

Minutes of the Parent Council Meeting  
held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 in the Principal's  
Office at 6.00pm

Present: Jackie Smith (Chair)  
Ollie Clegg (Deputy Chair)  
Stuart Heggie (Acting Head Teacher)  
Katrina Smith  
Bill Smith  
Kristyna Macsween  
Anne-Marie Mooney (Minutes)

**1. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minute of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015 was approved.

**Matters Arising:**

RRED Campaign

Kristyna updated on the RRED campaign – Cllr Norma Austin Hart has spoken to all secondary school HE teachers, it has been agreed to set up a working group and distribute a campaign pack to all schools in the city. Cllr Hart also met recently with representatives of Coco-Cola to discuss the campaign. New legislation in USA is a positive step, similar legislation in UK.

SW Neighbourhood Meeting

Jackie attended the SW Neighbourhood Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May, held in WHEC. Jackie advised that there were only three participants at the meeting. It was generally felt that the meeting isn't very useful, there is not sufficient time between the Agenda being distributed and the meeting to gather input from Parent Council members on items to be discussed.

Refurbishment and Building Works

Stuart reported that Art, Drama and CDT are now back in D Block following completion of refurbishment. Science and Home Economics refurbishment now underway. Staff have coped excellently with the upheaval. We will ensure that we have one working kitchen throughout the programme of works.

Positive Action Funding

Stuart advised that at a recent HT meeting he raised the issue of the cut to our funding and subsequent cut in staffing allocation as we have raised attainment with Gillian Tee, Director of Children & Families. It has been agreed by the Director that attainment is not appropriate to be included in the funding calculation; the Council have agreed to revise the formula used for calculation in October however, Stuart advised that any changes will not be put into place in time to affect our staffing for next session and it would be 2016-17 session before any additional positive action funding would be received by the school.

Ollie circulated a draft letter he has put together on behalf of the Parent Council questioning the formula and why funding is being removed from the school when we have been successful in starting to raise both attainment and attendance. It was agreed to

send the letter to the members of the Education Committee and Gillian Tee, Stuart will check the number of teaching posts involved before the letter is sent.

## **2. Treasurers Report**

Two bids from Social Studies and Health and Wellbeing Faculties were circulated to members by Ollie, with one response received. Ken advised that he has not been receiving bank statements and will need to contact the bank to find out where they are being sent and check the balance of the account, he has details of the funding payment received from the Council dated 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014 of £623.80.

It was agreed that if there are sufficient funds in the account the Parent Council will meet the cost of both bids. It was agreed to pay the Clerk £80 and the invoice for the Parent Forum meeting (copying, mail out and buffet) of £119.63. Ken will also contact the bank to find out how to add Jackie as a signatory to the account. It was suggested that the school could approach Tesco/Decathlon/Lidl for sports equipment, Krystina advised that she already receives donations of sports equipment from Tesco.

## **3. Head Teacher's Report**

Stuart updated on staffing changes to the Senior Team – Sheila Paton is currently on secondment to Waverley Court, Stuart is Acting Head Teacher but a replacement for his post of Deputy Head Teacher has not been actioned. Staff have been superb and have taken on additional responsibilities. Janet Walker is currently Acting Deputy Head and both Stuart and Janet are working closely to ensure that there is Senior Team coverage at all times in the school. Sheila Cornes, Deputy Head Teacher, also on secondment to Waverley Court, is retiring at the end of June, this post has been advertised and it is intended that it is filled before the end of this term.

Stuart also advised on other staffing changes – Christine Karaca, Maths teacher is retiring at the end of term; Neil Morrison, PE teacher is leaving to take up a new post at another school; Graham Watson, Business Management teacher is leaving to look after his family; Kirsteen Scott, Geography teacher has a new post in a school in London; Katie Simpson, probationary teacher in Art has secured a post in a school in Stirling; Katy McLeod, RMPS/RME teacher is going on maternity leave.

We have appointed Barry Ferguson, Maths & Computing teacher to start in August and a probationary RMPS/RME teacher will join us at the start of the new session. We have received lots of interest and applications for all of our advertised posts, which Stuart advised hasn't always been the case, indicating the school is seen very positively. Interviews for posts will take place over the coming weeks with new staffing in place by the end of term.

The Parent Council expressed concern that we have a vacant DHT post, Ken commented on the obvious enormous amount goodwill that exists amongst staff. It was agreed that the Parent Council would write to the Education Committee and Gillian Tee to outline their concerns.

## **4. School Improvement Plan 2015/16**

Stuart gave the Parent Council the background to the work that he and the staff agreed to undertake from 2008 focusing on raising attainment, this work has been underpinned by the introduction of a system of Mentoring where our young people take responsibility for their own learning. We have also introduced Teaching &

Learning Communities to research and develop high quality learning and teaching strategies. Our approach to the Senior Phase following the introduction of National 4s is radically different to the approach taken in other schools alongside, using our Tracking & Monitoring system we are able to identify from S1 the different pathways that our students will be on. We also have in place a comprehensive Learning & Teaching Policy that all staff have contributed and signed up to.

Stuart advised that our School Improvement Plan for next year is not drastically different from last year's, we are aiming to refine and improve on the systems we now have in place and have been working on since 2008 to take us to the next level.

We are looking to sustain improved attainment and review the Senior Phase curriculum – a working group will look at the Senior Phase in other schools to improve individual learner pathways and positive destinations. We are planning to introduce 10 skills for learning, these will provide some of our students with a skills approach rather than an academic route.

Stuart has also consulted on our Improvement Plan with our Senior students; as part of their recent Induction day the new S5 & S6 were asked to evaluate the Plan. He received very positive feedback and mature responses about mentoring and teaching and learning. The students would like to see mentoring continue to improve and see the introduction of skills for learning as a very constructive initiative.

Stuart informed the Parent Council that we have teamed up with Heriot Watt University on a new outreach programme called Brightest Watts. Staff from the University will do project based activities with all S1 students next session based around developing the 10 skills for learning one morning every month. In the future this initiative will move through the school to S2, S3 and so on. The University will also provide language mentors for our students studying for National 5s and Higher French.

Stuart is confident that all of the proposals will keep the school on track to continued and sustained improvement. The Parent Council are extremely positive about the introduction of skills for learning and our partnership with Heriot Watt, recognising that many of our students will benefit from the new plan.

## **5. AOCB**

Jackie agreed to attend the P7/S1 Parents Transition Evening on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June aiming to recruit new members to the Parent Council, Jackie has had some interest from a couple of parents. Anne-Marie has produced a poster to go up on the digital screen.

Katrina handed over her files to Jackie as this is the final meeting that she and Bill will attend, she is very willing to help the Parent Council in future.

**Date of Next Meeting – 15<sup>th</sup> September 2015**