



## Head Teacher Update

Monday 20th March 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

Here is our recent news:

### 1. STAFFING

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, interviews took place for two permanent depute head teacher posts in the school. Mrs Davidson was successful and her acting post is now 'substantive'. Congratulations to her. Also successful was Neil Henderson. Mr Henderson is an acting DHT in East Ayrshire and will be joining the team once his notice period is complete. My thanks to chair of the Parent Council, Jean McFarlane, who took part in the DHT interviews.

Over the past two weeks we have seen two much loved colleagues move on to pastures new. Firstly, Ms Robertson, classroom assistant, has moved on to a permanent post closer to home and we wish her all the very best. Secondly, Miss Gribbon has left to take up a PT English post in a school in East Ayrshire. Miss Gribbon has been an integral member of our team, having made a real difference to the lives of so many of our young people. She will be much missed, and we wish her well in her promoted post.

Last week I interviewed on behalf of Renfrewshire Council for supply teachers. We also interviewed for full time, permanent teachers in Home Economics and Computing. This week, I am interviewing for full time permanent teachers in PE and Modern Studies. Thereafter, an appointment in English. Our new appointments are due to start in August. In terms of promoted roles, I am currently in the process of appointing PT Pastoral Support and PT Music.

Finally, Mr Robertson will be joining the English team straight after the Easter break.

### 2. ATTAINMENT

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March was our annual attainment visit with Head of Service Tracy McGillivray and EM Julie Colquhoun. We are currently performing above 'virtual comparators' in terms of attainment in the BGE (S1-3) and across all measures for the attainment of leavers from S4-6. I am delighted to report that neither Tracy nor Julie had any questions for our team after our presentation and both acknowledged the hard work and commitment of staff to getting it right for our young people.

March assessments for S4-6 have now been completed. The young people have benefitted from having an additional practice in an exam setting, and this is solid preparation for the main exam diet that starts at the end of April. S4-6 tracking reports will be with parents and carers before Easter.

Raising attainment booster sessions are currently being delivered at lunchtimes / after school and pupils are encouraged to sign up. Similarly, the Easter school programme has been published and pupils should be making the most of these

taught, in-person sessions, taking place in school over the first week of the Easter break. Finally, please encourage your child to sign up for the very strong, free, online offering from e-Sgoil – this takes place every evening and throughout the Easter break. Please see out Twitter feed for more info.

### **3. OPTIONS AND CURRICULUM**

Options interviews for S2-S5 have taken place over the last two weeks and interviews have now concluded, except for a small number of pupils who were absent / couldn't make their slot. Ms Price will now be embarking on creating the timetable for session 2023/24.

### **4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUCCESSES**

On Tuesday 28th February, every secondary school in Scotland was informed about their attainment data for all the young people S4-S6 who left school in 2022. I am delighted to inform parent and carers that 99% of our leavers went on to a positive and sustained post school destination which is the highest percentage across all the Renfrewshire high schools. Indeed, we have come out really well against our 'virtual comparator' across all the attainment measures. This means that young people get a 'better deal' in JHS compared to other schools like us. This success is a team effort between home and school, and I'm delighted for our young people.

On Thursday 2nd the Music Dept took a number of pupils out to perform at the Music Matters Conference in Johnstone Town Hall as part of the Youth Music Initiative 20-year anniversary. We got some lovely feedback from the organisers, and also on social media from a MSP. Well done to the Music department and their group of pupils for a great event.

Recently, Street Stuff from St Mirren started working with small groups of S1-S4 learners on life skills and employability on a 10 week programme. Feedback from the pupils has been really positive and the young people are enjoying the activities and building relationships with the Street Stuff team.

On Thursday 2nd the English team worked with the 7 associated primary schools on a World Book day virtual event.

On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March the JHS Pipe Band came third at the Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships in Kilmarnock. Apparently, we stole the show! The video is on our Twitter page and I highly recommend you give it a watch – 2min 30 sec it 'heats up'.

