

Chairpersons report for the year 2019/2020

On behalf of the group, I would like to publicly acknowledge the efforts of departing member, Maureen Tuddenham for the numerous years of membership on the Parent Council/Voice and her valuable support to the school and the staff.

On behalf of the group, I would also like to thank Elaine McDade who has stepped down from her role as secretary but who remains a member of PC/PV. We are delighted to hear that she is staying on the group and on a personal level I thank her very much. On behalf of the group and the wider parent forum, I would like to thank all the school staff, teachers, office, SLT, janitorial and the families of these staff members for all their efforts in a difficult year which clearly demonstrated commitment to our children.

The 2019/20 term year started with acting head teacher Carol Ann Lees providing an update regarding last year's exams results in the absence of Mr Ross, and as the term starts afresh, in 2020 Mr Smith is now deputising for Mr Ross. We wish Mr Ross well and hope he returns to good health as soon as possible.

- Meetings were held on 2nd September and 20th October, while another was cancelled due to the weather on 13th January (Storm Brendan). The meeting scheduled for 9th March was postponed for 2 weeks but then due to COVID could not take place on 23rd March. Our final meeting of the year was a Microsoft teams meeting in June 2020.

Across the year the Parent Voice have been active in engaging with each other and school staff on a wide variety of issues, with no one able to for see what would occur relating to COVID-19.

The main subjects centred on were the following:

- A continuing request for additional safety measures at the Bellziehill Junction to decrease the risk to our children. We have action agreed in principle but still various reports at NLC and Transport Scotland are awaited. We appear to be moving slowly towards physical improvements (see road safety update). Where we are now, is in no small measure down to our continuing perseverance to get something done. We have engaged, via local elected members primarily Cllr Burrows, in obtaining updates and trying to get the organisations involved to account for delays, in the event that the inevitable happens and that a child is once again involved in an a collision there. We have continued to attend the Local Area Partnership meetings to ensure we remain engaged in a wider basis. We have been active in this regard and no one can criticise us for lacking in our own endeavours. We have now been invited to Community Board meetings.
- We were involved in the consultation relating to the proposed relocation of Willowbank School.
- We were involved in the early stages of a proposal for a name change, but due to Mr Ross's health this has not been moved forward to our knowledge.
- We were invited to, attended and supported the Canonisation Mass on 22nd November 2019.
- We were asked to consult on an NLC wide road safety survey, run by the Road Safety Working Group in which, we provided a Parent voice composite response.
- We attended and supported a Parental Council Consultative Group meeting in February organised by NLC, which covered a range of topics including the attainment challenge, GIRFEC and General Teaching Council input on 'fitness to teach'.
- We were consulted in the lead up to, during and after the disruption caused by COVID-19. We were active in engaging on relevant points and concerns to try and effect any changes we felt were important relating to proposed blended learning, communication to parents and, as per the June-August report, the return to school in August.

Throughout the year we have been properly engaged with, listened to and that our parental/carer role in the running of the school has been fulfilled.

On a personal note as I stand down from my role as Chair I wish to thank the committee members for their engagement and support. The school staff have always engaged and responded to our communication timeously and with respect. We know that parental groups do not always feel that, but as a Chair I genuinely feel like we have always had a voice, in no small part to Mrs McGhee who seems to work from 7am -10pm at least- and Mr Ross, Mr Smith and all the Senior Leadership team who have given of their time to us.

I feel that the creation of the WhatsApp group has been of some use in trying to make us active all year round, not just in the lead up to meetings, which to me defeated the purpose regarding ongoing matters.

I do not feel like we managed to engage with the wider Parent Forum as much as I would have liked, but I know this is the feeling of most High School Parent Councils.