

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting and AGM

Johnstone High School

23 May 2016

Attendees

Parent Council

Martine Wylie, Aileen Brown, Kirstin Lyons, Lesley Reid, Jaqueline Tavendale, Neil Fowler, Arlene Motherwell, Elaine Gray, Gillian Williams, Anne Campbell, Paul Cameron (PC) - Sec, Diane Spence, (DS) - Chair.

Parent Forum Members

Iain Beverlard, Heather Luton (McFadden), Jean Mcfarlane, Cassy Auld,

JHS Staff

Lynne Hollywood (LH), Mick Fulton, Ryan Miller,

Councillors

Cllr John Hood (JH)

Apologies

Elaine McDonald, Lorna Hendriks, Shirley Ormond, Cllr McMillan

Diane welcomed everyone to the first AGM of the current Parent Council.

Item 1: Previous actions

DS: Highlighted previous actions from the minutes, all have been addressed.

Item 2: Chairperson's report

DS: Delivered the Chairperson's report. This report will be posted on the school website with the minutes from the April meeting.

LH: Thanked Diane for all her hard work as Chairperson over the last year.

DS: Asked the parent members and forum if there were any questions regarding the Chairperson's report.

Parent: Will the Head Teacher position be filled soon?

DS: Explained that following on from an action from the last meeting, Mr Dewar contacted (DS) regarding the appointment of a new head teacher. He advised (DS) that acting positions can be in place for 23 months. Mr Dewar confirmed that Mrs Hollywood would continue as Acting Head Teacher for the next school session 2016/2017. This would provide the school with stability and continuity.

LH: Added that Mr Peter Macleod, Director of Children's Services would soon be issuing a letter to Johnstone High School to inform the parent forum that Mrs Hollywood will remain in position as Acting Head Teacher until June 2017.

Parent: Will the Duke of Edinburgh Awards continue?

LH: Yes. The Duke of Edinburgh Awards are run by staff and volunteers. In addition, Mr Mackenzie, a staff member who previously ran DofE is planning to return next session.

JH: Stated that Parent Councils can apply to the Local Area Committee (LAC) fund for financial assistance for DofE. LAC funding is not specific to DofE, therefore the school could apply for funding for other initiatives in the school.

Parent comment: It is good to see pupils competing in the local sports competition.

LH: The school have introduced extra-curricular activities including sport and drama after school. The school are currently researching the demand for these activities. School are aware that some pupils are not able to take part in these activities as some have to get school transport home. This issue is being considered.

Item 3: Election of new Officer Bearers.

Diane and Paul agreed to be reselected in their roles as Chair and Secretary. This decision was unopposed. No parent members wished to stand for election at this time. The Parent Council continues to have no Treasurer.

DS: Aileen Brown & Jennifer Ballantyne wish to step down from the Parent Council. DS thanked them for their contribution. As a result, there are now 2 member places available on the Parent Council. Two new members will be selected from the current waiting list. DS explained that new members were randomly selected from within associated primary areas, to ensure there is a balanced representation of parents from across the associated primary schools within the Parent Council.

ACTION: DS to facilitate the selection of 2 new members.

Item 4: Parent Council Waiting List.

DS: Suggested that we update the Parent Council waiting list next session to ensure it is current. It was agreed parents wishing to be included on the Parent Council waiting list will be required to complete the relevant form in the school data pack at the start of the August term. This includes existing parents on the waiting list wishing to remain on it.

ACTION: DS to arrange an amendment to the constitution regarding the waiting list.

Parent: Why is the Parent Council restricted to 20 members?

DS: Parent Council agreed that 20 members was a manageable size, prior to confirming in the constitution.

LH: Highlighted that parents are welcome to come to any Parent Council meeting but they cannot vote.

DS: Highlighted that parent members have to attend at least 50% of the meetings within a school year and should not miss three meetings in a row.

Item 5: Parent Council Meetings

DS suggested that next year we schedule Parent Council meetings to once a term, rather than as currently approximately every 6 weeks.

There followed a brief discussion and comments.

Would having less meetings, impact the progression of the school improvement plan? It was highlighted it would leave a long period between Parent Council meetings.

Acknowledged there was a need for regular monthly meetings at the start of this school year as there were many school issues to discuss, following the important senior staff changes at the start of the year. Highlighted that the school is now much more settled and that the number of Parent Council meetings required should reflect this. Agreed, if additional Parent Council meetings were

required then they can be called. The Chair and Head Teacher acknowledged flexibility with their HT and Chair meetings and would meet to discuss any additional issues as required.

The school now has an improvement action plan and that plan is now in place and progressing well. Senior Education Officials and local representatives at Renfrewshire Council are very happy with the progress of the school. Acknowledged that monthly Parent Council meetings can put additional pressure on Senior staff.

