



Minutes of the Meeting of the Parent Council held on Tuesday 9th May 2023 at 7.15pm

Present

V O'Rourke (in the Chair)

S Gardiner	A Norris (MS Teams)
K Hynd	J Pate (MS Teams)
M Jeffrey	M Wailes
L Laird	

In attendance

Ms Lee	
Ms Docherty	

Item	Topic	Action
	Welcome and Apologies The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. Apologies were noted for J Cairney and M Cox.	
1.	Approval of Minutes 22nd February 2023 The Council considered the minutes of the meeting held on the 22 nd of February and were content to approve the minute as a complete and accurate record. The minutes were adopted by V O'Rourke and seconded by L Laird.	
3.	Rolling Action List The action list was discussed and verbal updates were provided. Members were content to approve the closure of actions 1 and 5.	

	Items 11 and 12 remain open.	
4.	<p><u>Head Teacher's Report</u></p> <p>Ms Lee provided a full update on school matters since the February meeting.</p> <p>The Head Teachers report for the May meeting is attached at appendix 1 and the report for the cancelled March meeting at appendix 2.</p> <p>There was a general discussion around the 'Promoting Positive Relationships Policy' with favourable feedback provided. It was confirmed that consultation had taken place with other Clydesdale schools in formulating the policy.</p> <p>Ms Lee sought comments and feedback on the School Improvement Plan and led a discussion on the 5 priorities identified. It was highlighted that a number of areas were being considered to expand and develop the curriculum on offer.</p> <p>Various suggestions and comments were provided by the Parent Council members, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the potential to consider peer support for Health and Wellbeing; • the benefits of the trauma based program 'Seasons for Growth'; • the opportunities through 'Duke of Edinburgh' with Ms Lee noting that a member of staff was fully trained in this provision; and • bee keeping and the potential for funding to be sought for a garden area. 	
5.	<p><u>Finance Report</u></p> <p>The bank balance of £839.90 was noted with the treasurer highlighting that £210 was still to be transferred to the school for the purchase of vouchers for the Young Musician/Vocalist of the year and Young Artist of the year competitions as approved at the February meeting.</p>	
6.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>The dates for the 2023/24 session were discussed and agreed as follows:</p>	

	<p>Monday 11th September – Annual General Meeting Tuesday 7th November Wednesday 31st January Tuesday 19th March Wednesday 8th May.</p> <p>No further business was raised.</p>	
	<p><u>Close</u></p> <p>The Chair thanked those present for attending the meeting and advised that the next meeting would be the Annual General Meeting held in the school on Monday 11th September at 7.15pm.</p>	

Signed

Date

Vicki O'Rourke, Chair, Lesmahagow High School Parent Council

Appendix 1

Head Teacher's Update, 9th May 2023

S6 Graduation

Our S6 students and their families enjoyed an opportunity to celebrate the end of their formal school education at their Graduation event on their last full day in school. Thank you to Pepe's for supporting the purchase of S6 Leavers' Hoodies again this year, and to everyone involved in organising the Hoodies, Activities Day, Graduation, Yearbook and Prom. We were very proud of the way in which our S6 students have worked together and with colleagues to develop a programme of enjoyable events to mark the end of their S6.

SQA Exam Diet

The SQA exam diet is now well underway. We have been very impressed by the manner in which our young people have conducted themselves before, during and after exams, and this has also been highlighted by our invigilation team.

Colleagues are available across the school to support our Senior Phase students throughout the exam diet, and B210 has been set up as a study room to provide access to ICT, stationery and a quiet place to work for the exam period.

Our new timetable will begin the first week in June. Details regarding new timetables and induction days for new S5 and S6 students will be shared with pupils and parents later this month.

Staffing

Adjustments have been made within the Expressive Arts timetable pending an additional Drama Teacher joining us to cover an absence.

Two new colleagues have joined us: Mrs Tracy Reilly, School Support Assistant and Mr Tom Lowes, Enhanced Personalised Support Mentor. Mrs Reilly joins the Support for Learning Team and Mr Lowes is providing additional support to young people across the four Clydesdale secondary schools. Mrs Laura Quinn, Teacher of English, will return in June 2023.

At the end of term, we have two colleagues retiring from our school after many years of dedicated service to our school community. We will very much miss Mrs Hazel Laird, Principal Teacher of Support for Learning and formerly Principal Teacher of Pupil Support, and Mrs Rosemary Whitefield, Youth Employability Support Worker within the Aspire Team and former Attendance Officer, but wish them very well in their retirement.

