



## Parent Council AGM 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018 Head teacher report

### 1. Staffing

Since the last HT report we have lost some staff to pastures new:

- Miss Chalmers (FH Science) to a FH post closer to home at Kilwinning Academy
- Mrs Chambers will take post as DHT at Inverclyde Academy in August. Congratulations to her on her promotion.
- Our NQT staff are busy trying to secure positions for next session, with great success so far.

Some staff have been internally promoted:

- Mrs O'Malley was successfully appointed as DHT Pupil Support
- Mr Palombo has been successfully appointed as Acting DHT (Arran House) from August.

We have welcomed new people to our team:

- Welcome to Mr Docherty in the English team joined us at Easter
- Welcome to Ms Cole, new FH Science, joined us last week
- Miss Hamilton, who was appointed in February, will join English in August
- Ms Robson who was appointed as PT Pastoral Support (Iona) last week will also start in the new session.

As you may recall from previous parent council meetings at this time of year, May and June are times when we are busy getting new staff appointed and we prepare to welcome a fresh round of NQTs. At time of writing, the following positions are active in JHS for starts in August 2018:

- We are welcoming three NQTs – one in Music, one in Maths and one in Geography.
- We have a vacancy post in Computing: national advert closed last week
- We have a vacancy post in PE: national advert closed last week
- We are also appointing an additional transition teacher as we have the largest cluster (7 primaries) in the authority, alongside St Andrew's Academy. This will be advertised across the authority
- We have a vacancy post as temporary FH Languages and this post will be advertised across the authority.
- We have a vacancy for FH Health and Wellbeing (PE and HE) and this was a national advert that closed two weeks ago.

It is my hope to have ALL positions interviewed and appointed by the end of term, and we are well on track to do this.

Finally, Mr Miller, this year supported by Mr Menzies, has just drawn up our timetable for the new session and this represents a massive piece of work and a significant landmark during a school year. My thanks to them both for the incredible hours and effort they have put into the timetable to make sure it is the best fit possible for our students (given the constraints that every school contends with such as staffing, accommodation, uptake levels etc). The new timetable commenced on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June.

## **2. School life**

Since the last parent council meeting in February ...

- The SQA exam diet started in May and is almost complete
- Miss Docherty (HE) is overseeing a planned S4 enrichment programme for S4 students who don't have exams and are therefore in school
- Our spring newsletter came out and we are on track with the summer edition. My thanks to Mrs Spence for her contribution to this.
- Our pipe band appeared on STV Live on 5<sup>th</sup> showcasing their incredible talent and they went on to great success at the pipe band championships through the Renfrewshire Schools Pipe Band, or the Johnstone Pipe Band.
- A valiant team of four staff took part in the Kilt Walk in April to raise funds for one of our house charities (who in turn supports a number of our pupils), Lisa's Gift.

Pupil events

- Well done to all involved in the Spring Concern back in March
- We had a very successful Easter school for seniors
- The senior awards ceremony took place in April and the junior awards just last week
- The S6 graduation also took place in April – led by Mr Munro, and as ever, an affectionate look at our leavers' last 6 years
- We had our first 'FLAG' lunch event organised by pupils and Mrs Barry to get all of our S1 sampling the new canteen menu which starts in 4<sup>th</sup> June, whilst eating alongside their teachers.
- S1 participated in the Renfrewshire wide clean up event and tackled our school grounds. S6 took on Shanks' Park!
- Continued sporting success at a range of Renfrewshire competitions for track and field, gymnastics, triathlon, swimming and dance.
- S3 pupils took part in a sewing challenge at Dumfries House
- A number of S3 have successfully completed 'Arcade Academy' with community learning and development staff

- Duke of Edinburgh expeditions have started up again now there is better weather
- S3 trips to Hunterston B to learn more about nuclear energy
- The new S4 embark on their work experience week, starting 4<sup>th</sup> June

#### Pupil events coming up...

- The Music department are off on their first concert tour to Belgium, later in June.
- This year's activities days are Monday and Tuesday of the final week. Off the back of a very successful first time carnival last year, we will be doing this again on Monday and have planned a range of activities for Tuesday – some in and some out of school, many free/low cost. We will be collapsing the timetable on these days and pupils will be directed to activities on what should be a terrific couple of days.
- Please note that this session, in consultation with parents involved, we decided to cancel the London trip planned for June 18. In discussion with Mrs Irving, we have decided that this will go ahead again in June 19.

