



Head Teacher Update

Monday 23rd January 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

Happy New Year, and welcome to my first HT update of 2023. We've been very busy in school since we resumed on Thursday 5th January, and here is a flavour of what's been happening.

1. As you will be aware, schools in Scotland are currently undergoing industrial action, and as a result, there have been school closures or days when we are unable to open to all year groups. Renfrewshire Council has been liaising with parents directly through the text messaging service, and in Johnstone High we follow that up with reminder texts. It is VITAL that we have the correct contact information for parents and carers. If you have not been receiving regular texts from us, please contact the school office on 0300 300 1331 to ensure we hold the most up to date information for your child. Thank you.
2. At the start of this term, we have welcomed Mr Findlay into the Humanities faculty. Mr Findlay is a very experienced RMPS teacher and has already settled into the department and is enjoying teaching his new classes. We also welcomed Ms Zych, previously of Kilbarchan Primary, as our P7/S1 Transition Teacher. Having also worked at Thorn Primary, many young people were delighted to see their former teacher arrive in school as a new (temporary) addition to the Learning and Behaviour Support team. Miss McCarthy will be joining the Maths team at the end of January.
3. On Friday 6th January all pupils had an online assembly delivered in class to remind them about our school values and expectations. As ever, we appreciate parental support in the following key areas:
 - a. School uniform. PE kit / leggings is NOT suitable for class, and we will contact you if your child is not dressed in correct school uniform.
 - b. Phones and headphones should not be out in class unless the teacher has approved the phone for learning purposes.
 - c. Pupils should only ask out to the toilet in an emergency. Pupils found to be loitering in corridors / toilets will result in parental contact and a sanction being put in place.
 - d. Deodorant should NOT be brought to school. Deodorant cans trigger our fire alarm sensors.
 - e. Finally, vaping will not be tolerated on school premises. Significant sanctions will be put in place for those with vapes / caught vaping in school.
4. On Friday 6th January we had the wider achievement awards which were a big success. Over 100 pupils received either a personal achievement / house / half colour / full colour award and I was so impressed by the range of things our young people are getting up to. We have some really talented young

people in the school, many of whom devote a lot of time to their community, and even some national champions.

5. CANI Coaching update – On Tuesday 10th January, staff from CANI came in to school to work with the 20 S2 who then went on to part in the residential experience, 16th January – 19th January at Dumfries House, Cumnock with Mrs Davidson, Mr McGurk and Mrs Seywright. Lots of team tasks, individual goaling/reflection, and even a fire walk! I went down on Thursday mid-morning for their graduation and to hear about their school improvement priorities and plans. They have lots of good ideas and I look forward to seeing them grow their leadership skills and put these ideas into action.
6. Tuesday 10th January was also the S2-5 Options Information evening. We have lots of information on our website for those who missed the event. Related to this, pupils have experienced ‘taster’ session of new subjects, and subject staff have been making sure the pupils are familiar with the new subjects and options open to them during the next academic session. This week coming we will be carrying out our ‘Mock Options’ with S2-5, which is a process we undertake before crafting the best options columns to maximise the majority of pupils’ preferences. Ms Price, acting DHT, is in charge of the options process.
7. So far this term, S3 reports have been issued. Staff have completed prelim marking and are in the process of feeding back to pupils, through ‘learning conversations’, to make sure S4-6 know exactly what they need to do to improve their performance. Mrs Davidson, acting DHT, is leading on the ‘post-prelim process’ and will support the Principal Teachers to make sure each pupil is presented at the correct level to ensure they achieve their best possible result. Parental contact will be built into this process.
8. Brian Donnelly, formerly the National Director of Respect Me (Brian wrote the government’s policy on anti-bullying and is a specialist on all things behaviour) has been in and out of school this week working with our S2s in their classes. Brian is looking at our Respect Me (anti-bullying) policy and our parental engagement as part of our ‘parents in partnership’ work.
9. Mixed fortunes on the sports front recently – agony for the senior boys football who played well but lost 7-1 to St Ninians, but better news for the senior boys volleyball team who did really well at the tournament they played in this week, winning most of their games. Well done to all the pupils and staff involved. (And good luck to the boys S1 football team who play on Wednesday this week.)
10. Primary head teachers came for a visit on Monday 16th January, and took in a tour of the support facilities within the school. They regularly hear about ‘nurture’ and ‘pastoral’ and ‘LS’, and this was their opportunity to see these in action and ask questions.
11. Primary 7s came up on Wednesday 18th January in the afternoon for a ceilidh. This is a new event for us and thanks go to Mrs MacLeod for organising and

the other staff (and S6) who helped out on the day, with special thanks to Miss McCahill and Mr Forsyth for beautifully organising 180 p7s into pair and group dances. It was a sight to behold!

12. Wednesday 18th was a VERY busy day, as we also completed our flu vaccination catch up.
13. There have been many careers themed events taking place, both in and out of school this week
 - a. On Thursday 19th January, UWS were in to speak to S5 about their widening access programme (similar to Glasgow University's REACH programme).
 - b. We had the BBC in on Friday 20th January for a career themed insert for S3-S6, with a panel style Q&A of local business people and BBC staff who are early in their careers.
My thanks to Mrs Carlin for organising this event – and our pupils were brilliant in terms of engagement and conduct.
 - c. Also on Friday 20th, Mr Brown and Mr Johnston took a group of S3 pupils out to the Science Centre for a BAE STEM Futures event. I'm reliably informed that our pupils took a chess board and had a match at lunchtime! (Proud HT moment.)

Here is what is coming up:

14. Mock options assemblies on Tuesday 24th
15. Head of Service, Tracy McGillivray, is coming in to speak to Mrs O'Malley, DHT Pupil Support, and myself, on Tuesday 24th about 'The Promise'; to hear about the good work we do for our care experienced pupils, and how we might develop this in the future.
16. Miss Smith (PT Design and Technology) is taking a group of seniors off timetable on Tuesday to work on the SCQF silver accreditation.
17. **S3 parents' evening on Tuesday 4.30pm – 7pm.** All S3 parents should have received an email about this and instructions on how to book appointments online. Please note that it is an IN PERSON evening, and we look forward to seeing you in school. If there are any issues with the online booking, please call the office on 0300 300 1331. Alternatively, please call your child's pastoral teacher should you need help or support around any aspect of the parents' evening.
18. Wednesday p6, some S1 are leaving early for a football match.
19. On Thursday, our young people will experience a brief Holocaust Memorial Day presentation at the start of period one. We are delighted, and privileged, to welcome a Holocaust survivor into school that morning to speak with selected senior pupils.

20. Friday 27th January is another day of industrial action and the school will be closed to pupils.

21. Friday 10th February is a non-uniform day. The school is closed to pupils on Monday 13th – Wednesday 15th February for the mid-term holiday and in-service day. School will reopen to pupils on Thursday 16th February.

With best wishes to you and your family,

Lynne Hollywood.

Lynne Hollywood,
Head Teacher

If you need to contact us, please call 0300 300 1331 and ask to speak to your child's pastoral teacher:

	PASTORAL PT	DEPUTE HEAD TEACHER
ARRAN	Mr Rainey	Mrs O'Malley
IONA	Miss Docherty	Ms Cole
MULL	Miss McFadden (acting)	Mrs Davidson (acting)
SKYE	Mr Kennedy	Ms Price (acting)