As planning continues for the new school year, Ms Bandu Geurtzen has been appointed as Teacher of Inclusion, and will join our Inclusion Support Provision in August. Our Inclusion Support Provision enters its fourth year within the school, with young people now entering the Senior Phase. Mrs

Catherine Travis has been appointed as Principal Teacher of Support for Learning (0.6FTE, Wednesday to Friday), commencing in August 2023. Interviews for the position of Faculty Head of Social Subjects take place later in May.

Improvement Planning

Our in-service day and whole staff meeting this month provide opportunities for discussions and planning for whole school and departmental improvement. This year, we are preparing a three-year plan, with a focus on further improving health and wellbeing, inclusion and equity, raising attainment, skills for learning, life and work and leadership and sustainability. We are keen to seek your feedback on our improvement plan, either this evening, later this month or as we continue to review and update our plan.

February Insight Update/ SSR2 Visit

The February update to insight focusses on the attainment, achievements and destinations of our school leavers from October to September. This year's update therefore summarises the achievements of young people who left school between 1st October 2021 and the end of September 2022. In this period, 103 young people left Lesmahagow High School.

We were joined by colleagues from South Lanarkshire Council, Youth Employability and a Head Teacher from another school, to review our data at the end of April, with a focus on improvement planning.

Read&Write – Assistive Technology

Also on our in-service day, all colleagues had the opportunity to learn more about assistive technology and how this can further support all students in the classroom. The Read&Write tool provides young people with the opportunity to convert speech to text, to have text read aloud in their chosen language, to compile a dictionary of unfamiliar words from a passage by highlighting key words, or to make adjustments to the presentation of text on a screen to allow greater focus on important content.

Appendix 2

Head Teacher's Update, 22nd March 2023

Staffing

Ms. Rachel Stirling, Teacher of Physical Education, has joined our PE department.

Applications have been invited for the positions of Teacher of Inclusion, to join our Inclusion Support Team, as the provision enters its fourth year, and Principal Teacher of Support for Learning (0.6FTE), Wednesday to Friday, with closing dates of 26th March and 2nd April respectively. Interviews for these positions will take place early in the new term.

The position of Faculty Head of Social Subjects will be advertised on MyJobScotland in the new term.

Mrs Hazel Laird, Principal Teacher of Support for Learning and Mrs Rosemary Whitefield, Aspire Vocational Development Worker, plan to retire at the summer holidays.

ParentsPortal

Thank you to all parents who have already signed up for ParentsPortal. Please contact the school office if you have any difficulties in accessing ParentsPortal. We will begin to share information through ParentsPortal in the new term. Parents can sign up at: <https://parentsportal.scot/home/>

Parental Involvement and Engagement

Des Dickson, Education Operations Manager, South Lanarkshire Council, provided an update to Head Teachers at their February meeting regarding the 'Parental Involvement and Engagement Census' conducted in 2021-22. The Census provided baseline and comparable data on Parental Involvement and Engagement across Scotland and allows us to build on best practice. 4,128 parents/carers of South Lanarkshire pupils participated in the PIE census. Findings are given in ten percent bandings and then compared to the national data, which was published in December 2022.

General Communication – The majority of parents/carers agreed the school keeps them well informed about their child's progress. (Secondary Schools – 60%; National – 59.7%).

The majority of parents/carers reported that they were satisfied with the number of communications they get from the school on general information. (Secondary Schools – 60-70%, National – 69.7%).

More than half of parents/carers reported that they knew what their child was learning at school (Secondary Schools - 50-70%, National figure – 57.7%).

Up to forty percent of parents/carers agreed the school provided them with useful information about how they could help their child to learn at home (Secondary Schools – Up to 40%, national – 36.2%).

Up to eighty percent of parents/carers were satisfied with how the school engages with them (Secondary Schools – up to 80%; National – 47.2%).

Up to 20% of Secondary parents agreed that the school made them aware of Family Learning opportunities; Up to 60% disagreed. (National 17.3%).

Up to 30% of Secondary parents agreed that the school seeks their views and opinions on school policies. (National – 30%).

Up to 30% of parents agreed and 30% disagreed that parent/carers views helped to decide priorities in the School Improvement Plan. (National - 22.1%).

Over 60% of secondary school parents/carers stated their school had a Parent Council. Over 30% stated they didn't know. (National figure – 77.8%). In SLC, 100% of Secondary schools have a Parent Council.

