

Minutes of Parent Council A.G.M.

Johnstone High School

19th February 2018

Attendees

Parents: Diane Spence (DS), Cllr Bill Binks (CllrBB), Anne Campbell (AC), Lorna Hendriks (LH), Elaine Gray (EG), Paul Cameron (PC), Kirsten Lyons, (KL), Cassy Auld (CA), Tracy Scott (TS), Jacqueline Tavendale (JT), Gillian Williams (GW), Jean McFarlane (JMcF), Lesley Reid (LR), Cllr Andy Steel (Cllr AS), Simeon London (SL), Alain Dempster (AD)

Staff: Lynne Hollywood (LH), Ainsley Brown (AB)

Apologies

Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting 13th November 2017 were reviewed and approved. The actions from the previous meeting were as follows:-

Contact Persimmon Homes to see if a grant or fund is available – <i>(AC) submitted an application and will update the Parent Council should we receive any funds</i>
Screen shots of Show My Homework App to be made available on the website – A section on Show My Homework is available on the new-look school website
Repeat parent/child school dinner and Show my homework evening for P7 c. March – decided this is likely to fit better with events for P7's being held in May/June
Obtain a plan of school grounds to enable consideration of school grounds layouts – To be confirmed
Ask Graeme Johnston (Technical) to consider design for School Grounds furniture – this is underway and on track
Show Parent Council Members around the new Nurture Base at the February meeting – on the agenda for this meeting
Can we get an indication of the usage of the Maths Digital Library
Share information on after school club app at February Meeting – no information available at this time

Chairperson's Update

DS welcomed new Parent Council members Simeon London and Alan Dempster. DS also advised that Kerry Crichton, Angela Kerr and Martine Wylie had all resigned from the Parent Council and thanked them all for their support.

Treasury Report

The funds stand at £20,272. The funds were boosted by the very successful Christmas Fayre which netted a profit of £1349. Special thanks was given to Kirsten Lyons for all her hard work in co-coordinating the craft exhibitors.

Donation to school funds

Parent Council agreed to donate £500 to the school funds. This was gratefully received by LH who explained that the money would be put towards the running of the school mini-bus and the purchase of award badges and certificates for pupils.

Joanne Sturgeon

DS congratulated DHT Joanne Sturgeon on her promotion to the Head Teacher post at Drumchapel High School. On behalf of the Parent Council DS asked to pass on our best wishes and thanks to Joanne.

School Funding /Grounds Project

Plans are underway for an outdoor classroom area and meetings were being held with the community payback team and a wood recycling company to get quotes and further support.

The intention is to use recycled wood for chunky tables and benches which would be stained black in colour due to climate considerations. Coloured pots of shrubs would add colour to the area.

There is a fund-raising group meeting on 6th March to look closer at the plans and an update from this meeting would be circulated. DS will ensure that quotes are circulated before any commitment is made to spend funds. (1)

The back of the school will be cleared to make more space available for the Home Economics Department vegetable garden.

There is also a proposed kiosk being offered by the council which could provide additional outside food vending facilities. Graeme Johnston will provide plans with and without the kiosk

The Parent Council concern is that they would prefer better food to be served to pupils rather than the same food but from a different outlet (kiosk). (LH) said that the school had been promised an improved menu since Christmas. The Council is referring to the outdoor outlet as a kiosk now rather than a van.

A discussion took place about trying to keep pupils within the school grounds at lunchtime and LH explained that Mr Menzies and Mr Miller regularly go outside of school at lunchtime to disperse groups of pupils who are out of the school parameters. This regular patrol by the DHTs is gaining praise from residents in the local community and noticed by pupils.

Nurture

(AB) provided the Parent Council with an update on the development of the Nurture Room. This initiative is being funded from half of the Pupil Equity Fund (the other half going towards an additional guidance teacher). (AB) explained that this classroom environment created a homelier environment for S1-S3 pupils where they could learn in a more relaxed and supportive atmosphere. Pupils could take the confidence they gain from this experience into the classroom.

The Parent Council were shown around the Nurture Room. The feedback was excellent, and it was agreed that this was a great initiative and that (AB) had done a fantastic job in transforming the space. The Nurture Room would be shown to parents at an open day after the school inspection has taken place.

Head Teacher's Report

The full Head Teacher's Report is available on the web site.

Staffing

LH explained that the staffing situation had improved slightly with teachers appointed on a permanent basis to PE, Modern Languages and English.

LH explained the biggest staffing issue is long term absence and that DHT and guidance staff were covering classes. In particular, it was noted that Mr Palombo and his team have been working extremely long hours to ensure that the English Department is appropriately covered, and the Parent Council noted how pupils felt very well supported by Mr Palombo and his department.

Joanne Sturgeon's vacancy has been advertised and (LH) noted how the number of applicants was very encouraging.

School Life

Parent attendance at school events remains at a high level.

The craft fayre was very well attended and some special thanks was noted again for Kirsten Lyons and Diane Spence for all their hard work in making this event happen.

School Improvement Agenda

The Pupil Equity Fund is less this year but is still sufficient to cover the nurture room and the additional guidance teacher.

Press

There was good press coverage in 'Oor Toon Johnstone' about the Christmas gift handout. It was noted that there had been mixed publicity about the education trip to New York and it was explained that there are other school trips at different costs and not just exclusively New York. It was recommended that in future there is standard format for communicating all school trips (2)

(PC) asked why the school relied on Twitter which is geared towards a different demographic. (LH) explained that by including Facebook in the school communication plan it would only increase the number of streams that staff had to keep on top of. (LH) committed to revisit this after the summer (3)

LH explained that with the cost of postage increasing the school rarely engages in large mailings and would continue to rely more on electronic communication.

School Inspection

The school inspection team will be returning at the end of February and (LH) and (DS) asked for support from parents with regards to meetings with the inspectors. The outcome from this inspection could be either (i) the school is signed off (ii) they would come back and re-inspect, or (iii) where a report from the Council is sought after one year. It was noted that the school would not be regraded but only signed off or not.

Governance Review

The Scottish Government is continuing to review the option of Regional Collaboratives with other schools as oppose to working in smaller council areas. Renfrewshire is part of the West Partnership – 7 large local authorities. The government is also looking at a Head Teachers' charter which may include, for example, a statutory responsibility to close the attainment gaps in schools.

A.O.B.

(KL) asked the school to consider having a source where pupils could find extracurricular activities that would support their work or university applications. (LH) said this sounded like a role that the children's employability service at the council may fulfil. Cllr Steel said that he would make enquiries including an approach to Wilma Leburn, Development Officer for the Employability of young people at Renfrewshire Council.

1	Quotes for the outdoor classroom development to be circulated to all PC members	DS	ASAP
2	Standard format for communicating all school trips/excursions	LH	By August 18
3	Revisit the advantages and disadvantages of having a school facebook page in August 2018	LH	By August 18
4	Request to Council and Wilma Leburn for a list of extracurricular activities that pupils could engage with to support their applications for work and university/college	Cllr Steele	ASAP

NEXT MEETING & AGM: Monday 4th June 2018 at 7pm