

BISHOPBRIGGS ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING AND THE AGM OF THE
PARENT COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 25th FEBRUARY 2025



Present: Allison Lunan, Sam McLean, Jane McIntosh, Jo Whittet, Lynn Armour, Julie Dey, Ashwathy Rajagopal, Ian Donaghey, Linda Lumsden, Cllr Gordon Low, Cllr Lynda Williamson, Melanie McKendrick, Jonathan Campbell, Linda Bowers

Apologies: Kirstie Mendham, Steph Fowler, Peter Tracey, Shona McCarthy, Kenneth Lawani, Julie Watson

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.

- **SQA Timetable** - SMcL advised members that email, on behalf of PC, highlighting concerns in respect of SQA exams, raised at previous PC meeting, had been forwarded to SQA and also cc'd to MSP, EDC and Chief Invigilator. Although no direct response received from SQA, the matter has been satisfactorily resolved as highlighted in letter (via email) from SQA, forwarded from Scottish Government. This has been circulated to members. ID expressed DHT Ewan McRae wished to express thanks to parent body for their aid in resolving this matter. Cllr Williamson told members this situation was across board in Scotland, not just in EDC. Hayward Review trying to implement curriculum model as aware of pressure YP under.
- **Constitution** – SMcL advised members that initial constitution rewrite has been progressed by working party and will be forward to members for observation and comment.

3 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

SQA Timetable

ID again expressed the thanks of staff for the resolution in this matter, owing to the rescheduling of 14 exams across the diet, the initial exam start has now been moved forward a day to Friday 25th April. This has impacted the planned 6th year event, which has been rescheduled to Wednesday 23rd April at the Eagle Lodge. An amendment to Woodhill Evangelical Church as there was no availability on this date. Pupils all return to school following the Easter break on Tuesday 22nd April, senior phase pupils commence study leave on Thursday 24th April with exams starting this year on Friday 25th April.

Support Programme

ID advised that the supported study programme starts this week, classes after school are smaller in size and there are also support programmes online so people can access it. Communication has been sent to parents for them to be informed. If YP does not present for the class parents will be advised. JW requested that should a teacher not be available to deliver the class for any reason, please can parents be advised? ID notified that this should not

be the case as there are no parents evenings running through March and staff availability has been maximised for supported study programme. Miss McPhee will be requested to send out email if teacher for any reason is unavailable. Staff availability for the Easter study programme, running through the first week of Easter holidays (Mon 7th – Fri 11th April) is currently being obtained. Morning session 1000-1200 and afternoon session 1300-1500, this provides four hours of condensed study, giving structured routine of going to bed early, rising early and being able to study, gives structured approach and helps last minute preparation. These sessions will cover Nat 5 and Higher for S4-6 pupils, those sitting Advanced Highers need to be self sufficient in study. Provision is excellent but there is no budget for it. This is not targeted and anyone who wants to attend can, it is not supported study.

LA expressed thanks for school doing this along with programme in December. ID detailed that he is a great believer in preparing YP for exams. Study Leave is known about and a great learning experience so YP should have a better routine, ensures YP are best equipped for exams. School ensure YP aware of all study methods and find one best suited to them. ID gave example of radio playing songs, where lyrics can be recalled, study is no different if repetitive it becomes subliminal and can be recalled under pressure. Targeted workshops for S4 and S5 and also some for BGE too, there is a PT Attainment for both Senior phase and BGE.

Option Choice Process

ID discussed the Option Choice process being undertaken in respect of S2 presently, with Option choice return on Monday 3rd March. During parents evening, subjects were being sold and school try to make it as informative as possible. There was a brilliant turn out for each presentation and 95% parents were in attendance. This is first experience of subject selection, narrowing 15 subjects down to 9, it is complicated if YP needs to change mind later on and it is an important evening. PT of Pathways, Mr. Carey has developed document Pathways, clearly detailing subject choice pathway to careers available for that subject, it is on school website under learning, also showcasing careers with advice, a successful introduction.

S1 Careers Event is taking place on Friday 28th February. It is the culmination of an IDL event that has been taking place all week and will include 30 partners in attendance. Each partner will have a stall to showcase the pathway, the benefits and experience of pursuing such a career.

Staffing

ID informed members that PT Guidance for Muir House, Alice Curry is retiring at end of this school session. He expressed his thanks for her work and stated that she will be sorely missed. The position will be advertised nationally in the coming weeks.

School have currently got a number of teaching jobs advertised on My Job Scotland;

Permanent jobs include 2 x maths, 1 x music, 1 x drama, 1 x English, 1 x computing. Temporary posts also advertised. Very lucky as incredibly sought after posts, school is within the central belt and is desired school to teach at, will be inundated with applications and just getting through leet is a huge process, followed by a walk around with selected candidates, observed lesson and then finally interview.

School have appointed a permanent teacher of Gaelic who is also an English and Spanish teacher, this is a huge asset. Starting at the end of the month before Ishbal McLeod, PT

Gaelic, goes on maternity leave. Temporary post advertised for PT Gaelic meantime, exciting times for the expansion of Gaelic.

Success Stories

Blessed with lots of unbelievably talented YP throughout all areas, very well catered for and supported by staff to harness, nurture and showcase through competition.

