

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting

Johnstone High School

6th February 2017

Attendees

Parents: Diane Spence (DS), Paul Cameron (PC), Jacqueline Tavendale (JT), Jennifer Murdoch (JM), Anne Campbell (AC), Gillian Williams (GW), Cassy Auld (CA), Lorna Hendriks (LHe) & Kirsten Lyons (KL) Lesley Reid (LR), Neil Fowler (NF)

Staff: Lynne Hollywood (LH), Tracy O'Malley (TO'M), Susan Condry (SC) & Ainsley Brown (AB)

Apologies

Arlene Motherwell , Angela Kerr, Elaine Gray, Andy Steele, Cllr Iain McMillan

Ryan Miller is stepping down from the Parent Council. Going forward the Parent Council meeting will be attended by a member of the SMT on a rotating basis. T'O'M will provide an update on the Parent Engagement Strategy

Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 6th February were reviewed and approved. The Actions from the previous meeting were as follows: -

Litter Issue

LH is still fielding regular complaints about littering which reflects badly on the school. Local shop owners should take some ownership for litter created but local residents see pupils in uniform drop the litter and will contact the school in the first instance. There is insufficient capacity to let senior staff cover outside of the school to deal with this and Prefects are not expected to do this. DS confirmed that the council could provide bins but would not be responsible for emptying them. DS had talked to the community council and the tack being taken will be anti-social behaviour teams and wardens to identify specific culprits.

Attainment Challenge Money

This item is covered in the agenda

Newsletter Ideas

DS had received suggestions from the Parent Council members regarding items that could be included in the school newsletter. These included: Useful Websites (Planitplus, Scholar); Hints & Tips from Brian Costello; Fundraising Section with a list of forthcoming events and dates; Dates of Next Meetings; Requests for skills and talents; Suggested Reading Material. DS is to provide LH with a list of dates for future meetings **(1)**.

My School App

TO'M thanked everyone for the positive feedback she received about the 'My School' App and explained that she had to make the decision to purchase it as she had already had been given an extended trial period. PC raised concerns about some design, functionality and accessibility issues. TO'M explained that the company who produced the App had been very accommodating about making some of the suggested changes and that the App is still in its trial form. An alternative

provider had been contacted as a comparison when looking at the trial but they had not responded. An information sheet will go out with the App. PC to speak to TO'M about the questions to ask about the design and set up **(2)**.

Edmodo/Scholar/Homework

The information about Edmodo and Scholar has been included in the newsletter along with homework tips/advice.

PTA

DS confirmed that the decision had been made to continue with just a Parent Council as it would become confusing if we had both a Parent Council and a separate PTA. The Parent Council would have a fundraising sub-group that would report back to the Parent Council.

Update from the Chair

Parent Council Insurance

The SPTC offer insurance to Parent Council members which covers the Parent Council for any events that it organizes. DS has applied for cover and has emailed LH a quote for cover that would be for the remainder of the year ending 31st July. The cost for the part-year is £110 and the school will cover this cost on this occasion given that the Parent Council has yet to raise funds. DS explained that the insurance was strictly for events run by the Parent Council and that fundraisers run by pupils for (for example) Tanzania could not use this insurance. KL asked DS to find out from the SPTC if the insurance can in anyway be extended to cover pupil events **(3)**.

Bank Account

The Parent Council bank account is now open with a zero balance to date.

Skills Audit

Parent Council members were sent a Survey Monkey link which aims to capture skills and resources that parents can offer to support the school/parent council. The survey takes 2 minutes to complete **(4)**.

Constitution

As the Parent Council is now looking to fundraise then the constitution should be amended accordingly. Stuart Miller from Engage has provided the wording that is required and DS will email this out to everyone with a deadline to raise any objections. There is no need to respond if you agree with the changes **(5)**.

Fundraising Update

A movie afternoon will be held on 17th February for S1 and S2. Mr Fulton will arrange sale of tickets which will be £3 per pupil and will include sweets, popcorn and a drink. LH confirmed that staff coverage would be provided by the NQTs. AB also volunteered to help supervise the event. Hannah's of Johnstone and Showcase Cinema Linwood to be contacted for donations **(6)**.

