



22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019

## Important Dates

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### March 2019

- 22 **MS Free Event, 4:00-6:00pm**
- 28 **Aberdeen Youth Jazz Festival**
- 28 **EARLY DISMISSAL AT 11:00AM**
- 28 **Staff Appreciation Lunch, 10:00am-12 noon**
- 28 **CAS/NHS Car Wash, 12:00-3:00pm (see attached flyer)**
- 28-29 **Parent-Teacher Conferences**
- 31 **CLOCKS GO FORWARD ONE HOUR AT 01:00AM**

### April 2019

- 1 **PTO Meeting at 9:30am**
- 5 **TEACHER IN-SERVICE – STUDENT HOLIDAY**
- 8-12 **Spring Holiday**
- 17 **Grade 8-12 Drama Production, 4:00pm in The QET**
- 18 **Grade 8-12 Drama Production, 6:00pm in The QET**
- 19-21 **Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award Qualifying Expedition**
- 19 **MS House Challenge, 12:00-3:00pm**

## ▶ From the Head of School

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**Dear Parents,**

I became a school principal at an international school in China. It was my first experience of managing Chinese office staff. Until then, I had only supervised teachers from my own culture - an egalitarian bunch who did not take well to direct orders. I had developed a way of talking in these situations which got things done without turning my colleagues against me. It clearly worked well enough for me to get promoted, so it wasn't something I was going to let go of lightly.

Early on in my new job, I noticed my secretary's desk was getting cluttered and important documents were left lying about. 'You deal with parents really well and you do a great job translating,' I observed, believing that I was clearly indicating that whatever I said next was in the context of my general appreciation of her other qualities. 'But I am not sure you have everything organised in the best possible way.' Having delivered what I felt was a pointed criticism, I got to the point, 'Perhaps you might want to file things away a bit more promptly.'

I was surprised when I came in the next day to find the mess unmoved. I asked my secretary, 'I thought you were going to tidy up your desk?' She looked at me with genuine puzzlement. 'Yesterday remember, I asked you to?' 'No' she replied, 'I don't think you did.'

My failure to communicate was nothing to do with language, it was everything to do with cultural expectations. I later observed Chinese managers with their employees. They wouldn't go to them but would summon them on the phone with a blunt 'Come here' and then issue a simple 'do this' order. It had struck me as rude. To those involved it was honest and clear: you're the boss, why pretend you're not; you are telling me what to do, why pretend it's a suggestion.

Being in an international school means more than mixing with lots of other nations. Many local schools now have students from all over the world. The difference is they expect all students to conform to British ways of doing things. In an international school, we don't merely tolerate differences, we reach out to understand, and by doing so understand ourselves and our own assumptions more. This isn't so we can deny our own cultures, but through self-awareness become more effective in an increasingly globalised world where, whether we stay in our locality or travel the world, we will have to meet and deal with all kinds of people.

On Monday, we sent out the CIS Community Survey as part of our accreditation process. It is important for ISA to reach out and understand the community it serves. We want your opinions. In last Friday's *Thistle Talk*, we invited parents to join our accreditation self-study groups on 5<sup>th</sup> April, because we would like to engage actively with parents' views.

ISA values community and diversity. A diverse community is not a problem to be solved through toleration; it is an opportunity: through diversity, communities can become stronger. But it doesn't just happen, it requires us to actively engage and to be reflective. Please help us do just that and join the conversation.

To access the survey, please click on this link: <https://survey.cois.org/s3/Parent-2018-19-International-School-of-Aberdeen>

**Excerpt from last week's *Thistle Talk*:**

*At ISA, we are a true partnership of students, parents, faculty, support staff and Board members and as a result of this, we would like to extend an invitation to you to become involved in the Self-Study process. We will shortly be sending you all an email with a link to our community survey. We do ask that you take the time to help us collect the highest quality of data we can by filling out this questionnaire in order to focus our discussions during this self-reflection process. Along with this opportunity, we are also looking for between 8 and 16 parent volunteers who would be willing to sit on one of the 8 domain committees for the Self-Study. If you think that this would be of interest to you and you have the time to commit to attending a few meetings, including helping to gather or suggest some relevant pieces of evidence, please let us know by registering your interest with our Google Form, available here:*

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1qActqkaXESg07QkEuNIDW7JaCTJOjqYZ7\\_ypDIbFrIE/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1qActqkaXESg07QkEuNIDW7JaCTJOjqYZ7_ypDIbFrIE/edit)

*Please note, attendance to meetings on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> April will be necessary, with more details to follow.*

Kind regards,

**Nicholas Little**  
Head of School

## ► From the MS/HS Principal

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**Dear Middle/High School Parents,**

You will notice a new attachment at the end of this edition of the Thistle. We have subscribed to a monthly article to support parents in their efforts to keep their children safe online. You will find topical issues and suggestions for ways to help young people in the articles. One is designed for parents of elementary-aged students and the other secondary. I hope you find the material helpful. The simplest recommendation I have, though, is for kids to take advantage of the longer days and clearer skies and, once homework is done, get away from a screen and head outside to enjoy some fresh air.

