



14<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## Important Dates

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### February 2019

- 15 **Teacher In-Service – NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS**
- 18-22 **FEBRUARY SCHOOL HOLIDAY**
- 25&26 **IB Mock Exams**
- 26 **'Alternative Routes to University' with Inspiring Futures, 8:30am**
- 26 **Grade 10 Parents Information Evening, 6:30-7:30pm**

### March 2019

- 4-8 **Book Week**
- 4-5 **Author Visit**
- 4-6 **FCD (Freedom from Chemical Dependency) Visit**
- 4 **PTO Meeting, 9:30am**
- 4 **NHS Induction, 4:00pm**
- 5 **PSAT 10 Testing**
- 6-9 **ISSA HS Girls & Boys Basketball Tournaments**
- 6 **FCD Parent Session, 10:00am in the MS Seminar Room**
- 6 **DofE Bronze & Silver Awards Expedition Planning, 3:15-5:15pm**
- 7 **World Book Day**

## ▶ **From the Head of School**

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**Dear Parents,**

Feedback is a vital part of learning. When I learnt to drive, my instructor, Trevor, would explain to me all the component parts of getting a car moving. It was way more complicated than I had expected; but then I was a novice, and I had only seen experts do it. For them, all the steps were firmly embedded in their long term memories, and were therefore instinctive. Whereas they didn't have to consciously remember anything and therefore made it look easy, I had to keep in mind which pedal to put my foot on, how far to turn the key and for how long, how to release the handbrake, getting into gear without stalling, checking my mirrors: each step was simple, what was difficult was the combination, in the right order. What I now do while chatting to my wife, took a concerted effort when it was Trevor sitting next to me. It wasn't enough for him to explain it to me once, and I was away; I got it wrong several times; each time I needed Trevor to correct me, to tell me where I had fallen down, and exactly what I should do next time. He didn't need to give me grades; I just needed to know what to do to get better.

When we are doing something new, we use our working memories which can only hold so much information at any one time. After we have done it a number of times, it moves into our long term memories, which are pretty close to infinite. Practice makes permanent; it only makes

perfect, if you are practising the right things. That's why I needed Trevor's feedback to keep me on the straight and narrow. Strangely, once I had mastered Trevor's lessons, I forgot that I had found them difficult – my expert brain was quite alien to my earlier novice brain – and, quite hypocritically, I was impatient with my wife when she started learning to drive and kept stalling the car.

Few people need more than 100 hours of learning, to master driving for everyday purposes. Learning to write an evaluative essay from not being able to read or to use calculus from not knowing how to count is a process that takes countless hours over many years. Students must move from novice to expert in one skill area (like multiplication tables), and then they become a novice again in the next – like simple algebra. Then to expert. And do this over and over.

It is very easy to forget what it is like to be a novice in skills that we ourselves have mastered. That it is why, however difficult it is to help our kids in subjects we haven't studied for years, it can be far worse with homework in our expert area. We are ambitious for our children - what we expect them to learn across such a range of subjects, the aptitudes we want them to develop; it is good to remind ourselves sometimes the size of the task. For us as a school, we have to use feedback to improve on the complex task of teaching what we may be expert in doing (which are two separate things).

That is what the accreditation process is for us, it is also the purpose of the International Schools Assessments that students in many grade levels have been sitting this week. It will provide great feedback for us on how our students are progressing; feedback that we can use to help us improve how we help them in that progress.

Not everyone who learns to drive becomes a Formula One champion a few years later. But, with clear instruction and good feedback, everyone can develop enough skill in it to use it meaningful in their daily lives. At ISA every child should have every opportunity to achieve the same in a lot more than that.

Kind regards,

**Nicholas Little**  
Head of School

## ► **From the MS/HS Principal**

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**Dear Middle/High School Parents,**

Lots to be positive about last week with an excellent showing at the GoForSet event and outstanding performances from our Boys (3<sup>rd</sup>) and Girls (1<sup>st</sup>!) in the basketball tournament. At the Principal's Coffee, CAS students spoke enthusiastically about projects they had been involved in this year. On Sunday, our Grade 11 students, as part of the CAS programme, welcomed a 20-strong party from Contact the Elderly onto campus and prepared a cream tea for them with entertainment. I am immensely proud of what our students have been involved with in the last few weeks, and hope they will build on these endeavours and grasp similar opportunities in the future.

This week has seen a great deal of testing in the form of mock exams and ISA tests. The students seem positive about the process, and will hopefully benefit from the insight into their progress that the results will provide. Roses and candy-grams organised by our Student Council for Valentine's Day helped keep spirits high. A well-earned rest is then on the horizon, and I hope the students will come back excited about the next section of the semester.

When we return from the break, the Grade 12s have two days of mock exams and, in the following week, FCD (Freedom from Chemical Dependency) will be visiting. We have built a schedule for them to meet with year groups to talk about age-appropriate issues, and a summary of what FCD do, is listed below. We have asked them to offer a parent session and you might like to join them on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March at 10:00am, or for the drop-in Q&A at 11:00am that day.

