

BISHOPBRIGGS ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE PARENT COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 6th JUNE 2023



Present: Allison Lunan, Jonathan Campbell, Kirstie Mendham, Ashwathy Rajagopal, Ian Donaghey, Cllr Gordon Low, Cllr Lynda Williamson, Sam McLean

Apologies: Lynn Armour, Deb Hart, Melanie McKendrick, Cllr McDiarmid

1 WELCOME

JC welcomed everyone to the meeting

2 MATTERS ARISING AND NEXT STEPS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes from meeting 25th April had been circulated to all members electronically, these were approved for circulation.

3 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

School Improvement Plan

Following PC steer in order to ensure relevant content, ID provided members with feedback from the parental voice of the SIP survey.

In respect of question 'What went well this year?' parents generally appreciated the extra curricular programme provided by the school - the wide variety of clubs and trips. Encouragement and time, given by staff was also acknowledged.

Parents Evening – positive comments were received regarding getting into school for parents night and the format which worked well, subject choice - smooth and useful, very informative workshops with S2 option evening, frequent reporting with clear and comprehensive information. Snr phase progress reports also appreciated.

Primary Transition - Parents detailed good transition from P7 to S1, everyone settled well, excellent choice of clubs, superb guidance and support – including those with ASN, S1 Induction, excellent transition programme & S1 settling well.

Positive comments also received regarding warmth displayed by staff, genuine care shown and plenty of support for all young people from all year groups. Lovely appreciative comments.

'What could have gone better?' Several comments were made regarding homework; don't think enough homework, standardise homework and curriculum across all departments, still class teacher dependant for homework issuing and marking. Pressure should not be put on young people with ASN. ID clarified homework is being reconsidered. School is looking at protecting environment and gathering alternative strategies to manage for some YP, providing this opportunity within school. Support for families with 'How to Study Guides', these already exist but communication is to be aim next session to ensure well signposted and easy to access.

Curriculum pathways and career education are the best in East Dunbartonshire. ID advised school has a 100% record for alternative pathways.

Lots of work has been done to include new subject matter for Nat 5 to Higher level, including Child Care, Psychology and Criminology

Health and Well-being continues as a priority under SIP.

ID advised staff have also been consulted in respect of the SIP and similar views expressed to parents, they also detailed that monitoring & tracking clubs is something that could be improved upon.

Next steps –

Health and Wellbeing – PSE curriculum, monitoring and tracking of extra curricular clubs, renewal of promoting positive relationships policy, review of School Vision, Values and Aims, Learning for sustainability, Empowering pupil voice through Pupil / House council, analysis of pupil voice through SHINE, Health and Well-being survey and a Rights respecting School Award.

Partnership and collaborative working – introduction of a family learning programme.

Attainment and achievement – Insight training for all staff, collation of meaningful evidence to support DIP and SIP.

Pupil voice will be starting this week in respect of SIP – House council reps meeting with Year Heads.

School Funds

ID advised members that school had made a deliberate decision to not go down the route of a PTA regarding school fund raising post COVID, with consideration for the cost of living crisis being faced by many families. School need a new mini bus and ID interested to hear members views. Discussion took place regarding various fund raising ideas. Easy Fundraising identified as a free method of generating income, requesting donations from parents directly and specific fundraising activities for the purpose all raised.

4 AOCB

Future projections for school roll, given another extraordinary year group intake for S1

SMcL expressed concern regarding school roll given another large year group of 240, entering S1 next session, following the current S1 intake of 260. ID assured members that LA had been fully supportive and would have invoked criteria for entry had it been considered necessary. All pupils entering school live within catchment area, a small number have not come from the feeder schools but ID fully satisfied that the school is able to accommodate this number of pupils, given the new modular classrooms, additional staffing and a new DHT, with one for each year group now. ID expects the 98 members of staff to rise and also advised that there is a waiting list established for each year group as there are YP who meet the criteria for school entry, however there is no further capacity at the school. Members advised that consideration also needs to be given to the wider school building accommodating the additional pupils, alongside provision of support services such as Library facilities and ASN accommodation during exams.

Update regarding librarian position following Ms Thomas' retirement

KM requested clarification on librarian position – ID advised that Ms Thomas irreplaceable, she had undertaken aspects of so many things that weren't her responsibility. Some things have already been dispersed such as School website and Twitter page, there will not be a like for like replacement. There will be a new librarian, a HT liaison meeting is yet to take place where this will be clarified, Gregg Bremner is currently waiting for the advertisement. ID confirmed the library is a safe haven and will not be broken into classrooms. An ASN teacher has been shadowing and has some knowledge, there is a contingency plan going on in background. ID advised that school has lowest number of 4 Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) next session, there will be lots of interviews in May for following session, ID detailed the NQT process for members.

Vaping

AR queried whether there were any sensors in bathrooms or changing rooms for detecting vaping.

ID advised that unfortunately vaping does not activate smoke alarms and there is a need for increased presence in the bathrooms and changing rooms. All young people are aware that if they get caught they are suspended, someone was caught in May. PSE and assemblies are raising awareness. ID believes suspension strict but necessary, it is a banned substance for all under 18s. A return to school interview with pupil and parents covers issues and an agreed plan of action and reassurance that it will not happen again. LW informed members that Scottish parliament is looking at banning disposable vapes, EDC also considering this. ID is operating a zero tolerance of this at school, it endangers others and is anti social behaviour, preventing right of others to use toilets in peace. A number of pupils have been suspended for vaping alone having been caught in the act, real cigarettes are not an issue at all.

Transition Exams

ID clarified that these are detailed on the curricular calendar on the school website, three weeks notice is given to the pupils and matter is discussed at S3 parents evening. Timetable is detailed on Satchel.

Homework

AR queried number of YP who do not participate in homework. ID advised a very small number of individuals do not complete homework, school is trying to avoid detrimental homework and is done in a supportive manner but not detracting from the 50 minutes of class teaching. School is making marginal gains within a protective environment and trying to get YP engaged.

ID advised members that school is trying to resolve an issue regarding S3 pupils whereby SMT have been asked to speak to some concerning length of their skirts. This is a very body sensitive subject and needs delicate handling given potential confidence issues wearing skirts. School is trying to deal with the small number of pupils involved individually considering health and well being and utilisation of mental health ambassadors.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 29th AUGUST AT 7.00PM