

### FROM THE HEADTEACHER

I know that Christmas is rapidly approaching as our school Christmas trees have just gone up. However before we all become totally absorbed in the festivities I would like to take this opportunity to keep you up to date with some of the events in and around the Academy.

#### Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day in Elgin Academy this year had a particularly poignant feel to it as the two minutes silence ended with Cailean Morison S6 playing 'the last post' in the courtyard. Staff and pupils were very appreciative of this opportunity to reflect as we are aware that so many of our families have connections with the forces.

#### St Andrew's Day

On a lighter note, we also celebrated St Andrew's day with a "wear something tartan" day. The Scottish flag was flown and Chris Hyndman S3 and Jodie Marriott S5 welcomed us into school on their bagpipes. At lunchtime the canteen served haggis, tatties and neeps and for those who had the energy there was country dancing in the school hall led by Mr Davidson.

#### Assemblies

Our school assemblies have been particularly successful this term with an increased emphasis on participation by the students themselves. Our most recent round of assemblies featured: the senior pupils' presentation on our anti litter campaign; the work of our successful safer routes to school and travel group; a musical item from one of the contestants in the talent show. This year's winners, the G strings, were particularly popular. A surprise item was when the Depute Head Teacher pounced on some pupils for not wearing the school uniform. The group of S3 girls was in fact wearing the uniform of Mzomhle High School, our partner school in East London in South Africa. The girls had asked for permission to wear it on a monthly basis to emphasise our links with the school and this was a very novel way of introducing the idea to the rest of the school. We are grateful to our school chaplains who take part in all our assemblies and manage to fit in with the variety of items they contain with grace and humour.

#### Prelims for S4, 5 and 6

The S4 prelims begin on Monday 12 January and S5/6 begin on Monday 26 January. These are extremely important exams for our pupils and although I would wish everyone a happy Christmas holiday, an appropriate amount of studying during this period could have a very significant effect on the outcome. If your son/daughter is in S4, 5 or 6 please encourage him/her to use the time in the holidays wisely.

#### Christmas Events /

## **Christmas Events**

We are now beginning to look ahead to a very full December. The annual Christmas concert took place on Monday 8 December. The standard of music was as always in the Academy very high. Put this in your diary for next year if you missed it this year.

On Thursday 11 and Friday 12 December the first school show in Elgin Academy for a decade will take place. "Noises Off", Michael Frayne's award winning comedy, is an ambitious project and staff and pupils have been working very hard recently to prepare for it. We have been fortunate in receiving sponsorship from a number of local businesses, not least from Mansell's who have constructed the set for us. Tickets are selling fast and it looks like it could well be a sell out.

The school hall is looking particularly attractive with the addition of a "real" Christmas tree this year. The tree was donated by Elgin Academy parent council and we are grateful to them for their support.

It will also grace the hall for the school dances which take place on Monday 15 December (S1-3) and Wednesday 17 December (S4-6)

## **Student Voice**

I am delighted to report that this session in addition to our year based pupil councils we now have a whole school student council. This is currently chaired by Chris McNair S6 and supported by Mr Gray. I hear that they have had some very interesting discussion recently on how to combat bullying and we await their recommendations with interest.

## **Staff Changes**

On 19 December we say goodbye to Mrs Joyce Duff who has been with us for eight years. Mrs Duff is moving to Speyside High School which is nearer her home. We wish her well in her new school. We are fortunate in that Mr R Todd who retired from the maths department in the summer has agreed to come back to help us out until we can find a replacement maths teacher.

We also welcome our new ICT technical assistant to the Academy Stephen Perry who we hope will start very soon.

## **Parent Council News**

The parent council continues to meet regularly to support the work of the school. Currently two members of the council are involved in the interviews for a new Depute Head Teacher and another two members are serving on the stakeholders' group for the new school building. The council supplied the Christmas tree for the hall this year. There are many ways that parents can help the work of the school through the parent council. The council is open to ALL parents of Elgin Academy. If you are interested in becoming involved contact Mrs Jackie Andrews, chair of the parent council via the school office or simply come along to the next meeting.

Finally on behalf of the staff and pupils of Elgin Academy I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.



**Headteacher**