*'FCD is a non-profit organization that provides alcohol, nicotine, and other drug education to schools around the world.*

*FCD prevention specialists are not visiting our school in order to tell students what to do. They recognize that every student makes his or her own decisions about alcohol, nicotine, and/or other drug use.*

*FCD prevention specialists will present the most up-to-date information available on the physiological and psychological effects of various drugs, and provide a forum for discussing social, cultural, and personal issues that relate to the choices people make.*

*One thing that makes FCD unique is that all of the prevention specialists are in healthy recovery from their own alcohol or other drug addictions. Most FCD prevention specialists began their own drinking and drug use during middle school and high school. They have experienced the pressures, personal issues, and social situations teens face with regard to alcohol and other drug use. They also have first-hand knowledge of the destructive aspects of drug use, and how, in their case, occasional use led to addiction.*

*FCD believes in involving the whole school community in prevention education, not just students. There will be sessions for school staff and families as well.'*

Enjoy the break!

**Angus Carmichael**  
MS/HS Principal

## ► **From the Elementary Principal**

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Dear Parents,

- **Book Week**

From 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> March, your child will be taking part in numerous activities to celebrate reading. The week will begin with a special Monday assembly that features the author Ali Sparkes. On that Monday, Ms Sparkes will carry out separate writing and workshops with our students from first through eighth grade. (If students want any of Ali's books signed while she is visiting they will need to be **ordered by parents ahead of time.**)

Teachers will be decorating their classroom doors with images of one of their favourite books. (The students will be encouraged to guess the book titles.) In addition, there will be a book swap that week. Look for details from Ms Crimp, our Librarian.

We will be holding a special assembly on Thursday from 8:30am, and hope many of you will be able to join us. In keeping with the 'official' World Book Day on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> March, all of the children and parents are encouraged to dress up as their favourite book character. Start thinking about your costumes now! The rest of Thursday, the students and staff will have an alternative schedule to celebrate books and share in the joy of reading with each other.

Over the holiday, the students have been encouraged to get a photo taken while they are reading a book in an 'extreme' manner, such as while sitting on a swing set. We're hoping to display these pictures of children having fun while reading in the Elementary corridor.

- **This is My Best Effort**

When an Elementary child produces a piece of work, they are often proud of the fact that they have something, sometimes anything, to show for their effort. As teachers, we share in a child's enthusiasm for work turned in. However, I believe we owe it to our students to also challenge them with statements like "Is this complete?" or "Have you read this over?" or "Have you anything else to add?" to make sure they reach their potential. There is great power in high expectations, and children need to appreciate that the words 'reaching potential' are related to working hard and, at times, struggling a bit to make their best effort a reality and something that is deserving of high praise.

In our quarterly reports, we give a strong emphasis to both skill progress and student effort. During the conferences at the end of March, I hope parents will learn that their children are developing a sense of pride in their work and a willingness to accept and look for positive feedback to improve. Be sure to encourage your child to ask questions when he/she doesn't understand something and is willing to have a go at something even when the work has the potential to be hard.

Our students are pretty aware and they recognise what genuine progress feels like. I believe one critical measure of that success is when a child becomes responsible for his/her own learning and has a concrete understanding of what is required to produce a 'Best Effort'. Those are words that should make any parent proud.

Whether you are travelling or staying in Aberdeen, I hope you have a wonderful holiday this February, filled with lots of family fun.

Best regards,

**Don Newbury,**  
Elementary Principal

▶ **From the IBDP Co-ordinator**

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Grade 10 parents are reminded of the upcoming parent night on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> February. I will be presenting on the benefits and requirements of the IB Programme, whilst Ms Barker will be available to answer any questions you may have with regards to university applications.

**Jennifer Purpura**  
IBDP Co-ordinator

▶ **From the Fine Arts Department**

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Have a lovely Winter Holiday! Lots of great concerts, exhibits and performances after the break. Watch the THISTLE and the display board outside the theatre for upcoming events!

**Author visit coming - Buy a book in advance to get it signed!**



We are excited to announce that we have another author visiting ISA for Book Week! Ali Sparkes will be in school on 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> March. She'll be talking about some of her popular series, and helping students in Grades 1-8 to develop their own creative writing. A big thanks goes to the PTO for supporting this author visit!

All students will have a chance to get a book signed by Ali Sparkes, but we will not have any books available to buy in school. If you would like your child to get a book signed, please buy one beforehand and bring it in to school.

Ali has written a lot of books, and we'd recommend these ones in particular:

**Grades 1-4: [Spider Stampede](#)**

A first chapter book about two boys who meet a scientist with a crazy serum.