The Red Nose Day walkathon was a big success and it was pleasing to see MS students interacting with, and helping along, ES peers. Running activities across year groups can have a very positive impact from a pastoral perspective, and it goes a long way to building that sense of community at our school in which we take great pride. Further to this, the combined MS and HS themes for Spirit Week have been very well received, and I have enjoyed seeing the creative outfits being worn by both students and teachers.

Thank you to everyone who came in for the Grade 10 Global Perspectives event. Occasions such as this develop global citizenship among our students, and it was pleasing to note that several individuals who I spoke to had been so impacted by the issues they had studied that they hoped to continue to raise awareness or offer support to relevant charities in the future. If you missed this but want to see what some of our students are up to, the IB2 Art students have hung their work for their final exhibition, and there are some incredible pieces on display around the first floor.

Our students have an early finish at 11:00am on Thursday next week, ahead of Parent-Teacher Conferences. I hope you will take time to meet with teachers and ask your children to reflect with you on their learning. Helping these young people grow to be successful individuals requires a co-ordinated effort on the part of many adults, and next week is a great opportunity to make sure we are helping your son or daughter reach their full potential.

**Angus Carmichael**  
MS/HS Principal

## ► From the Elementary Principal

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Dear Parents,

- **Hey, Little Ant**

*'I can see you're big and strong, decide for yourself what's right and wrong, if you were me and I were you, what would **you** want **me** to do?'*

Reading aloud stories, like the one about an ant desperately trying to convince a kid to NOT squish him, can help children of all ages to appreciate the wonder and magic of a book. Being read to is risk-free. When a teacher (or parent) does the reading, children's minds are open to anticipate, infer, connect, question, and comprehend (Calkins 2000). I believe you are never too old to enjoy a read aloud. Whether it's a story or non-fiction selection, it's both liberating and enriching to listen and have the experience of written language without the burden of decoding. Reading aloud grants all students (including those who have **E**nglish as an **A**dditional **L**anguage), access to content that they may not be able read and understand by themselves.

It's widely acknowledged that being read to is one of the most influential elements, if not the most important factor, in helping children to build the knowledge required for success in reading. Throughout the Elementary School, PS through Grade 5, reading aloud is a daily practice in our classrooms. Many of the grades also have guest readers, parents who come in to share one of their favourite stories. Typically, children's listening comprehension outpaces their reading comprehension until Middle School. Therefore, it is particularly important that students in the earliest grades build knowledge through being read to as well as through reading on their own. Of course, as reading skills develop (something that can occur with a different timeline for each individual), the balance gradually shifts to reading independently. The last two weeks' reading was a special theme in all of the classrooms. From the celebration of World Book Day right through the rest of the year our teachers and students will continue to delight in the joys of reading.

- **“Staying Safe Is Serious”**

After visiting Babcock Helicopters at Aberdeen Airport on Thursday, many first graders have decided that they would like to become pilots. The tour featured an opportunity to learn about the role helicopters play in transport. This included a discussion of search and rescue, the impact of the weather on flying, and a chance to tour two real helicopters made in France and America, respectively. The boys and girls were very engaged in the experience and many felt it was pretty special to be around such amazing flying machines. They asked thoughtful questions, including, **“Are there any climates you can't fly in?”** After the trip, one girl made a point of telling me that *“Technology can go wrong, so the helicopters are checked every day.”*

Another girl explained, *“There are different types of helicopters. Some rescue people and others take people, wearing lots of safety gear, to the oil rigs.”*

Many thanks to all of the good folks at Babcock Helicopters, especially Captain James Curnock and Captain Richard Warren, for making this trip possible. Fifth grade also had a dynamic trip this week. They went to the Maritime Museum and learned about Aberdeen's long relationship with the North Sea. Field trips broaden the educational experience of our students and greatly enhance learning.

