

Lesmahagow High School Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday 5th October 2021, 7 pm, Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Jennifer Cairney, Marie Cox, Alan Crooks, Sandra Gardiner, Donna Kelly (Minutes), Lorna Laird, Barbara Lee, Hazel Leggate, Colin McGavigan, Angela Norris, Vicki O'Rourke (Chair), Jill Pate, Alex Rae, David Robertson, Michelle Wailes

Apologies: Gillian Brown, Mark Horsham, Karen Hynd, Elspeth Martin

1.	Minutes of previous meeting Minutes of meeting held on 23 rd August 2021 approved by VO and seconded by HL.
2.	Adoption of Parent Council Constitution JP asked for clarification on the following wording: 6.2 – “If 4 or 25% of members of the <i>school parents</i>” agreed that this should be changed to “If 4 or 25% of members of the <i>Parent Council</i>” 6.3 – should read “The Annual General Meeting will be held in <i>August</i> /September of each year”
3.	Participatory Budgeting (Pupil Equity Funding) Alex Rae (Teacher of History and Modern Studies) advised that 5% of our Pupil Equity Funding has been put aside by the school to spend on Participatory Budgeting, and that the whole school has a say on how this money is spent. A very comprehensive list has been suggested by pupils and the Pupil Council have also provided their input. The categories for consideration are as follows: <u>Education</u> (external speakers, textbooks, new library books and new art supplies) <u>Access to Education</u> (ICT in school, stationery, school bags, career fair for younger pupils and sensory items in the nurture room) <u>Health and Wellbeing</u> (mental health training for pupils to support other pupils, sports competitions, bike racks and locks in school, breakfast club, sports clubs and kit, water fountains and drinks bottles) <u>School Experience</u> (winter uniform, inspirational posters, outdoor social spaces for pupils, larger lockers, plants and art in the school building) It is now up to the school body to decide where to direct funding; voting for pupils and staff will close on 7 th October and for parents and carers on 8 th October. Voting link will be available as a Google form and on Twitter. JP asked whether some of these items could be funded by school grants instead – further discussion took place on school grants at item number 7 below.
4.	Fundraising plans and ideas It is hoped that the Christmas show and concert will go ahead on 21 st December 2021. This will depend on the next update from the Scottish Government and advice from the Local Authority. If it is not permitted to hold an “in person” event, the school would hope to have an online event instead. If it does go ahead “in person” the Parent Council would hope to do some fundraising at the event. Christmas Fayre – it is hoped to hold this in the school, or if Government advice does not allow this, as an outdoors event instead. MW suggested the possibility of hiring an external venue if not permitted to hold inside the school. MW asked if the school were looking for funds for anything in particular or just in general. JP suggested it is easier to raise funds if we have a specific “wish list” as people are more willing to donate if they know what they are contributing to. BL advised that requests have been received from the Arts and Technical Departments, but that funds are always welcome for anything of a more general nature.

5.	<p>Class Management</p> <p>Lynne Mitchell had asked for this item to be added to the Agenda, but since she is not in attendance, this will be added to the Agenda for the next meeting on 10th November.</p>
6.	<p>Home schooling for students who are self-isolating</p> <p>JP asked what provision there is for pupils who are self-isolating due to Covid. BL advised that if a pupil has to self-isolate, work will be provided on Google Classroom or paper copies and coordinated through Pupil Support. Mrs Wright has collated all Google Classroom codes so that all pupils have the necessary codes to continue their schoolwork while at home. Arrangements for pupils working at home have been reviewed and improvements made, so this should hopefully be working well by now. DR advised that if parents have any concerns, they should contact the school by phone or email for further advice. If any child has fallen behind, extra work can be given to help that pupil catch up.</p>
7.	<p>Local Grants</p> <p>Members were reminded of the various grants which are available – such as windfarm grants, although these are quite specific, Tesco Grant and Kirkmuirhill Second Chance Grant. There are also a number of community council micro grants for £500 which are available until the end of October. Information on the micro grants was sent to Wendy Russell (former Chair) but is also available online. JP offered to look into how to apply for these; BL offered to help JP with paperwork and provide copies of previous requests/applications. JP asked if the school applies for these or the Parent Council. Now that Parent Council has its own bank account, it should be possible to make two bids, from both the school and the Parent Council.</p>
8.	<p>Pre-loved uniforms</p> <p>VO advised that the school has an extensive collection of uniform items and suggested fixing a date which could be advertised on Facebook for people to come into the school to donate and/or collect items.</p> <p>DR advised that a letter will be going out to parents about the wearing of uniform, mention can be made that pre-loved uniform items are available in the form of an “eco swap shop” where pupils can bring in items and swap for something else in return, which should avoid any stigma. Mention can also be made of the winter clothing grant which is now available.</p> <p>MW asked if there is any way of contacting the school to check what is available. BL advised that there is a stock list of sizes available from Gemma Smith, Pupil Support or the School Office. A link can be added to the Parent Council Facebook page with these details.</p> <p>Suggestion also made to ask Tesco if they would be willing to donate any uniform items.</p>
9.	<p>Inclusion Support Team</p> <p>DR advised that this provision opened in August 2020 led by Pamela Docherty, with S1 and S2 pupils currently with us and numbers expected to increase in future. Transition programme for pupils includes outdoor learning, support for learning, nurturing etc. The programme can be followed on Twitter to find out more about the work that is being done.</p>
10.	<p>Acting Head Teacher Report</p> <p>Refer to Appendix 1 for Acting Head Teacher’s Report, which covers the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • SQA • Parental Engagement (parents’ evenings) • Extra-curricular activities, merit reward events and other events • Prizegiving • Young Scot Card • Insight Update (Virtual Comparator) – it was suggested that these could be looked at in more detail at a future meeting in school, in graph form if possible.