LR explained that the fundraising sub group had met on two occasions and had received a lot of advice from Engage Renfrewshire. The group has taken the decision not to go down the route of seeking charitable status as this will over-formalise arrangements at this stage. In addition to the movie afternoon the fundraising group also proposes running a car boot sale in April/May in the school car park.

Head Teachers Report

Staffing

Gemma Davidson started today (6th Feb) as principal teacher of music. The guidance vacancy has also been filled by Mrs Wilson. Mr Gilmour (Geography) has been appointed to the newly created temporary post of PT Raising Attainment where he will use data analysis skills. 16 applications have been received for the permanent PE position and 5 candidates will be interviewed. The school is still aiming to recruit a languages teacher.

Inspection

The school is still awaiting the formal letter from the inspectors. Staff and parents will be advised at the same time. DS to decide if it is appropriate to have a Parent Council meeting to discuss the findings once published or whether there should be a meeting for all parents. LH to take advice from Renfrewshire Council and inform DS **(7)**.

Pupil Events

LH referred to the many opportunities and events that had been organised for pupils at all levels by many of the staff. Details of these are in the Head Teacher's Report.

Parent Events/Information

There has been very positive feedback regarding the school newsletter. To print a copy of this for every pupil would be very expensive and would detract from the use of social media which is being used effectively to share the newsletter. However a limited number of newsletters would be printed and made available at the school, the local primary schools and libraries.

Following the recent 2nd year parents' evening the school would avoid parents' evenings during exam times and would make use of directional signs. With regards to feedback about there being 3 teachers in each classroom it was noted that teachers were obliged to do this to avoid working in isolation. 3rd year pupils had been appointed as ambassadors to show parents around. It was noted that some teachers had run behind schedule and appointments were often more than 5 minutes. It was asked if appointment sheets could be given out with greater notice. It was acknowledged that the school did more than most in providing an opportunity to meet with all teachers. Guidelines as to what to expect at parent's night may be useful **(8)**.

The options evening for S2-S5 would be held on 9th February at 7p.m.

The tackling poverty agenda would include an initiative to make parents feel more comfortable attending the school.

Building Improvements

The school building improvement plan is going well but the 'Bubble' that was due to be installed at reception has been postponed and rescheduled to a date Feb/Mar. A new back-lit sign has been put in place and a severe pot hole in the staff car park has been filled after a 3 year wait. The 'timeout' room has been moved to the management suite allowing the vacant room to be turned into a 'family room' with soft seating and a play area for pre-school children.

Other News

Katy Mitchell won the Renfrewshire Council Staff Awards – Young Achiever of the Year 2016 for her work with S1 – S6 pupils, particularly for her Advanced Higher class.

Morgan Spence (S6) was asked to develop a film clip to support the Paisley 2021 bid. Alongside this he is also delivering animation workshops across a range of Renfrewshire primary schools. Morgan's film has been featured in the local media and on BBC Scotland.

Money saved on the cover (Maths issue at the start of the session) has been used to buy football and netball strips and senior phase text books. Thanks to Ms Sturgeon and Mrs O'Malley who took on the additional maths teaching for the savings that made this possible.

Maths – Susan Condy

SC, who joined the school as PT of Maths on 12th January, presented to the Parent Council her vision and plans to improve the standard and achievement levels of pupils in Maths.

As well as the guidelines that TO'M would provide regarding homework, guidelines will be available for each subject including advice to parents on how to help with Maths.

CA noted the study booklet that had been recently handed out to S2. It was acknowledged that this was very useful but had put a lot of pressure on S2 to revise in a short period of time.

Following the prelim results in maths it was agreed that there was a need to 'go back to basics'. There was a concern last year about the maths' results and staffing issues had not helped improve that situation. SC stated that "Dynamic Maths" revision notes would be issued to every S4-S6 maths pupil by the end of February. These notes would include course details, examples and explanations and are an excellent tool for supporting a pupil's revision. Information would also be made available on Edmodo.

SC acknowledged that there was a lot of work required. SC would be meeting with every teacher regarding every class. SC confirmed that teachers would be required to follow the National 5 curriculum and that on-going assessments for 1st – 3rd years would be robust. SC will be present at the options night to meet parents and answer any questions they may have.

