



February 2025 Headteacher Newsletter

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you as we approach the February holiday. This term has been extremely busy for staff and young people in Inveralmond Community High School. Our young people in S2 and S3 have been thinking about their future in school and beyond in Pathway Meetings. Our S4-S6 pupils have been focused on SQA coursework and exam preparation; and will shortly have their Pathway Meetings.

Over the last month or so, young people have been involved in lots of things, not only in their school but in the wider community. This newsletter provides an update on the various activities which pupils have been involved in, and of which we can be proud as a community.

On Tuesday 28th of January we had our fourth parent council meeting of the session. Following each Parent Council meeting I provide a newsletter on the items discussed in the meeting, along with any other news. Our next parent council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 25th of February at 1845 and takes place in the Business Studies Department.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all in our community an enjoyable February break. We look forward to welcoming pupils back to school on Tuesday 18th of February.

Yours Faithfully

Hamish Shankland

Headteacher



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1. Welcomes & Announcements

- Mrs Nicole Chalmers has joined us in the Physics department on a permanent basis. We are delighted to have her as part of our Science and Home Economics Faculty.
- Miss Eilidh Waddell continues with us on supply for the duration of the term, covering Home Economics.
- Mrs Carole Cowan will join us on a permanent basis as Teacher of Home Economics. We look forward to welcoming Mrs Cowan as a permanent member of the HE team.
- Following short leet interviews I am delighted to announce that Mrs McGinnis will be joining Inveralmond as permanent Depute Headteacher Support. Mrs McGinnis joins us from out with West Lothian and is a highly experienced educator and leader. We look forward to welcoming her to our Senior Leadership Team.
- Mrs Lee Anne Steel is currently Acting Depute Headteacher Support, following the departure of Mrs Charters and pending the arrival of Mrs McGinnis. Whilst Mrs Steel is Acting DHT, Mrs Brogan Townsley will take up post as Acting Principal Teacher (PT1) in Arran House. Congratulations to both on these acting positions.



2. Christmas Rewards

Why?

Our Parent Council spoke to us about the idea of creating a rewards system that recognises every person who comes into ICHS and meets or exceeds expectations. Rewards do not measure academics, they focus on the core skills and attributes we know are vital to be successful.

Values - 'our way of being'

Kindness - avoiding conflict; actively seeking resolutions

Respect - actions and interactions allow others to be educated

Honesty - resolve issues in the right way

Pride - to ensure that people are proud of doing the right thing

Ambition - to create an environment where we all want to be our best



@justthebraveoff

The Criteria:

- ▶ **Attendance**
 - ▶ Should be above 90% (as required by West Lothian)
 - ▶ No patterns of **latecoming - mornings, after break/lunch, or class lates**
 - ▶ No patterns of lost learning: excessive toilet requests/out of class/truancy
- ▶ **Attitude:**
 - ▶ **Engagement**
 - ▶ **Behaviour**
 - ▶ **Class attendance**
 - ▶ **Latecoming to class**
- ▶ **Behaviour**
 - ▶ No more than 2 Duty Officer Calls or Reflection Periods
- ▶ **Uniform** - no more than 3 calls home/repeat reminders

We treat every young person as an individual and account is taken of any personal circumstances which affect a young person's capacity to meet the criteria.



3. Values Awards

Last session our Rewards Working Group successfully trialed a 'Values Rewards System'. This allows any member of staff across the school to nominate a young person who they believe has demonstrated a school value in action. The Rewards Working Group then met to select one winner from each yeargroup. The Values Rewards will now run on a termly basis. Our Christmas winners received a letter home, a Headteacher meeting and Praise postcard, along with a selection box. In our Awards Ceremony we will introduce a new 'Headteacher Values Award'. All termly winners will be considered for this award.

Congratulations to our Christmas Values award winners:

- ▶ S1 - Amy Manson (*Kindness*)
- ▶ S2 - Harris Harvie (*Respect*)
- ▶ S3 - Charlie Gray (*Kindness*)
- ▶ S4 - Abby Farquar & Sam Magee (*Kindness*)
- ▶ S5 - Kirsty Hamilton (*Kindness*)
- ▶ S6 - Alistair Cameron (*Kindness*)





4. How to Help Your Child Pass

On Wednesday 29th January, we held our first ever How to Help Your Child Pass evening.

