

**Parent Council Meeting 6th September 2021**

**HT Update**

**Staffing update**

At the start of the session, we welcomed several new staff to the school:

**Temporary posts:**

Fern Wilson Biology

Rose Ashmole PE and LS

Lauren McGinley History

Calum McInnes Maths

Nicole Meredith Chemistry

Eileen Wilkie DYW officer

Margaret McLaughlan English 0.6

**Promotions**

Kaitlin Docherty PT Pastoral (IONA)

Katrina Price PT Modern Languages

Lesley MacLeod PT English

Tracy McKay Acting PT Maths

**Newly qualified staff:**

Alessia Toti Art

Sophie Scott Biology

Aileen Graham Business Education

Caitlin McColl Chemistry

Corrina Cola English

Julia Falconer Modern Studies

Sophie McCahill PE

Jack Forsyth PE

Jennifer Fagan RE

We also said farewell to

Ms Butler Robson (moving school to nearer home),

Dr Costello (moving school),

Mrs Colford,

Miss Wilkie moved post within JHS,

Our NQT staff, most of whom have found employment.

**School roll**

We welcomed just under 150 S1 pupils to the school in August and our S6 did a great job looking after them for the first week. The plan is that the S6 buddies will be familiar faces and will help S1 in classes throughout the year.

The school roll has taken a dip this year as S1 is a ‘low birth year’ (i.e. there were fewer pupils in P7 in the cluster primaries) and our S6 is also, historically, a smaller year group. Our roll is predicted to increase next session. However, it is interesting to note that we received a large number of placing requests S2-6 at the start of term, some from Renfrewshire and some beyond.

**School Improvement**

The draft school improvement plan is complete, and I would very much welcome parent comments/views.

We were visited by Head of Service Julie Calder on 2nd September. Julie is now our link HoS and we enjoyed having an ‘in-person’ visitor to the school. Julie went for a tour and met the SMT. She was complimentary of the school and our wonderful pupils.

**SQA Update**

We successfully navigated our way through the alternative certification model and issued pupils with their grades on the last week of term. In terms of appeals, we were unsure about numbers, but I am pleased to report that appeals have not been an issue in JHS. We hope our young people are happy with their results and I am really proud of all their efforts during extremely trying circumstances.

At the moment, exams are scheduled to take place. However, it remains prudent for us to gather as much attainment evidence as we can throughout the year. Also, our seniors need significant exam practise before the main event. Therefore, we are planning on an assessment window in October, prelims in December, and depts will have another opportunity to assess, if appropriate, in March. We realise there is a fine balance to be had between the over assessment of pupils and sensible preparedness - recent years have taught us that it is helpful to be ready for whatever events come our way! As ever, we will keep you posted.

**Covid Update**

I wrote to parents twice over summer and one of those communications was dedicated to covid. We have been advised not to change our in-school mitigations until the government reviews the situation at some point in September. It is my hope is that this is when we will be able to pull back from

- staggered lunches

- year group doors

- seating in rows rather than groups

- face coverings

However, we await the guidance.

In the meantime, the most obvious change has been the removal of track and trace from schools. When we are aware of a positive case, we now send a text notification to parents that takes you to a NHS letter on the council website. This notification is valid for 10 working days. This is the new ‘warn and inform’ system.

**Calendar update**

I hope to have this with you soon. The staff planner is ready; for the parent version I am waiting on final notification from the council about the queen’s jubilee holiday. We have scheduled parents’ evenings to take place, although I am unsure if, in reality, these will go ahead in person. If they don’t, I would be interested in hearing your views on a worthwhile alternative. Last year we sent our extra full reports, however this was extremely challenging for the staff.

**Awards**

We will be going ahead with the senior awards ceremony for session 2020/21 on Thursday 23rd September. This will be virtual, as sadly we still cannot have over 50 people in a room.

**Timetable update**

Mr Menzies has carried out all renegotiations and as far as we are aware, all timetables are currently ‘sorted’. Consortia arrangements are in place and pupils who attend college have also started their classes at the Paisley campus.

**Project leaders**

We have recently appointed a number of staff to the role of ‘project leader’ to take forward a range of areas within the school. These include

Raising attainment – broad general education specific

Senior phase specific

Data analysis

Wider achievement - celebrating achievement and extra-curricular programme

Alternative curricular pathways using the SCQF framework

Pupil leadership - Captains, Saltire award, pupil council

This is in addition to our current project leaders within learning and teaching, employability and hearty lives (some of these are council funded).

**Pupil Equity Funding**

This session all schools had a 15% increase in PEF funding in recognition of the current challenges. We have used PEF funding to continue our work within nurturing approaches across the school, and to continue our nurture base (the Thrive Hive). We have also used the increased amount to fund the appointment of the project leaders detailed above. It is our hope that these roles will impact positively on pupils across the school from S1-6, and as you can see, the weighting is very much towards raising attainment. Any remaining PEF funds will be channelled towards supported study and supporting individual young people, as required, with ‘the cost of the school day’.