

**Head Teacher Update**

**22nd January 2021**

Dear Parent / Carer,

We are now at the end of week two of remote learning. With the announcement from the First Minister on Monday 18th, we know that the current lockdown restrictions will be with us for some time to come, and certainly to Mid-February. Our February holiday is Monday 8th and Tuesday 9th February, with an in-service day for staff on Wednesday 10th. Pupils resume learning on Thursday 11th, whether that is remotely or in school via a keyworker place.

As I mentioned in my update last week, it is my intention to keep you up to date on school life over this second lockdown. Each week the topics may change, and if there is anything in particular you would like me to cover in these updates, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

**Surveys**

Microsoft Teams surveys are proving to be a brilliant way for us to quickly gather information from pupils and parents – so apologies if you feel we are overdoing these at the moment!

* Last week we had a survey out to parents on IT access, passwords and stationery.
* This week we had a survey out to pupils on remote learning; we also sent out ‘dummy run’ options forms to S3-5 via MS surveys.
* Next week (week beginning 25th January) we will be surveying parents again across a range of areas. This is to make sure we are providing the best service we can.

If at any time you feel there is something we could be getting better, please call the office on 0300 300 1331 and a message will go to the most appropriate person. Please give us the opportunity to fix things when they go wrong.

**IT Access**

From the previous survey on IT we were able to find out who needed extra help. We are working our way through these requests, and liaising with Renfrewshire Council to see how we can best support families. Glow and Satchel One password issues should be sorted; if not please contact the school or let us know through the parent survey coming out next week.

**Remote learning and monitoring engagement**

We are getting positive feedback from parents and pupils that the interactive remote learning offer during lockdown two is hitting the right note. My thanks to parents who have been in touch to let us know.

The pupil survey has closed and is giving us good quality information from S1-6 and spans all subject areas. From this, we are pulling out what remote teaching methods young people like best, and what they are not so keen on. We will share this with staff. We also asked the pupils to tell us how things are going across the curricular areas. This too will be shared with departments so they can tailor their offer in response to what the pupils are saying.

Please remember that your child can ‘check-in’ with their pastoral teacher through PSE lessons each week. This is in addition to the check-ins with subject teachers each day. Pupils are actively encouraged to seek help and support from their teachers – we are here to help them.

Parents will get the opportunity to share their views on remote learning in the survey next week. Our experience from lockdown one is that it is hard to get the balance right for everyone, as every child and family circumstances are unique. Therefore, you will have the opportunity in the survey to indicate if you or your child are needing extra support at the moment. This could be around remote learning or any aspect of wellbeing / mental health.

**Support for parents**

Please remember to visit our remote learning page on the school website as this is where we are housing resources available to pupils and parents. This week we have added a booklet to support parents (and pupils) with remote learning, along with some hints and tips on how to navigate lockdown life with teenagers (granted, not the easiest of tasks!):

<http://www.johnstonehigh.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Parent-and-pupil-remote-learning-guide.docx>

**Options for session 2021/22**

The launch of the ‘dummy run’ process for pupils in S3-S5 for session 2021/22 began this week with text messages being sent out to all parents and carers of pupils in these year groups. These messages provided information about the dummy run and why it is an important part of the options process at Johnstone High School.

A link to the presentation is below:

<https://www.johnstonehigh.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Dummy-Run-Jan-2021-presentation.pptx>

Further text messages gave links to the dummy run survey for pupils in S3-S5.

In addition to this key information, I am pleased to inform you about our new YouTube channel. This channel has videos from each department about the courses on offer next session across the school in order that pupils and parents are well informed when the options choice process begins. The link to our YouTube channel is below:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC95T49m0tJRZn7LUY_YMwHg>

The next stage of the options process will be when the options form is created, followed by the individual pupil interviews. Due to the current lockdown restrictions and because we are awaiting on information from SQA on their certification model, we are unsure exactly when these interviews will take place, but we hope to have the process completed sometime in March. We will keep you informed as we progress.

**SQA**

We continue to await SQA guidance on their arrangements for the alternative certification model for this session. As soon as we know, we will pass this on to you. I will emphasise what I said last week; young people should focus on the learning and teaching and make sure they are actively engaging with their classes.

**Reports**

Despite working remotely, we are endeavoring to keep to the same reporting schedule. S5/6 can expect reports to be posted home around the first week in February. S4 will be the week after.

The reporting system for pupils in S1-3 is slightly different and we are told that the Council’s new ‘parent portal’ allows us to electronically upload S1-3 reports directly to parents via the portal. Although the S1-3 reports are not imminent, I would encourage parents to go on to the Council website and sign up for ‘parent portal’.

**Keeping in touch**

This week Jean McFarlane, chair of the parent council, has kindly sent out the 2022/23 school holiday consultation paper to members of the parent council. My thanks to Jean for this.

Finally, I will repeat something from last week’s update. If you need us, please phone us on 0300 300 1331. This might be about remote learning, IT, needing stationary, discreet support for a family matter (e.g. financial hardship in these tough times), or you may be worried about your child’s mental health or wellbeing. Whatever it is, we are here to help. PT Pastoral will be your first point of contact; however, the office staff will always endeavor to get you through to the most appropriate person. There is also the school enquiries email.

johnstonehighenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk

With best wishes to you and your family,



Lynne Hollywood

Head Teacher