

**Head Teacher Update**

**5TH February 2021**

Dear Parent / Carer,

I hope that you have had a good week and that, like school staff, you are very much looking forward to a long weekend without the remote learning!

Here are the main news items for this week:

**Holiday reminder**

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.

Therefore there will be no remote learning on:

Monday 8th

Tuesday 9th

Wednesday 10th

**FM Announcement**

On Tuesday this week the First Minister outlined proposed plans for a phased reopening of schools for some groups of young people in the coming weeks. We are working with Renfrewshire Council and the other secondary schools on plans from the 22nd February to invite those senior phase pupils who require to be in school to complete practical elements of their SQA courses. This will be on a part time, limited basis. More information will come to you prior to the 22nd.

You may also have picked up from the FM announcement that home testing kits will soon be made available to all S4-6 pupils. After the February holiday, we will be in touch with arrangements about this, including collection details and how to administer the tests at home. Please note that home testing is voluntary and confidential, but I would encourage pupils to take part as it is another important way that we can keep our families and our community safe.

**Monitoring engagement**

We have spent the past two weeks refining our system for monitoring pupil engagement. Thanks for your patience as we worked to get our system right for teachers, the office staff, parents and pupils.

From this point onwards, parents can expect the following on a weekly basis:-

S1-3 If your child is not engaging\*, you will get one text home telling you that

your child is not engaging in one or more subjects. In the first instance, please discuss this with your child as they will have a good idea about what subjects the text is referring to.

**If you contact the school office, they will be able to tell you the subjects that have alerted a concern.**

We made the decision not to text you about every separate subject as the pupils have a lot of subjects in S1-3 so this may, in some instances, be overwhelming for parents.

S4-6 If your child is not engaging\* you will receive a text telling you about this and it will also tell you the subject.

You might get more than one text if the non-engagement is in more than one subject area.

We decided to send subject specific separate texts home in the senior phase as the pupils study fewer subjects in S4-6, plus these are SQA certificated courses.

Non-engagement\* = not handing in, or not completing tasks set.

**Education Scotland Report**

On 29th January Education Scotland published a report on remote learning. It was drawn up after 5% of Scottish schools were contacted by inspectors, of which Johnstone High was one. I am delighted to report that we were included as a good practice example for our work in issuing home economics cooking packs to S1 families. Well done to Miss Docherty and all those who supported this parents in partnership project.

**Parent survey**

Our parent survey closed on Friday 29th January and we received 358 responses. We have collated the results, and this is being issued to parents today.

**Reporting**

We are continuing with our reporting schedule in order to give parents and carers the essential feedback you need on your child’s learning.

You may recall that there will be an extra report this session, as due to Covid we are unable to provide parents’ evenings this year.

* S5/6 reports have been posted home this week
* S4 reports are in the process of being printed and packaged for posting
* Staff are now working on S2 (tracking) and S1 (comments) reports and these are due out February and March respectively. We have adapted our reporting guidance to staff so that these reports reference remote learning.

**Children and Young People’s Mental Health Week**

Miss Wilson, supported by Miss McFadden and Miss Ashmole (amongst others) have sent out a lot of information this week to pupils, staff and parents on Children and Young People’s Mental Health Week. There have been daily activities for young people and staff ranging from bedtime routines to mindfulness walks. We also have a short video under construction which will tell our pupils how much we miss them (coming soon).

**SQA update**

On Wednesday it is an in-service day for staff across Renfrewshire. All secondary schools are prioritising SQA development. This means getting together in subject teams (sometimes across authority subject teams) to moderate pupil assessment, plan robust and valid assessments for when the pupils return, and look at recently updated SQA guidance on ‘understanding standards’. This work is designed to support our professional judgments in May/June and ensure that an ‘A’ in Johnstone is as robust and valid as an ‘A’ grade in any other high school.

**Pupil Wellbeing – insert from Mrs O’Malley DHT**

The pastoral team at Johnstone High School are keen to offer as much support to our young people as they can. They are currently in the process of contacting all families in their caseload to check in and offer support if required. This is a very challenging time and we are aware that it is impacting on everyone in different ways. Lockdown and remote learning have created difficulties and challenges for some young people that they previously didn’t have. We are keen to support with early intervention wherever possible.

Our school counselling service is still taking referrals and supporting young people during this time by telephone or online. **Parents can make a direct referral** via their website <https://www.exchange-counselling.com/>  or alternatively you can contact your child’s pastoral teacher who can make the referral for you.

The contact details for the pastoral team are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **House Group** | **Pastoral Support Teacher** | |
| ARRAN | Mr Rainey **(S1 – S5)**  [daniel.rainey@renfrewshire.school](mailto:daniel.rainey@renfrewshire.school) | Miss Wilkie **(S6 ALL HOUSE GROUPS)**  [eileen.wilkie@renfrewshire.school](mailto:eileen.wilkie@renfrewshire.school) |
| IONA | Mrs Butler-Robson **(S1 – S5)**  [lauren.butlerrobson@renfrewshire.school](mailto:lauren.butlerrobson@renfrewshire.school) |
| MULL | Mrs Wilson **(S1 – S5)**  [claire.wilson@renfrewshire.school](mailto:claire.wilson@renfrewshire.school) |
| SKYE | Mr Kennedy **(S1 – S5)**  [liam.kennedy@renfrewshire.school](mailto:liam.kennedy@renfrewshire.school) |

**Keeping in touch**

Please remember that we are here to help.

PT Pastoral (see above) 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](mailto:johnstonehighenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

With best wishes to you and your family,



Lynne Hollywood

Head Teacher