Parent Council: A vote was suggested regarding making Parent Council meetings less often, once a term.

Vote was passed in favour of having meetings once a term 14 for / 1 against.

Vote carried, we will have meetings once a term.

Item 5a: Sub Group meetings

DS: Suggested that Parent Council could now evolve to reflect the improvements in the school? Suggestions, introducing subgroups to work with the school on specific areas, helping to organise school events, sponsorship/local funding/fundraising, involving parents to come in to the school to talk about their careers and the school being involved in local events.

RM: Suggested a sub group on parent views on reporting eg: the reports that are given to pupils.

JH: Could we invite some of the pupils from the pupil council to the next meeting?

Parent Council: What are the links like to local organisations (eg: rotary) for funding.?

LH: A lot of these links come down to contacts, so a lot of the STEM connections have been developed. At the moment there isn't a real chaplaincy connection but this is being addressed.

Parent Council: LAC, Local Area Committee is a potential source of funding.

DS: Liliias Day and other village Gala days could be an opportunity for the school to be involved with.

JH: Mentioned that Johnstone Gala day is starting up again.

DS: Historically it is the S5 + S6, who do a lot of the fundraising within the school.

Parent Council: What are we raising funds for? eg: IT facilities.

LH: Explained "School Funds" are monies that funds the "extras". It is not for learning and teaching. The School funds are low at the moment as not much fund raising has occurred. This fund would normally cover things like award ceremonies and some trips, etc.

DS: Asked Parent Council members to look out for sponsorship/ funding/ grant opportunities and if any members had experience of filling out funding applications.

DS: Asked if anyone would be interested in taking part in a Fundraising/ Sponsorship sub group?

Lesley Reid, Jaqueline Tavendale, Anne.Campbell, John Hood, Michael Fulton and Neil Fowler put themselves forward.

DS: Suggested another sub group for "Engaging with Parents"

Gillian Williams, Ryan Millar, Kirstin Lyons & Paul Cameron put themselves forward.

DS: Thanked Parent Council members for volunteering to join the sub groups.

ACTION: DS to implement sub groups at the 1st Parent Council meeting next school session.

Item 6: Staffing

LH: Some Parent Council members are involved in the assessment centre for a new DHT.

LH informed Parent Council that the school management team will be extended, with an additional Temp DHT for one year. The Local Authority have supported this to continue to the progress of the school improvement plan.

LH: The SMT have been working extremely hard to take the school forward. The new temporary DHT is an additional resource to support this improvement agenda.

Item 7: AOB

1. Travel/ McGills/ Kilbarchan

DS updated Parent Council that no further communication had been received from McGill's, regarding Kilbarchan routes to JH and complaints made about a particular local bus route. DS asked MW if she still wanted to take our issues forward. MW replied yes and may have to consider the option of a private bus service.

ACTION: DS will email McGill's again requesting an update.

2. Exit Interviews with Parents

Aileen Brown: Asked would it be useful for the school to know the perception of someone who has been through the school?

LH: JHS is about to put out an HMle type questionnaire to gather views from parents about the school.

RM: Suggested that we could use Survey Monkey, to gather parent feedback.

Parent Council: Suggested there might be some value in interviewing parents whose kids are leaving as they have no agenda.

3. Timetables

Parent Council noted that office/support staff names were on the new timetables, (eg: support staff running Maths Classes).

LH: Explained that "Place Holders" were in place until the timetable is finalized eg. probationers start in August. Unfortunately, the software system for writing timetables does not allow for including TBC names so real staff names have to be used. To avoid a different kind of confusion, the school sometimes uses office staff as "place holders". This has been communicated at school assemblies and it was stressed that only TEACHERS take classes.

JHS have quite a few part-time staff so there are some splits, where classes are covered by two different teachers. There have been efforts to minimize this and it will improve after the summer term.

MF: Highlighted that the majority of split classes have worked well.

LH: The school will get 5 probation teachers across a range of subjects which will be beneficial as they bring enthusiasm and ideas.

4: Exam timings

Parent Council: Is it normal that Higher exams are mainly in the morning & Nat 5 in the afternoon?

LH: This is set by SQA and applies across Scotland.

Parent Council: Has there been an impact with the dining hall being next to the exam hall?

LH: Only one exam - a music listening exam required special intervention, a slight 10min delay, so lunch would be over.

5: Upcoming events

Wednesday 25th May: P7 Transition evening

Tuesday 31st May: Parent groups DHT assessment Centre

Tuesday 31st May: Vision, aims and values meeting

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

Next meeting

Dates to be confirmed and communicated.