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TR/mf

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Dear Parent/Carer

At the end of my first week, I am writing to share with you how privileged I feel to be the new Head Teacher at Craigmount High School. In my first week in post the students and staff have made me feel incredibly welcome. In my introductory assemblies with all year groups I shared with the students my core values, and what they can expect from me as Head Teacher. I emphasised my commitment to fairness and equality, my high expectations, and the importance of a Head Teacher being approachable to all.

These personal and professional qualities have developed in a career path taking me to Glasgow, Aberdeenshire, Stirling, and since 2002, as a Senior Manager in Edinburgh schools, including six years as Head Teacher at Tynecastle High School. My own teaching subjects are English and History, and in the past year I have taught the new National 5 history course, which afforded some useful insights into the new qualifications.

This term my main focus will be on holding one-to-one staff interviews and developing a feel for the culture at Craigmount, and I have been spending a lot of time visiting classrooms and school clubs. In May these classroom visits will include some formal shadowing of students with specific needs so that I can sample the learning experience from their perspective. On Friday afternoon, I also met with a group of S6 leavers so that they could share their valuable perspective on school life over the past six years.

What is really clear to me already is that there is a very strong ethos built on respectful relationships between staff and students. This has been evident in classrooms, and in a number of the lunchtime clubs I visited. I want to protect this fantastic culture and to build on it. Craigmount is a great school, but I want to work with the school community to make it even better. Consequently, I will be leading a session with staff during the May In-Service Day where I hope to identify core strengths and share views on how the school can grow and develop.

Of course parents offer another crucial voice in driving school improvement so I am also currently absorbing the details from all the parent questionnaire returns from this session. Thank you if you contributed to this process at parent consultation evenings. I am also really looking forward to meeting parents in person, and the first opportunities this term will be at the next Parent Council Meeting on Monday 27 April and on Tuesday 28 April at the Spring Concert. Hopefully, I will see many of you there.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any matter you wish to discuss.

Yours sincerely

Mr Tom Rae  
Head Teacher