**PEEBLES HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL**



**Parent Council Meeting**

**23 September 2020**

**Teams Meeting**

**Attendees**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Glenda Barton, Chair, Parent Council (PC) |  |
| Campbell Wilson, Head Teacher (CW)Justin Noon, Depute Head (JN)Dr Kirstie Carvalho, Principal Teacher for Learning & Teaching (KC) |  |
| Eric Nightingale (EN)Tristan ComptonSarah KeenClaire BarrettMorven Smith | Sarah Keen Vanessa RiceRachel BeattonSarah Duncan (SD)Susan Jarvis (SJ) |
| **Apologies :** Vicki Swan, Muriel ForemanThe meeting was also attended by many new parents and we were delighted to welcome them. |  |

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome / introductions/ apologies / Minutes sign off**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.

The previous meetings’ (there were two meetings on 20 August) minutes were approved with one addendum:

SBC have responded to the question ‘**If there is to be no music tuition why are SBC still charging fees for tuition and will there be a rebate?’**

SBC Response: we guarantee 28 lessons a year and this would include virtual lessons this year. If this number is not reached then parents may get a rebate, though each circumstance may be slightly different.

**2. Open Forum Q & A. Focus on S3**

**There have been no parents’ evenings and no feedback on S3 learning due to the fire and Covid - what plans are in place to help S3 make choices?**

CW: As soon as we are able to have virtual parents’ evenings, S3 will be given priority. The dates for parents’ evenings are yet to be determined (this is with the Local Negotiating Committee for the authority). Parents’ evenings will all be virtual for the moment.

JN: The Choices process for S3 – S4 incorporates information evenings, parents’ nights, reports. There will be virtual information evening for parents – this is likely to be just after Christmas. The school website holds all information around courses and choices so have a look at that ([Our School – Curricular Options – Course Choices.](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sb/phscoursechoice/)  Teachers are always happy to discuss with pupils in their classes and Pastoral have conversations with all students. There is a robust process around making the right choices at this stage.

**Homework – there is very little being set at present. Are there some guidelines given to teachers about homework, how much should we be expecting?**

CW: In the next few weeks all staff will start to use Show My Homework (SMHW) again. During lockdown we stopped using SMHW and used Teams instead because there was some duplication of work for staff and we wanted it to be consistent for all learners. Now that we’re back at school, we can use SMHW again and all staff should be using this by Monday 5th Oct. Whatever is on SMHW should also be on Teams as this is the main vehicle for posting work for pupils. I will feed back to staff that parents want to see SMHW being used again.

**NB: Show My Homework is now called Satchel**

**I am concerned about the leap up to S4 – is there a strategy to ‘catch up’ this year group?**

If there is insufficient homework being set, I will feed this back to staff. There will be a discussion at our next Leadership Team meeting about this and about setting the appropriate amount of homework.

**Will teachers be using SMHW it as a feedback tool as well? Teachers can mark and you can see how a pupil is performing.**

CW: I’ll take that to the LT meeting too.

**S3 reports - it’s 18 months since that year group had reports due to the fire and covid. Is it possible to get a written report if face to face conversations with parents are not possible (and are often very short)?**

CW: There is no report scheduled before October – I will look at the calendar and let you know.

Other parents on the call concurred with these views expressed on homework and feedback.

**Time out of school due to fire/Covid, pupils are behind where they should be at this point. I’m curious what is being done to assess and close this gap?**

CW: I do accept that a lot of learning has been lost due to the fire and Covid. We are constantly working hard to get everyone back on track and where they should be. Perhaps a subgroup would be useful re homework and recovery of learning.

Tristan Compton took an action to support such a subgroup for S3. Lots of parents in the meeting expressed an interest in being on the group.

**When will S1 parents get access to SMHW?**

JN: We weren’t sure SMHW was going to be used until now so S1 logins haven’t gone out yet. They will go out on a letter next week.

**Do the S1 children get split into different ability levels for Maths?**

JN: This year, no. This year S1 are in form classes for maths. Previous years have been in ability groupings at point of transition. This year the P7 – S1 transition was disrupted due to Covid.

And there are no plans to introduce ability levels for S1 this year because there is less scope for maths classes to move around.

**3. Learning and teaching (L&T) update - Mr. Noon/PT L&T**

Mr. Noon gave an update on the Learning & Teaching framework, which was started last year, with

engagement with parents and some work carried out such as ‘open doors’ observation days to work towards a L&T framework for all teachers. However, because of the fire and Covid, the progress made was not as hoped.

Mr. Noon introduced Dr Kirstie Carvalho who has recently been appointed Principal Teacher for Learning & Teaching and will be progressing this work.