Last week the school got a nice piece of coverage in the Paisley Gazette for our Vision Scotland award for our work on Holocaust education.

This week we were awarded with the SCQF Gold Ambassador School Award. You may have seen this on social media. Johnstone High School is the first school in Renfrewshire, and only the fourth in Scotland, to obtain this prestigious award in recognition of our strong curriculum offer, work with partners and 99% positive destinations figure. We are delighted with this recognition of the hard work of pupils and staff and it highlights our approach to making sure every young person is supported into the correct pathway for them.

On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March the S6 Young Enterprise team went to the regional finals and won 6 awards, including best team in Renfrewshire and best overall team in the region: beating all the Inverclyde and East Ren schools. They are off to the finals at Hampden in May and I couldn't be prouder of them. The photos are on Twitter and the JHS team, immaculate in their blazers, look so business-like and professional.

## **5. SPORT**

On Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March our junior girls qualified as one of only three schools in the West region to go through to the national football finals (we won the West group). Amazing news and the girls are delighted. Roll on the finals.

U15 boys beat Gryffe 2-1 in the league.

U15 boys lost 2-5 to Williamwood in the St Mirren Cup semi-final.

Senior boys won 2-1 in the league against Linwood.

Senior boys beat Gleniffer 8-0 in the league.

S1 girls won the Renfrewshire cross country team competition last week, individually taking S1 gold and S1 bronze. We were second in the S3 boys team competition.

Our pupils came third in the Renfrewshire Volleyball league.

## **6. LOCAL AUTHORITY**

At the HT meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March, Josh and Hannah in S6 kicked off the event with a beautiful acoustic set and they were fabulous. This involved them performing in front of 63 Head Teachers and the entire Children's Services directorate. The confidence, talent and ability of our young people never fails to impress, and it was a proud HT moment. I've had lots and lots of these recently 😊

On Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March we had a visit from Director of Children's Services, Steven Quinn. Steven wanted to find out more about our SCQF work and therefore we presented an overview of all the curriculum, partner and employability work that has gone on over the past few years. Absolute highlights were S6 pupils Josh, Amy and Ross who were superb and calmly took tough questions from the Director. Steven also passed on his congratulations to the entire school community on our SCQF Gold Award.

## **7. PARENTS' EVENINGS**

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March was S1 parents' evening and 75% of S1 parents signed up. This was our first attempt at bringing all subjects together in communal areas (rather than dotted about individual classrooms) as we were acting on feedback from parents who said they struggle to navigate the building and keep to time when the subjects are spread about. The parents' evening went well and there was a lovely ethos on the night.

## **8. NEWS**

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> the Music Dept took a number of pupils out to perform at the Music Matters Conference in Johnstone Town Hall as part of the Youth Music Initiative 20-year anniversary. We got some lovely feedback from the organisers, and

also on social media from a MSP. Well done to the Music department and their group of pupils for a great event.

On Friday 3rd March, we put out a pupil survey to get the ball rolling for activities day at the end of session. This relies 100% on the goodwill of staff, and I am hopeful that we will be able to put together a programme that caters for all young people's interests and budgets. I'm just relieved there is no dunk tank proposed for this year!

Friday afternoon also saw a reward ceremony to congratulate our young people who had made it through the month of February with no more than one behaviour demerit. It was lovely to see the return of our behaviour reward ceremonies (previously we had been relying on satchel one points as a reward, but pupil feedback told us they missed the reward ceremonies), and especially lovely that the afternoon was so well attended. We are delighted to have so many brilliant young people that demonstrate our school values every day.

6<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> March was a big week for all things employability - Scottish Apprenticeship Week started on 6th March. Thanks to Mrs Carlin for all her work in putting out updates and inserts to make sure our young people are signposted to all available opportunities.

#### **COMING UP:**

- S3 vaccinations on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March
- This week we will get 'last week of term' info out to parents and carers.
- We will also communicate with parents and carers about the last week for S6 which is straight after they return from Easter break.

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:

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