

BISHOPBRIGGS ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING AND THE AGM OF THE
PARENT COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 29th OCTOBER 2024



Present: Jonathan Campbell, Allison Lunan, Kirstie Mendham, Sam McLean, Jane McIntosh, Jo Whittet, Lynn Armour, Steph Fowler, Peter Tracy, Julie Dey, Kate Ferguson, Ian Donaghey, Cllr Lynda Williamson, Kenneth Lawani, Cllr Alan Moir, Linda Bowers, Shona McCarthy, Cllr Gordon Low, Lyndsay Murray

Apologies: Julie Watson, Ashwathy Rajagopal, Cllr Collette McDiarmid, Linda Lumsden, Melodie Crumlin, Melanie McKendrick,

1 WELCOME

JC extended a warm welcome to all attending meeting.

2 MATTERS ARISING AND NEXT STEPS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes had been circulated electronically prior to the meeting and were accepted as an accurate record. To be uploaded onto school website.

3 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Authority Review

ID advised members in respect of the requested Local Authority review currently being undertaken at the school in preparation for an anticipated full Inspection as the last one was in November 2012. This LA review is being undertaken by a team of twelve, including Kevin Kelly, EDC Quality Improvement Manager, Mary Kelly, EDC Quality Improvement Officer, Head Teachers of Douglas Academy and St. Ninians' alongside several Deputy Head Teachers among others. This review will be undertaken over a full week as opposed to the usual three days in order to ensure accurate feedback from every area. ID striving for excellent in all four areas and actively seeking areas for improvement where needed in order to achieve this.

BA submitted an initial scoping review (a self assessment) prior to the review in respect of the four themes being assessed as follows; 1. Leadership of Change – Excellent, 2. Learning, Teaching and Assessment – Very Good, 3. Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion – Very Good and 4. Raising Attainment and Achievement – Excellent. Seventy-eight classroom observations will take place over all year group levels with the vast majority of staff being observed. Pupil, staff, parent and partner focus groups are being held with the inspection team and ID encouraging everyone to provide honest feedback in order to develop any area identified as needing attention. ID advised Inspections usually take place around November or February time and around two weeks notice is generally given. ID further advised that 680 responses were received for the parent questionnaires circulated from over 1100 families, although he was a bit disappointed with this response he has been advised this is an incredible response. Feedback in respect of the review will be forthcoming as it is ongoing presently.

ID shared a presentation of the scoping review submitted, with a full break down of the individual themes under assessment with relevant evidence for attendees, some detail of content as follows;

1.3 Leadership of Change

Shared Vision, Values and Aims – Over a year spent in development with extensive work being undertaken to ensure all stakeholders were engaged demonstrating ‘Respect, Effort and Resilience’. Engagement and commitment to Vision, Values and Aims encourages a better blended approach to learning.

Strategic planning for Continuous Improvement – Collective responsibility in the process of change. Inset day protected for Improvement plan. Pupil Leadership forum provides a strong voice alongside the House council, parent and partner voice. Time is taken to ensure things are thoroughly looked at and considered by way of piloting scheme prior to implementation, with change evolving e.g behaviour points.

Responsibility for Implementing change provides pupil empowerment by manner of pupil leadership opportunities, - prefects are able to choose a working group relevant to a particular theme, Captaincy roles and new prefect responsibilities some examples. Staff empowerment with Career long professional Learning Programme for Newly qualified teachers, tutorials, PDGs, PEF and Leadership opportunities. Parent, carer and partner empowerment with information evenings, family learning, communication and understanding of pupil progress and partnerships.

2.3 Learning and Engagement

Calm and conducive learning environment. Strong relationships, reinforcement of high expectations, learning environment protected.

Culture of engagement, behaviour points, praise postcards etc. Strong Learning and Teaching Brand and identity. B8 provides consistency. Lots of time in Assembly covering links. Reinforces expectations, promotes consistency & develops routines.

Quality of Teaching - effective use of assessment.

3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

Universal and systematic approach to providing Universal plus and targeted supports.

Cross department and pupil working group developing a sector leading PSE curriculum.

Fulfilment of statutory duties, child protection practices and procedures. Attendance journey – one of pilot schools in EDC evaluating implementation of attendance and timekeeping and tracking system to work alongside new EDC policy. Creation of new context specific guidance to work alongside new EDC policy to ensure continued support for all health needs in school.

Inclusion and Equity. Inclusive practices transition programmes, Right Respecting School Award, LGBT Silver Award, Level 2 Vision Schools Scotland. Many others work alongside Vision, Values and Aims to create inclusive practices across school. Pupil and Staff Mental Health Shine Survey, lead school presented at National conference. Ambassadors also working with outside agencies.

3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

Doing very well, tracking literacy and numeracy and sustaining high standards over time.

