**Parent Council Meeting 19th November 2018**

**Head Teacher Report**

**Staffing**

There are a number of staffing changes to let you know about:

* Mr Miller DHT has been appointed Acting Education Manager at Renfrewshire Council and therefore both Ms Cole and Mr McKenzie are continuing in their acting up roles, DHT Iona House and FH of Science respectively.
* Mr Bryce is joining the English department on a full time permanent basis on 22nd November.
* Mr Carey retired at the October break and therefore we have a nationally advertised vacancy for a full time permanent teacher of Business and Admin (to achieve a better balance with computing / business within the faculty). It closed at the weekend.
* Mrs Robertson has been appointed the Acting FH of Social Subjects, alongside her existing responsibilities of RE and Learning and Teaching
* Mr Johnson has taken on the role of Acting PT Technical
* Mrs Butler-Robson will be going on maternity leave around the Christmas holidays and we have just appointed Mr Kennedy, a computing teacher from Renfrew High, to cover her Iona House PT Pastoral role from January onwards

We are currently running with long term absences in a number of subject areas:

* + Biology
  + Modern Languages
  + English
  + Social Subjects
  + Maths

I will discuss how we are managing this at the full PC meeting.

**School Life – Pupils**

For a detailed account of school life in Johnstone High, I’d like to take this opportunity to direct parents to the Autumn newsletter which is on the website and the school twitter feed. However, here are some of the most memorable things that have happened in school since the previous PC meeting.

In terms of fundraising, there have been three main events in school. Before the September weekend we had a non-uniform day in aid of the Renfrewshire foodbank and an impressive number of crates were collated. The Friday before October holiday saw another scheduled non-uniform day, this time in aid of our four house charities and school funds. An impressive £600 was raised. And finally, on Friday 16th November S6 sported pyjamas and organised a number of events for Children in Need raising £300 on the day. Well done to all!

Our extra-curricular programme has been drawn up and is available for pupils to choose a club. Mr Menzies is in the process of putting together an in-house data base so we can more formally track pupil achievements in and out of school, and when appropriate, target opportunities at young people in need. Our young people continue to amaze us with their talents, and a recent highlight was the Renfrewshire road race with success coming for individuals in S1 and S2. On a related point, the school show for 2019 has been announced – We Will Rock You. Alongside stalwart staff across the school, particularly in the Music department, we have a new director in Mr Smith, our Psychology NQT, who brings a wealth of experience from directing musical theatre.

This term we have had a focus with the young people on behaviour. After the October holiday, the staff behaviour monitoring group held their termly reward ceremonies for pupils who have no more than one demerit (net) for the previous term. This was well attended by all year groups and those who were there responded very positively to the fun and games, certificates, sweeties, golden tickets and vouchers available for the lucky few whose names were drawn.

However, across the school staff at all levels have noticed a deterioration in respect and general behaviour both in and out of the classroom. We are committed to ensuring our school is a safe, happy and productive environment for our pupils to learn in and for our staff to teach in. After discussion with the SMT and Principal Teacher group, we decided a ‘back to basics’ approach to tackle the matter. Pupils S1-4 have all met with me and the rest of the SMT at assembly to clarify our expectations, with respect being the main focus. The SMT have also been engaged in ‘every lesson every day’ where we go round every class in the school each period, checking in and supporting staff to ensure pupils are getting on with the job of learning. At time of writing, this has been well received and pupils are very clear about our expectations of them.

Related to the above point, the PTs of Pastoral Support and their Heads of House and junior leaders have worked hard 12-16th November for Anti-Bullying week. A range of workshops have been put on in the school by outside providers, including an insert on Show Racism the Red Card. The theme of this year’s Anti-Bullying week, nationally, has been #chooserespect, which has been timely given the assemblies that I delivered on Tuesday 13th. These assemblies finished off with Miss Mullaney from Social Subjects speaking to the pupils on her work on Rights Respecting Schools and a strong emphasis was put on our young people getting involved and taking ownership over creating the culture and ethos that they want in their school.

Mrs Carlin continues to support a number of our pupils, especially seniors, to attend a number of training and employability events such as construction and training taster sessions and females into STEM. She has worked intensively with our S5 Christmas leavers so that none leave without a viable option. She is also placing a range of apprenticeship events on the school twitter feed.

Finally, one of the most significant events that happened this term was the unveiling of the war memorial on 9th November 2018 by Peter Macleod, Director of Children’s Services. I have included the article that was release to the press at the end of this HT report.

**School life – Parents**

We had Open Evening for prospective S1 parents on 25th October and had overwhelmingly positive feedback from the young people and their parents through the evaluation forms at the end of the evening. My hope is that Open Evening, alongside the primary roadshow events, will reassure primary seven pupils and their parents that JHS is the right choice for them. My thanks to all members of the parent council that supported us throughout this process.

