



16th December 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

It's hard to believe that we are almost at the end of term. Detailed below are arrangements and events that are taking place this week. Also included are updates about events and achievements from across the school this term.

Last week arrangements (week beginning 16th December)

Tuesday 17 th December	JHigh Winter Wonderland – 6pm – 9pm
Wednesday 18 th December	Positive behaviour rewards ceremonies for pupils
Thursday 19 th December	Santa dash for pupils (weather permitting)
Friday 20 th December	Interhouse games. School finishes at 2.30pm.

Staffing update

Inclusion: Ms Buchan joined us in November as our inclusion/behaviour support teacher.
Maths: Mr Herd joined the Mathematics department at the beginning of December.
Biology: Ms Seywright has returned from maternity leave.
Music: Ms Strong joined us in October as the Acting Principal Teacher of Music.
Pastoral: Ms McFadden returned from maternity leave in October.

Events

- Open Evening for the new S1 (current P7) took place on 7th October and was a great success. We had over 350 visitors to the school and lots of positive feedback from parents/carers and young people. It was a wonderful example of a team effort, from teaching and support staff and the large number of pupil helpers.
- We had over 700 item donations at our Foodbank collection on 10th October.
- Children in need took place on 15th November and this concluded a week of in-school fundraising, mainly by the fundraising team and S6. It rounded off with a lunchtime event in the hall and a great time was had by all. An impressive total of just over £448 was raised for Children in Need.
- On Tuesday 13th November we had an odd sock day to raise awareness of anti-bullying week.
- We put in place a series of classroom presentations to raise awareness during National Dyslexia week.
- The captancy team represented the school at the Remembrance ceremony at the cenotaph.

- We have a brand-new Young Enterprise team called Food for Thought (with 21 S6 members) selling a range of reusable sandwich bags and containers, focusing on food poverty and sustainability.
- We have a prom date and venue! – Coates memorial – Wed 4th June 2025.
- Careers week (11-15th November) had a range of inserts from employers from Law, Journalism, Environmental Health, Library services etc.
- Trips this term so far:
 - S3 Fashion and Textiles to Glasgow Kelvin College for 'Project Runway'
 - S5/6 Jewellery to Glasgow Kelvin College for a specialist workshop.
 - S5/6 RME trip to the Gurdwara and St Mungos in Glasgow.
 - S2-4 Columba 1400 values and leadership trip to the Isle of Skye.
 - Pupils attended the STEM WEST careers fayre.
 - S4 pupils studying German visited the Goethe Institut in Glasgow.

Pupil Leadership Academy

Here is a flavour of what the 92 pupils are involved in through their groups:

- Events (concerts/awards/charities etc) – currently working on 'J High Winter Wonderland'.
- Classroom Experience (Leaders of Learning) – linking with Renfrew High School on an Education Scotland programme called 'leaders of learning'.
- Environment (Eco Club) – going for their green flag.
- Digital Technologies – are currently in the process of revamping our website.

Magic Breakfast

Mr Glen leads the co-ordination and running of our magic breakfast club which is open to all pupils every day. Since August there have been more than 2300 pupils sign ins for a sit down breakfast. This doesn't include the large numbers of pupils who opt for the grab and go option of bagels, toast or crumpets in the foyer at the main entrance each day. Many thanks to Mr Glen and the team of staff volunteers who give up their time each day to make this possible.

Celebrating Success

Music

Our junior and senior young musician competitions have been a huge success with over 25 juniors and 15 seniors taking part. Our winners were:

Junior

1st - Mia M

2nd - Ellie H

3rd - Sophia K

Senior

1st - Kayden W

RU - Sharlyn Z

RU - Fergus D.

We also did an audition for Disney with the choir and 6 soloists and they were successful meaning they will get to perform in Disneyland when we go to Paris this coming June!

Pipe band have continued to have success since the summer including supporting the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra with their concert in the Paisley Town Hall in September, recording a new documentary with Sky Arts after their success in the first Sky Arts Documentary 'Battle of the Bagpipes' and performing at the Renfrewshire Remembrance Service.