Supported study now has different approach to 3 years ago. Sign up was very high and it became 'another class' as staff didn't feel they could tell a pupil they didn't need to be there. Lots of study is now available online and can be accessed from home. Thanks expressed by LA for supported study programme.

S4 year group receive 6 weeks targeted support, 25 subjects delivered over 38 sessions each week. Attendance rate 90.26%.

S5/6 year groups receive 6 weeks targeted support, 29 subjects delivered over 44 sessions each week. Attendance rate 87.6%.

Overall quality of learners' achievement detailed in results obtained with wider suite of qualifications offered. QR tracking for clubs, Wider Achievement Whole School Tracker, Education Scotland STEM Nation award. Charity & Fundraising, Community involvement.

Equity for all learners. Whole school tracker & department awareness. Targeted support for those with barriers.

SMcL emphasized the consultation process undertaken with PC throughout each session, in order to ensure parent body opinion obtained.

Kenya Trip

ID notified meeting in respect of the Kenya Trip, three staff Miss Eagan, Mr Wylie & Mr McCue accompanied 33 young people to Kenya. They were faced with emotionally challenging situations and encountered some difficulties whilst delivering PSE lessons to different schools, incredible ambassadors for their generation, not just for the school. Staff are attending a presentation on Friday to be shown the slides. KM expressed her daughter had had a fabulous experience. Instagram page displaying African children's joy. AM detailed whole experience was an emotional roller coaster with the build up, funding, sponsorship, networking, communication, few bumps along way but great experience. Will take long time to digest highs and lows but a fantastic journey. Interesting feedback for Instagram, another group down south followed. All came through with flying colours and very worthwhile experience. Two different videos have been produced, one hard hitting the other lighter in content. Details will be shared with parents on parents evening Mon 4th November.

4 AOCB

School Uniform Policy

SMcL with consent, had circulated to all members a detailed document received from member of the parent body questioning the current school uniform policy and requesting PC members consider it's content. Concern was expressed regarding the type of clothing worn by pupils ie blazer, shirt, trousers/skirt, tie and formal shoes, suggesting less formal attire such as a plain polo shirt, trousers/jogging bottoms and trainers be adopted instead. ID advised members he did not wish to influence any discussion. Members thereafter freely expressed their own opinions in respect of uniform criteria. Although members could see both sides, overall support for the current uniform policy was overwhelming. One member, being a former teacher, expressed that given a choice pupils had elected wearing a shirt and tie (in a different school), further comments such as 'need a dress code', 'states a connection - what's wrong with it' 'saves lots of money – can easily lose control', 'Uniformity going to BA / Turnbull', 'Blazer has lots of benefits', 'having consistency', two members expressed

Westercleddens decision whereby following a survey 95% of P7 chose shirt and tie option over polo shirt (other than PE days) making move to S1 much easier. Comment was made that the document was 'too far the other way', one member expressed that trainers for walking to and from school might make things easier, it was pointed out that given Scottish weather formal shoes provided more protection than trainers. Lockers also permit alternative footwear storage. Discussion regarding skirt length also took place with members observing that parents permit YP to attend school in this fashion. ID clarified that Blazers are allowed to be removed in class and jumpers are optional. There is flexibility in respect of weather (eg footwear in snow) and should there be any legitimate issue (ASN, injury etc) wearing uniform, a uniform pass can be electronically detailed on register so YP does not need to stand out. One member concurred with this having had experience of the uniform pass. ID also detailed that the school uniform bank is available to those who are not able to readily access uniform.

ID thereafter provided members with feedback from the Bishopbriggs Academy SHINE mental health survey undertaken by Glasgow University for 2023/2024 session. This is undertaken directly with the pupils without staff involvement. 1119 pupils were offered the opportunity to take part, 262 elected not to do so with 77% submitting responses. From this survey it was clearly evident that appearance featured in 24% girls reporting low happiness in year groups S1-3, concerning 48% of girls within S4 year group. Boys did not reflect the same concerning levels in respect of low happiness.

Headline findings detailed;

- Comparisons between pupils was a contributing factor to negative feelings around appearance.
- Pupils expressed a lot of issues around bullying, particularly around appearance but also skin colour/hair colour mentioned.
- Uniform was seen as a positive leveller in the context of comparisons between pupils but some pupils thought this was undermined by being able to wear whatever they want in PE.

Pupil comments recorded included the following in respect of uniform;

- Non-uniform days good and bad – you can express yourself but also people can make fun of what you are wearing.
- Uniform is good, it avoids people comparing themselves to others.
- Issue with PE uniform as it leads to pupils comparing what they wear

Given these observations obtained directly from pupils, by an independent body, positively support the school uniform policy, all members were in agreement that the survey has satisfactorily reviewed the policy and there is no requirement for any amendment.

Action SMcL to notify parent accordingly.

