



CULLODEN
ACADEMY

Rector: Dr J Vance
Depute Rector: Mrs J Urquhart
Depute Rector: Mr C D O'Neill
Depute Rector: Mr I Weafer
Depute Rector: Miss V Forrester

Keppoch Road
Culloden
INVERNESS
IV2 7JZ
Phone 01463 790851

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Hello,

As another term ends, I wanted to write and thank you for your support and update you on developments within the school. As will quickly become apparent, I will need to write to you again in the first week back as several issues are dependent on the next round of Scottish Government advice.

Parents' Evenings

We were keen to see the resumption of in-person Parents' Evenings as part of the process of rebuilding the spirit of Culloden Academy as a community. However, our top priority must be to resume the information sharing and dialogue between parents and teachers. For that reason we are currently in the process of establishing a system which would allow us to hold Parents' Evenings virtually. Next term we have Parents' Evenings for S1 and S2 pupils and both of these- it would appear- will be held online. We will get details to you in the first week back.

Building works

We expect to be using the 12 additional classrooms that have been installed in the school grounds from the first day back. Pupils will be issued with a new timetable in registration and those whose register class is now in the new building have been advised of this by their teacher. This extra space is very much appreciated and over the coming weeks we will see what additional activities this space allows us to resume. Work continues on external coverings, an external servery, and a new muster point.

Even more importantly the Stakeholder Group meet on the first week back for an update on the plans for Phase 1 of the new build. I anticipate the Property and Estates Team leading a consultation with parents and pupils about these plans in the coming months and will keep you informed about when exactly this begins.

Uniform

Below is an extract from an assembly which I gave to all pupils on Wednesday morning which hopefully gives some more information about why uniform matters to us and why we will be actively promoting it next term. Particularly at a time when pupils wear masks, being able to identify everyone in the school as a pupil of Culloden Academy is an important security issue. In addition, I believe strongly that uniform removes any issue around clothing brands, football tops and subliminal messaging on some casual wear. However, there is another much more positive reason for us to have and adhere to uniform which I hope is explained below:

If my job has any one defining purpose it is to help teachers to teach and pupils to learn and grow so that when you leave here you have as many options as possible and they are of the highest quality. How do we do that?

- 1. We make employers see "Culloden Academy pupil" as a badge of quality. That was the case with pupils turning up to interview in our uniform with our reference and being appointed even without going through the interview sometimes.*
- 2. We make visitors see that Culloden Academy is somewhere they want to support, somewhere they want to invest in and somewhere they want to come to work.*

Your role in this is relatively simple: be the best version of yourself that you can to help us have the best version of Culloden that we can.

To help win hearts and minds with employers and visitors the following things matter.

- a) Uniform. I thank each and every one of you that wears the school's uniform and supports us in showing the community that we are serious about education and serious about your future. Aside from security and equality issues, it makes a big difference to how a school feels and how a school is perceived and that really matters. If other schools look more serious about learning that we do, employers simply go there for their recruits. To those of you who have drifted away from uniform please get that sorted and come back after October holidays ready to contribute to us being one school all pulling in the same direction.*

I hope this makes sense. We have had to compromise on uniform last year when windows were open all the time but this year even if multiple layers are required, I'd like to see uniform playing a big part of our young people's attire.

Parent Council

I would like to thank the Parent Council for their time and for the questions and information at the recent meeting. I would like to thank Duncan MacDonald for his support during his two years as Chair and also thank Lisa Thomson for her two years as Treasurer. We are delighted to welcome Jeni Alexander as the new Chair (for one year only she was at pains to point out- watch this space) and Morven Reid as Treasurer. We spent some time looking at the school's improvement priorities for this session. We also looked at what the Parent Council might welcome presentations on at future meetings. The next meeting is planned for 15th November and if you are interested in attending then please contact the Parent Council at cullodenacademyparentcouncil@gmail.com

Staffing update

We are delighted to announce that Mr McKnight has been appointed to the position of permanent Principal Teacher of Guidance for Drumossie Vikings.

COVID restrictions

One of the many things I have learned is not to guess what happens next. I believe that there will be further advice issued to schools for the new term and so I will read it, process it and communicate out what will be different as soon as possible in the new term. Our recent partial closure was due to the very high number of staff absent that day. Whilst we can keep the school open in some capacity we will always do so. In the interests of fairness, should I have to partially close the school again for similar reasons it would be S4, 5 and 6 who attend and S1-3 who remain at home.

I hope the October break is kind to you all and I look forward to seeing parents and staff more directly interacting again next term. Thanks again for all your support.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Vance". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Dr J Vance

Rector