- **Parent Conferences**

As teachers, we're looking forward to the opportunity to conference with parents on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March. Parents are encouraged to make appropriate requests to see any other teacher, in addition to the grade level (classroom) teacher who works with their child(ren). Our school is so successful because it's a place where students, parents, and teachers work together on the common goal of excellence in education. After the conference, be sure to review with your child(ren) the important goals set for the remainder of the school year. If you have any questions about your conference times, please contact Mary Rayne at [mrayne@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:mrayne@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk) or on 01224 730300.

Best regards,

**Don Newbury,**  
Elementary Principal



The ISA Jazz Band is proud to perform in the 2019 Aberdeen Jazz Festival on Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> March at 12:30pm in THE BLUE LAMP!

Entrance is FREE!!! Come support these fine musicians!

<http://www.aberdeenjazzfestival.com/programme/artists/aberdeen-youth-jazz-band.html>

# Online Safety Newsletter: March 2019

## Fortnite Battle Royale update

**Fortnite is rated PEGI 12 for frequent mild violence. It is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age.**

**The PEGI rating considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty. Would you let your child watch a film classified as a 12? In the UK, it is an offence for someone to supply a game to someone under the age specified.**

When rating games, PEGI do not take into consideration the chat features of a game which in this case could arguably be the greatest concern about letting your child play Fortnite. You may have seen in the news just recently of a case of a 41 year old man using the Fortnite voice chat to groom a child (Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-46923789>). If you do choose to let your child play then consider the following:

- **Chat functionality:** Fortnite contains voice and text chat systems which can often contain inappropriate language. You can turn the voice chat off but **not the text chat**. To turn voice chat off, go to Settings, Audio and switch to off.
- **In app purchases:** All users can purchase V-Bucks directly through the game. This currency can be used to purchase items in the Fortnite store so make sure you don't store your credit card details.
- **Playing too much!** The competitive nature of this game means it can be difficult for a child to stop playing, an average game lasts 20 minutes so set time limits on usage and remember to avoid any screen time one hour before bedtime.

Play the game with your child, observe them whilst they are playing so you can monitor the sort of chat that they are listening to/contributing to via text chat. As always, show your child how to report any inappropriate behaviour and ensure that they know that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns.

On Fortnite you can report players by using the in-game feedback tool by selecting 'Menu' and 'Feedback'. Full instructions can be viewed here:

<https://epicgames.helpshift.com/a/fortnite/?s=general&f=how-do-i-report-bad-player-behavior-in-battle-royale>



## Tik Tok (Musical.ly)



Music.ly was closed last year and users were automatically migrated to TikTok. **TikTok state that users must be aged 13+.** Users can watch musical clips, record 60 second clips, edit them and add special effects. Due to the nature of this app, videos may be inappropriate for some users due to their sexual nature or explicit language.

If you do choose to allow your child to set up an account then we recommend users have a private account to control who can see their videos and who can send them messages. Even with a private account, profile information (profile photo, username and bio) is seen by all users so ensure your child understands not to reveal any personal information in their profile e.g. don't wear a school uniform in your picture. To set your child's account to private:

- Go to your profile page, tap on the top right corner and select "Privacy and Settings", Select "Privacy and Safety" option and toggle "Private Account" on/off

Tik Tok includes a 'Restricted mode' to limit the appearance of content that may be inappropriate. To set this:

- Select "Digital Wellbeing" under the app settings, tap "Turn On" and set a passcode, Toggle "Restricted Mode"

More information is available here: [http://support.tiktok.com/?ht\\_kb=for-parents](http://support.tiktok.com/?ht_kb=for-parents)

## Cyberbullying

**If it's unacceptable offline then it's unacceptable online.**

**Think!** It's important to talk to your child about how they behave online, if they choose to use technology to call somebody names or spread hurtful rumours then they are involved in online bullying. Talk to your child, ask them how they would feel if the same was said or done to them?

**What are your children saying online?** It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they wouldn't if they were face to face with each other. Talk to your children about how they are speaking to others online. Explain to them what to do if somebody is mean to them online, how should they respond (don't respond, ignore them!), how to use reporting tools and to tell a trusted adult.