	HL added that a huge well done was due to all pupils, staff and parents for how well pupils have performed, especially during such a challenging year.
11.	Support for pupils MC asked about support available for pupils who have any issues between reporting periods. BL advised that letters of concern are sent by the school and an updated tracking report can be provided. There are three Pupil Reports and one Parents' Evening per year for each year group. DR advised that any issues should be addressed with Pupil Support or the relevant Faculty Head at the time, in order that any concerns can be dealt with promptly.
12.	Primary School Transition DR organises our Primary Transitions programme and is looking for suggestions for local companies to reach out to work with P7 pupils on an enterprise project.
13.	Homework AN asked (on behalf of GB) when homework will be issued? BL advised that homework is up and running again on Show my Homework. AN will report this back to GB.
	BL and DR left the meeting at this point.
14.	Head Teacher Recruitment Process VO advised that both herself and HL will be involved in the HT recruitment process (with MW on standby) on behalf of the Parent Council. Also involved will be Carole McKenzie (SLC Head of Education for Clydesdale) and a Head Teacher from another school. Applications are in, decision will be made by 20 th October on who to interview, applicants will be assessed and shown round school on 28 th October, final interviews will take place on 4 th November (panel of 6-8 people), with a view to post being filled at the start of 2022.
15.	Close VO thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

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Acting Head Teacher's Report

Staffing

Ms Anna Fletcher, Teacher of Modern Studies, was appointed as Acting Principal Teacher of Equity and Inclusion following interviews last Friday. Ms Fletcher, alongside Mrs Smith, will provide additional targeted support for pupils in S1-S3.

We currently have a long-term absence in Business Education and in our school office. Subject specialist cover is in place in Business Education.

Interviews for the position of Acting Faculty Head of Expressive Arts from January 2022 will be held after the October break.

Currently, the following positions are advertised through myjobscotland:

- Cleaning Supervisor – closing date: 8.10.21
- School Support Assistant (ASN) – closing date: 12.10.21
- Depute Head Teacher (ASN) – closing date: 19.10.21
- Teacher of Inclusion (0.4FTE) – closing date: 19.10.21

We also plan to advertise an additional Teacher of English position to allow additional support to be provided for literacy.

SQA

The 2022 SQA Exam Timetable has been published, with exams scheduled to take place from 26th April until 1st June. We currently have scheduled our Senior Phase Assessments for 6th – 17th December and will confirm the arrangements for these as soon as possible, in line with SLC advice. Study skills advice will be shared after the October break.

Parental Engagement

We plan to offer online parents' meetings this session if it isn't possible for these meetings to be arranged face to face. Mr Gray and I have attended an information and training session on the use of 'School Cloud', the system that will be used. Organising appointments is very similar to our previous online booking system. The provisional dates of our Parents' Meetings are:

- Tuesday, 16th November - S2
- Wednesday, 24th November – S3
- Tuesday, 8th February – Senior Phase
- Thursday 17th February – Senior Phase
- Wednesday, 25th May – S1

Further information will be provided in due course.

Extra-Curricular Activities, Merit Reward Events and other Events

A number of additional extra-curricular activities have now resumed, as have our S1-S3 Merit Reward Events. S3s will be involved on Thursday, 7th October in the first reward event. S1s will be involved on Friday, 29th and S2s on Wednesday, 3rd November. Further events are scheduled before Christmas. An S3 pupil represented our school at the Youth Sustainability Forum today in Hamilton Townhouse. Two Senior musicians have also been invited to perform at the Lord Lieutenant's Public Speaking event on Friday in the Townhouse – the first live performance organised by South Lanarkshire's Instrumental Music Service since before the pandemic. Congratulations to all involved.

Prize Giving

Our Prize Giving has been filmed and is now being edited. The link will be shared to all parents and carers when completed. Trophies and shields are currently being engraved. Congratulations to all prize winners.

Young Scot Card

Young people can upload their own photo if they wish to order a new Young Scot Card. School photos will be taken when it is possible to arrange for the photographer to come into school.

Insight Update

Our initial Insight analysis following the 30th September update has shown improvements in almost all measures. Attainment in S4 and in S6 in LHS has outperformed our Virtual Comparator in almost all key measures.

The lowest performing 20% of candidates in S4 attained an average of 170 insight tariff points (VC = 130, SLC = 120).

The middle performing 60% of candidates in S4 attained an average of 365 insight tariff points (VC = 344, SLC = 344).

The highest performing 20% of candidates in S4 attained an average of 425 insight tariff points (VC = 432, SLC = 425).

Note: this is based on the attainment in the best 120 SCQF credit points attained by the candidate. National 5 courses are 24 SCQF credit points. A National 5 A = 84 insight tariff points (B=74, C=64, D=59). Therefore, our highest performing 20% of candidates are attaining on average more than 5 N5As in their best five courses. (For information: N4 is 33, N3 = 12).

For S5, attainment increased to the level of last year's VC. The VC also increased, therefore this area remains a key area identified for improvement.