

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting

Johnstone High School

5 Sept 2016

Attendees

Parents: Diane Spence (DS) Chair), Paul Cameron (Sec), Neil Fowler, Andy Steel, Shirley Ormond, Jaqueline Tavendale, Lorna Hendriks, Cassy Auld, Anne Campbell, Lesley Anne Reid, Elaine Gray, Gillian Williams, Kirstin Lyons & Angela Kerr.

JHS Staff: Lynne Hollywood (LH) (Acting Head Teacher), Ryan Miller (RM) (Depute Head),
Councillors: Cllr John Hood (JH)

Apologies: Arlene Motherwell & Cllr Iain McMillan

Resignations: Elaine McDonald & Mick Fulton (Teacher)

Diane welcomed everyone to the 1st meeting of the new session, introducing new members Angela Kerr and Cassy Auld.

Previous actions:

DS highlighted the previous actions from the minutes, all addressed.

- New members selected.
- Amendment to the constitution.
- Introduction of 2 new subgroups.
- McGill's contacted again, no response.

Minutes were approved.

PC Chair Update:

(DS) attended the last Parent Council Chair Liaison meeting. Minutes from that meeting will be distributed as soon as received. She also highlighted that parent forum information is available on the National Parent Forum of Scotland website.

Head Teachers Report.

(LH) discussed the items in the HT report. The Head Teacher's report will be posted on the school website along with the school summary improvement plan.

Further discussions around the following items.

- Staffing

Parents expressed concerns around the maths department as the school is currently short two maths teachers. (LH) acknowledged this and explained that fortunately two of the Depute Heads are maths teachers and are currently covering classes until the posts are filled. Recruitment of new maths teachers are in process. (LH) informed the Parent Council that there is a national shortage of maths teachers however it is a priority to try to fill these posts.

The Parent Council highlighted several staff changes and asked if this is a normal level of staff turnover?

(LH) replied yes, it is normal, especially now, when often teachers have been promoted, retired or a school has a new intake of probationers.

- School values have been set.

Determination, Friendship, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Trust.

The Senior Management Team are developing ideas to have assemblies around the school values.

- **Pupil Events.**

The new funding subgroup agreed they would try to raise funds via grants and sponsorship initially to buy new football kits for all year teams (S1-6). The estimated cost is around £1500. Previously the school did not have a Parent Council funding group. The Parent Council are keen to support the school in this way and hope to be able to fund “extras” for the pupils of Johnstone High in the future.

- **Duke of Edinburgh Awards**

(LH) confirmed there are currently five volunteer staff delivering DofE Bronze and Silver awards within the school. A discussion occurred around the large uptake for places on the S3 Bronze group, where a ballot would likely take place to confirm numbers. Currently there is no Gold DofE group within the school due to limited demand, however it can be done out with school. DofE update report in November.

Primary Road Shows & P7 Open Evening

Last year the P7 Primary road shows were very successful and helped to combat some unhelpful school publicity that had been around at the time, resulting in the expected number of 1st year pupils attending Johnstone High.

(LH) asked if any Parent Council members would like to join the SMT on their evenings at the primary schools to answer any questions from P7 parents or pupils?

(LH) issued various dates and times for P7 roadshows. Several Parent Council members volunteered to attend.

(LH) thanked them.

The P7 Open Evening is on Tuesday 25th October. Parent Council are invited to attend if possible.

ACTION: (DS) to arrange a small Parent Council group to attend the P7 Open Evening.

SQA Results

(LH) & (RM) presented the 2016 SQA results to the Parent Council.

In terms of results, August 2016 saw some significant successes and achievements at individual pupil, subject and whole school level.

Pupils:

We are particularly proud of our 4 students in S5 who achieved 5 A Highers, the additional 7 students with 4 A Highers and the 22 who obtained 5 Higher awards. In S4 we were pleased that 7 pupils achieved 7 A passes at National 5 level, another 8 had 6 A passes at Nat5 and another 9 obtained 7 Nat5 awards. We had 9 S4 pupils who undertook their Higher Music a year early – 8 obtained an A pass; an outstanding achievement.

Departments:

There were noteworthy performances at Advanced Higher level especially in Chemistry, Biology and History.

81 pupils passed higher English this year and 18 obtained an A pass. At National 5 level 139 pupils passed in S4 with a 92% pass rate and 58 S4 pupils got an A at Nat 5 English; this represents an excellent overall performance. The department is now able to take on Advanced Higher this session.

The languages department did very well especially in French (15 A Higher passes) and Spanish where no pupil obtained less than a B at Higher and there was a 100% pass rate at Nat5.

