

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting

Johnstone High School

25th April 2016

Attendees

Parent members

Diane Spence (DS), Paul Cameron, Jacqueline Tavendale, Anne Campbell, Lesley Reid, Martine Wylie, Gillian Williams, Lorna Hendriks, Shirley Ormond, Jennifer Ballantyne, Elaine McDonald & Elaine Gray

Councillors

Cllr John Hood (JH)

Johnstone High Staff

Lynne Hollywood (LH), Mick Fulton, Joanne Sturgeon (JS),

Apologies

Aileen Brown, Kirsten Lyons, Andy Steel, Beatrice O'Neil, Arlene Motherwell, Neil Fowler, Ryan Miller, Cllr Iain McMillan

DS opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She introduced Joanne Sturgeon, Depute Head Teacher & Head of S1 & Pupil Support.

DS reviewed the actions from the previous meeting.

Aims, Values and Vision meeting: A meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 3rd May. A number of Parent Council members responded to the invite wishing to be involved in the focus group. DS thanked them.

Minutes of previous meeting were approved.

Parent Council AGM:

DS: The meeting on 23rd May will be our last meeting this year and suggested that the AGM be part of the May meeting.

LH: Suggested that the school group text the parent forum, notifying them of the details of the AGM and inviting them to attend.

Action: LH will group text the parent forum notifying them of AGM, 2 weeks before the AGM in accordance with the Parent Council constitution. Details of the AGM will also be posted on the school's social media and school website.

Action: DS will send Chairperson's report to LH.

Acting Head Teacher report.

LH discussed the Head Teacher's report. In a previous meeting it had been agreed that all the items in the Head Teachers report would not be repeated in the minutes, avoiding duplication, therefore please see the school website for the Head Teachers report from May 2016.

Items discussed from the Acting Head Teacher report.

- March was a busy month for school visits from Gordon McKinley, Head of Schools, Shona Taylor, HMle and Peter MacLeod, Director of Children Services. All 3 visits went very well with great positive feedback about the school, staff and pupils.

- Concerns about local press miss-reporting activities in local schools across Renfrewshire. The press appear to be using social media to source stories, however it seems there is a lack of diligence regarding verifying stories.
- School have purchased 30 laptop computers “classroom in a box” for use throughout the Johnstone High.
- Discussion around how the school can engage hard to reach parents. Suggestions included sourcing local learning centres, children services and parallel organisations. School's home link worker/guidance teams can also help with encouraging pupils/parents to engage with school and education. Initiatives aimed at targeting specific pupils designed to support aspiration and positive destinations, using the additional funding from the Renfrewshire Council's “Tackling Poverty Commission” will contribute to improving parental engagement.

Parent Council Issues raised :

Technology:

There was a concern that the school had an over reliance of using online resources (eg edmodo) for course work and this could disadvantage children from poorer families.

It was highlighted by LH & MF that school only use online as a back up and not as a core resource. Hard copies will always be available to pupils. It was also highlighted that edmodo is not mobile/smart phone compatible.

JS: Staff are very giving of their time to ensure that children get access to online resources if they need it.

Parent Council acknowledged Johnstone High is a very nurturing school.

Staffing:

There was a brief discussion regarding staffing numbers in Geography, noting Mr Gilmour being the only teacher in the department.

LH stated Mr Gilbert, DHT would also be teaching Geography if required.

LH informed the Parent Council that school is also recruiting within PE. Due to existing staff requesting flexible working, appointments will be on a part time, supply basis.

A Parent Council member asked for an update on the Head Teacher appointment.

LH: Informed the Parent Council that there are many stages in recruiting a new Head Teacher and highlighted that an acting position can be seconded for a maximum of 23 months.

To obtain clarity of the situation DS suggested she could ask Mr Dewar for an update.

Action:LH to ask Mr Dewar to contact DS.

School Action Plan update:

LH handed out paper copies of the current school action plan. Very good progress is being made, with many points on the plan already ahead of schedule.

Presentations by Joanne Sturgeon, DHT

Pupil support/Attendance/Behaviour Management

The pastoral support in the school is very established. Each Guidance teacher has a case load of around 230 pupils. Johnstone High School is a very mixed school and some pupils have significant support needs. Guidance teacher duties include monitoring children's attendance and contacting parents and carers to discuss if required. Generally school attendance is good with occasional dips. The school will target support where particular need is. If pupils are absent with long term illness, Renfrewshire Council provides 2 hours home tuition per week. This sometimes is enhanced on a voluntary basis by teachers.

A key initiative of the school is looking to improve pupil behaviour. Building on the nurturing element of the school and developing better relationships with pupils are key to success. The school has a draft behaviour policy which needs further developing. The school uses authority wide resources to support behaviour management. A timeout room within school is currently used which is successful. There has been a reduction in exclusions in the school as this has often been found to be counter productive and not improve behaviour.

Parent Member: What happens if there is a potential danger to other children?

LH: There are procedures in place which are carried out if necessary.

JS: Within school there is a move to less punishment and more of an ethos of trying to understand the problem. The use of detention rather than exclusion, meeting with parents, using the timeout room are considered more beneficial.

DS: Stated that she had been informed by a parent member of an apparent increase of pupils engaging in anti social behavioural outwith school.

LH: Replied if it is reported to them and it is within the school day they will certainly investigate.

The benefit of having campus cops within schools in the past was discussed. No funding from the Council is available to continue this provision.

LH: Highlighted that there are a relatively small number of senior staff members available to monitor pupils during breaks and it is a very open campus with many exits.

Timetable.

Joanne Sturgeon informed the Parent Council that the new timetable will be ready for implementation from Mon 16th May. A tremendous amount of work has gone into planning the new timetable to ensure best use of resources and where possible delivering pupil's 1st subject choice. According to Local Authority policy a class viability ie: the minimum needed to run a class in a subject, is 10 or more. If the numbers are lower, sometimes it can still be managed within school, however with advanced highers occasionally pupils would be placed in a consortium with other schools.

Predicted exam results are looking good but actual exam results are required to finalise classes in the senior school.

This year the P7 intake is a little bit smaller than the number of S6 pupils leaving, however only by 3 pupils. The plan is that the new S1 pupils will be using their actual confirmed timetable while at their transition days at school this term.

A P7 Transition Open Evening is scheduled for Wednesday 25 May.

DS: Asked if school would like a representation from the Parent Council?

LH & JS replied, Yes they would be delighted for the help and support.

Action: JS to confirm details to DS regarding Transition Open Evening.

AOB

- New blazers and PE tops will be available to purchase. A blazer measuring service on a specific day will be scheduled.
- Concerns over the quality of school meals was raised.

LH: Explained the quality of schools meals are assessed through "NUTMEG" (<http://www.nutmeg-uk.com/>). This is a test which the Council uses to assess the quality of the school meals. LH advised any specific complaints should be brought to the school's attention.

School noted there has been an increase in the number of packed lunches recently.

- School bus procedure
If the school bus is late, are the pupils marked as late?
LH: Replied pupils would not be recorded as late.
- It was noted that the week for the S3 work experience was incorrect on the school website calendar.
Action: LH will rectify this error.
- 50th Anniversary Year Celebrations
LH: The school is looking forward to the 50th Anniversary Year Celebrations.

Next meeting Monday 23 May 7pm

This will also be the Parent Council AGM which all Parent Forum members can attend.