

Minutes of Parent Council

Johnstone High School

25th February 2019

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 Attendees

1.1.1 Parents:

Diane Spence (DS), Elaine Gray (EG), Kirsten Lyons, (KL), Lorna Hendriks (LHe), Gillian Williams (GW), Jean McFarlane (JMcf), Simeon London (SL), Alain Dempster (AD) Cassy Auld (CA), Jacqueline Tavendale (JT), Laura Noon (LN), Paul Cameron (PC), Tracy Scott (TS), Debbie Kilgour, Karen Walker, Gillian Whyte, Nicola White

1.1.2 Staff:

Lynne Hollywood (LH), Ainsley Brown (AB), Pierangelo Palombo (PP), Leigh Cole (LC), Maggie Payne (MP).

1.2 Apologies

Cllr Bill Binks (CllrBB), Anne Campbell (AC), Lesley Reid (LR), Christine Kearney (CK) Cllr Andy Steele (AS).

2 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19th November were reviewed and approved. The actions from the previous meeting are as follows: -

Explore potential work placements through 'Community Benefits' scheme.	LH	On-going discussions with council and Amanda Carling re work placement opportunities.
Request to be made for donation of Tombola prizes for Christmas Fayre.	LH	Complete
Explore text messaging to inform parent of supported study classes.	LH	The supported study classes are now secondary to the new 'booster classes'. Details of the offered classes will be sent home to parents this week and are available on the JHS web-site.

3 GUEST SPEAKERS

3.1 Maggie Payne - Place2Be Counselling Service

- Place2Be provides counselling services in both Primary and Secondary Schools in the UK and established in JHS in October 2018.
- JHS is one of two schools in Renfrewshire providing this service.
- The counselling provided can be offered in two formats, a 'drop in' Place-2-talk and counselling on a one-to-one basis.

- The 'drop-in' format, Place-2-talk, started recently within the school and a few pupils wishing to talk have already approached Maggie. Maggie recognised that it may take some time for this service to be accepted by the pupils as she builds their trust.
- Counselling on a one-to-one basis is also provided, with a capacity of 12 spaces throughout the academic year. Each session lasts for 50-minutes and these are offered for a period of 1-academic year. However, the timeframe is dictated by the needs of the student and on average the sessions continue for around one term. This allows the service to be offered to additional pupils over the course of the academic year.
- All discussions between the pupil and the counsellor remain confidential, unless a pupil's safety is at risk where further interventions may be required.
- The requirement for Mental Health first aid training for staff is recognised in the school improvement plan. Maggie has already delivered sessions to raise awareness of these issues with several of the school guidance staff.

3.2 Leigh Cole DHT attainment

- Leigh provided a summary of the S4-S6 prelim results.
- SQA have brought forward the deadline to 28th Feb, for schools to submit their final candidate numbers, detailing all subject and exam levels or unit only presentation requirements. Consequently, the earlier deadline reduced the time available for marking the prelim papers and implementing any necessary follow-up action.
- Results suggest a number of level changes may be necessary through S4-S6. In each case, parents and pupils will be consulted to establish the optimal level of assessment required.
- LC also stressed that changing from Nat 5 to Nat 4 level can prove challenging as, in some cases, the course content is not hierarchical and time is extremely limited putting pressure on the delivery of any new course content before the SQA exam period begins in April.
- To counter these challenges LH consulted with the Parent Council around the proposal that the Prelims could take place before the Christmas break in future years. To allow this strategy to be effective it will require certificated subjects to begin after timetable change in June.
- To support students with their exam preparation structured 'booster' classes will be available as well as the more ad hoc 'supported study' sessions. Pupils must indicate their intention to attend the booster classes by signing up for the sessions. The sign-up sheets will be available in the hall from Monday to Friday lunchtime, the week prior to the scheduled class.

