

**Parent Council Meeting 4th March 2024, @School**

**Zoom Meeting**

**Present:** Amanda O’Donoghue (Chair), Geri Collins (HT),Linda Biggins (Clerk), Julie Brown (Treasurer), Gill Docherty, Alison Pearson, Charles Gay, Laura McInally, Katie Ferguson, Joanne Ferguson, Karen Carruthers.

**Apologies:** Jigjit Tait Kaur, Gail Thomson, Jennifer Cassidy, Julie Waugh (Maths Teacher)

**Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Minutes of last meeting 5th Febrary 2024 were approved.

**Matters Arising**

**Head Teachers Report**

Staffing Meeting

Our staffing meeting took place on Monday 5th February and based on our projected roll for 2024/25 we will have 1,177 pupils. This equates to 80.6 teachers. Since our staffing meeting however every Head Teacher was called to the City Chambers to discuss budget cuts. Apparently, our staffing number will be adjusted and we still await what this means in real money. They cannot increase the ration of pupils to a teacher but it may mean that more senior management teams will be teaching classes and more young people will be sent to the hall to be supervised in larger groups during staff absences.

DYW Fashion and Textiles workshop

DYW Fashion and Textiles workshop took place with an industry designer on February 6th to support young people from S1 to S6 interested in this area of work.

S3 Cross Country

Despite the challenging weather the rescheduled S3 Cross Country competition went ahead on February 6th. The winners will be recognised at the Junior Awards Ceremony.

S2/4/5 Information Evening

The S2/4/5 information on the 8th February was again a terrific success. There was a large turnout and all feedback received was incredibly positive.

S1 Ipads

Since October, our S1pupils have had access to their iPads in school each day and we have been working to embed the use of devices and digital platforms in day-to-day learning and teaching in Hillpark. The next step in our ‘iAspire’ digital strategy now puts the responsibility of bringing iPads to school, and the ongoing care of the devices, with your child. We are looking for them to demonstrate maturity and preparedness in their approach. Therefore, it is a pleasure to inform you that S1 iPads went home on Friday 9th February.

S3 into S3 options

The deadline for the options for S3 into S4 was February 16th. Mr Edgar is our school timetable and has now set the new classes for S4. He has met with the small group of pupils who were unable to drop their first choice subject.

Primary 6 Health and Wellbeing Days

On Wednesday 21st or 28th February P2-4 we welcomed the P6 pupils from our associate primary schools for a Health and wellbeing day. This event was largely led by our National Progression award and Sports Leaders candidates.

Girls4Equality

A group of S5 pupils attended a Girls4Equality event at Glasgow City Chambers. This is the 3rd year of the event although this time boys were allowed to attend.

Purple Friday

To mark the end of LGBT Month, we had our very own Purple Friday with stalls and wear something purple for pupils and staff. I am delighted to say that the school raised funds for LGBT Scotland.

S4 Parents Evening

The second of our S4 Parents Evenings takes place tomorrow night. Please ensure that you make appointments as this will be the last face to face discussion with S4 teachers before the SQA exams.

S1 Tracking Report

The 3rd Tracking report for S1 pupils will be issued on Friday 8th March.

Mark Scott Award

I am delighted to say that a new group of S5 young people have been introduced to the possibility of achieving the Mark Scott Leadership for Life Award. It’s a personal development programme for young people in S6 to support them in becoming more confident individuals and develop the skills for independent learning. It encourages teamwork and project management skills and an awareness of how to lead others. It hopes to develop a sense of social responsibility by delivering projects that benefit the local community. Linda asked if perhaps the kids who were selected for this could work with the Cycle programme and if possible refurb or service the school bikes? Something to keep in mind for the future.

Senior Ship Building Workshops

A group of seniors will be taking part in a ship building workshop at the Science Centre on March 8th.

Advanced Higher Hubs GCC

At a previous Parent Council Meeting I raised the issue of the Advanced Higher Hub provision in Glasgow City Council. This is where Glasgow had a central offer for young people in S6 who wanted to do advanced higher but couldn’t within their own school. Although this service is heavily used by certain schools across the city, for Hillpark our numbers are generally small. For example, we have no pupils using the hub this year but had 3 last year for Graphics, Business and for Computing. As part of the budget cuts, unfortunately this session will be the last for the hub. Each school has now been asked what advanced higher subjects they can offer pupils across Glasgow. If we look at the schools in the South and subjects normally offered at Advanced Higher, Govan, St Margaret Mary’s and Castle milk offer only one subject, Rosshall offers 4, Kingspark and St Pauls offers 5, Bellahouston offers 6, Hillpark offers 11, Holyrood offers 13, Lourdes offers 15 and Shawlands offers 16. All schools have been asked to present their offer for session 2024/25 as soon as possible. Pupils must completed their application forms for Advanced Highers by March 22nd. Wk Beginning 15th April, a central team will meet to discuss the applications and offers across the city, with schools notified of potential pupils – pupils will also be notified at this point. Places will not be confirmed however till August. The challenge of course with offering Advanced Higher within a school is assigning a teacher to often small numbers of pupils when you are only given enough teaching staff for a ration of 1 to 20 or 30.

