

MINUTES OF PARENT COUNCIL MEETING 30th MAY 2023

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSIONS	ACTIONS
Introduction & Welcome	Sara welcomed all	
Minutes & Apologies	Previous minutes approved Apologies: J Aitchison, Cllr Alexander	
Councillors Questions	<p>Cllr D Alexander: I wish all exam takers the best in the coming weeks and hope that all the hard work of pupils and teachers, and staff bring the results they deserve. As there possibly won't be another meeting before the summer recess, I wish all those leaving the best in their future work, apprenticeships, college and university.</p> <p>Cllr Milligan – budget challenges, lots of change coming. Unless different funding things will be difficult. £6m needs to be saved. Climbs to £31m over next 7 years. Impact on staffing that supports education for students.</p>	
School Improvement: Including a look back at this year and discussion on planning for next year.	<p>HT update:</p> <p>Freeze on non-essential spend advised before Christmas which school heeded. Carry forward was retained by the Centre, this is unprecedented. Course choices were slightly impacted and we have a 1% cut to our school budget. Still awaiting budget from Centre. HT very nervous about balancing the budget with no carry forward.</p> <p>Shared HT role has worked well, Ms Mitchell is a great support in this role. Schools in authority working on aligning timetables so classes could be shared across schools perhaps digitally.</p> <p>RRSA (Rights Respecting Schools Award) we secured the silver award, looking to renew PE Gold sports award, SCQF silver award. Terrific sports success, SPOTY award winner, school football teams, campaign to allow girls football finals to be played at Hampden, like the boys do. Equity work on-going and 40 staff trained in Equality work LGBTQI, exploring an anti-racist award, University of Sussex S1 Maths materials with them. Attainment strong, positive destinations up 97%</p> <p>Improvement plan progressing; communication better, HT Bulletin in place weekly now.</p> <p>Midlothian organised with priorities, service plan has been shared – short term and 4 year cycle plan. Target for school for 2027 for positive destinations to be 100%. Foundation apprenticeships expanding on next year. School looking at routines, relationships and our expectations.</p> <p>SA: change of uniform – will be good to see how that embeds.</p> <p>HT: Parents evening – feedback is that the staff view is that the virtual parents evening works well. HT will keep Parent Council updated.</p>	
School Calendar 2023/24: including discussions on Parent	HT: we were trying to get permission from Head Office to share our Google calendar with parents however this is not progressing due to security and GDPR concerns. Website operator can host the calendar and will work with school to get 3 calendars on to be	

Council Meeting dates and formats.	viewed: whole school calendar, Clubs, extra-curricular clubs and trips, Senior Phase Assessment calendar. Able now to plan for long haul trips, ski trips etc. We plan longer led in times for big cost trips to spread costs and school can assist some families for those in most need. School mindful of costs to families. Suggestion: could new school captains lead on the first Parent Council meeting to link up with new S1's? Suggestion to review Zoom and face to face? Which brings most attendance? What can we do differently to engage more families?	
School and House Captain Recruitment	Parent Council used to assist with this recruitment as the School & House Captains work with the Parent Council. 39 applicants which is the largest ever; Friday 9 th June are the group interviews and school would welcome members to assist with these group interviews. Process involves many aspects over a few weeks. Newbattle and LHS captains will do some work together.	
Secretary Role	SA: As Ruth Watson is leaving Sara thanked Ruth for her work with the Parent Council. Ruth has been with the school for 19 years and working with the Parent Council for about 14 of these years. Her support has been very much appreciated. Sara presented Ruth with some gifts from the Parent Council. Ruth thanked everyone for these and said it had been a pleasure to support and be involved over these years. An internal "advert" will go out to gather interest in the Secretary role	
Parent Council Chair's Update	No direct questions. Parent Council funded new chess sets which is much appreciated by the Chess Group. Student Voice groups in the school may well approach Parent Council for some funding; the school is adding to this funding. Add funding to PT's meeting. RW to prompt School Show support if needed.	RW to ask AM re S Show
200 Club	To promote	
Q&A	Answer to question at last meeting regarding Computer language used in school: For N5, Higher and AH Computing Science there is no requirement to teach a specific programming language. A number of programming languages are taught in Scottish schools. The Principal teacher of Technologies has been involved in marking Higher Computing Science assignments this year and the languages used have included Python, Visual Basic/Studio, LiveCode, Java, Lazarus/Pascal and C++. As a school we have always believed that we should not be teaching programming language-specific skills but good programming skills that can be transferred to other programming languages. Lazarus meets the requirements of Higher and Advanced Higher courses in that it supports constructs such as arrays of records which Python does not without a workaround. In saying that, Python is increasing in popularity across Scotland and more and more resources that are being produced are geared towards Python. The school is going to introduce Python with the new S3 for the upcoming session to look to roll it out if successful. Question: management of phones/devices in classrooms. Concern raised that phones were being used for other things not school work. Device management is challenging for staff and it can be inconsistent across the school. School has a policy which is clear. Chromebook is our preferred method but sometimes	

	phones are needed if an activity is needed for a subject. Teachers can see on their laptops who is engaging in what method. Expectations are re-iterated periodically. If the issue is a photo being taken this is taken seriously and acted upon. Lightspeed system monitors the use by students and looks for red-flags: certain types of searches are then advised to the school to help assist a perhaps vulnerable situation.	
AOCB	None	

Contact names for information: If you wish a query or comment to go to a particular person, please add their name to subject field in any e-mail into the dedicated Parent Council email address and this will be forwarded to them, thanks.

Chair - Sara Adam (SA)

Treasurer - John Aitchison (JA)

Shared Head Teacher - Campbell Hornell (HT-CH)

Shared Head Teacher Acting - Alison Mitchell (HT-AM)

Parent Council dedicated e-mail:

parentcouncil.lasswadehs@midlothian.education

Next Meeting dates provisional:

Tuesday 5th September 2023

Thursday 12th October 2023

Thursday 23rd November 2023

Thursday 18th January 2024

Tuesday 19th March 2024

Tuesday 28th May 2024