Dr Carvalho: I was curricular PT at Jedburgh Grammar – been at PHS 15 months. Really excited in this post, really passionate, excellent L&T is our no1 priority. Main part of remit and first thing to focus on is building a framework of L&T. This framework is a shared understanding of what does highly effective L&T look like in the classroom, a consistent and shared understanding across all staff. The timeline is quite ambitious – to have it complete by January. There will be lots of work between now and then, gathering stakeholder input from staff, parents and pupils. Once this framework is in place this is central to everything to improve L&T.

Three main areas to look at:

Structure of lessons – what feature of lessons have the biggest effect on student learning

Pedagogy – how teachers deliver that learning

Things other than the above: – classroom ethos, behaviour management, resources, relationships between pupil & teacher

I’m keen to get parents involved and have their input for the framework. Would you be interested in getting involved in this? What are your most important aspects of Learning & Teaching? e.g. homework? The Parent Council could help with feeding back on the draft framework.

A discussion took place around L&T and PC involvement:

KC would welcome working with other PC working groups e.g. curriculum group and neurodiversity group. We want this to meet the needs of every pupil in the classroom.

A question was raised about taking best practice from other frameworks PHS could learn from rather than reinventing the wheel. JN answered that there are so many things that impact on learning. When a school creates its own framework, it really helps embedding in the culture. It isn’t really making it from scratch, it’s a really powerful part of the process.

Professional coaching for staff has been offered in the past from a parent.

Perhaps we could incorporate ideas from feeder primary schools.

A question was raised about including pupils in the design of the framework and could this be facilitated by someone external to teaching staff to get a richer input from them.

KC confirmed that pupil voice will definitely be feeding into this framework. Pupils are best placed to tell us what’s going on and what they’re experiencing.

A question was raised about what success would look like. Is it ‘excellent’ inspection? Exam results?

JN: The framework is so important. It will exemplify what we should be doing and build consistency, coupled with professional learning. We’ll see incremental improvements over time.

Curriculum and course content are the ‘What’; Learning & Teaching is the ‘How’.

Q: What should we assume is an average time that a teenage brain can be working? A stressed brain doesn’t acquire knowledge very well.

JN: Research shows it depends on the activity, e.g. listening – not long! Great teaching is about balancing all of this, with lesson structure, pedagogy. What looks like downtime is actually processing time.

Glenda thanked Dr Carvalho and Mr. Noon for their very useful coverage of this topic and invited parents to email phspc@outlook.com to express interest in being involved in this piece of work.

**4. Curriculum Survey**

SJ advised that the parents survey is back, and we are waiting for pupil responses to bring to next PC meeting.

CW explained about the delay in getting the pupil survey results back (Survey Monkey license had expired). However, staff and parent feedback has been analysed to some extent and there is fairly high commonality to staff and parents’ views. It will be interesting to see what pupils say. Looking to publish results of these surveys at the end of October. CW confirmed the staff survey results are with J Lee.

**CW/SJ/GB to have meeting to discuss survey results and bring to next PC meeting.**

**5. School capacity / rebuild**

Sarah Duncan shared the Property Subgroup Update (see appendix). JN explained about the blended learning model and timetable. Using this socially distanced model, PHS is constrained by the size of some of our rooms. E.g. the Millennium wing – where normally there are 30 pupils in a class, these rooms can only accommodate 8 pupils with social distancing. This is our main constraint.

A question was asked about disruption of teacher continuity using this model.

JN explained that this would have an effect. Under this model, S4 – S6 would have teacher continuity, but S1 – S3 would be in bubbles, having a Broad General Education (BGE) whilst at school, and follow their curricular choices when learning at home. Their teachers will post work for them for their home days.

Concern was raised by parents about this lack of teacher continuity for S3, when we are waiting for teacher feedback to take in account for making Choices.

Questions were asked about live streaming of lessons when at home. There is still Teachers’ Union pushback on this. KC agreed to consider remote learning when doing the L&T work.

**6. Working Groups**

The Chair covered the various Working Groups as part of the PC. Parents were invited to please contact us with interest in participating in any of the groups: e.g. Eco Group, Building Subgroup, Learning & Teaching. This will also be included in the post meeting survey.

Ruth Doherty offered to run a subgroup for University Applications. CW thanked Ruth for this kind offer. He will take this to students to find out what their needs are, so this working group could be responsive to these needs. The deadlines for Oxbridge are tighter. CW will reach out to students/pastoral and speak to this group directly and respond to Ruth within the week.

Request was made for any parent with experience in this area - university applications, interview skills, VetMed/Oxbridge – to let PC know, and Ruth will take forward.