Childnet have just produced the following information pages in response to two key questions. The pages are full of advice and tips:

### **What makes a good online friend?**

<https://www.childnet.com/young-people/primary/get-answers/what-makes-a-good-online-friend>

### **What should I do if someone online is mean to me?**

<https://www.childnet.com/young-people/primary/get-answers/what-should-i-do-if-someone-online-is-mean-to-me/>

### **Further information**

- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/online-bullying/>
- <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics/cyberbullying>

## Digital books to read with your child

Vodafone and Parent Zone have produced two stories for you to read with your child to help them learn about online safety and to spark a conversation. Sally the Smartphone's Digital Disaster (5 to 7 year olds) and Tommy the Tablet's Birthday Blunder (7 to 9 year olds) are available here:

<https://www.vodafone.com/content/digital-parenting/blogs/story-time-books-help-children-be-resilient-online.html>

# Online Safety Newsletter: March 2019

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- Go to your profile page, Tap on the top right corner and select "Privacy and Settings", Select "Privacy and Safety" option and toggle "Private Account" on/off

Tik Tok includes a 'Digital Wellbeing feature' to control the amount of time your child spends on the app and a 'Restricted mode' to limit the appearance of content that may be inappropriate. To set this:

- Select "Digital Wellbeing" under the app settings, tap "Turn On" and set a passcode, Toggle "Screen Time Management" and/or "Restricted Mode"

**More information is available**

**here:** [http://support.tiktok.com/?ht\\_kb=for-parents](http://support.tiktok.com/?ht_kb=for-parents)

## Do you know what Catfishing is?

This is when someone creates a fake online profile pretending they are somebody else to trick others. People of all ages have been 'catfished'. More information is available here: <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/resources/platform-guides/catfishing-online-safety-guide/>

## Secret Conversations on Facebook

Whilst Facebook is less popular amongst teenagers it is still worthwhile keeping up to date with all features.

Secret conversations have been available for a while now but not everyone is aware of them.

Messages (which can include text, stickers and photos) can only be viewed on the device from which they've been sent so even if you have your child's account details, you won't be able to see the messages if you are not on the same device. Plus, secret conversations can be sent with a timer so that they disappear from their phone and the recipient's phone within a set time e.g. 10 seconds.

Secret conversations can be reported and/or the person can be blocked. It is important to ensure that your child knows how to use the reporting tools of any apps/websites that they use and they know to tell a trusted adult if they do have any concerns.

Further information is available here:

<https://parentinfo.org/article/staying-safe-on-facebook-secret-conversations-a-parent-s-guide>

## Advertising on Social Media

### Instagram

Instagram are doing more to support vulnerable users and will now not allow any graphic images of self-harm, such as cutting on their platform. More information here:

<https://instagram-press.com/blog/2019/02/07/changes-were-making-to-do-more-to-support-and-protect-the-most-vulnerable-people-who-use-instagram>

### Do you know the average age of an online gamer?

Average Female age = 36

Average Male age = 32

### PEGI ratings explained



This rating means that the game contains elements that encourage or teach gambling. Games with this sort of content are PEGI 12, PEGI 16 or PEGI 18.

A recent BBC Panorama investigation found that a teenager lost money on a gambling-type game which was promoted by a YouTuber who the child followed (source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/c8b3c39d-84df-4424-b42f-c04f26c8560f>). Following this, we thought it important that young people learn and understand that people they follow on social media may, at times, be paid by brands to promote their product in some way. The endorser must make it clear they are doing this (or in the UK they are breaking the law) by adding some form of disclosure



e.g. #ad. However, there are several YouTubers who are endorsing products and don't always clearly disclose that their post is an ad.

From April, gambling adverts will no longer be allowed to appear on websites or in computer games that are popular with children. Full story here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2019/feb/13/gambling-adverts-banned-child-friendly-websites-games>

### Tellonym (a play on the words "Tell on him") 13+ to register (17+ on iOS devices)

There are lots of anonymous messaging apps and websites out there, Tellonym is one of them. To register, a user must state that they are 13+ (on iOS devices, you must state you are over 17). A user then receives a link that they can share on other social media channels so people can ask them a question anonymously. Users can block other users, set a filter to block specific words and can also report inappropriate messages. **Due to the anonymous nature of this app it can be misused and cyberbullying is a concern.** As with all apps that your child is accessing, we encourage you to explore it yourself first to evaluate it. Just looking at the reviews for this app will raise concerns.

More information is available from Commonsense Media: <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/app-reviews/tellonym>

# CAR WASH FOR THE AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL TRUST (AET)

On Thursday the 28th of March, from 12PM - 3PM during parent conferences, get your cars washed for only £5 each! The event will be run by 11<sup>th</sup> graders for their CAS project as well as some NHS (National Honour Society) members! All the money collected will go to the African Educational Trust (AET) foundation, who support people in Africa who have been excluded from educational opportunities due to conflict, discrimination or poverty.

To participate in our car wash please park your vehicle in the top car parking lot and pay one of the students in yellow jackets.