The evening involved a series of stations which parents and young people moved round. Each station had an interactive element and was focused on how parents and carers can work alongside their young people and the school as they prepare for exams.

Feedback from those who attended was overwhelmingly positive. It is our aim to offer this every year so that more of our school community can benefit.

The How To Help Your Child Pass materials have been posted on our usual communication channels. The How to Help Your Child Pass package will be delivered to pupils through PSE between now and Easter to support young people in how best to prepare for deadlines and exams.



How To Help Your Child Pass Information Evening



Mr Hamish Shankland
Headteacher

We are excited to invite you and your young person to our How to Help Your Child Pass Evening on January 29th, from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at Inveralmond Community High School.

This event is designed to support all our students to reach their potential, and we strongly encourage you to make the most of these sessions to ensure your child is fully prepared for the challenges ahead.

During the evening, we will cover a range of topics to help your child succeed.

Session include:

- Growth mindsets and time management
- Progress tracking and support
- Accessing Achieve and E-Sgoil
- Subject-specific top study resources
- Effective study planning techniques
- Setting SMART targets for success
- Wellbeing support to ensure a balanced approach to studying

Please sign up here to join us on the 29th of January.



5. ICHS Uniform

We know that many young people may go shopping to replace uniform items over the holidays.

We are keen to promote the highest possible standards of uniform in school.

As a school we are able to support with items of uniform from our own stock, or through <https://schoolbank-westlothian.org/> They can also be found by searching on Facebook. School ties can be purchased at the school office.

Please note the following:

- We ask pupils to wear unbranded clothing so that others are not under pressure to buy expensive brands
- Crocs are not an acceptable form of footwear for school. For safety reasons any young person wearing open shoes may not be able to access all of the curriculum.
- All shoes should be 'majority black'
- No young person should wear any item of clothing which exposes their stomach or back

As a school we have created a uniform guide which can be found on our website. This has pictures and more detail of what is accepted as uniform.



The poster features the school logo (a circle with 'I C' over 'H S') and a tree emblem. It lists uniform requirements: a school tie with a black or white formal shirt (long or short sleeved) or a sweatshirt with school logo, a black jumper or cardigan, and an optional school blazer; black trousers, a skirt, jeans, formal shorts, jogging bottoms, or thick leggings; and mostly black shoes. Illustrations show a shirt and tie, trousers, and shoes. A footer states: 'Our uniform policy promotes accessible and equitable uniform items that can be reasonably expected to be worn by all pupils. Parent/carers are asked to co-operate with the school in encouraging the wearing of our school uniform.' Below this is a blue banner with the school logo and the motto: 'As a community we are working together to become inspired and fulfilled individuals who ACHIEVE CONNECT THRIVE'.



6. Attendance

The information below gives an idea of the impact of attendance on achievement.

There are 32 periods in a school week. There are 190 days in the school year = 6080 periods in the year. The notional delivery time for an average course is 160 hours.

95% attendance = 9.5 days missed = 60.8 periods

- 37.5% drop if concentrated into one SQA subject
- S4: 6.25% drop in each subject
- S5: 7.5% drop in each subject
- S6: 9.38% drop in each subject

90% attendance = 19 days missed = 121.6 periods

- 75.6% if concentrated into one SQA subject
- S4: 12.6% drop in each subject
- S5: 15.1% drop in each subject
- S6: 18.9% drop in each subject



Notional Grade Boundaries:

A = 70-100%

B = 60-69%

C = 50-59%

D = 40-49%

No Award = 0-39



7. Latecoming

The information below gives an idea of the impact of latecoming on achievement.

Inveralmond CHS starts at 0835 with period 1.

If a pupil is late to class for 5 minutes each morning:

= 25 minutes across the week

= 15.83 hours over the year

= 13.67 periods

= 8.5% of an SQA course



8. Coming up:

- ▶ Pathways Meetings: Ongoing
- ▶ Tuesday 18th February: term begins
- ▶ WB 18th February: Senior Phase Tracking Reports available to pupils and parents/carers
- ▶ Tuesday 25th of February - next parent council meeting



Have a wonderful February
Holiday!