A supported study programme covering weekly topics would be put in place immediately for senior pupils and a group text would be sent to parents to confirm this.

Post prelim strategy (including supported study and Easter School)

Pupils with more than 2 fails in their prelims will be interviewed by one of the Depute Head teachers. Pupils with 2 or less fails will be interviewed by the PT. At these interviews the pupils will discuss whether to remain at their current level or drop down a level (e.g. drop from Nat 5 to Nat 4). This will be shared with parents. Parents will need to sign off if the decision is taken not to drop down a level against the advice of the PT/DH. This process will be completed during the month of February and ultimately the decision to drop down a level or not will lie with the parent in terms of the pupil age of responsibility.

A £5,000 budget is available for supported study and Easter School. Maths and English are a priority and PT and staff members from all areas will decide how to organise this. Staff are paid to run an Easter School and a timetable for this will be made available.

'Show My Homework'

TO'M passed around a demo of "Show my Homework". This web site provides visibility to parents and senior staff of what homework has been issued by teachers and what has been completed by pupils. It can also host information on the homework policy and homework guidelines for each subject. This system is being successfully used by Grange Academy in Kilmarnock however Renfrewshire Council have concerns about the IT capacity/capability to support it. There were some concerns raised by the PC to ensure that digitally excluded parents and pupils are not disadvantaged.

The Parent Council are very positive about the system and note that it would help raise the attainment of pupils and assist in engaging parents more in the school curriculum. The Parent Council have asked LH and TO'M to pursue this solution with the Council **(9)**.

Insight update

Insight has not yet been updated. Insight is an online benchmarking tool for secondary schools and local authorities to identify areas of success and where improvements can be made. The system is updated twice annually detailing attainment results and school leavers' data.

Scottish Attainment Challenge

Under the "**Scottish Attainment Challenge**": Renfrewshire is one of the Attainment Authorities. Schools in Renfrewshire bid for this money and JHS was successful. Mr Gilmour's, PT for Raising Attainment post is funded through this. Additional plans also include key workers to focus on attendance and Transition teachers to focus on relationship with the primary schools.

Separate to that but under the same umbrella is the "**Pupil Equity fund**": The school has received £110K. It was broadly calculated on the number of JHS pupils receiving free school meals. The school can decide how this money is spent but it must target and benefit S1-3 pupils from SIMD 1&2. LH wishes to consult with the parents, pupils and staff as to how that money should be spent. If PC members have any creative suggestions, please contact LH **(10)**. The school is required to make a detailed plan on how to spend the fund. It is hoped the Pupil Equity Fund will be available each year for at least 3-5 years.

Duke of Edinburgh update

The Bronze Duke of Edinburgh group are on track and all pupils are participating well. Training sessions are scheduled in March. Lauren Montgomery will send out a letter detailing bus/travel requirements.

The Silver Duke of Edinburgh group are also progressing well. Mr McKenzie, is using EDofE to update the pupils.

DS raised the issue that the pupils who had completed their bronze award last year had not yet received their awards. TO'M to contact DofE regarding outstanding bronze awards.

AOCB

No other business.

Summary of Actions

1	DS to provide LH with a list of future meeting dates	DS
2	PC to speak to TO'M about the set up/design of the MySchool App	PC
3	DS to find out if the Parent Council Insurance can be extended to cover pupil-run events	DS
4	Parent Council members to provide Skills Audit by accessing and completing the Survey Monkey link provided by PC in his email dated 3 rd Feb.	All
5	The amended Parent Council constitution has to be emailed to Parent Council Members. Objections to be raised by a deadline date that will be in the email	DS/All
6	Contact Hannah's and Showcase for donations for movie night	AC
7	LH to contact Renfrewshire Council regarding the best means of sharing the Inspection Report with parents. LH to then advise DS	LH
8	Consider guidelines for parents' nights	LH
9	Show My Homework – LH and TO'M asked by the Parent Council to seek approval from the Council to implement this system	LH/TO'M
10	Parents suggestions/ ideas to LH asap	All
11	TO'M to contact DofE regarding outstanding awards.	TO'M

NEXT MEETING

7.00pm 15th May. **NB: This is also the Parent Council AGM.**