



**MEARNS CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL
MINUTES OF PARENT COUNCIL MEETING**

Meeting: Monday 22nd March 2021

Present: S Clark (Head Teacher), K Vallance (Chair/Secretary), A Blair (PTA Chair), S Hussain, S Sadiq, E Morrison, J Wong, L Jones, L Fraser, J Thomson, M Carter, C Dodd, Z Robertson, J Murphy, C Adams, N Siddiqui

Apologies: Cllr Bamforth, L Donaldson (PTA Vice-Chair), J Brindley

1. Welcome and Apologies

K Vallance welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed apologies had been received from Cllr Bamforth, L Donaldson and J Brindley. K Vallance extended a welcome to any new attendees at the Parent Council meeting.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting (1st February 2020)

The minutes were accepted on the proposal of L Jones and seconded by C Dodd.

3. Matters Arising

MCHS Sports Facility – The technical review is still ongoing with ERC. No formal plans have been submitted to date.

Potential S5/S6 Year Extension – S Clark noted that the grade submission date to the SQA was 25th May 2021 with courses complete by the start of June. For S6 the year will end at the beginning of June. The school are looking at the ability to organise formal proceedings to mark the completion of Secondary School. For S5 the end of year date is still under review.

PC Chairs Meeting – K Vallance intimated key items from the recent PC Chairs Meeting. ERC school attendance figures had been superseded by events for this academic year. 1,300 devices had been loaned by ERC during the Covid pandemic. The Standards and Quality Report 2019-2020 noted that ERC had the highest Local Authority attainment levels in Scotland. 67% of pupils entered Further Education (25% higher than the national average). 97% of 16-69 year olds in education – again the highest of any mainland Local Authority.

4. Head Teacher's Report

Pupils Return, Timetable and Exam Schedule

S Clark noted that the school was surprised that blended learning was reintroduced before the Easter break. This caused some logistical issues but it was good to see pupils back for face-to-face learning, particularly welcoming back S1 to S3. As always the challenge is to juggle all requirements with multiple teaching of the same classes.

S Clark noted that the pupils have been fantastic and that there have been no remote learning concerns from parents. The school is keen to have all pupils back after the Easter Holidays but in order for the process to work, physical distancing will have to be removed.

S Clark confirmed that the intention was to have detailed exam proposals issued later in the week for all S4, S5 and S6 pupils. *Post Meeting Note – Exam schedules issued for all S4-S6 pupils over April and May to ensure appropriate evidence is available prior to grade assessments being submitted to SQA.*

Easter Opening

S Clark confirmed that the school would remain open during the Easter break. This will assist with the general well being of pupils and will provide a support network where required. S Clark noted that the staff response had been tremendous with many teachers volunteering to assist over the period. The cap on pupil numbers is entirely linked to the social distancing requirements. Plans for the Easter break will be issued to pupils and parents/carers by 26th March 2021.



4. Head Teacher's Report (Cont'd)

Communication with Parents/Carers

S Clark highlighted that the school was keen to ensure that the correct mix of communications was being met between the school and parents/carers. The school is looking to reduce the volume of communication and assess various formats for delivery. The general feeling from the Council was that the level of communication and format was currently appropriate but happy to review other methods and options going forward.

Pupil Equity Fund (PEF)

S Clark outlined the PEF and that support for wellbeing & mental health has been raised as a key requirement by pupils. A pupil working group has established a wellbeing base for the school in a support anchor location. The support would comprise 2 members of staff to carry out one to one interventions through a schedule of planned activities.

The premise is to develop a detailed plan and submit this to ERC for sign off. The PEF funding would be investing in the future, albeit with temporary posts that would require to be reviewed on a year-to-year basis. S Clark noted that this was preferred as it allows for review and assessment.

The PEF programme has been running since 2017 and is usually the same annual funding figure. It has a 5 year lifespan therefore would finish the year after next. The future funding position is entirely controlled by the Scottish Government.

Having reviewed at the meeting the Parent Council unanimously endorsed the proposed use of the Pupil Equity Fund.

5. Local Improvement Plan 2021-2024 (LIP)

K Vallance noted the following key deliverables of the LIP:

- Improvement in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between haves and have not's
- Improvement in employability of young people
- Higher positive school leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in children's health and wellbeing

K Vallance commented that it was odd that the LIP did not have a section reflecting on a review of the previous LIP and what deliverables had been achieved. Also there was no specific mention of the Developing Young Workforce initiative or the vocational courses that were now available for S4 upwards. K Vallance also noted that the Capital Plan was so prominently mentioned in connection with improving the health target underlining the priority that ERC places on providing the sports facility for MCHS.

S Clark intimated that MCHS work up their own specific improvement plan to reflect the unique requirements of the school.

S Clark confirmed that the Covid funding received by MCHS was equivalent to 1.5 extra teachers. Additional funding was also made available from ERC for hub activity, additional supported study and school cleaning materials.

6. Finance Report

L Jones outlined the current financial position of the Parent Council bank account as follows:

Opening Balance	£1,142.21
(Expenditure)/Receipt in Period	(£ 0.00)
Closing Balance	£1,142.21

7. Parent Teacher Association Report

A Blair once again confirmed that it was a very difficult year for the PTA as it is for everyone connected with the school. A Blair hoped that the dress down day planned for nearer the end of term could take place.



8. Correspondence

K Vallance noted the issued of Money Advice and Rights Team information (ERC) issued to PC members on 1st March 2021.

The SQA Learner Booklet was issued to PC members on 12th March 2021.

A specific S4 meeting was held with some members of the Parent Council on 24th February 2021 to review the possible examinations schedule for S4 pupils upon return to school given that mock exams had been completed in December 2020.

9. Any Other Business:

K Vallance and C Dodd led a vote of thanks to the entire MCHS teaching and administration team for their fantastic efforts over the past year and some very difficult and demanding conditions.

10. Date for Next Meetings

The next Parent Council meeting will be the **AGM** and will take place on **Monday 24th May 2021 at 7pm**. The link for the MS Teams meeting will be advised nearer the time.