**Head teacher weekly update**

**Friday 11th February 2022**

Dear Parent / Carer,

Here is all our news for week ending Friday 11th February:

1. **School closed**

I wrote to parents and carers last week (and a paper copy went in school bags on Monday 7th Feb) with dates for the rest of the school session. This covered holiday dates and study leave/S6 arrangements.

School is closed to pupils on: **Monday 14th** / **Tuesday 15th** / **Wednesday 16th Feb.**

1. **Retiral**

Miss Purves, from our Home Economics department, has informed me that she is retiring. Miss Purves is a Johnstone High School institution and has been here since 1993. She will be hugely missed by staff and pupils alike as she is an extremely popular colleague and is much loved by the pupils, especially those in her senior hospitality and cake classes.

We wish Miss Purves all the very best for a long and happy retirement and I know she is keen to pop back into school to say goodbye to the pupils.

1. **The easing of covid restrictions**

I am delighted to let parents know that with effect from Thursday 17th February we are now allowed to reduce some covid restrictions in school. The Scottish Government has eased rules around keeping ‘bubbles’ (classes / year groups) separate which allows us to do the following:

* **Doors** – we are moving from year group doors to house doors. Pupils will be greeted by house teams and support staff to hand sanitise twice per day – first thing in the morning (8.45am) and then again at the end of lunchtime.

**IONA – Music door**

**MULL – Dance studio door**

**ARRAN – Canteen door**

**SKYE – Main door**

* **Staggered breaks and lunches** are going! We are reverting back to standard intervals (10.30 – 10.45am) and lunches (1.15 – 2pm M/T/T and 12.25 – 1.10pm W/F). We know this will increase pressure on the canteen and on social spaces so have decided to allow S5/6 to have the milling area as an extra social space, and we have set queues for juniors / seniors in the canteen.
* **Seating –** staff can now decide if they wish to move their class seating back into groups rather than rows.

(Pupils were informed about all of the above in their p2 lesson today.)

From Monday 28th February, the restrictions are easing again and there will be no need for staff or pupils to wear a face mask in class, although we still need to wear them in the corridors and social spaces. Apparently, the rules on assemblies will also be lifted. When I get more details, I will pass these on to you.

1. **S2 parents’ evening**

This took place, online, on the evening of Tuesday 8th February. As with previous sessions, the next day we received positive feedback from parents about how easy they found the online system.

The next virtual parents’ evening will be S1 in March. Thereafter we will survey parents and staff to see if there is a desire to move over to the virtual version on a permanent basis, or revert back to face-to-face meetings when the guidance allows this.

1. **S1 Quiz Fundraiser**

This afternoon the S5 heads of house are running a quiz for S1 pupils in the hall. (Numbers in the hall are limited to 50 to make sure we stay within covid rules, so they are running the event twice!). Snacks and juice will also be provided and the S5 heads of house have decided the funds raised are going to Lisa’s Gift, a local charity that supports vulnerable Renfrewshire children.

1. **S6 Candygrams**

To tie in with Valentine’s Day, S6 have been selling chocolate roses all week to raise funds for their prom/yearbook. These will be delivered across classes later today.

1. **Parent Council**

The next parent council meeting will be on the 21st February. More information will come out in due course. Please note that all PC agendas and minutes of meetings can be found on the school website.

1. **Children’s Mental Health Week 7-11 February**

My thanks to Miss Ashmole who has organised a week-long programme of classroom inserts and other health related activities for both pupils and staff. Funds raised from our non-uniform day on the 11th will support mental health charities.

1. **February is LGBT History Month and Purple Friday is 25th February**

You may be aware that Johnstone High School has achieved silver level LGBT charter status and we are actively working towards gold. This is because we want everyone – pupils, parents, staff and visitors – to feel valued and that they belong within our school community.

Part of this is that we acknowledge and celebrate various national Pride events the calendar. Over this month there will be awareness raising about LGBT History and pupils can wear something purple – in addition to their school uniform – on Friday 25th to show their support.

I hope you have a brilliant half term break, and we look forward to welcoming the young people back to school at 8.45am on Thursday 17th February at the appropriate house group door.



Lynne Hollywood

Head Teacher