Parents’ evenings have taken place for S4 on 11th October, S5/6 is scheduled for 21st November and S3 is 5th December. S1 and S2 have theirs after Christmas. Again, evaluations are typically very positive. *(Please note that the vast majority of ‘negative comments’ at parents’ evenings are oriented towards issues with appointments and the school building and I am happy to discuss these with any parent who wishes to meet with me.)*

Miss Docherty continues to work with groups of S1 and S2 parents in the Parents in Partnership programme. Fairly informal, this involved groups of parents getting taster sessions on school life and then a session on a topic of interest to them, such as online safety for teens. There is more detail on this in the newsletter.

**School Improvement Agenda**

At a school level, we continue to evaluate our work and to make on-going improvements wherever we can. Each session, every department engages in rounds of self evaluation using Education Scotland’s ‘How Good is Our School?’ audit tool, and this helps to keep us reflective and ‘on our toes’.

We also have department reviews each session, and in 2018/19 we have completed a dept review of Technical. This involved the SMT visiting lessons, speaking to the staff and focus groups of pupils, and having a very close look at the results and improvement plan of the department. This is a thorough-going review and is modelled on the approach taken by Education Scotland during inspections. The Technical department were supportive and welcoming and together we have agreed their strengths and areas for development. Mr Johnston has recently been appointed acting PT and is relishing the task of driving the department on this session. The next scheduled departmental closer look is Art in November.

Renfrewshire Council also ensures that we are evaluating our work at a whole school level. On 12th November Gordon McKinlay, Head of Service, and Maureen Sneddon, our Education Manager, came into school to meet with the SMT, groups of staff and pupils to discuss attainment and achievement. This meeting pulls heavily on our Insight position, post SQA results. Both Gordon and Maureen were very heartened by the quality of our young people and staff and commented that we are a school that knows itself well, making improvements against our own previous performance year on year. I can give the PC fuller briefing on this at the meeting.

Finally, all PTs meet with myself and members of the SMT at this time of year to review their departmental performance in Insight and to draw up bespoke individual action plans based on the data within Insight. This ensures that departments are continually improving and working on their development areas.

**Updates on building improvement**

As I mentioned at the previous HT report, the gable end signage is now in place and will come into its own in the dark months as it is illuminated. I’m sure you will agree with me that it presents a much better image of JHS to the local community. My thanks to Mr Johnston for his efforts in making this happen, and for managing my high expectations within a challenging budget!

The grounds project continues to gain momentum and the school is already benefitting from the tidy up, lick of paint for the office block, and the monoblocking in the courtyard. We are very much looking forward to the next stage when the furniture arrives. Again, thanks to all of those involved particularly Diane Spence and Mick Fulton.

**Press**

We have had two press photo shoots in a week this month in JHS! The first was for the war memorial (article below) and the second for promotional shots for McTaggart and Meikle who gifted us their labour and materials as a part of the Parent Council grounds refurb project. A fuller piece of work for the press will be out together when the work is completed.

War Memorial - Paisley Gazette Article:

A JOHNSTONE school is now home to a special tribute to former pupils who lost their lives in the First World War.

As part of events to mark the 100th anniversary of the Armistice, pupils and staff at Johnstone High unveiled a commemorative plaque in honour of those who made the ultimate sacrifice to promote freedom.

The names of 45 former pupils who perished in the ‘Great War’ have been etched on the copper plaque, which was created with input from the school’s current intake.

A special service to remember the fallen took place at the school, with senior pupils reading the names of those who died in the conflict between 1914 and 1918.

An original plaque which honoured the school’s war heroes was destroyed by fire at the previous building in Ludovic Square.

However, depute headteacher Graham Munro carried out extensive research to identify those who were lost.

He said: “I researched the names of former pupils who had died after the local business community, led by Councillor John Hood, raised money to get a memorial with all the pupils named on it.

“I used historical and military websites and cross-referenced names with the online census. I also spoke with local people.

“We now get our pupils to read out the names of the fallen at our Remembrance service every year. They can be shocked when we tell them that some of the soldiers died when they were younger than them.”

Andrew Sheppard, who is Johnstone High’s head of art and has an interest in military history, designed the war memorial, helped by pupils.

He said: “I worked with several year groups on the plaque. The centrepiece is a lion sleeping in a field of poppies and was based on a drawing by one of our former pupils which I then turned into etched copper work.

“There are 12 pupil pieces around each side on smaller copper plates and each is the pupil’s own response to the idea of commemoration and sacrifice.”

Anyone who had a relative who attended Johnstone High before being killed in the First World War is asked to call the school on 01505 322173, so they can be added to the memorial.