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**GLASGOW ACADEMY**

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Rector: Peter Brodie, MA, MA (Ed)

22 December 2010

Dear Parents,

The Parents' Evening for parents with children in S1 is to be held on Wednesday 19 January, between 5.00 and 7.30 pm. We very much hope that you will be able to come to the Dining Hall on that evening to meet as many as possible of those on the staff who teach your daughter or son. Members of staff who teach S1 will be available, without appointment, to discuss your child's work. Tutors will also be available to talk about your child's progress in more general terms. Please consult the school report when deciding which teachers it will be most important for you to see.

Although there will inevitably be some queuing, we are hoping to reduce congestion by asking some parents to arrive at 5.00 and others at 5.45. May I please suggest that you arrive at **5.00**? The evening will end at **7.30** and you are particularly asked not to keep members of staff behind after this planned finishing time.

In order to accommodate as many parents as possible, it is hoped that each interview with a teacher will last no more than five minutes. Please make a separate appointment, by telephone through the school office, if you feel that longer is required or if you are unable to meet a teacher you would particularly like to see – some members of staff do teach more pupils than there is time to discuss properly in one evening.

As an all-round school intent on providing challenges and experiences which develop the whole person, The Academy has long stood for promoting the four capacities which are at the centre of Curriculum for Excellence. These involve creating confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens. For us, Curriculum for Excellence has been evolution not revolution, and it has been about engaging children better with their learning, helping them become more independent learners, offering them more personalisation and choice, and enabling them to think more for themselves - and think 'outside the box'. These are developments we would have instigated anyway as part of our desire to provide the best possible educational experience.

We have made a number of improvements to our curriculum and its delivery over recent years in the light of Curriculum for Excellence in order to help children connect learning

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across subjects and think outside subject boundaries. Examples of these cross-curricular projects include the English Department working with the Art Department in S1 on the theme of Remembrance, and a project on Robert Burns. The Drama, PSE and Maths Departments have created an inter-disciplinary project covering financial awareness for S2 called 'Short-Change'.

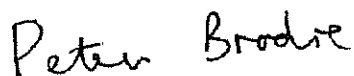
Teaching methods now engage children in their learning more strongly. For example, in Maths a 'We're in Business' day facilitates co-operative learning: young people are able to make informed decisions and are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding through presentations and posters. In PE children set and review personal goals for achievement in health and wellbeing. They are encouraged to count success rates for a skill and then try to beat their score, for example in badminton and basketball shooting. In Art, using pictures of African masks and working in small groups to enhance artistic skills whilst also developing literacy, a pupil in each group will describe the mask verbally to another, who will write down what they understood from the description. This is given to another pupil who does their best to interpret the written work back into a visual image. This becomes the basis on which the group develops a ceramic or 3D outcome. Children enjoy these challenges as a group, and especially the individual input they have.

There will be a leaflet about Curriculum for Excellence on the signing-in table at the entrance to the dining hall at the Parents' Evening: please help yourself to a copy and feel free to ask any questions you wish of any of us. Above all, please be reassured that Curriculum for Excellence has not, for example, changed the rules of French or Spanish grammar, Science or Maths. We will go on teaching all those and being a rigorously academic school, endeavouring as always to combine the best of the new with what we know works well from experience.

These days exams change every few years. S1 are due to sit new or modified ones when they reach S4 and S5. Once the teams working nationally on these modified exams reveal more about them this coming year, we too will be working towards them to ensure that we take them in our stride. We are unusually fortunate in having a very high number of highly experienced SQA Senior Examiners, exam-paper writers and markers amongst our teachers: they will be at the centre of enabling the new exams to function, so we will be particularly well placed to know all about these exams once they are unveiled.

We look forward to meeting you on 19 January.

Yours sincerely,



Rector