Over 40% of parents/carers agreed that the cost of participating in school activities/events is affordable; 30-40% neither agreed nor disagreed. This is reflective of the national picture (54%).

Up to 30% of secondary parents/carers agreed that the school helps them to understand their child's rights. 40-50% neither agreed nor disagreed. This is in line with National figures (30.8%).

Barriers to parental engagement included: lack of opportunities (20-30%), work commitments (60-70%), care of younger children (10-20%), lack of confidence (0-10%), cost (0-10%), lack of internet connection (0-10%), language barriers (0-10%), other reason (20-30%).

Next steps:

- Parental Engagement – parents and carers are involved in the life and work of their child's educational setting.
- Parental Engagement – parents and carers are engaged in their child's education throughout their learning journey.
- Parental Representation – parents and carers have opportunities to lead improvements within their child's education settings.
- Family learning – Parents and carers have opportunities to learn together with their children.
- Equality – the Education System is equipped with the knowledge and tools to support parents and families regardless of their circumstances.

*Please see the accompanying slides for further information.

Cost of the School Day

Our Pre-loved uniform and winter clothing stores have been restocked and continue to be promoted in the weekly bulletin, by class teachers and through social media. Items can also be requested by completing an online form:

School uniform <https://forms.gle/AWcqcQ7seyd5c91i9>

Winter clothing <https://forms.gle/9aZx27gRgjm3XXCV6>

A group of pupils had the opportunity to discuss current and future practise regarding Cost of the School Day, in partnership with CPAG Scotland, which will also shape our future Cost of the School Day initiatives.

SQA Practical Exams, Folio Work and Study Support

Over the past few weeks, students have completed SQA Practical Exams in a range of subjects, including Administration, Music, Drama, Home Economics and PE. Senior phase students have also been busy completing coursework, folio work and internal assessments.

The SQA exam diet begins on Monday, 24th April 2023. Students are encouraged to participate in Supported Study sessions within the school and/or those offered on line through Esgoil, the SLC Study Support programme or through West OS. Details of these programmes are available through Google Classrooms and class teachers.

S6 Graduation takes place on Friday, 21st April 2023 and Prom takes place at the Radstone Hotel, on Friday, 9th June 2023.

Library Update

Mrs Thomson is making progress with the Reading Schools Accreditation programme and thanks the Parent Council for their support.

Three S3 pupils participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award are volunteering in the library at lunchtimes. They are helping with book displays, writing 'book synopsis' cards to advertise good books and are advocating Reading for Pleasure. Their first display will be after the Easter Holidays. The current display is 'World Book Day 2023'.

Some new books have been added to the library this month and a further range of titles will be added in the new term. The newest titles broaden the range of resources available to our young people.

Extra Curricular

Well done to our Dance Leaders, Brianna Buckley, Holly Fotheringham and Joscelyn Kennedy who opened the SLLC Active Schools Dance Show on 7th March.

Well done to Beau Christie, who was part of the South Lanarkshire Schools' Percussion Ensemble who won a Platinum Award at the Scottish Concert Band Festival in Perth Concert Hall on 18th March.

A number of our young people will also be performing in the South Lanarkshire Big Band Concert at Rutherglen Town Hall on Monday, 27th March and the South Lanarkshire Orchestral Society Concert at Hamilton Town House on Thursday, 30th March.

Expressive Arts Evening

Our Expressive Arts Evening takes place on Wednesday, 29th March at 7pm, when there will be an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our musicians, singers and artists. Thank you to all parents and carers who are supporting the event, and to everyone who has offered to help with refreshments.

Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment in Scotland: Interim report

A summary of the proposals for the new model for Qualifications and Assessments can be found at: <https://connect.scot/policy/hayward-review-reforming-qualifications-and-assessments>

Key recommendations are:

There should be a better balance between internal evidence (gathered in schools/colleges) and external assessments (e.g. exams) in National Qualifications, and the number of exams taken across the Senior Phase should be reduced.

Better integration of both academic and vocational qualifications.

Make better use of digital, e.g. using digital technology for assessments and gather evidence as well as collecting and presenting achievements on a digital learner profile.

Broaden the evidence of achievement collected during the Senior Phase to include skills and other abilities and achievements, not just subjects. This will be done through the creation of a Scottish Diploma of Achievement.

The overview of the review can be read [here](#).

Phase Three of consultation is now open until 7 April 2023. You can read the briefing paper and full questions [here](#).

Parents can also share their thoughts on the Review by completing a Parent Survey through Connect at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/9Y3FJP3>