

Dear Parent/Carer,

It seems quite some time since last I wrote so there are a few things to share with you as well as confirming arrangements for the end of term and wishing you a very happy and healthy holiday.

Staffing

Mrs Jacqueline Ramsay, our DHT Pupil Support will be retiring at Christmas and we thank her for all she has given to our school community over the last 12 years and wish her all the very best in her retirement.

We are pleased to share that we have also appointed the following staff:

Mrs Michelle Yeoman – Curricular Leader (Wellbeing Hub)

Ms Nikki Duthie - Pupil Support Officer (Wellbeing Hub)

Ms Alison Beck – Clerical Assistant

Prelims and S3 Exam Experience

Our Senior Phase (S4-6) Prelims went really well with invigilators praising our students for their exceptionally polite and positive attitudes. Their behaviour was exemplary and they were a credit to the school. We cannot underestimate how difficult everything has been for our young people and how much they have missed out on previous experiences like these and I know that you will be praising them too.

Currently, the plans are to hold our S3 Exam Experience starting on **Monday 10 January**. We will also be conducting the SNSA assessments with S3 students following these. Again, we are really pleased to be able to offer an experience which will help to prepare our young people for future SQA Examinations.

Little Shop of Horrors – Summer Show

We were disappointed not to have our Panto again this year due to Covid-19, however, there has been great excitement at Tynecastle High School this last week with auditions for our summer show – The Little Shop of Horrors. I believe that we had 65 young people audition which is just fabulous and I know that dancing and backstage opportunities have also been available. We are all now just crossing everything and hoping that the show will be a live performance come the summer but our young people are certainly going to enjoy creating it whatever happens.

Rewards

As usual, we are rewarding 10 students from each year group based on Merits and other positives from staff. Unfortunately, the Cinema Experience we had planned cannot go ahead at this time but we will ensure that it takes place in the new year.

We are currently reviewing the Rewards for our school with staff and students and we are looking at systems which will bring both greater numbers of positives and greater consistency in sharing these.

Thinking about others in the community

As you know, Christmas is a very expensive time and not everyone has the same supports so we are pleased as always to be helping in some way with:

48 parcels to the elderly in the community

170 gifts for Social Bite's Tree of Kindness

82 families receiving food hampers, gift cards or presents.

Thank you to all of you for your kind donations too.

Empowered Learning Project

The date that we have for the updating of current iPads and the issuing of new is the week beginning **17 January**. Please see our website for details. We are very much looking forward to being a fully 1:1 iPad school and will be sending information regarding our Parent/Carer Online Launch which will take place on **Monday 10 January at 6.30pm**.

Coronavirus and Testing

You will have received our communication regarding LFD testing and really hope that your young person is able to support this as well as fully engaging with FACTS. Only with the support of everyone in our school community can we keep each other safe.

Please do also check our website over the holidays for any updates to mitigations for the return to school on **Thursday 6 January 2022**.

Christmas

On Friday, students are allowed to wear Christmas jumpers, hats, baubles etc. Any students not dressing for Christmas should be in uniform as normal.

There will be a prize for the best dressed Christmassy outfit – junior, senior and staff. Mrs MacGregor has spares so do ask your young person to see her if they would like to borrow anything.

Please note that we will finish for the holidays on **Friday 17 December at 12pm**.

Staff return on **Wednesday 5 January** (In-service Day)

Students return on **Thursday 6 January**

And lastly, I would just like to wish you and your family a really relaxing and enjoyable holiday. I do feel that everyone is very much in need of this break. However 'normal' we try to keep things, we must not underestimate the impact and strain of Coronavirus on ourselves and our young people.

I hope that 2022 is a really great New Year.

Please do take care, stay connected and, most importantly, stay safe.



Hazel Kinnear

Head Teacher