

Dear Parents and Carers

As we come to the end of this academic year at Cookstown High School, I would like to thank you for your encouragement and support this year. I have enjoyed meeting many of you and have appreciated the opportunity to learn and understand the history of school and community as well as work with governors, colleagues, parents and pupils to continue develop the educational provision and excellent standards.

Being part of The High School community means that it is important that we work together to ensure that our children have the best education possible. The positive contribution from each individual cannot be under estimated and serves to strengthen the school and benefit pupils. We are very grateful to those who have given so generously of their time, skills, experience and resources. Thank you also for your participation in the recent survey and as soon as we receive the collated information from Kirkland Rowell we will feedback to you in the new term.

As no doubt many of you are aware the examination season in May and June has been especially busy with over 166 different external examination papers being taken by various pupils. I am sure that the hard work and revision of our pupils will pay off and we very much look forward to pupils being rewarded for their labours in August. Pupils who sat internal examinations will have received their results and I hope that they are pleased with the progress that they have made since the Christmas examinations.

Since the Easter break there has been a variety of educational visits and trips and you will have read about them on Facebook or the school website.

We had an excellent sports day and colour run. It was a real delight to see the fun and enjoyment of all participants and spectators. Thankfully the weather held out which added to the fun filled atmosphere with laughter, competition and sporting prowess. Huge thanks to all of the staff involved in organising all of the events.

We were delighted to welcome Primary six pupils from our feeder schools. During the three days pupils had the opportunity to meet pupils from other schools, High school pupils, sample practical lessons in Technology and Home Economics and French and become acquainted with High School life. It was a pleasure to meet pupils and staff from their respective schools and we very much look forward to seeing everyone again in the near future.

The Technology and Art Department hosted their annual exhibition which show cased some of superb work and skill from GCSE and A level pupils. The impressive range of breadth of work on display reflected the variety of material and style that pupils were able to build upon and develop. We are very pleased that Mollie Brown has been awarded a Bursary by the Thomas Devlin Fund to help her develop a career in the creative arts. Mollie will be studying at Art College Belfast in September.

Now in its fifth year, History Club has welcomed its highest number of members yet with over thirty pupils now at the meetings. Highlights for the Club this year is their participation in a range of activities to mark the one hundredth year since the end of the First World War. A commemorative tree was planted as well as murals created to mark this significant event. The spring term also brought a special visit from Chelsea Pensioners, and as in previous years, the club also acknowledged Holocaust Memorial Day by planting crocus bulbs in the Eco Garden as well as writing letters to a Holocaust survivor. The year ended with an annual outing, this time to both the Siege museum and Free Derry museum in Londonderry.

For the fourth year, both Cookstown High School and Holy Trinity College have been collaborating in a number of shared activities as part of the Shared Education Signature Project. These included interview skills workshops for all Year 12 and 14 pupils as well as a collaborative Careers Convention in the Leisure Centre for all Year 12 and 13 pupils in both schools. Each event proved to be a very successful endeavour and our thanks go to members of the community, businesses and further educational institutions who gave their support.

A public speaking competition was offered to all pupils in Year 8, with a very successful final being held at the Glenavon Hotel. Jamie Kerrigan was the overall winner. Year 12 English pupils also benefited from additional Revision workshops which were held in Cookstown Leisure Centre. There was also the opportunity for English Literature pupils to go to the Grand Opera House to watch Macbeth as well as to the Seamus Heaney Centre. Thank you to all colleagues who have made these events such success especially Mrs S Allen who coordinates all events.

Sporting success has continued this term: Brandon Hamilton, Jamie Donnell and Matthew McMenemy have been selected for the Tyrone Junior SuperCup team who will play in the tournament (formerly known as the Milk Cup) at the end of July. Ewan Cruickshank and Hugo Cleary-McGuffin were selected for the Ulster U16 boys' hockey and travelled to Glasgow to play a series of matches against the Scottish U16s. Ethan Greaves has been selected for the Ulster U18 boys' hockey and will travel to Wales to play a series of matches against the Welsh U18s. Max Wylie and Oran Kennedy are taking part in the U13 Ulster Development Programmes. Congratulations to Nicholas Griggs who represented Ireland in cross country, finishing 18<sup>th</sup> in the UK and third in Ireland. He also represented Ulster in athletics achieving a bronze medal in the 800m.

The Embassy of Switzerland in the United Kingdom, in collaboration with Francophonie UK, offered an international quiz during the "Semaine de la Francophonie 2019" to celebrate the French language and the French-speaking countries. Mrs McFlynn prepared Year 10 pupils for this event. The successful team came third in this international quiz, achieving 93% overall. 786 participants had entered the quiz from across the world. The team members were: Natalie Johnston, Ella Thom, Serena Burton, Hanna Gillis, Ellen Harkness, Adriana Davis, Olivia Thompson, Nicole Hamchevici, and Holly Purvis.

Our Learning Support Centre have been involved in a number of sporting events throughout the year including participating in Superstars multi-disabilities sports championships and Disability Sport NI. Pupils attended a residential in Newcastle participating in various activities: gladiator challenge, canoeing, bouldering, and building bridges. Other events have involved visits to Armagh Planetarium, completing qualifications in catering, and horticulture as well as an art competition with two pupils winning at district level.

At the end of this academic year, we are saying farewell to several members of temporary staff: Miss Rollins, Dr Hodgett, Mr Collins and Mrs McStocker, and we wish them all of the very best for the future. Mr Thompson (Vice Principal, Pastoral) is also leaving The High School to take up a post at Sullivan Upper School as Vice Principal responsible for Teaching and Learning. Mr Thompson joined us in January 2017 and has provided excellent pastoral leadership and support for pupils and will certainly be a huge miss. Mrs C Allen has been appointed to take over the role as Vice Principal (Pastoral) in September.

Please find below some **key dates for your diary** (for further dates please look at the school website or the school app).

Term resumes Year 11 and year 13	Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> August
Term resumes Year 8 and Year 14	Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> August
Term resumes - All pupils	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September
Year 11 Information Evening	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> September
Year 13 Information Evening	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> September
Year 8 Information Evening	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> September
Year 14 Parents' Consultation Day	Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> October
Year 8 and 13 Parents' Consultation Day	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> November
All year groups internal examinations	Week commencing 9 <sup>th</sup> December

I would like to draw to your attention the annual Parents, Friends and Family Evening on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September at 6pm. This is a fun evening with games, BBQ and opportunity to get to enjoy the company of school community. Please do come along and enjoy the evening with the wider school community.

If you are a former pupil of Cookstown High School, why not join the Former Pupils' Association, please look up their face book page.

Whatever the summer holds for you, I hope that you all have an enjoyable and relaxing break, and I look forward to welcoming your children back in the new academic year.

Very best wishes

G J Evans  
Principal