Modern Studies also had a very good year where 8 out of 9 pupils in S5 gained an A pass.

Finally, at Nat 5 PE had a 91% pass rate with 23 A passes and Admin had a 92% pass rate.

Whole school:

It was the best year on our records for pupils gaining 1+ Higher or 3+ Higher awards and the second best year on record for 5+ Higher awards. Our Advanced Higher performance was outstanding with a 9% increase in pupils gaining 1+ AdvH from the previous year (and was our best performance on record). Similarly, best performance in three years for pupils in S4 obtaining 5+ Nat5 awards. However, analysis shows us that we still have a job to do. Our performance amongst our highest achieving pupils is improving, however for less academically able pupils we must do better to ensure that all our youngsters leave us with 5 or more level 3 (Nat 3) awards and a qualification in literacy and numeracy. Moreover, when we measure ourselves against the Renfrewshire average we are behind in almost every measure except for Advanced Higher performance.

All departments have been asked to complete a SQA action plan to address lessons learned from session 15/16 and we will also be doing this at a whole school level.

Following the presentation from (LH) a general discussion around both the positive elements and how to improve areas that need attention.

(RM): The school is implementing an improvement plan. The new stats software allows the school to look at class to class and compare them across the country. The school can use these stats to support staff especially if there are areas that staff need to develop to improve attainment.

(LH): is delighted that English has improved and would like to see this replicated in other areas too. The school is focusing on supporting less able pupils and pupils from lower SIMD areas. The poorest performers are boys from SIMD 1-2 areas.

Parent Council: A comment was made for a need for more parental involvement. One parent found it difficult to contact the school although others had had a good experience.

(LH): will take this individual case forward out with the Parent Council forum.

Parent Council: A general discussion took place around homework. There were conflicting thoughts on homework whether too much or too little.

(LH): Is working with pupils and staff to introduce the new school homework policy.

Funding Initiatives.

Currently there are various local and National Funding initiatives.

Renfrewshire Council's "**Tackling Poverty**" initiative has an education element, including joint employability opportunities targeting pupils from SIMD 1-2 areas. Within JHS one initiative is the **Parenting Partnership Project**, which encourages parents who may have had a negative experience of school to engage and come into the school. The project includes parent and pupil cooking lessons, health education, science and parental literacy. It is being facilitated by teachers from English, Home Economics and Science departments. It allows parents see what school offers their children, reframing "school" for them and this in turn helps support learning at home.

Scot Gov's "Attainment Challenge"

Renfrewshire Council is now an Attainment Challenge authority. There will be council wide bids for monies from the Challenge Fund to help support pupils from SIMD 1-2 who might be falling behind at school. Various proposals are being taken forward. (LH) is on the council's working committee for the bid.

Scot Gov's "Innovation Fund"

(RM) is working with Mrs Haggerty to develop a £5K bid for a Literacy initiative.

Scot Gov's "Pupil Premium": The school can be awarded £900 per pupil who are receiving free school meals to support those students.

The school welcomes any monies; however, all funds must be targeted and evidenced.

(LH) will pass on more information as it is made available.

Parent Council Subgroups:

Two Parent Council subgroups have been set up and the following members have agreed to join.

Engaging with Parents

Aims to improve tracking, monitoring and reporting to parents. Also, to maximise the reach of engagement/communication between school and parents.

Members: Kirstin Lyons, Gillian Williams, Paul Cameron, Lorna Hendriks, Angela Kerr, Elaine Gray lead by Ryan Miller.

Action:(RM) will send out details to arrange a 1st meeting.

Funding/Sponsorship

Aims to raise school funds via grant funding applications and sponsorship for funding requirements of whole school and specific departments, e.g. school grounds, ICT equipment, football kit and sports equipment.

Members: Neil Fowler, Andy Steel, Jaqueline Tavendale, Anne Campbell, Lesley Anne Reid, Cllr John Hood lead by Mr Fulton.

Action: Mr Fulton will send out details to arrange a 1st meeting.

(LH) suggested that the Parent Council set up a Treasurer's bank account and obtain charitable status to make applying for funds easier. There was a general discussion around how the Parent Council could fundraise. (DS) suggested it would now be beneficial to have a treasurer's role in place within the Parent Council.

Action: (DS) to open a Parent Council Treasurer's account.

AOB

Cllr (JH): Reported that the path at the back of the school was strewn with litter and asked if pupils could be told not to drop their litter.

(LH) stated that pupils are repeatedly told not to litter, and acknowledged there is a shortage of bins.

Action: Cllr(JH) offered to get a bin installed.

Diane brought the meeting to a close and thanked everyone for attending.

NEXT MEETING

Mon 7th Nov 7pm