Faraday challenge - product design competition. Create product - child toy, disabled related sports. S2 won last year, this year came with sensory element and alert. Won first prize (school used to host competition but it is now at Science Centre). Anyone in technology can enter and put their name forward.

Barr mock trial. School have achieved the UK National finals for the second time, having won the Scottish finals. Won for the first time two years ago. Team going down to London on the 22nd of March. Two years ago, school team came third. Mr Gilmore and ID going down Friday with the team and coming back on Sunday. Team exceptional, long history of debating from S1 onwards culminates in this bar mock trial. ID is impressed by how composed young people were during the competition and how they dealt with it.

F1 with schools competition. Engineering design car goes into drag race. Team won Scottish finals and went to national competition in Sheffield last year. This year school have two teams entering, team Apex and Wyvern, hopefully both will do well going to national finals on the 26th and 27th of March in Sheffield.

4 AOCB

Request for Advanced Higher Computing Course

AR advised 8 pupils undertaking Higher Computing with no provision for Adv Higher, queried whether there was any reason for this. ID fully explained staffing issues and demands on the three members of staff in computing presently, this was fully explained to members alongside additional finance required. If only two classes were required at Nat5 level this would open up opportunity for 6 periods needed for advanced higher tuition, however demand is for three classes. Need a big demand for subject and presently this is not evident and there is insufficient budget. YP choosing to take subject are able to travel to Turnbull to pursue subject. ID has staffing and each department is accounted for and demand makes the choices, staffing based on roll. In the traditional model everyone has same choice - now there is a much larger choice e.g. psychology, criminology, childcare & development. Department has grown substantially. Computing interest declined but interest is now growing again. If there were three full time members of staff, school would be able to offer advanced higher computing but is presently under threshold. This can be revisited if only two S3 Nat 55 classes occur, it is not a case that school do not want it, it is a budget constraint. LR asked whether college paid for the consortium arrangement. ID informed members that BA has the largest curriculum in Authority. Consortium arrangements are in place with EDC schools. ID explained manner of provision in respect of arrangements, ie timetable and travel requirements for those pupils undertaking this arrangement, there is always some impact as only 6 non contact periods, which would be time used for travel and will need to fit in with other subjects. YP have to consider whether they could achieve it. ID clarified all is free through consortium arrangement, largest consideration is can the YP manage undertaking this. LL queried dance and advised still waiting to see whether the Higher can be run, ID understands only 5 or 6 pupils expressing an interest which is not many, something else in PE dept would need to go to accommodate this. ID detailed that BA has a 96% success rate of catering for curriculum choice. It always poses a challenge.

Career Day for older classes

AR enquired whether there was any option for S3 or S4 to also have a career day as felt S1 date is too early. YP having so many choices at this stage but input does not make a huge impact. At S3 or S4 they absorb information much better. ID stated careers advice is holistic - S1 and every year group has an input, S1 will sit down next year to do options, they panic at S2 so that is the reason why they're exposed at S1. They are thinking of what to do.

Discussion took place among members with one accounting inspiration for their child at P7 by one teacher, view was held that exposure to as many careers and opportunities to try and narrow down choice was beneficial. YP have had more time to learn about things and options. ID detailed every task in class is related to meta skills. School wants YP to detail the meta skills in my world of work, every YP has an account, there are also two career advisors in school. DYW every week, school facilitate building CV into lessons and meta skills. Pupil profile by S3 (mini CV) it is not just one event, number build in every year, earlier invested in it make better choices later on. Every child is different, some can't get enough of it, others are not interested. LA feels well prepared for option choices. ID detailed 100% positive destination and positive pathways from the school. AR clarified a graduate apprentice programme is available after S4 at JP Morgan.

School Capacity

SMcL requested whether any update available in respect of school estate, Government Schools Estates information has now been published for 2024 and concerningly shows no amendment to either capacity or proposed building works for the school. Seven of the eight EDC schools are over 100% capacity; the remaining school is at 95% and is not able to accommodate the additional capacity the local authority needs. ID updated members that work is planned to extend the PE base, ELR department now have an additional classroom at the loss of a meeting room, this is now finished. A temporary furniture store housing EDC orchestra equipment presently, is being looked at to convert this to another classroom (orchestra equipment to be relocated). These are the only works being planned.

Councillors advised that previously detailed deficit of staff within canteen has been addressed, and pressures relieved for lunch time. ID reiterated that intake for next years S1 has been capped at 240, and any pupil number over that will be relocated. SMcL enquired when the notification would be provided to P7 pupils in respect of position at BA, ID clarified that the Fraud team, through sheer volume and need for transparency will be challenged to ensure criteria complied with but will ensure full picture obtained and criteria consistently applied. There will be many irate and upset parents and ID believes notification will be received in May, allowing appeal process during June. Registration process has been bought forward to accommodate this. ID informed members that the staffing allocation for the school has been increased and has been able to expand curriculum, is confident that this can be addressed in coming weeks and will manage 1350 pupils next session.

Twitter

Cllr Williamson sought members thoughts and opinions in respect of 'X' (formerly Twitter) from LA perspective. Discussion took place with a variety of observations being expressed. These were noted by Cllr Williamson. ID advised main point of school communication is Satchel.

JC thanked everyone for their attendance.

Next Meeting Date:

Tuesday 29th April 2025, 7pm – Conference room