**Head teacher weekly update**

**Friday 23rd April**

Dear Parent / Carer,

We have successfully navigated our first week back of the full time return to school. It has been lovely to see all of our young people back in the school building, meeting their friends and getting on with ‘in person’ learning and teaching 33 periods per week. This is particularly important for senior pupils studying for SQA qualifications and it was a great relief to welcome them back.

Before I move onto the news updates, I would like to ask for parental support across a range of areas that have come up this week.

* **Face coverings:** a growing number of pupils are coming into school without a mask, and many need regular and robust reminders from staff to keep their masks on in classes/corridors. This is a non-negotiable health and safety measure to keep your children and our staff safe when in our building. Thank you in advance for speaking to your child about this.
* **Litter:** I have received several complaints from local residents about the volume of litter dropped by JHS pupils around the local area and at the Spateston and Howwood Rd shops. This is never socially acceptable and is distressing the local residents who have spent a lot of time over lockdown looking after the area. Again, please reinforce the importance of responsible behaviour in the community with your child. Thank you.

(Pupil litter picks will be resuming soon!)

* **Latecoming:** over this week we have noticed high numbers of pupils late in the morning. Each period one, pupils who are late for school are registered at reception and given a late slip, along with advice about the importance of punctuality in school and in the workplace.
* **Car access:** parents dropping pupils off by car are asked to remain at the bottom of the hill for health and safety reasons. Thank you.

Here is the news for week 19 April – 23 April:

1. **Assessment period three**

You may recall from the letter Ms Cole DHT sent out at the end of March that we are now in the third assessment period for S4-6 in order to gather evidence for SQA grades. We have not set out a formal assessment calendar/timetable for this as we are keen that assessments take place when the teacher and pupils feel they are ready to give of their best.

1. **Raising attainment booster sessions (RABS)**

Raising attainment booster sessions (RABS) for S4-6 start again on Monday 26th April. Pupils can now sign up for RABS through their PSE MS teams page. The RABS timetable is on the website and paper copies were issued to pupils on Friday 23rd April. Please discuss this with your child and encourage them to sign up for these vital sessions to support their SQA grades.

Link for sign-up:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKZDyWunnYCZOvqkY6zq2_DdURTRaQ0s3M1VLQldOQzk3TTJaQUZPMEYxMy4u>

1. **Options update**

Mr Menzies is overseeing the process this session and we have now completed all options for the current S2-S5. Mr Menzies now takes this information to create the timetable for session 2021/22.

1. **Parent Council**

I spoke with the chair of the parent council this morning to update her on the return to school. The next meeting of the parent council is the AGM and the date has changed to: **Monday 17th May, 7pm, online.**

1. **S6 / leavers update**

Myself and Mr Munro, DHT met with S6 captains on Thursday 22nd April.

We discussed a number of agenda points:

1. **Milling area**

I have made the decision that from Monday 26th April the milling area is no longer available to S6 at interval and lunchtime for health and safety (covid) reasons. JHS needs to take appropriate measures to minimise risk as we do not want our learners testing positive or having to self-isolate, especially as they are in the middle of assessments. We have other areas in the school they can go into that are supervised and better ventilated.

1. **Leaving school**

Pupils have been reminded that they cannot officially leave school until they get a leavers form signed. This year the focus will be on teachers signing off that all SQA assessments are complete. As seniors have assessments at all different times throughout May and June, there can be no ‘official’ leaving day or final week this year.

1. **End of term**

Sadly, due to ongoing covid restrictions (such as limitations around trips, visitors into school, evening events, and ‘large gatherings’ ) we are unable to run the traditional events that would normally take place for seniors, such as prom or Lapwing Lodge. However, we are planning to run a graduation event on the afternoon of Wednesday 23rd June, and more information will follow. Pupils will attend in person and it will be live streamed for parents and family. We also have plans for a virtual senior awards ceremony in early September.

1. **Yearbook**

Mr Munro has met with the pupils to ensure that they have the appropriate support and guidance to organise the class of 2021 yearbook.

With best wishes to you and your family,



Lynne Hollywood

Head Teacher