**Grades 3-6: [Finding the fox](#)**

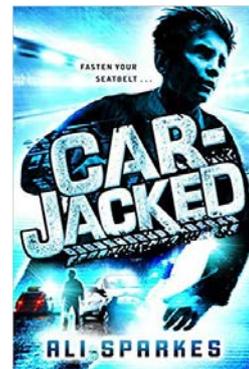
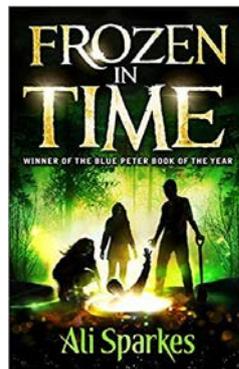
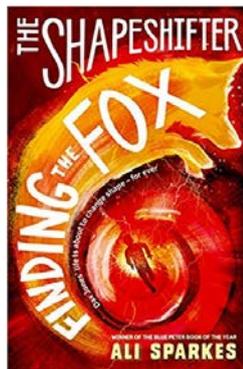
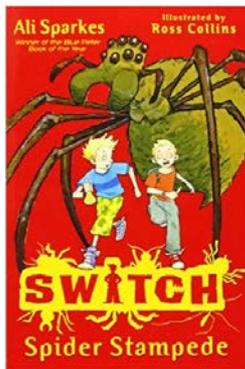
An exciting adventure story about a boy who can change into a fox...

**Grades 5-8: [Frozen in time](#)**

Winner of the Blue Peter Award in 2010, this is a fast-paced time-travel novel.

**Grades 7-8: [Car-Jacked](#)**

A high-octane adventure about a boy trapped in a hi-jacked car.



Ali Sparkes' books are available to buy online at Amazon, and we have also requested that Waterstones in Aberdeen stock them. You can call Waterstones (now in the Bon Accord centre) on 01224 502334, to check which books they have.

PS: Middle School will also have a second author visit later this term - more information coming soon!

**Josie Crimp**  
Librarian

# It's the YEARBOOK!!

## Order Form for 2018-19 Book

The price of this year's book is **£25**. The book will be distributed in the spring.  
(Please make cheques payable to 'International School of Aberdeen' or 'ISA'.)

Students' names, grade levels (and in case of elementary students please also include teacher's name):

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment of £\_\_\_\_ made by:

Cash                       Cheque                       Card                       IPayImpact  
cheque # \_\_\_\_\_

Yearbooks may be paid for in the business office. No money to be accepted at Reception. Books will be distributed in the spring by the Yearbook staff.

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### Customer Receipt

The price for yearbooks is £25 **per** book.

Number of books ordered and paid for: \_\_\_\_\_

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment of £\_\_\_\_\_ made by:

Cash                       Cheque                       Card                       IPayImpact  
cheque # \_\_\_\_\_

Yearbooks may be paid for in the business office. No money to be accepted at Reception. Books will be distributed in the spring by the Yearbook staff.

In case of cash payment: Signature of salesperson/Business Office stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

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# News from your PTO

Thursday 14th February, 2019

## HEY DADS!

Have you joined the club? The Dad's club has been very busy this school year enjoying private tours to the Brewdog in Ellon, enjoying good company at the Bieldside Inn, bowling, meals out and even learned apple pressing to make apple cider!

All you need to do is watch your emails for the new events. So sign up and join the club!

Contact Jens at [isa.dads.club@gmail.com](mailto:isa.dads.club@gmail.com)



BIELDSIDE INN

## Pub Quiz

TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY

8PM MEET FOR DRINKS

9PM QUIZ STARTS



DEADLINE 31ST MARCH 2019

## ENRICHMENT APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

LET'S ALL MAKE THE MOST OF THE MONEY THAT WE HAVE RAISED FOR THE PTO

WE WELCOME APPLICATIONS TO SUPPORT ANY SCHOOL CLUB, ACTIVITY, EXPERIENCE OR EQUIPMENT. DEADLINE 31ST MARCH!!

In the past we have approved applications for: volleyball team uniforms, Author visits, Artist in residence, technical theatre equipment, Spheros, football team uniforms, ES ceilidh banner, TEDx talks, Generation Science, digital cameras for classroom use, ELS sensory furniture, Mind Stretchers, band music, playground materials, Duke of Edinburgh, laptops for learning support, a greenhouse, astronomy club telescope, Lego robotics club, Christmas decorations, surf boards and a fridge just to name a few!

For more information or to request an application form: [pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk)

## ARE YOU READY?



AWARD IN EMERGENCY **FIRST AID** AT WORK

**Wednesday, March 27**  
8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
MS Seminar Room

Open to all ISA parents, at NO COST, on a first come, first served basis. Limited to 12 participants

Email [pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk) for inquiries or to reserve your spot



All participants will receive the Emergency First Aid at Work certificate



**PTO have an exciting new initiative:**

Local businesses can opt into the Bronze, Silver or Gold tier Advertising Programme. We will be advertising the Gold tier businesses on our Facebook page!

If you know of any companies who would like to opt into this programme, or if you would like more details, please contact Jen Sword our PTO advertising member via email [pto.advertising@gmail.com](mailto:pto.advertising@gmail.com)



Our team is led by Clinical Director and Consultant Orthodontist, Dr. Lisa Currie, who has recently received an honorary appointment as Senior Clinical Lecturer at the University of Aberdeen (School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition), teaching at Aberdeen Dental School.

The Orthodontic Clinic is a friendly, state-of-the-art specialist orthodontic practice that has been established since 2006.

We take pride in working with the latest techniques so you can be sure you are receiving the most up-to-date treatments available to create your perfect smile. We aim to be the first choice for dentists and patients seeking orthodontic care in the Aberdeen area.

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