Our talented musicians have put lots of effort and hard work into preparing for the Renfrewshire Schools' Christmas Concert and Carol Singing at the Piazza where they raised an amazing £250.66. They are currently preparing for J High Does Winter Wonderland. It's been great to see our young people thrive, work together and contribute so positively to the local community.



Science

Top of the Bench RSC Competition

4 nominated pupils from S2, S3 and S4 (Finlay R, Beth K, Lewis H and George W) took part in the Glasgow and West of Scotland regional heat for the 'Top of the Bench' competition at the University of Strathclyde this year.

The 'Top of the Bench' competition is one of the Royal Society of Chemistry's (RSC) longest-standing activities for school pupils. The competition is designed to enthuse and excite pupils with chemistry and encourage them to consider further education and careers in chemistry.

The team competition activities were related to chemical reactions and students also heard from some of the Postgraduate Students who spoke about their career path in Chemistry. They were able to ask questions and chat to the students find out a little more about life as a chemistry student and where this can take you.



Science Club

Our aspiring S1 Scientists attend Science club on a Monday lunch time in Miss Scott. Some of the experiments they will get to do are burp in a bag, magic milk, and elephant's toothpaste from a pumpkin for Halloween.

Robot Club

Robot club is back on a Tuesday lunchtime in the science department with Mr. Fulton and is open to all pupils.

AH Physics

All AH Physics pupils have had the opportunity to attend a day session at the UWS Physics labs. Pupils were able to use the labs at the university to complete one of their AH Project experiments and had a chance to work with the University staff to run practical sessions at an undergraduate level.

Modern Languages

Our Higher and Advanced Higher Spanish pupils had the opportunity to listen to speakers and join workshops about studying languages at university through the SCILT Moving Forward with Languages event. The event brought lecturers from universities across Scotland together to give sample lectures on a wide range of themes. Pupils opted in to different workshops and also gained information about studying languages. All pupils involved found it to be a really useful and insightful experience.

On November 14th the British Sign Language (BSL) Senior elective class welcomed three visitors to the school. We hosted Linda Joyce, a lead BSL interpreter, Cat Lafferty from Contact Scotland BSL, and Fiona Bell, an Access to Work interpreter. The BSL class and N5 Retail class listened attentively to our speakers and watched a demonstration of the Contact Scotland BSL platform, a free video interpreting relay service for BSL users (<https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>) The pupils enjoyed this immensely and took the opportunity to practice some of their signs as well.

"Thank you for your warm welcome to the school, the pupils were great with all their questions and using BSL to sign with Cat was just lovely. Well done for what you are doing at the school."

At the end of October, S4 German pupils visited the Goethe Institut in Glasgow for a morning of workshops, seminars and a trade fair about the benefits of studying German and where it can take you. Our pupils really enjoyed learning about some of the employability opportunities having a language, particularly German, can open up for you.

PE

There have been several achievements in PE. Detailed below are just a few of them:

Football

After very successful performances at the SFA Regional Tournament, the Crossover Trials and the Final Trials, and having been watched in games representing the SFA and her Club team, Karis R has

been selected for the Scottish Schools under 15s Girls International squad for the 2024-25 season. Well done Karis!

Renfrewshire Swimming Championships

This event took place on Wednesday 13th November. Nate U (S2) picked up two gold medals. He won the 100m backstroke and the 200m backstroke. Well done Nate!

Renfrewshire Cross Country

This event took place on Tuesday 3rd December. It was a highly successful day for Johnstone High, with four of the six races being won by Johnstone High pupils! A special mention needs to go to our S3 girls who have now won the Renfrewshire Road Race and Renfrewshire Cross Country team event three years in a row! Well done! Full details below.

