities and clubs.**

Two or more activities—75% One activity—21% No activity—4%

**Would you recommend ISA to another parent?**

98% “yes.” 2% “no.”

**Level of participation in service activities.**

4 or more—26% 2-4—36% 1—25% None —13%

**Mission Statement Questions**

**Avg.**

Our students are challenged to reach their maximum potential through academic growth, becoming socially responsible and active global citizens.

**4.5**

ISA provides students with a comprehensive university preparatory education utilising best practices in education.

**4.5**

Our school is a partnership of excellent staff, committed parents, and dedicated students.

**4.5**

| <b>Student Survey Grades 6-11</b>                  | <b>Avg.</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Section 1: Quality of Instructional Program        | 4.0         |
| Section 2: Support for Student Learning            | 4.0         |
| Section 3: School Climate/Environment for Learning | 4.1         |
| Section 4: Student/School Relationship             | 4.0         |
| <b>Composite</b>                                   | <b>4.0</b>  |

**The amount of homework assigned to me is: “too much”, “too little” , “just right”.**

“too much”—44.0% “too little”—2% “just right”—54.0%

**Time spent on homework per day:**

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| 20 minutes  | 11% |
| 40 minutes  | 16% |
| 60 minutes  | 18% |
| 80 minutes  | 16% |
| 100 minutes | 5%  |
| 2 hours     | 13% |
| 3 hours     | 7%  |
| 4 hours     | 11% |
| 5 hours     | 6%  |

**Student Technology Use Questions**

Technology owned or have access:

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Mobile Phone            | 91% |
| Music player, iPod, etc | 35% |
| Laptop, i-Pad, etc      | 83% |

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Chromebook     | 26% |
| iPad           | 56% |
| Gaming console | 60% |
| Apple Watch    | 12% |

### **Social Networking Use**

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Instagram               | 74% |
| Texting                 | 83% |
| E-mail                  | 75% |
| Twitter                 | 23% |
| Facebook, My Space, etc | 29% |
| Skype, Facetime, etc    | 66% |
| Snapchat                | 80% |
| WhatsApp                | 68% |

### **Texting, e-mailing, use during homework:**

|            |     |
|------------|-----|
| Never      | 21% |
| Sometimes  | 53% |
| Frequently | 17% |
| Constantly | 3%  |

### **Individual Comments/Feedback**

The affirmative comments that came up repeatedly by theme included: Teachers, Safe and Caring environment; Inclusivity/diversity; Friendly and welcoming school and quality of Facilities. There were also numerous individual comments for vision/goals for the school, but some comments with higher frequency included : Longer lunch; Increase Enrolment, More access to facilities after school hours; Changes to cafeteria menu: Maintain respect for everyone.



Have a Great Summer!

8th June 2018



**SCHOOL IS OUT FOR SUMMER!!**

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SEE YOU 16TH AUGUST 2018

## **Buddy Families - We Need You!**

We would be so grateful to hear from '**remaining**' families who might be willing to act as Buddy Families next school year to help those new to the school to settle in. If you previously volunteered please get in touch to confirm your happy to remain on the list.

This is a great way to help foster community spirit in the school as well as connect with new friends.

Please contact **Buddy Co-ordinator Ashleigh Kinch** at [pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk) or download a form from the PTO section of the ISA website. Thank You!

 ISA Parent Teacher Organisation  
 [pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk)



If you have ever been a newcomer, you know how overwhelming it can be to start a new school.

*Please Sign up for  
our Buddy Scheme*

We will match newcomers with our current ISA family members.  
Please sign up by emailing Ashleigh Kinch [pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk)



## WITHDRAWAL FORM

Please notify us as soon as possible if you know you will be leaving in the next few months. Even if you know you are leaving but do not have a definite date, it would be helpful for us to know.

Non-Corporate Fee Payers are obliged to provide 60 days written notice of withdrawal, sent for the attention of the Head of School with a copy to the ISA Business Office.

Please complete and email to either: Annette Brand (Middle/High School Secretary) at [abrand@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:abrand@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk) or Mary Rayne (Elementary School Secretary) at [mrayne@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:mrayne@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk)

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>FAMILY NAME:</b>   |  | <b>WITHDRAWAL DATE</b> (or estimated if not confirmed): |
| <b>STUDENT'S NAME:</b>  |  | <b>GRADE:</b>   |
| RECEIVING SCHOOL:<br>(NAME & ADDRESS)   |  |   |
| <b>STUDENT'S NAME:</b>  |  | <b>GRADE:</b>   |
| RECEIVING SCHOOL:<br>(NAME & ADDRESS)   |  |   |
| <b>STUDENT'S NAME:</b>  |  | <b>GRADE:</b>   |
| RECEIVING SCHOOL:<br>(NAME & ADDRESS)   |  |   |
| <b>STUDENT'S NAME:</b>  |  | <b>GRADE:</b>   |
| RECEIVING SCHOOL:<br>(NAME & ADDRESS)   |  |   |
| <b>STUDENT'S NAME:</b>  |  | <b>GRADE:</b>   |
| RECEIVING SCHOOL:<br>(NAME & ADDRESS)   |  |   |
| <b>COMPANY:</b>   |  |   |
| <b>FAMILY FORWARDING ADDRESS:</b><br>(if new address is unknown, please supply an alternative e.g. relative/friend) |  |   |
| <b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>   |  |   |

Any confidential psychological or educational psychology assessments will be handed directly to parents in a sealed envelope to present to the receiving schools.

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>PARENT SIGNATURE (permission to release records):</b> | <b>DATE:</b> |
|--|--------------|