

Dear parents,

I am delighted to welcome former Scotland and British Lions player **Mr Peter Wright** as our new **Player Development and Performance Coach**. Peter will be combining his duties as Scotland Under 20 Head Coach and Glasgow Hawks' Director of Rugby with a commitment to improving the performance of Glasgow Academy boys through training with them five afternoons a week and analysing their match performances. This commitment means that Peter will be working with Glasgow Academy teams and their coaches throughout the age range, from Prep 6 through to Senior 6. Peter's passion for rugby, his wealth of experience as both a player and a coach, and his understanding of - and connection with - young people are already inspiring our boys across the year groups. We want to do all we can to ensure that they enjoy their rugby and have fun improving their skills whilst developing a consistency of approach at all levels.

Amongst many new appointments this year, **Mr Scott Weston** is our new **Head of Rugby**, and Scotland U21 rugby player **Mr Gregor Wood** our new Games and PE teacher.

The Academy has more than doubled its investment in sports coaching over the last four years and has now created a full-time Outdoor Education department to offer more children than ever before opportunities for building confidence, resilience and a sense of self-efficacy through the fun of climbing, kayaking, Nordic skiing and so on. **Ms Rosie Goolden** has been appointed **Head of Outdoor Education**. She holds the highest qualification in the country in mountain activities and is Director of Mountain Safety and Training for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland and Chair of the Scottish Mountain Safety Forum. She has established first ascents (alpine, ice and rock climbing) in Peru, Iceland, Norway and Greenland. A freelance instructor for 11 years, her specialisms are kayaking, canoeing, hill walking, mountaineering rock climbing and winter climbing. She is a former Welsh Junior Slalom Champion, competing internationally. Her remit is to widen participation by significantly extending the excellent programme established by Neal Gwynne.

Mr Daniel Ford is **Head of Morrison House** in succession to Alan Campbell.

We are delighted by our **record Higher and Advanced Higher results**. S5 (now S6) gained our best-ever pass rate AND our best A rate and best AB rate. The 60.4% A grades is an exceptional achievement - significantly ahead of any previous year - indeed over 8% up on what the previous strong year group achieved.

In S6 at Advanced Higher we again had our best-ever pass rate and our highest-ever A grade rate. Jason Long and Alice Ahn clocked up a record-breaking 11 Advanced Highers between them, all at A grade. Just for good measure, Jason also gained a starred A grade in Further Maths A level and an S (Outstanding) on his STEP paper for entry to Trinity College, Cambridge.

At Standard Grade, we were particularly pleased to achieve our best-ever Credit pass rate and grade 1 rate for Standard Grade English taken a year early in S3.

Across the years, numerous children worked very hard and I am really pleased that they did so well.

Members of our Combined Cadet Force enjoy a range of summer activities. At annual camp, our CCF won the **Best Contingent Award**, for the second year running, gaining first place in every category considered for the Award.

Our rowers achieved yet more successes over the summer too. Ronan Murphy and Ross Urquhart ended the year as **Scottish Champions, British Champions and Home International Champions**. Their time at the Home International of 6.56 was the fastest achieved by any British Junior pair this year and would have won the men's event. Earlier in the year Ronan and Ross made history at the Scottish Championships when they won senior eights: the first time a junior eight has won this senior event. Congratulations, too, to Eleanor Jamieson and Kimberley Somerside on Bronze medals at the British Championships. 70 children now row with the school, many of them in addition to their other sports. This helped us win more medals than any other school in the Scottish Indoor Rowing Championship.

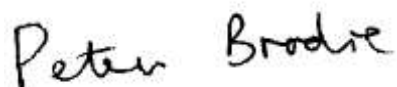
Many congratulations also to Max Aitchison who won the Gold medal in the 1500m at the UK Youth Games in Sheffield.

We are pleased that so many children make good use of all the opportunities for help with work that we offer and we are keen that they become independent learners. Should it be the case that, on a particular night, all set homework has been done, there is nothing better than revision. Revision should, of course, be active, with children repeatedly testing themselves, writing answers to questions and then checking back with their notes or textbooks to fill in any points missed or to correct any slips. A quick look through notes, followed by putting them aside and jotting down the key points and key details and then checking those against the original notes does much to commit things to the medium or long-term memory. If things are revisited on, say, three occasions they tend to stay in the long-term memory, for learning has become a habit. In short, there is always useful study that children can do to help themselves and there is no such thing as having no work. For those in S3 and S4, we recommend two hours' work a night at this stage.

Mobile phones can be a considerable distraction when there is work to be done or a need for the nine or more hours of sleep required by teenagers. Children's thought processes are disrupted by other children ringing or texting, so one's own child and other children can be aided if the phone is switched off and in another part of the house when they're working. It can also be helpful to limit the time spent on MSN, Facebook and other sites or games which may be a distraction to children who have gone to their room to work. Once any need to work on a computer is finished, switching it off prevents the interruption of revision, reading or handwritten work by emails or other children going online.

With every good wish for what I hope will be a very happy year,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Brodie". The handwriting is cursive and somewhat informal.

Peter Brodie