

Hillside School Bulletin

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We wish everyone the very best, as the country emerges from the national restrictions. We are looking forward to again making use of the many community resources in Fife and beyond, including skate parks, beaches, sports clubs and leisure facilities.

Hillside School has continued to be fully open throughout the national restrictions. We have ensured that our young people have enjoyed full access to the curriculum, including many health and wellbeing opportunities.



Our young people in the senior phase have been working on their SQA and ASDAN courses. Recent successes have included attainment at National 4 English and Literacy, National 3 Cookery, and ASDAN Gardening, and Beliefs and Values. We are very pleased that levels of attainment and wider achievement throughout the school continue to increase.



We continue to be vigilant for Covid-19 symptoms and we have all the required mitigations in place to ensure that we remain safe. Recently updated guidance

from the Scottish Government includes: regular wearing of face masks, physical distancing, and good ventilation and regular sanitising of shared surfaces. All staff and young people in S1 to S6 are now able to access twice-weekly Lateral Flow Testing.

Outdoor opportunities have been a feature of life throughout the winter. In PE, we are now looking forward to our outside summer sports programme. Our horticulture group are starting to sow vegetables and flowers, and our shed-building (SQA National Progression Award) class is now putting together their constructions.



We have a very popular gym on site. Recently, we have added safe weights and new benches and flooring to the area. All of our machines have been serviced and are fully operational.



As part of our school improvement plan, we have been ensuring that our young people have increased opportunities to make positive choices. Our mornings focus on the ten core areas of the curriculum and afternoons on enhanced options for attainment and wider achievement. For example, this term young people have twenty-five learning and activity options to

choose from, including: animal care, literacy, volunteering, numeracy, music and fire pit story-writing.



We have a close relationship with the staff at Skills Development Scotland. Using online meeting technologies, young people have been able to arrange one-to-one consultations with Anne and Carrie, our local careers advisors. All young people who are planning on attending college later this year have been able to work on all aspects of their application, with support from their key teacher, key worker and Michael, our Developing the Young Workforce Co-ordinator.

All staff have been accessing online and other forms of professional learning, training and courses. There has been a whole-school focus on: developmental trauma, compassionate and rights-based culture, professional enquiry, and the new version of the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (de-escalation) policy.



SQA National qualifications are an important aspect of our offer for our senior phase young people. Our core SQA qualifications include: English and Literacy, Maths and Numeracy, Social Studies, Art and Design, Biology, Physical Education, Craft and Woodwork, Admin and IT,

Religious and Moral Education, and Personal and Social Education.

The School Council representatives for the next few months are: EJ, Niall, Kenzie, Liam, Arron and Ryan. The council met one-to-one during the recent national restrictions, with the focus being on everyone ensuring that life at Hillside was 'ticking along' fine. Outcomes from recent discussions include fresh fish returning to the menu, mobile phone and wifi times being reviewed, and new afternoon activities being introduced by the education team.



Staff, and young people and their families, have become skilled at using online meeting tools, such as Teams, Meet, Skype, Vscene and NearMe (NHS). This has allowed everyone to take part in meetings, chats and consultations. We have even conducted virtual tours of the school using mobile devices. Many of us yearn for the return of face-to-face interaction and this is now possible in our Covid-safe meeting rooms and elsewhere in the school.

As a Bronze Award Rights Respecting School, we are now pursuing the Silver Award. This coming term, staff teams will be reviewing some of the language around the school that may need to change to be relevant and appropriate in modern times. We will use The Promise and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to guide us.

Our School and Rights Council meets every month. Recently, they

have been discussing with managers: the best way to ensure that bedrooms are well-ventilated; ideas for afternoon activities; and leisure time outside of the school day. Well done to the young people who maturely and respectfully contribute to these meetings.

Our whole staff self-evaluation has focused on 'How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?' 100% of staff who responded agreed with the statement: "Management, staffing and practice frameworks drive and support the best outcomes for children and young people experiencing care." Staff noted that our management, HR assistant and counselling psychologist are regularly available for our young people and staff.

Soon, we hope that our young people will recommence or start their work placements in the local community. As well as offering a Level 3 and above qualification, the networking and workplace and interpersonal skills developed are invaluable.



As part of our community involvement in the coming months, we will be working alongside community officers from Police Scotland. They will be popping-in to meet with staff and young people, while arranging activities, such as boxing and car safety roadshows.

Working closely with the Scottish Government and our care and

education link inspectors, our focus over the next year or so will include: everyone's health and wellbeing, positive transitions, identifying gaps in learning, good attainment and achievement for all, and alleviating the impact of the pandemic.



We have purchased some new bikes to add to those being refurbished as part of our bike maintenance activities. Our aim is for all young people to have access to an appropriate bike at all times.

We recognise the importance of communicating effectively with our young people's parents and carers, especially during as we emerge from the pandemic. All of our young people have access to safe wifi and devices that enable them to speak safely online with family and friends. Letters and certificates of commendation are regularly shared, and parents and carers can request a chat with subject and key teachers at any time. Our parent and carers' forum is open to all and will soon return to being a face-to-face event.

Congratulations to the following young people on achieving their Hillside Group Award, recognising SQA attainment and achievement: Ryan, Jordanlee and Jamie (Bronze); Niall and Jack (Silver); EJ, Brandon, Mikey and Jack (Gold); and Jamie, Kenzie and Lucius (Platinum).

I hope you have enjoyed reading about some of our great work.
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