



21st February 2020

Important Dates

February

- 21 HS Charity Games Night, 4:00-6:00pm
- 25 Grades 4 & 5 Swimming Gala, 10:10-11:55am
- 25 Grade 10 Parent Information Evening, 6:30-7:30pm in the MS Seminar Room
- 26 Grade 10 Trip Parent Meeting, 3:15-4:00pm in the HS MPR 1
- 26 MS/HS Spring Drama Production - 'SPARK', 4:30pm in the Black Box
- 27 MS/HS Spring Drama Production - 'SPARK', 4:30pm in the Black Box
- 28 Parent Friday Morning Coffee, 8:30am in the Cafeteria

March

- 2-6 Book Week
- 2-3 Author Visit
- 2 PTO Meeting, 9:30am
- 2 National Honor Society (NHS) Induction, 4:00pm in The QET
- 3 PSAT 10 Testing
- 4-7 ISSA HS Girls Basketball Tournament
- 4-8 ISSA HS Boys Basketball Tournament
- 4 Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Bronze & Silver Awards Training, 3:15pm
- 5 World Book Day
- 5 ES Assembly: 'Wonderful Words', 8:30am in The QET
- 6 HS Student Council Breakfast

► From the Head of School

Dear Parents,

Schools are busy places, students are always learning something new, there is always a trip or an event coming up. In the hurly-burly of the day to day, it can be difficult to step back from the detail of each stroke being applied to think about the complete picture of what we are trying to achieve.

ISA has in-service days throughout the school year; generally in August, November, February and April or May. These are our opportunities to reflect on the whats, whys and the hows of what we do. Last Thursday, while students stayed at home, ISA staff took the opportunity to look at the fundamental principles that define our professional choices. We began the day by looking at our guiding statements - our mission, vision and values, considering our community's feedback: what is the essence that we should stay true to; what should we update as circumstances have changed? Most importantly, we asked ourselves what this means for our day to day practice.

Our guiding statements mention the word ‘excellence’ four times. For us that means every student “reaching their maximum potential”. So we spent time looking at our learning principles.

They are worth repeating here in full. We, as ISA teachers, know learning is effective when, Learners:

- feel secure and supported;
- understand the purpose of the learning and the nature of success;
- construct new understanding by building upon prior knowledge;
- listen, talk and interact with others;
- construct meaning by making connection between knowledge and concepts;
- are appropriately challenged;
- use timely goal directed feedback;
- have ownership of their learning;
- think and act upon their learning.

As part of this session, we watched a video of ISA students explaining what they wanted from their teachers and their lessons. Students across Elementary, Middle and High school were remarkably united in their themes. They wanted an environment in which they were safe and respected; they wanted to be seen as individuals (not as one of an homogenous group), and they wanted work that challenged them as individuals.

If you look carefully at our principles, they expect students to be proactive, learning isn’t something just done to them. They focus on quality of understanding (which is personal) rather than quantity of information. Students do things and think about what they are doing and why; not just because they are told to. They work together, not in competition. Most of all though these principles are focused on individual students and their own journeys to reaching their maximum potential. That is high expectations for all.

ISA has a challenging set of principles. It is important that we frequently remind ourselves what we are working toward.

Best regards,

Nicholas Little
Head of School

► **From the MS/HS Principal**

Dear Middle/High School Parents,

Either side of the long weekend we have seen a high level of testing in the form of IB2 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.

Highlights for this week include a Spanish Play, a World War One production (timely for the upcoming Battlefields trip), and a High School Charity Games Night. We are fortunate to have such incredible facilities to host these events, and next week I hope you will consider coming in to enjoy this year’s MS/HS production called ‘Spark’ on either Wednesday, 26th or Thursday, 27th February at 4.30pm.

We are currently building our schedule for next year and, as discussed at the recent Principal’s Coffee morning, we are aiming for challenge and breadth. Courses at ISA culminate in the IB Diploma Programme, and it is important we develop the necessary approaches to learning (see

image below) across our continuum and expose students to activities that are sometimes outside of their immediate comfort zone. Information will be coming home over the next few weeks about options for your son or daughter, and I hope you will take some time to review the courses that aim to push your child to reach their full potential and develop key skills that support their learning.

Thinking Skills	Communication Skills	Social Skills	Self Management Skills	Research Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curiosity • Reasoning • Creativity • Problem posing • Reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulating arguments • Understanding messages • Explaining concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration • Effective communication • Maintaining positive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation skills (time management, goal setting) • Affective skills (self motivation, resilience, mindfulness) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Honesty • Information literacy • Media literacy

Angus Carmichael
MS/HS Principal

► From the Elementary Principal

Dear Parents,

• **Book Week**

From 2nd – 6th 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 **Ifeoma Onyefulu**. Ifeoma is a Nigerian children's author and novelist, living in the UK. Most of her books are geared towards young children, and feature her own photographs of village life in Africa. The author will carry out separate writing and reading workshops with our students from Pre-School through fifth grade on Monday and Tuesday. Many thanks to the PTO for sponsorship of the author visit.

Teachers will be co-ordinating other activities in their classrooms all week to celebrate Book Week. The annual book swap will also take place that week. (Look for details in the classroom blogs.) We will be holding a special assembly on Thursday from 8:30am. The theme this year is 'Wonderful Words', and at the assembly students will participate in a parade to show off words that have a significant meaning to them.