Please come and help the AET to achieve their goal of having a continent in which all African nations provide quality education for every citizen, and of course don't miss out on driving a fresh, clean car!





# News from your PTO

Friday 22nd March, 2019

**IMPORTANT REMINDER**

The first aid course is next week on Wednesday, **March 27th** starting at 8:30 am sharp. Participation in this event required previous booking. All details can be found in the email sent to you confirming your place in the class.



## We still have some shoes to fill

Nominations for PTO positions are still open! This is your chance to get more involved in school life through one of the many exciting opportunities we currently have:

- Fundraising Coordinator (Team Cheerleader)
- Social Associate (Party Planner Extraordinaire)
- Spiritwear Associate (Cheerleader in Training)
- MS CEC Rep (MS Team Builder)
- Volunteer Coordinator (Social Networker)
- HS CEC Rep (HS Team Builder)
- Cultural Liaison (Relationship Expert)

Email us on [pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk](mailto:pto@isa.aberdeen.sch.uk) for a job description, reach out through Facebook or join us at our next meeting on Monday, April 1st at 9:30 am.

Nominations will be open until Friday, March 29th. The slate will be voted on at AGM on 22nd April.

# ACT NOW!



Only one more week left to apply for PTO Enrichment Program. This program aims to support excellence in educational supplies and experiences.

Applications can be found on the ISA Website.

**Deadline is 31st March 2019**

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!!

New information

## STAFF Appreciation LUNCH

Thank you to everyone who has kindly signed up to donate food and/or their time to the Staff Appreciation Lunch on **March 28th**.

We are still in need of volunteers to help with set-up, serving and cleaning after the event. Please let us know if you can help:



<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0444abac29a7f94-staff>



As always, please remember that you will need to send a list of ingredients/food sharing form and **do not use** any ingredients containing peanuts or any type of tree nuts.



Please let Kim Ferris know how and when you will be sending the item you signed up for. **All items to be dropped by March 27th, 3:30 PM.** Kim will be receiving items March 27th 8:15AM-9AM, as well as 2:30 PM-3: 30 PM on this day.

Please leave your name and your children's grades with any dishes left behind, so we may be able to contact for questions and return containers.

Thanks in advance for your participation in making this event a success.

**Kim Ferris:**  
[Kimberlyferris2@gmail.com](mailto:Kimberlyferris2@gmail.com)  
**Alison Johannessen:**  
[ISApovolcoord@gmail.com](mailto:ISApovolcoord@gmail.com)



**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)



51 Holburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB10 6EY  
Tel: 01224 212888  
Email: [info@beautyfountain.co.uk](mailto:info@beautyfountain.co.uk)

[www.beautyfountain.co.uk](http://www.beautyfountain.co.uk)



Innocent Aesthetics Ltd  
481 Great Western Road  
Aberdeen  
AB10 6NN  
Tel: 01224 325354  
E: [info@innocentaesthetics.co.uk](mailto:info@innocentaesthetics.co.uk)

[www.innocentaesthetics.co.uk](http://www.innocentaesthetics.co.uk)



21 Golden Square,  
Aberdeen, AB10 1RE  
Tel: 01224 611633  
E-Mail: [info@theorthodonticclinic.co.uk](mailto:info@theorthodonticclinic.co.uk)

[www.theorthodonticclinic.co.uk/](http://www.theorthodonticclinic.co.uk/)



**RoC**Private  
clinic

Westhill Business Park,  
Westhill, Aberdeenshire, AB32 6JL  
Tel: 01224 515 254  
Email: [aberdeen@rochealthservices.com](mailto:aberdeen@rochealthservices.com)

[www.rocprivateclinic.com](http://www.rocprivateclinic.com)

WWW.SONYAANGUS.COM



*It's V.I.P season...*

...AND THAT MEANS  
VERY IMPORTANT PARENT!

Whether it's mum, mum-to-be, mother-in-law, grandmother or someone else, all motherly figures deserve to be celebrated on Sunday 31st March.

So, treat the lovely ladies in your life with our glorious gifts.

Pop in for our annual Mother's Day Made Easy event, where gift wrapping is included (with donations to Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland encouraged)

P.S. Mini bottle of fizz if you spend over £30, while stocks last!

FRIDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> AND SATURDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 10AM - 5PM



*Sonya Angus*  
GIFTS. FURNITURE. INTERIORS.  
PRET A PORTER

The Courtyard, Cults, AB15 9SD  
01224 862690



WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SONYAANGUSSHOP

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