**7. Post holders**

The nomination process for post holders for 2020/2021 took place as follows:

**Chair: Glenda Barton**. Nominated by Glenda Barton, seconded by Vanessa Rice

**Vice Chair:** Susan Jarvis, Sarah Duncan, Tristan Compton all applying for the post. A process will take place and we will report back at next PC meeting.

**Task Force**: (previously PHS 200) request was made for a project manager to coordinate this

**Treasurer: Eric Nightingale.** Nominated by Glenda Barton, seconded by Susan Jarvis

**Comms: Vanessa Rice.** Nominated by Eric Nightingale, seconded by Glenda Barton

**Lottery: Susan Jarvis/Eric Nightingale.** Nominated by Glenda Barton, seconded by Tristan Compton

**Fundraising: Claire Barrett.** Nominated by Vanessa Rice, seconded by Rachel Beatton

**External Funding: Sarah Keen.** Nominated by Glenda Barton, seconded by Eric Nightingale

**Clerk: Claire Barrett.** Nominated by Glenda Barton, seconded by Sarah Duncan

**8. Treasurer’s Report**

EN gave an update – see Treasurer’s report appendix. Agreement was reached to give £250 each to Maths and Modern Languages staff bases out of the PHS Lottery cash reserves for some items lost in the fire.

Agreement was also reached to offer a gift (value £25) to Charles Gray accountant who verifies the accounts for the PC.

**9. Charity update**

The Charity Trustees need to meet soon to discuss fundraising opportunities now that we are a registered charity.

The names of the trustees were shared, they are

Chair: Glenda Barton

Treasurer: Eric Nightingale

Clerk to be confirmed

Campbell Wilson

Sarah Duncan

Angela Dobie

Tristan Compton

A request was put out to any parents or carers where their employer will offer a charity match funding or any grants to please contact phspc@outlook.com

**10. Head teacher update / Q & A**

Mr. Wilson gave his update – see appendix – and questions followed:

Is there somewhere parents can see what should be taught in each subject for each year group?

Course descriptors are linked to Choices on the website. All courses are being added to Teams.

A question was raised about online learning at home, particularly for any child who is long term sick. Could lessons be live-streamed?

CW advised this is still an issue with Teacher’s Unions. It is open for staff to do, and they are aware of parental desire for it.

The Chair acknowledged this is an area parents are very interested in for Learning & Teaching, with the current Covid situation.

Mr. Wilson conveyed his thanks to parents for joining the meeting and said it was very heartening to see so many parents at these meetings. It makes these so valuable to hear all the questions and messages from parents.

The meeting came to a close just after 9pm.

**Next meeting: 27th October 2020**

**Contacts**

To join the lottery – email admin@peebleshslotteryorg.uk

Parent Council email: [phspc@outlook.com](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cclair%5CDownloads%5Cphspc%40outlook.com)

**Appendices:**

1. Treasurer’s Report
2. Headteacher Update
3. Property Subgroup Update

**TREASURER’S REPORT FOR PARENT COUNCIL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 23th SEPTEMBER 2020**

**Current Bank Balances**:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Bank Account | At 21/09/2020 | At 20/08/2020 | Movement |
|  | £ | £ | £ |
| PC Main A/C | 9,805.20 | 31,819.04 | (22,013.84) |
| PHS Lottery A/C | 4,410.11 | 3,439.74 | 970.37 |
| Total | 14,215.31 | 35,258.78 | (21,043.47) |

The PC Main account balance has reduced by £22,014. Reflecting the transfer of the final Fire Fund balance of £21,889 to the School and £125 final Clerk stipend payment for the year 2019/2020.

The £970 Lottery account increase is the consequence of additional ticket sales income, less the September 2020 prize distribution. The next draw is scheduled to take place on 14 December 2020.

**Fire Fund:**

Subsequent to the finalisation of insurance claim settlements, the outstanding Fire Fund balance of £21,889 was transferred to the school on 21 September.

£2,000 has been allocated to each of the following departments:

Physical Education

Sports Teams

Pastoral

Additional Needs

Modern Languages

Mathematics

The balance of £9,889 is to be spread amongst other Department at the discretion of the school.

**Request for Additional Support Re: Fire Damage**

The Parent Council has been approached by Teaching Staff associated with the Mathematics and Modern Language Departments, who are in need of new personal refreshment equipment and crockery permanently damaged by the Fire.

We have been informed that these losses are beyond the scope of the SBC insurance policy. Therefore, our proposal is to offer these two departments, subject to agreement in this meeting, £250 each out of the PHS Lottery cash reserves. The school management team will be responsible for reimbursing individual items purchased.

**Friends of Peebles High School Charity Update:**

Further to registration of the charity on 3 July 2020 I’m pleased to report that Royal Bank of Scotland plc has approved our application for a bank account, it was officially opened on 6th September. A note of thanks is extended to Rachel Beatton who helped fast track our application during the operational restrictions imposed by Covid-19.