School Mobile Phone Policy

ID clarified school mobile phone policy will remain the same, following query in respect of updated Scottish Government guidance where use left to discretion of Headteachers. Mobile phones are not used in classroom unless accessing questionnaires, teams, worksheets or novels. Mobiles provide essential diabetes tracking and monitoring for some pupils and also provide safety reassurance for parents when pupil travelling to or from school. ID is unaware of any event in respect of S1 pupils and expressed social media may be issue. Number of parents do not govern use of mobile phone in respect of their YP and fact Instagram should not be accessed until 13yrs was voiced. Satchel should be the primary source of information coming from the school and should there be any issue the admin team are able to contact parent/carers. ID advises that there is a need to encourage responsible use of mobile phones and S1 parents evening provides platform for advice in respect of Snap chat and What's App,

do not allow your YP to join a What's App group of 240 people. No members had issue with policy.

Leavers Hoodies and Year Book

Ms McSherry is overseeing this and has confirmed that the orders are in and payment is being collected. Leavers books are in hand with house captains from each house organising. Publishing company have been contacted and deadline is end of February to complete, this will ensure sufficient time to address any issue.

School Capacity

SMcL expressed concern at the consistent growth of the school with the school roll showing 1331, 107% of its capacity of 1244 as shown on the 2022 School Estate Stats. Following a freedom of information request to EDC, the current P7 year group numbers of the associated primary schools show 254 pupils collectively, the P6 year group numbers are at 239. (EDC projected figures in November 2019 estimated 188 S1 year group intake for 2025 session and 186 for 2026 in respect of new housing developments within the catchment).

All secondary schools within the LA area exceed 100% capacity presently with the exclusion of Kirkintilloch at 95% capacity. Owing to the nature of the local demographic, large family homes vacated by elderly residents are sought after by families looking to capitalise on the excellent schooling, resulting in an ever-increasing demand. ID in agreement that action needs to be taken, there is scope for four more modular classrooms, however a more permanent solution is required. ID is liaising with Gavin Haire (head of EDC estates) in respect of possible extension to current building but this cannot be discussed until a solution is found. Criteria for admission to the Academy has been utilised this year – (criteria explained to members not already aware) and fraud squad has had impact on those renting properties in order to gain admission. Fewer people are now trying it but it can be difficult with genuine circumstances such as marital breakdown. ID advised that staffing has increased comparatively over the last number of years, reassuring members that staff are not placed under undue pressure given the high expectations of them. Practical elements such as exam provisions also need addressed, given not only larger year groups but also those requiring separate accommodation, the current exam facility within the gymnasium holds 204 pupils and in one exam, 45 pupils required separate accommodation. Impact on all pupils and staff needs to be properly considered. ID assured that this would be the case.

Comann Nam Parent

SMcC queried additional Gaelic Teacher post on behalf of Comann Nam Parent, requesting whether position could be amended to permanent, due to no expression of interest despite three advertisements being published. Owing to the location of most of the qualified teachers likelihood is family removal from Island areas would be necessary and no one is willing to undertake this for a temporary position. ID advised that he was confident funding would be secured for the position, having secured funding two consecutive years but advised that there is no leeway for the position being made permanent. Those in a permanent position do not want to take the gamble applying. Should the Gaelic PT teacher Mrs MacLeod be absent for any reason, there will be a big impact. ID advised that should this be the case the post would be a temporary promoted post and confident that this would generate interest. A second member of staff would also free Mrs MacLeod to deliver History and Modern Studies. SMcA to email ID in order to try and progress further assistance with Scottish Government.

S4 Prelim Timetable

ID advised that the S4 prelims will commence on 29th November, the timetable will be communicated after the LA review concludes. Members were informed that pupils will be on study leave for the duration of the prelims, not all schools do this, however the experience reflects that of the actual exam period in May and June and is beneficial for both pupils and parents. S4 learner slides have been circulated and school calendar on web site provides relevant information.

Prom Night

ID informed members that a provisional booking has been made for the usual venue of the Old Fruit Market on 6th June, it is hoped this can be amended to 13th owing to school show clash. Venue is self contained and allows safe, direct bus transport. Members will be updated.

AGM

Constitution

JC advised that current constitution for PC does not appear fit for purpose and requires updating. Small working party requested to look at modernising the constitution in order to ensure that it accurately reflects our role. KM, LA, SMcL, KF and AL volunteered to address this.

Action – to report back progress at next meeting

Election of committee

JC advised members that he had undertaken the role for four years and was happy for someone else to take the role. No other nominations were made for any position, all committee members were happy to remain. Elected as follows;

Chair – Jonathan Campbell proposed SM, seconded by KM

Vice Chair – Allison Lunan proposed by LA, seconded by JC

Clerk – Sam McLean proposed by KM seconded by KF

SMcL advised members that no information in respect of GDPR has been received from EDC. Therefore, no detail of members, other than names (which are a matter of public record on the minutes) would be supplied meantime.

JC thanked everyone for their attendance.

Next Meeting Date:

Tuesday 14th January 7pm – Conference room