- S1 Girls Individual
Mhairi B: Gold
Saffy D: Silver
- S1 Girls Team
Mhairi B, Saffy D, Eilidh B, Rona H: Gold
- S2 Boys Individual
Jay J: Gold
- S2 Boys Team
Jay J, Cameron C, Archie D, Ben M: Silver
- S2 Girls Individual
Isla M: Gold
- S2 Girls Team
Isla M, Lexi D, Eilidh M, Toni L: Bronze
- S3 Girls Individual
Ella C: Gold
- S3 Girls Team
Ella C, Cerys M, Megan M, Lillas H, Skye M, Chloe W: Gold

Humanities

WWF Climate Hero & Sustainability Unit

Classes within S3-Senior Geography took part in WWF's Climate Hero challenge by completing work on Sustainability, trying alternative foods that would reduce their carbon footprints & by learning about the causes, effects, and solutions to Climate Change. Many pupils agreed that they preferred the peri-peri crickets to the vegan cheese. Pupils are currently waiting on their certificates for this!

Breast Cancer Awareness Day

Many of our Humanities S6, alongside the Fund-Raising Committee, dedicated a lot of time & effort into raising awareness & funds for Breast Cancer Awareness. The result was a fabulous Friday including fundraising from staff & pupils through photobooths, bake sales, raffles & face painting. As a school we raised over £1000.

Spotless September in Humanities

Pupils all the way from BGE classes to Geography S3-6 took part in Spotless September, a council wide initiative ran in conjunction with Team Up to Clean Up, to complete litter picks and learn a little about sustainability. We had poster competitions for each year & had some fabulous anti-litter & climate change awareness posters.

Eco-Committee Plans

Our Eco-Committee also took part in litter picks & had a meeting about what we aim to achieve this year. We are planning a sponsored clean up of an area near us, fundraising for new materials & completing Christmas crafts as we do every year. We have created a Sustainability report for classes to complete in PSE to work towards our schools Eco Green Flag.

Children In Need

Children in Need went as successfully as it has done in the past with help from staff, probationers, S5 bakers & S6 volunteers. Within one day of activities the school managed to raise £450 for a cause close to the school's heart as Children in Need work with pupils within our catchment. Beat the goalie, face & nail painting & carnival games kept the hall busy!

SCQF Level 4 Courses with Keep Scotland Beautiful

Humanities have had meetings with Keep Scotland Beautiful & are planning on introducing two new SCQF Level 4 qualifications under their umbrella, these will work in conjunction with the SQA & are focusing on Global Issues with Climate Emergency & Biodiversity Action at the heart of both courses!

Business and ICT

We have some S3 pupils who have achieved their SCQF Level 4 and or Level 5 in the digital Cyber Explorers Course run by Cyber Scotland giving them Cyber Champion status.

This was a unit of work that was brought into S3 Computing Science this year to engage pupils with Cyber Security concepts and allow S3 pupils to gain even more tariff points in the curricular area. Feedback from pupils has been very positive as it is completed in an online universe, teachers delivering it also felt it was a great resource, so we are hoping to embed this into the S2 or S3 curriculum permanently in order to maximise attainment.

This course was designed to help students to get hand on insights into the essential role cyber security plays in all our lives and discover insights about future career options.

We are very proud of our pupils who gained Level 4 and level 5 awards.

Employability

Alfie H in S6 achieved his Silver Industrial Cadet Certificate by completing a week of work experience with BAE Systems.

Childcare

Over the past few weeks, pupils from the S4 childcare class have been visiting Gleniffer Nursery on placement, helping staff and gaining work experience. The S4 pupils have also been invited to attend the festive nursery event on Tuesday 17th December which will include carol singing and meeting reindeers! The childcare class has made Christmas tree decorations to gift over to the nursery pupils to show our appreciation.

RMPS and Psychology

311 RMPS and Higher Psychology designed Christmas cards with letters inside of them for the residents of Cochrane Care Home within the Johnstone community. Cochrane care home's manager received the pupil's work with open arms saying that "Johnstone High School should be incredibly proud of the pupils they are readying for the wider world."

Outlook expedition

We have 20 pupils signed up for the 'life changing' trip to Malaysia in 2026 for some trekking, turtle conservation and lots more. We are always very proud of the hard work and effort to fundraising by our pupils each time we run a trip like this.

I wish all families in our Johnstone High Community a wonderful festive break and look forward to welcoming back our young people in the New year on Monday 6th January 2025.

Yours sincerely,

Tracy O'Malley
Acting Head Teacher