An application has recently been lodged with HMRC to formally record our charity, so as to gain Gift Aid eligibility. Approval is expected to take around 4-6 weeks.

Eric Nightingale

21st September 2020

**Headteacher Update**

**Update for the Parent Council: Wednesday 23rd September 2020**

**Fire-safety:**

On Friday of last week, we participated in a Fire Safety Assessment led by senior colleagues from Health & Safety at SBC. We have addressed a couple of minor issues highlighted in that assessment and continue to do everything we can to be as safe as possible. Today we carried out ‘fire assembly point walks’ **with** every young person in the school. As soon as it is appropriate to conduct a full fire drill, we will do so. I am confident that we have communicated and ‘walked through our new procedures thoroughly.

**Staffing:**

We have been busy appointing staff since the start of term, which is customary at this time of year.

New Permanent members of staff – Ms Jen Ness is a new full-time permanent appointment to the English Department and joins us from Biggar High School. Due to start on 4th October. Ms Caroline McKaig was successful at interview for a permanent post in the Technical Department. She joins us from Gala Academy and starts on Monday 19th October.

New Temporary appointments: Paul Regan and Neil Hattie join the Social Subjects department on contracts up to Christmas. Both are recently qualified teachers with experience of teaching in various schools in the central belt.

Internal appointments to newly created promoted posts:

* PT Learning & teaching: congratulations to Kirstie Carvalho who was successful after a competitive interviewing process; she joins us this evening.
* PT Additional Needs – two members of staff were successful at interview for the post vacated by Alan Stewart – Lynn Bertram and Gill Geddes will be taking on the role until Christmas. Lynn Bertram Tuesday – Friday and Gill Geddes on Mondays. All of us are keen to see our young people with complex Needs returned to the school site as soon as possible.

We are currently advertising for a maternity cover in the Chemistry/ Biology department.

Overall staffing levels are good, and relatively settled for the session.

**School Improvement:**

* The final School Improvement Plan - now shared with SBC and will be uploaded to the school website as soon as it is signed off

Pupil Support – short life working group on attendance means that there will be a significant tightening on attendance procedures led by Mr. Fagan. We are aiming to run some pilots on attendance over the course of the session

Delighted to be sharing progress in Learning &Teaching this evening.

**Blended Learning:**

 Everyone should now have received a letter outlining attendance patterns for their children. We hope that it will not be required. SMHW will be used if we are in a future or partial ‘lockdown’ model

**Curriculum Survey:**

Embarrassingly, our Survey Monkey account has expired, and we are processing payment at present – the survey has been closed and we await reactivation of the account this week. We shared staff and parent results prior to the pupil survey and there was broad alignment in parent and staff opinion. It is important we consider the voice of our young people before making any final decisions. I aim to conclude this work and communicate the future direction of the school to all stakeholders prior to the end of October

**Fire Monies:**

Grateful receipt of nearly £22000 which will now be passed on to the agreed recipients.

**PHS Property Subgroup Update – 23 September**

The subgroup recently submitted parents’ concerns about the current accommodation to the SBC Property Team and subsequently met with Mr. Wilson to discuss the issues raised.

The priority issue discussed was that Enhanced Provision is not yet back on site and there is currently no plan for how to accommodate the provision on site. Mr. Wilson confirmed that the aim was to achieve a return to site this academic year, but SBC had not yet found a solution that provides disabled access, toilets and shower. The group agreed to seek a meeting with the Project Lead and Mr. Wilson agreed to consider how to improve school links with pupils and staff to reduce the impact and request SBC consider inviting portacabin suppliers to design a showcase facility. There was also discussion around the potential for parents to seek out of area placements and SBC would need to consider the financial impact of that.

The second priority issue was the Art Department facilities which currently have little practical space to complete 3D pieces, display work or store complete pieces. Mr. Wilson confirmed he had located a cupboard for storing SQA work and would consider options for community display of work. The property group agreed to investigate arranging an independent assessment of facilities in relation to deliver Curriculum for Excellence.

Further issues discussed include Capacity (6 classrooms to replace the 26 spaces lost is the minimum that was required to get back on site and is not sustainable), Study/Quiet Spaces (assembly hall and atrium available throughout the day and library being used to access college courses, The Store is available for pupils with additional support needs), Technology and Outdoor Space (lack of seating and shelter) and financial commitment to the rebuild project (impact of improving current accommodation on rebuild project).

Meetings are now scheduled to take place week beginning 28th September with Councillors and the Project Team and the Project Lead has offered to attend the next PC meeting in October/November.

END