

SQA Results

Overall our examination results were as expected with some excellent individual and departmental results. In particular we saw an increase in the % of students gaining 3+, 5+ and 6 National 5 examination passes in S4. Our Higher results in S5 were above the Moray average and our S6 results were once again extremely pleasing. Our Advanced Higher results were the highest in Moray with quality passes. Congratulations to the following students who gained all A passes in their 6 National 5 courses: Pola Bartoszczyk, Lauren Cameron, Ruari Fraser, Kate Hannen, Erin Liney, Felix Main, Jennifer Mitchell, Eve Newlands, Jack Noel, Shauna Perry, Christine Simms, Ellie Stone and Emma Swanson. Congratulations also to George Hurst and Jodie McPherson who gained 5 A passes in their Highers this year with many more gaining 4 As and a B. Finally congratulations to Lorna Bull and Kathryn Barr who gained A passes in all three of their Advanced Higher courses. As with most of our students, the results are testament to their hard work and the quality of support provided by both staff and parents. We are very keen to support all our students and we of course congratulate those who have achieved what they hoped for as well as supporting and advising those who have not achieved their targets. On the first day back this term much work with Guidance staff ensured any changes in courses or levels were made so all students could start new courses as quickly as possible.

Homework

We are excited to have started Show My Homework which is an online tool to help parents keep track of their son's/daughter's homework. Show My Homework (SMHW) will give you the ability to see the details of all the homework tasks set, the deadlines and the submission status (e.g. submitted or not submitted) with grades if applicable. We have decided to introduce SMHW in response to feedback from parents who said they wanted more details of what homework was being set in order to support their children more effectively. This system will hopefully improve the way we communicate with parents and the information we share regarding homework. We have launched the system initially with all S2-6 pupils and new pupils in S1 will be included later this term. Login details for parents were issued to S2-6 pupils last term but extra information will be issued this week.

Senior Students

All of our new S5 and S6 students were involved in induction events in June. Our S6 students have taken up leadership roles and are contributing to the wider life of the school community in a very positive manner. Many are carrying out duties as Prefects with others taking on leadership roles such as Elite Tutors, supporting students in S5 with their studies. A menu of 16 opportunities was available for all S6 students, this included the opportunity to volunteer in the local community. As a year group they also completed a charity walk last week.

Pupil Equity Funding

As you will be aware, all schools this year have been awarded Pupil Equity Funding. Following consultation with parents and staff we are using this to support home-school links as well as to address patterns of lower attainment with certain groups of young people and ensure effective interventions are in place. Mel Williams has been appointed to a part-time post of Raising Attainment teacher and we also appointed Marian Stringer as a Home School Link Worker.

Summary of Parents' Feedback

A summary of feedback is now available on the website from all year groups during last session. Further discussions with the Parent Council on ways in which we engage parents more in the work of the school would be welcomed.

This leaflet is designed to provide a summary of information about our school's progress over the last year. In particular, it covers four key questions:

- How well does our school support our young people to develop and learn?
- How well do we work together to lead change and ensure on-going improvement?
- How well do our young people attain and achieve?
- How well do we ensure wellbeing, equity and inclusion of all our young people?

School Improvement Planning

This year's plan is available on the School website and a summary is shown below



School Improvement Groups

The following groups have been set up for this session. We would extend an invitation to any member of the Parent Council who may wish to be involved in these groups.

- Developing the Young Workforce
- Curriculum Review
- Leading Learning
- Wellbeing Promoting School
- Spotlight on Success (Universal Support)
- Achievements Group
- Digital Literacy
- Staff Consultative Committee
- Social Committee
- Health & Safety
- Pupil Forum
- Parent Council

P7 – S1 Transition Programme

Our new pupils in first year have settled well into the Academy after enjoying the transition days in June. Ann Rossiter has shared the feedback from the Transition Activity Day workshops. I would also like to thank parents for their supportive and positive feedback during the P7 Parents' Information Evening.

Vision and Values

Throughout last year we reviewed our values, looking at what was most important to us as a community and how we demonstrated these values in our everyday practice. In consultation with our parents, pupils and staff we were pleased to see much in common in terms of what people thought were important. Ambition, Respect, Resilience, Caring and Confidence are our five core values. We launched our new values at our House Assemblies last week where all students made suggestions as to what these values look like at Forres Academy. They will be used to create a display in the school.

Our school vision has also been up-dated or refreshed and indeed simplified. Gone is the wordy statement to which many of our staff and young people found difficult to relate. So put quite simply 'Forres Academy is a community where everyone is valued, respected, encouraged and inspired'. Two key words here that I believe are often overlooked: 'community' and 'everyone' - both words are part of this short statement and it is so reassuring for me that our community felt that these needed to be emphasized in our new vision.

Activities Days/Excursions

At the end of May all S1 – S3 students were given a wide selection of activities which they could choose from for our two Activities days. They ranged from swimming, canoeing and card making to the 'battle of the bands' in the music department. 40 young people joined staff on an extremely successful watersports trip to Spain as well as 32 students enjoying another trip to the Battlefields in France and Belgium. In June some students enjoyed the exchange trip to Vienenburg and we also welcomed our exchange students from Mount Dora, Angelina Torres and Jollice Boyd who were staying with Laura Macpherson Zieger and Campbell Kershaw.

Building Work

Over the summer holidays we had a lot of building work going on including new electrical distribution boards fitted, a gas survey and gas remedial work. In the school car park there are now new disabled bays and area has been designated for ASN taxis to ensure the safety of pupils who use this transport and the staff who support them. Thankfully the pot holes have also been filled in!

Staffing

We had a number of staff changes at the end of last session. Four long serving members of staff retired and one long serving member of staff who has left to take up a promoted post. Elizabeth McKay had taught in the Modern Languages department for an impressive 35 years. Julie Clarke, teacher of Mathematics had been at Forres Academy for almost 22 years and Susan Green also left after 24 years at the school in three different departments, English, Guidance and Support for Learning. Dave Baker had been Principal Teacher of Physics for 16 years and Fiona Dow had also been at the school for almost 16 years as a loyal Pupil Support Assistant.

Our Science department has seen several changes. Helen Duffy has taken over as Principal Teacher of Science and we welcomed two new members of staff to the Physics department, Fraser Wilson and newly qualified teacher Tim Probert.

Our Maths department has also seen several changes in staff. Chris Forshaw left in May to return to the Stirling area and Chloe Hunter took up post at the beginning of June. We also welcomed Andrew Smith who joined the department in August as a newly qualified teacher.

Another department that has seen many changes is our Support for Learning department. Graeme Reid joined the department in June as Principal Teacher of Support for Learning. We also welcomed Fay Tinnion and Carolyn Carrott as teaching members of staff and Samantha Bayliss as a Pupil Support Assistant. Last week we appointed two new part-time Pupil Support Assistants, Michealla Henderson and Katie Grant.

Marilyn Hamilton has taken up the post of teacher of RME as Paul Moore – Bridger left to continue his studies in Edinburgh. Lorna Millsopp joined the Modern Languages department in August on a part-time basis.

Finally two new members of staff joined our Office Team this term, Stacey Copeland and Lynn Allan.

An e-mail sent to the school in June from a member of the public.

A Very Good Experience

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to say how nice it was to meet some of your pupils in and outside the Coop in Forres town centre. I do not walk too well at the moment and I was in the shop at lunchtime one day last week. The shop was very busy and I was struggling a bit with my shopping and walking aid. There were a number of pupils inside and outside and they could not have been more polite and helpful making way for me and insisting that I went to the front of the queue. They were a credit to your school!!

Yours sincerely