



## JAMES GILLESPIE'S HIGH SCHOOL

Interim Head teacher / Ceannard: Neil McCallum B.Ed (Hons), SQH

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### JGHS Parent council 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023

#### Parent Council Chair and Treasurer

I would like to share my gratitude for Sarah Scott (PC Chair) and Ros Ingle (treasurer) for all their incredible hard work and time in leading the parent council. They have both taken on these roles with a commitment to improving the school and have committed their time and support to the school. This has been done over several years and through the particularly challenging times of Covid!

I have particularly appreciated their time and guidance over the last year, since I arrived at the school, they have been a great support.

They have both done incredible work and we thank them for all that they have done to support improving the school.

#### Staffing

##### *Alan Glancy – Passing*

It is with a heavy heart that I share the news of the passing of Mr Alan Glancy, our senior janitor. He sadly passed away on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September. He will be greatly missed and was at the heart of the school for the last 17 years. His funeral will be held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October at the Lorimer Chapel, Warriston Crematorium.

##### *Prelims*

Mr Cotter, DHT, has the prelim diet completed and is now finalising the alternative arrangements for those students that require this. It is his hope to have this shared with students, as well as parents and carers.

##### *School Dress Code*

Further to the previous meeting in September, we are preparing a consultation to share with the whole school community in relation to the school dress code.

We have asked staff to inform us when students are dressed inappropriately and this is followed up in line with the school behaviour policy and contact with home for support where appropriate.

We will continue to monitor the dress code and take appropriate actions.

##### *F1 in schools*

The F1 team did incredibly well at the recent world championships. Where they managed to win several awards and finished 15<sup>th</sup> overall out of the 68 teams competing, The won awards for:

- Sponsorship and Marketing
- Enterprise portfolio

They were one of only two teams to win multiple awards.

### ***School Improvement Planning***

The School Improvement Plan (SiP) priorities are not placed in a particular order. These were created based on the feedback and recommendations from the Supported Self Evaluation that took place with officers from the Council last November. These are based on the Quality Improvement Indicators from "How Good is our School 4" (this is the national document for self-evaluation and improvement in schools.) Please be reassured that these are all important initiatives in relation to continuing to improve the school and to ensure we provide the best outcomes for our students.

The documents referred to in the school improvement plan, will be added to the school website along with the school improvement plan.

It is our intention to include parents and carers, as well as students, in this process going forward.

### ***Edinburgh University – Women liberation Celebration***

We have been contacted by Fiona Mackay at Edinburgh University regarding celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women's liberation conference held here at JGHS in 1974.

The focus of the events will be on the conference's 5th demand: women's legal and financial independence. Given the current context of austerity, cost of living crisis, and enduring gender pay gap it would be a great learning opportunity for Gillespie's students to explore these topics and the role the school played in the 1974 conference. The idea is to have a couple of events/activities that both look backwards/ commemorate as well as look forward.

The hope is that they can link in with the Trust as well as through the curriculum.

### ***Achieve+***

We recently activated a new study platform for all pupils in S4,5,6. This is to support them with their preparation for their national qualifications. The platform provides support for over fifty subjects at National 5 and Higher levels.

### ***DJM Award***

We're delighted to present the inaugural Donald J Macdonald 'Kindness Award'. This is from monies raised by the parent council when Donald retired as Head Teacher in June 2022. The award is to be presented to one pupil from each of the communities (Lauder, Roslin, Spylaw, Darrach) and this is for their acts of kindness over the last academic year. There were over twenty nominations and the four winners each received £100 and a glass ornament, along with a certificate, at a presentation in September.

### ***Sustainability***

CEC has given each school 0.1 (half a day per week) in funding to support the development of sustainability in each establishment.

Mr Callum Maclellan, Science teacher, has taken on this role for our school and is also part of the wider CEC approach to sustainability.

We will share more information in relation to the work being undertaken by Mr Maclellan.

### ***Active Schools***

Please see the additional information shared by Mr Eliot Ambrose, Active School Coordinator.

### ***Scottish Curriculum Information Evening.***

Following the request from the parent council meeting in September, we will be offering an information session on the Scottish Curriculum on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November in the school theatre. An invite will be sent out to all parents and carers after the October break.

### **World Mental Health Day**

Our amazing Seasons for Growth group, through the generous donations given, on the wear Orange to work day on 10<sup>th</sup> October, raised £300 which is a fantastic effort. Every penny will go towards materials for running the programme again this year.

We also shared links to resources which were developed & produced by the team at Richmond's Hope. These [videos](#) are designed to provide advice & help teachers, parents and carers support bereaved children and young people:

You can find out more about Richmond's Hope [here](#)