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. My favourite part of Book Week is when younger and older classes come together for a common reading experience. We're a school that appreciates and regularly promotes both the joy and the importance of reading, and look forward to this opportunity to celebrate as a whole school.

• **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.

Best regards,

Don Newbury,
Elementary Principal

► **From the Fine Arts Department**

BRAVO to Grade 4 & 5 on your hard work and outstanding performance with the Scottish Opera Company! **WELL DONE!!!**



The Elementary School – Community Band Performance

Monday, 16th March 2020

During the Elementary School Assembly

The QET

The adults and the children join musical forces to perform for you at this Elementary School Assembly! Be sure to attend and cheer them on!

The Fine Arts Team

Tech Talk - 21st February 2020



Scratch Coding Hackathon

Here at ISA we think coding is a vital skill, and we start introducing coding in the Elementary School using Scratch. If you have enjoyed Scratch, are age 8 or up, you might be interested in a Scratch Coding Hackathon which is taking place in Aberdeen as part of the Mad March Science Festival.

What? Scratch Coding Hackathon

When? 29th March : 10:00 to 16:00

Who? Anyone age 8+

How? Book here: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cromar-future-group>

Interested? Here is some more info from the organisers...

The aim of this day is to create an awesome software product using Scratch. You will work in small teams, and we will organize the work using a so-called “agile” approach (everything will be explained on the day). You will be given jobs to do – yes, proper jobs – and we will work together to create the product. Less experienced people will be paired with more experienced people, so everyone is welcome.

You need to be prepared to work hard, enjoy yourself, participate actively, and be ready to learn lots, be entertained and to have fun! Can you meet the March Madness Hackathon Challenge? We know you can – just say Yes!

In order to be successful, we need participants with a range of different abilities. We need young people who can:

- Program in Scratch (the Programmers)
- Design the product and how it should look and work (the Product Designers and User Interface Designers)
- Create digital artwork, backgrounds, and graphics (the Graphical Artists and Designers)
- Test the program as it is developed (the Product Testers)
- Prepare materials to help us describe, market and sell our amazing product (the Product Marketers)

We do need you to come for the whole day (10 am to 4 pm), and refreshments and lunch will be provided. You can bring your own laptop or use our equipment. We will also supply specialist tablets or paper for those doing graphic design.

Full details are here: <http://2020.marsterman.co.uk/coding-workshops/>

If you take part, please let your teacher know - we would love to hear all about it!

► From the IBI & 2 CAS Students

On Sunday, 2nd February, a group of students in 11th and 12th grade hosted the second annual ISA Tea Party with the Elderly. The charity who organises these tea parties, ReEngage, aims to bridge the generational gap and create opportunities for the young and elderly to reconnect. In this CAS project, participants volunteered by speaking to the guests and serving them with food, tea and

coffee. They also got creative by cooking and baking at school or at home. Some students, with lots of help, made sandwiches and scones at school at 11:00am. Others, who came to the party later, brought in their own baked goods. At 2:00pm, the guests arrived and the party finally began. Students moved around and spoke to many guests. With singing, dancing and lots of food, everyone had a wonderful and very memorable time. We hope to see our guests next year at another party!



Thistle Talk is a great way to find out what is going on in the school, but you can get a lot more from our social media sites. Log into us at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-school-aberdeen> and <https://www.facebook.com/InternationalSchoolAberdeen/> and get the stories behind the stories.

ISA STUDENTS PRESENT
SPARK
A PLAY ABOUT PAYING ATTENTION



WEDNESDAY 26th February 4.30pm

THURSDAY 27th February 4.30pm

BLACK BOX THEATRE

Tickets £5 (purchase at the door)

**TEN
FEET
TALL**
THEATRE

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NEWS FROM YOUR PTO

FEB 21
2020



ISA Parent Teacher
Organisation



pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk

ENRICHMENT REQUESTS - 2/3

ISA PTO works to raise funds to support the enrichment requests submitted by our ISA community. Teachers, staff and parents are welcome to make an "enrichment request" to the PTO for the part or full sponsorship of their project, activity or item. Application deadline for this term is March 31st. Please see which requests we were able to support previous semester. More to follow!

STUDENTS GRADE 8-12



Combination bench press/squat
apparatus for the fitness suite

#4



#5

ISA LIBRARY ES author visit

As part of Book Week 2020, the ISA library wanted to organise an author visit from Ifeoma Onyefulu. She is a British Nigerian writer of children's books, particularly non-fiction. With this visit, the ISA library would like to conduct some workshops with the elementary school children on creative writing for non-fiction. The visit is scheduled to take place on March 2nd and 3rd.

SPANISH ES/MS Headphones

We received the request to provide some headphones for Spanish listening activities for elementary and middle school students. This will allow students to independently complete some listening exercises during their Spanish classes. The request has allowed students in all grades from KG and 1 to 6 to benefit from these additional resources in Spanish tutoring classes.



#6

ISA
PARENT
COFFEE

Fridays
8:15 AM



PTO
BOARD
MEETING

NEXT PTO
MEETING

Monday
March 2
9.30 AM
St Andrew's
meeting room

PTO ADVERTS PAGE

FEB 21
2020

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 PTO via
email pto.advertising@gmail.com or
pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk.



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