#### Parent events

- Our continuing engagement letter will be published by Education Scotland tomorrow (5<sup>th</sup> June). I will host a drop-in session for parents, alongside Maureen Sneddon (Education Manager at Renfrewshire Council) on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June 6-7pm. At this I will take any questions on the letter and will also open up the draft school improvement plan for parental consultation.
- The parents in partnership project has engaged in a range of parental engagement sessions this year and there is a 'heathy eating taster session' planned for p7 and their parents tomorrow evening, prior to the P7 parents' night. To date we have 130 people planning to attend!
- S6 prom is Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> of June and in a 'first' this year, we are holding a reception in the school prior to the prom so parents can mingle and see the young people off on to the bus (and get some photographs) as a year group.
- We had the S1 parents' evening in April and the P7 parents' information evening is planned for 5<sup>th</sup> June.

### **3. School improvement agenda**

As you know, we have two key priorities this session – learning and teaching and health and wellbeing. These are progressing well and will continue to underpin everything we do next year, therefore the school improvement plan (SIP) for 18/19 will reflect this.

Our 2018/19 working time agreement for staff has been voted on and agreed by the unions and this too reflects our two priorities in terms of how staff are spending the balance of their working time.

At the May in-service day we had our first learning and teaching showcase event. Over 20 staff led workshops for their colleagues on a host of activities designed to share good practice and give others the skills and confidence to try new things in the classroom. There was a real buzz that day and overwhelmingly positive feedback from staff. We will continue with this next session.

The calendar is also being produced at the moment. The main issue this year was the timing of the S1 evening – despite us taking this to full stakeholder consultation last session (although, admittedly, p7 parents were not asked for their opinion). I will bring a note of proposed dates for reports, tracking and parents' evenings to the AGM on the 4<sup>th</sup> to gather opinions.

#### **4. Education Scotland**

My thanks to members of the pupil council who took the time to attend the ES focus group in February – your support and close working relationship with us shone through. My personal thanks to all involved.

ES have decided that they are happy with the direction of travel and the progress the school has made so have no plans to return to the school. As is standard practice in these situations, the authority will be asked to submit a progress report in one year.

Their letter to parents is published tomorrow. I will be posting this home to each family with a covering letter. You will see that the letter is overwhelmingly positive but does recognise that we still have things we are working on (which we already knew!) and that some of our work is at an early stage therefore it is difficult to measure progress yet. As I mentioned above, there will be a drop-in for parents the following week. There will also be a press release and VT clip appearing on the Renfrewshire social media platforms.

Finally, and unrelated, we are welcoming 2 visitors from Education Scotland and 2 from Scottish Government during our P7 transition visits. The local authority is in the process of being inspected with regards to the attainment challenge funding that is supporting some important aspects of our work, namely our PT Attainment (data), Mr Gilmour, our inclusion support officer Mrs McCallum, and our transition teacher, Mrs Haining. The authority know about the excellent work that is happening in our primary / secondary transition, particularly around numeracy and this is why we have been selected to showcase what we are doing. The visit is only 2 hours in a busy whole day programme for the guests.

#### **5. Pupil Equity Fund update**

As you may recall from last session, we received £110k pupil equity funding from government which came straight to the school. We consulted all stake holders and came up with what was essentially a 2 year plan. The key strands of this are:

1. Nurture base with a PT and key worker
2. An additional PT pastoral to allow us to move to a house structure and enhance universal support (smaller caseloads)
3. Appoint a PT Learning and Teaching to lead on and oversee initiatives designed to upskill staff and facilitate the sharing of good practice

This session our funding has slightly reduced to £104k. We will continue with these three areas of focus as they are, albeit at an early stage, having a positive impact in school. These will be factored into our school improvement plan for session 2018/19.

## **6. Update on building improvements**

Mrs Spence will update at the AGM on the grounds refurbishment programme.

Our next project is school signage. In February, as a result of the snow, some letters fell from the external school sign. Concerned about health and safety, I immediately made sure that the council removed the rest. However we now have no external signage and particularly due to the HUB, we feel that a prominent school sign which is visible from Beith Rd is required. Therefore Mr Johnston has been working with a local company to get a new sign organised which is attractive, durable and safe, back lit and incorporates our new branding. I appreciate that this is not a spend on core business such as textbooks, however we get a small sum each year for the council for fixtures and fittings. Moreover, it is important that we are aware of the importance of visuals and image in an increasingly competitive, corporate world.

## **7. Our new strapline**

As created by and then voted on by pupils – SUCCESS, NOTHING LESS.

Suitably ambitious. I hope you approve.