Enhanced Nurture Programme

Since the pandemic schools across the country have been challenged by a change in culture regarding the importance of attendance. Within our current S4 cohort of 194, 16 pupils are complete school refusers with a further 12 pupils showing an attendance of less than 50%. That’s 28 pupils or 14% of our pupils in danger of not achieving at least 5 awards at Level 3. Before the Pandemic this number would be closer to 5%. To add another layer of challenge, Glasgow City Council has also redeployed all the attendance officers within Glasgow schools. The attendance officer would normally reach out to families and visit households to engage targeted pupils. So, what have we done to try and support our most vulnerable pupils. We have created a programme within the school that reaches out to this group of pupils and invites them in each day to sit in a dedicated space in a ratio of 1 teacher and up to 6 pupils who can work through work from different subject areas in order that National 3 and National 4 awards can be achieved. The programme runs each day from P1 to P4 and encourages young people into school who ordinarily would simply fade into the distance. Some pupils have enjoyed the experience so much that they were able to be integrated back into their normal timetable. For the pupils who simply cannot bring themselves to enter the school building, dedicated teachers have met with them at the local library or even with their own homes. Only 3 of the 28 pupils have not engaged at all, 7 pupils have already achieved at least 5 N3 or N4 awards, with the remaining 18 all achieving between 1 and 4 awards so far. I have two members of staff sharing the Lead on this programme in an Acting PT Engagement capacity. We hope to continue this programme into next session and make the PT position a permanent one, so fingers crossed this is approved by GCC.

Pre-sent Questions

Hand Dryers in Ladies Locker room

There has been a request for the hand dryers in the changing rooms to be re-fixed to above head height in order that they can be used as hair dryers. Unfortunately, however a recent incident involving the incorrectly positioned hand dryer did attract the attention of the Glasgow City Council Health and Safety Team. As a result, we were instructed to ensure that said hand dryer was appropriately positioned in order to avoid inappropriate use in the future. If any mechanism is used out with the intended function, insurance would be in question. Therefore, using a hand dryer as a hair dryer cannot be encouraged. I will speak to PE about possible solutions moving forward.

Female Toilets

A question has been asked about the availability of toilets at break and lunchtime. I have instructed the janitorial staff to ensure that all pupil toilets are available to pupils at break and lunchtime. If this is ever not the case, it is entirely down to the cover janitors supporting us at the moment through long term absences. We would urge any young person, concerned in any way, regarding the toilet availability at break time or lunch time to contact any member of school or janitorial staff and this will be rectified immediately. I have asked the AMEY manager to look into the locks on doors to ensure that they are all fit for purpose. All locks were in working order and all toilets had toilet seats. If a toilet is damaged at any point we do rely on this being reported in order that they can be fixed. All toilets are going to be undergoing a full refurb over the course of this session. Julie advised that the Science Toilets and LCR toilets were both closed at lunchtime and the Hub toilets kids sit on the floor. Mrs Collins again asked if this was happening to please report it. Amanda asked if the QR code had been helping with the kids who were wandering/making plans to meet up in school time? Mrs Collins confirmed that it had been playing the system are sent back, but the kids who were acting in good faith had been using the sytem correctly.

Cycling Initiative

Charles and I met with Alex Fox, the development officer for Schools Cycling Scotland and he helped us begin to shape an action plan for Hillpark. I shared with Alex my dream of creating a culture at Hillpark whereby those who would like to cycle to school are able to do so. WE can then build on this by taking targeted pupils out of school with trained instructors and maybe even adapting our curriculum to include bike maintenance or bikeability. The initial actions Alex noted were:

o A survey of pupils and parents on what is stopping them cycle

o To create a school travel plan, asking pupils and staff to feed into it

o To make contact with local cycling organisations to begin developing relationships and see where connections can be made.

Alex also contacted Janis Malone, Engineering Officer – Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability from the council regarding a cycle parking / shelter space. We are hoping that this could be done quickly and at no cost to the school.

o Survey

§ Do you own a bike Y(58%)/N(42%)

§ Do you ever cycle to school Y(0.5%)/N(99.5%)

§ If the answer is no select reason (various reasons)

· Distance, the big hill, no bike, weather, nowhere to store, worried about damage, uncomfortable cycling on the road

§ If the school provided a safe area for your bike would you consider this? Y(7%)/N(66%)/Maybe(27%)

Noted a second survey may be sent to the parents of the school to see their views. Also the school could work towards a Cycling Friendly School's award (almost an assessment). Things are looking positive and parent council would be keen to support.

**Any Other Business/Parent Questions answered**

Hillpark Helps - noted further update from Mr Haldale at the April meeting. Linda asked if the QR codes would be fully vetted - ie DPO overview and due to the information that may be requested to be input would full encryption be held? Amanda commented at this point there was not a lot of in depth detail and would look forward to the next meeting update. Mrs Collins said Mr Haldane was a whiz with the technical side and was sure all of this would be taken into account. Julie asked why was an app required? Mrs Collins advised it would be another avenue for the children to express their feelings/worries without having to go to pastoral care directly. Katie advised it would be a good way to break the ice with some of the kids.

Linda asked what the current predicted return rate was for the kids in S5 coming back for S6? Mrs Collins said it was looking like 86% would come back for S6.

Alison asked by Nat 4/5 subjects are on the S6 choices form? Mrs Collins said that the options cater for all the needs of the school. Some kids will only be reaching Nat5 in S6 and also NPAs are also included. If certain subjects were unavailable then 121 chats could be held with pastoral care. Unfortunately there have been rather substantial budget cuts within the Glasgow Authority for the new scholastic year. The Hub will not be open. Schools will be working together to provide (with co-ordination from the council) subjects that were less popular (ie physics where only 2 students had opted for AH Physics) this may be held at another school or HP may hold with kids from other schools attending.

Mrs Collins confirmed last day for the S6 cohort is April 19th - exams thereafter but no return after exams.

**Chair, Correspondence & Treasurer report**

All up to date, nothing to report.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 29th April 2024, via Zoom