**Head teacher weekly update**

**Friday 21st January 2022**

Dear Parent / Carer,

Here is the news for the last week in school:

1. **Covid update**

Staff and pupil absence seems to have settled considerably since the beginning of term, my thanks to everyone for their patience when we have had to cover classes.

Please remember that we are asking all members of the school community to regularly test using the lateral flow kits and record the results via the online portal. Pupils no longer need to fill out a consent form for this. Support staff go around the classes twice per week to issue kits to those who request them. At all other times pupils can go to reception to collect kits.

1. **Options update**

This week all pupils in S3, S4 and S5 came off timetable for one day to experience curricular taster sessions, prior to the options process kicking off over the next few weeks. We are keen that pupils experience these ‘new’ SQA courses prior to seeing them on options forms, as we are aware that they won’t have studied them in the broad general education (BGE, S1-3). New SQA courses on offer in our senior phase, subject to uptake, are…

Criminology Customer Service Sports development

Scottish Studies Leadership Jewellery and silversmithing

Construction Animation Travel and tourism

Fashion and textiles Creative industries Science and Technology

Photography Psychology

Next week the pupils will be doing the ‘dummy run’ – this is when we ask them what courses they are thinking of, but it is NOT binding in anyway – this then allows Mr Menzies to draw up options forms that are a ‘best fit’, based on what the pupils are telling us.

For more information on all aspects of the options process, please visit the 2022/23 OPTIONS PROCESS tab which can be found in both the pupil and parent areas of the school website.

1. **Senior Phase information**

On Monday 17th January at 4pm Renfrewshire Council launched its brand-new information portal for pupils and parents, the Senior Phase Pathways Offer 2021-22. This covers all aspects of S4-6: college, consortia, foundation apprenticeships, jobs and the local labour market, my future pathway (training opportunities), and work placements.

This can be found at the top of our twitter page.

1. **S6 update**

I have been meeting S6 regularly to discuss important issues for the year group.

Their prom is booked for 7th June at the Glynhill Hotel.

Hoodies were issued yesterday.

Plans are underway for their final week in school (after Easter – details to follow!).

The year group have also asked for a dedicated study zone rather than being allocated to a range of teachers over the day, whenever they have a study period. This was sorted out this week, and I believe the pupils (and staff – Miss Vernal and Miss Semple in particular) have been hard at work converting a science lab into a welcoming learning space.

1. **Pupil Council**

This week I met with the S4 pupil council, and the other year groups will be meeting with their linked captains and DHTs over the next two weeks.

On Monday 24th January we are having two pupil council focus group meetings, with reps from across all years, to discuss

1. The canteen – Karen, our canteen manager, will be in attendance to hear pupil questions and comments on the food provision.
2. Toilets – myself and Mrs O’Malley will be discussing this important school issue with pupils.
3. **Visits from HQ staff**

This week Director of Children’s Services, Steven Quinn, visited the school.

Steven met with a group of teaching staff and heard from them what it’s like in schools at the moment. Topics discussed included covid restrictions, learning and teaching, and SQA assessment and exams. Steven was impressed with the commitment and enthusiasm of our teachers and their unwavering support of our young people.

Later in the week, Education Manager Mairi Thomas, and Health and Wellbeing Development Officer Fiona Hewitt, came into school to meet with a group of S6 pupils who have been through the ‘mentors in violence prevention’ training. Mairi and Fiona came in to speak to pupils directly about how schools can best support young people by capturing their views and opinions. I have heard our pupils were ‘outstanding’ with Mairi and Fiona, demonstrating high levels of maturity and a depth of understanding about the issues facing young people. I am really proud of them.

1. **Vaccinations**

On Tuesday 25th January the NHS team are coming into school in to carry out DTP/Men ACWY immunisations with all of S3, S4 and ‘catch up’ S5/6.

1. **Parents’ Evenings**

The S3 parents’ evening will take place, online, on Tuesday 25th January 2022, 4.30pm – 7pm. Details have already been sent out to parents.

The S2 parents’ evening will take place, online, on Tuesday 8th February 2022, 4.30 – 7pm. Information will come out to S2 parents soon.

1. **Forthcoming dates for your diary**

Reports: S2 Reports will be issued w/b 24th Jan

                S4/5/6 Reports will be issued w/b 31st Jan

S2 parents’ evening 8th February

Non-uniform day 11th February

SCHOOL CLOSED 14th, 15th February

SCHOOL INSERVICE (CLOSED TO PUPILS) 16th February

Parent council 21st February

Dates relating to senior pupils around exam/study leave, graduation etc., will be agreed in consultation with Renfrewshire Council and published in due course.

With very best wishes to you and your family,



Lynne Hollywood

Head Teacher