**Head teacher weekly update**

**Friday 17th December**

Dear Parent / Carer,

Apologies for not sending an update last week, however I have sent two letters home in the last week regarding covid and lateral flow testing, and I don’t want to fill your text in-box with too many communications from school!

Here is the news for the last week in school:

1. **Covid update**

You will, no doubt, have seen the coverage about the omicron variant in the media and the concerns around its transmissibility leading to a surge of new cases. We will continue to do everything we can to keep school as safe as possible.

All pupils received an online lesson from me on Monday to emphasise that we need them to keep following the measures. These include:

* Wearing their face mask
* Coming in their year group door (to sustain bubbles) and hand sanitizing
* Wiping down their seat / desk
* Following the one-way system
* Bringing their own resources and minimizing sharing
* Staying 2m back from teaching staff

The pupils, on the whole, have been wonderful with this. I am amazed at how they have adapted to these rules and it’s just become part of school life. However, we need them to keep going – even though we are all tired and a bit jaded.

From a school point of view, other measures already in place include:

* Staggered breaks and lunches
* Two covid-day cleaners in school who ensure touch surfaces are regularly cleaned
* Ventilation by opening doors and windows
* Pupils sit in rows rather than groups
* We minimise mixing of bubbles as much as possible
* No gatherings of pupils over 50 (except social times)
* Limits on visitors to the school – only if necessary and by appointment only

Thank you and your child for your ongoing commitment to these measures and helping to keep us all safe in school.

1. **Lateral flow testing programme**

I have already written to parents and carers recently to encourage the use of lateral flow testing at home, and to let you know that pupils no longer need a consent form. This means that pupils can more easily pick up a batch of kits to take home. We have placed kits in every department in the school, at reception, and our classroom assistant team will also be touring classes with ‘the trolley’ (!).

We are very keen that pupils and staff test and record their results regularly and especially before returning to school in January.

Thanks for your help and support in this regard.

1. **Updating your details**

As we approach the end of a term, it would be helpful for parents and carers to check the contact information that we hold for you is correct. This can be accessed via parent portal (please check the Renfrewshire Council website for more details).

However, if you know that your address or phone number has recently changed, please phone our office team on 0300 300 1331 to update us.

1. **S1 tracking**

S1 tracking went home today.

1. **Panto trip**

Well done to the 128 young people (mainly S1) and 14 staff who went to the King’s Theatre on Wednesday to see Cinderella. A brilliant time was had by all!

Special thanks to all the staff who helped organise and support this trip.

1. **Christmas lunch**

Thank you to Karen and her catering team for providing Christmas lunch on Thursday this week. Steak pie / turkey (or veggie option) went down very well, however we can safely say that JHS pupils DO NOT like brussel sprouts!

1. **Staffing news**

Congratulations to Mrs McKay who was appointed as permanent PT Maths this week. We are absolutely delighted and wish her all the very best in her post.

1. **Options information ‘evening’**

On 14th December Mr Menzies sent out information about in the place of an ‘in-person’ options information evening. There are a range of presentations that parents/carers and pupils can view at a time that suits you.

If you have any remaining questions, please get in touch with your child’s pastoral teacher.

1. **Prelims**

Prelims are just about complete, with only a few exams left for Monday and Tuesday of the final week.

The pupils were OUTSTANDING in their approach to prelims and in their behaviour and conduct throughout. I couldn’t be prouder of them. This will also give them a huge boost as they now have a formal exam experience under their belt as a solid preparation for the exam diet in May.

1. **Christmas in school**

**Monday 20th December:**

Christmas Market for staff and pupils

(stalls selling a range of craft type items from young enterprise / travel and tourism / nurture classes; in the hall over both junior and senior lunchbreaks)

**Wednesday 22nd December:**

Non uniform day and we close for Christmas hols at 2.30pm

**Thursday 6th January 2022:**

School reopens at 8.45am.

With very best wishes to you and your family,



Lynne Hollywood

Head Teacher