3.3 Parent Council Chair update

3.3.1 School Grounds Plan

- Delivery and installation of the new outdoor furniture is scheduled to take place during the Spring break period with completion hoping to be prior to the pupils' return. This is dependent on the completion of all risk assessments by Renfrewshire Council.
- To help foster pupil engagement with the outdoor improvement project, students will be encouraged to participate in planting and maintaining the containers and raised beds. (1)

3.3.2 Financial Report

- Balance of funds: £15,991.09
- Christmas Fayre profit: £1164

- JT has secured £250 in match funding for the Parent Council from her employer. Our thanks to Jacqueline and The Royal Bank of Scotland for their support.
- Parent Council will donate £500 to School funds (2)

3.4 New Business

3.4.1 Renfrewshire Council Attainment Challenge

- Renfrewshire Council received an 'excellent' rating in the Scottish Government Attainment Challenge following the recent Education Scotland Inspection. The authority is the first in Scotland to gain this level of commendation recognising their 'progress in improving literacy, numeracy and work to close the poverty-related attainment gap'. Further information about the attainment challenge achievement is available at: <http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/8622/MEDIA-RELEASE-Renfrewshire-Council-first-in-Scotland-rated-as-making-excellent-progress-in-raising-school-attainment>

3.4.2 Johnstone High Inspection

- One year has passed since the JHS Education Scotland continuing engagement inspection and a progress report is now required.
- LH will formulate this report highlighting progress in the 5 "development areas" suggested following the original inspection in 2017. (3)
- To validate and ratify LH's report, Maureen Sneddon and Julie Colquhoun will visit the school to meet with pupils and staff as well as observe lessons.

3.4.3 School Calendar

- The creation of a small sub-group to proof read the new calendar was requested by LH.(4)
- Prelim examinations will now move to December in the 2019/20 session.
- The activities week at the end of the summer term will be restricted to the final 3-days of the session. The normal timetable will be followed until this point to ensure delivery of the required SQA curriculum

3.4.4 National Empowerment agenda

- Item held over until next Parent Council meeting.

3.4.5 Easy Fundraising

- Donating through Easyfundraising will be withdrawn as this is competing with the 'World Challenge' fundraising page and has had minimal success. (5)
- LN raised the possibility of fundraising by running a 'School Lottery'. This will be discussed further at the next Parent Council meeting

3.4.6 A Closer Look

- The Art department received a positive report following the 'Closer Look' SMT review in December. The department is currently very strong. A small number of improvement areas were suggested to enhance the department further.

3.4.7 Duke of Edinburgh

- There will be an update meeting scheduled within this term to discuss the Bronze award progress for last year's candidates.

- It is hoped that JHS staff will complete all necessary training to allow the school to run this year's Bronze DoE programme without reliance on the Community Learning Development team.
- Silver award, 1 pupil has completed the award requirements, other have items outstanding and will be notified of the remaining tasks to expedite completion.

3.4.8 Mental Health

- Fully funded online courses offering a level 2 accredited qualification in 'Mental health for young people' or 'Autism' will be offered to JHS staff.
- These courses may also be made available to parents.

4 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

The complete HT report is available on the school website and school app.

<https://www.johnstonehigh.co.uk/>

5 A.O.C.B.

- SL raised concerns expressed by a number of parents regarding the current options forms.
- Some students are significantly restricted in the choices that are available to them due to the current column make-up.
- LH explained that the columns are constructed from the 'dummy' choices run where the pupils indicate what subjects they would like to pursue in the coming year.
- This data is then analysed and the columns constructed to give the maximum number of pupils their desired range of subjects.
- The current column configuration provides an average efficiency of 94.5% (92% S4/5; 97% S5/6) and is the optimal layout based on the subject choices suggested by the students.
- LH stated that options interviews will be held with the students and parents before subjects are confirmed. However, if pupils / parents are experiencing difficulties in making suitable subject choices they should contact the school to arrange a meeting to explore any possible solutions.
- Parent council members asked if it would be possible to have more parent input into the 'dummy run' in future years, as some pupils may make ill-advised choices in the first instance which could adversely bias the data input into the analysis defining the column configuration.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING/AGM - Mon 13th May 2019

6 ACTIONS

1	Planting and maintaining containers and raised beds	Mick Fulton/ Pupils	On-going
2	Donation to School funds	DS/GW	asap

3	Final progress report, Education Scotland	LH	April 19
4	Sub-group to proof read new calendar	DS	asap
5	Withdraw Easyfundraising account	DS	asap