

Head Teacher: Mr Liam Coyle

February 2022

Be all we can be! Be proud of who we are!

Dear Parents, Carers and Families

We are really looking forward to pushing ahead with our learning as we move through term 2 and up to the Easter Holidays. The time from now until Easter is crucial for our young peoples learning and development from P1 right up to S6. It is especially important for our Senior Phase student from S4-S6 who will be working hard on their certificated SQA work. I know you will encourage your young person to work hard and give of their best during this time in order to maximise their achievements.

We are continuing to take precautions with regard to our COVID mitigations We are still functioning using mitigations and carefully following National and Local Authority guidelines and these safeguards will continue as we move through the term in line with guidance.

Annual Review Meetings

Our Annual review Meetings will be continuing for all pupils in Mary Russell between now and the Easter Holidays, well done to those who have completed their reviews. This is a unique system to Mary Russell and is hugely valuable in allowing Home, School and our young people to really focus on their learning and development. I would encourage you to make sure you take part in the review meeting process and take advantage of the opportunity to work with the school. Year Heads will be in touch on a year by year basis to arrange meeting dates and times.

Digital Schools Award

You will be delighted to know that our school has achieved the prestigious Digital School Award. A lot of hard work went into the preparation of evidence for the accreditation day, and as usual our young people shone on the day when giving their accounts of how they use ICT in Mary Russell. A special thanks to Mr Halliday and Mrs Methven who coordinated and prepared the evidence and organised the accreditation day, and to all staff and pupils who contributed to the process. We even made the National press! Please click on the link for a great read in the Daily Record....

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/paisley-school-pupils-staff-digital-26137707.amp>

Parental Engagement – Parental engagement is crucial to the progress of our young people at Mary Russell School, and we will be seeking the views of our parents and carers via an online survey on a termly basis. Please access our first online survey at the following link -
<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/re/maryrussell/2022/02/01/parent-carer-survey-2/>

Welcome to New Staff

I am delighted to be able to welcome Mrs Lynne Methven as the new permanent DHT in the Step Unit, we also have a new role in Mary Russell this term and I am delighted to welcome Mr Stuart Conway as our PT Outreach, this is a 1-year secondment initially and we are really looking forward to working with Mr Conway. We also welcome a new ASNA colleague in the Secondary department, Mr Ross McRae who started recently. We wish all the best to Mrs Lynne Allan one of our teachers who has retired and Mrs Kirsty Fox one of our ASNA colleagues who has moved to a new job.

A Night to Shine

We have been fortunate to benefit from a generous gift from the Tim Tebow Foundation for the second year in a row, who provided 80 party bags containing gifts for all of our S3-S6 pupils. The bags will be distributed as part of the Night to Shine event which takes place in many countries across the world to celebrate our young people. Due to COVID restrictions we are having a scaled down 'Morning to Shine' in the Step Unit on Friday 11th February, a lovely way to get ready for the holiday weekend.

Scottish Government Parental Involvement and Engagement survey – Renfrewshire council are encouraging all parents to take part in the government survey please use the link below to access:
<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/preview/RenPIE2022/3129C9047038DBE88366B3E63CF715>

School Catering/Clothing Grants

If you think you might be eligible, please make sure you apply for free school meals and for the clothing grant for young people. The application process has moved online, and forms can be accessed via the following link:<http://renfrewshire.gov.uk/Freeschoolmealsandclothinggrants>

Free school meals are now available for all pupils from P1-P5. All other year groups have to apply using the above link.

Parent Pay

If you don't qualify for free school meals I would encourage you to set up a Parent Pay account with the Council, this allows money to be loaded via the internet. There is now no other way to pay for meals as dinner halls across Renfrewshire have gone cashless . You can set up an account at the following link:

<https://myaccount.renfrewshire.gov.uk>

If you have lost your Parent Pay details letter and need a note of your parent pay details, please contact our school office who will be happy to help.

Unfortunately, if you do not qualify for free school meals and do not put money onto Parent Pay and your young person uses the dinner hall, it results in debt building up and the council have a system in place where letters are sent home as debt is incurred.

Pupils over 16 – Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMA is a means tested weekly benefit of £30 which is paid to any young person over 16 who qualifies. Applications and further information can be found via the following link:

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/3366/Education-Maintenance-Allowance>

If any of our Parents or Carers require support with any of the above applications, please contact your pupils Pastoral Care teacher/year head who will contact our Homelink Colleagues for support.

Social Media

Moving forward we intend to continue to utilise our Social Media as effectively as possible for communication and I would encourage you to follow us on Twitter and Facebook and to download our App.

Details, information and links can also be found on our School website –

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/re/maryrussell/>

With all best wishes.

Kind regards.

Liam Coyle

Liam Coyle
Head Teacher

Our Values:
Respect, Achievement, Care, Trust, Responsibility, Co-operation

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