

**Balerno High School Parent Council
Minutes of meeting of 5 November 2012**

1. Present and Apologies

Present

Aileen Macleod, Parent Member (Minutes)

Bruce Collie, Head Boy

Gillian Miller, Head Girl

Graeme Sives, Head Teacher

Helen Purves, Chair

John Thomas, Parent Member

Lindsay Fullarton, Staff Rep

Marion Milne, Community Council Representative

Mike Humphries, Parent Member

Jenny Grassick, Staff member – for first 5 minutes

Apologies

Liz Carrie, Sue McLeod, Kirsty McKeown, Parent Members

2. Previous Minutes – Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. No matters arising.

3. Jenny Grassick, Curriculum Leader – Health & Well-being

Jenny attended to ask if we would help encourage parents to join a focus group she would like to hold with S1-S3 parents before the end of the year if possible. She is reviewing the reports which are sent home before parents' evenings. Pupils will also be consulted.

We agreed to draft and issue the invitation.

4. Parent Voice

S5/S6 information evening feedback

It was agreed that this had been a successful event. Helen posted a summary account of the evening on the PC website after other PC members said they found it helpful. Graeme said the feedback from the evening had been positive. Graeme also said that it had been a good opportunity to explain the rationale behind the changes to scheduling of prelims and the issuing of the new S5/S6 Guide to key dates and deadlines booklet, designed to assist in study planning. John queried the ease of access on the school website to the school calendar and Graeme said he will speak to Luke McAllister about making it more user-friendly.

Window Replacement

Helen asked for an update on progress getting assurances from CEC that the work will take place in the near future. Ricky Henderson is looking into the financial situation on our behalf. Graeme had a meeting with the Head of Schools, David Wright, which had taken place on the school premises. This had allowed Mr Wright the opportunity to see first-hand how bad the situation is, with many windows with broken seals allowing heat to escape all winter leading to very high heating bills and staff and pupils working in cold classrooms. Graeme is hopeful that progress to resolve this situation is being made and that the finance department is looking into it.

S1 Focus Evening

Discussion took place to identify a date when Lindsay (S1 lead) and Graeme will be free to join this event. The evening of Tuesday 27th November was suggested in order to fall within the PC's desire to hold this during S1's first term, and to give enough notice to ensure volunteer facilitators' availability and send out an invitation to S1 parents. It will start with a plenary session and then parent volunteers will lead groups in discussion and will end with an information gathering session.

Problems about e-mail access were aired as there had been some confusion about how the PC could communicate information about this event to all parents. The discussion led to the conclusion that Graeme will ensure that the PC can access the parent body through the school's e-mail contact system as soon as possible. Time delay had transpired through the cycle of admin staff lettering parents and waiting for a response to ensure the highest possible proportion of accurate email addresses.

Venues for 2013 PC Meetings

As discussed at the previous meeting, the parent council is keen to hold two of its meetings at Kirknewton and Ratho primary schools. The suggested dates for this are

14 January at Kirknewton Primary School

11 March at Ratho primary school

Mike and John agreed to speak to the respective head teachers of these schools to confirm times and dates.

5. Headteacher's report

Seemis is now allowing a period by period registration system so parents are alerted if a pupil does not attend class.

Preparations are in place for a **Remembrance Ceremony** on Friday.

Staffing: Luke McAllister has been appointed as Head of Learning Support. There are vacancies in PE, Maths and English.

SQA results meetings have now been conducted by Jim Gladstone and Graeme with all departments. Each department had submitted their analysis of how their exams had gone. It has been a valuable experience and will serve to continue to promote good practice and look at areas for improvement and what intervention is required.

Progress had been made in the development of **online questionnaires** which will be used in future by staff, parents and pupils.

6. Senior Pupil Perspective

The **chosen charity** for this year's fundraising efforts is Teenage Cancer Trust.

Halloween dress down day has already taken place to raise funds.

Pupil Council: The new pupil council system is progressing with the help of Mr McKinney. The new format will have twelve pupil representatives plus the head boy and girl. There will be an agenda for each meeting tackling such issues as Bullying or Learning and Teaching.

S6 pupils have been working with younger pupils on the buddying, paired reading and mentoring systems. These are proving useful for all involved.

7. Local Updates

- The 44 First Bus has stopped. A new terminus is being built and in future the buses will go round the loop of Balerno.
- The music festival was a great success and Marion thanked all those involved.
- The next festival on the agenda is the tree festival.
- MacTaggart & Meikel have applied to develop the house on the corner so there is a query over future opportunities to put up the banner, but with a suggestion some fixings may be made available on the wall.
- Balerno Library is looking for new premises to extend the facilities. The High School Learning Resource Centre (LRC) was proposed as a possibility for this.

8. AOCB

Forthcoming events

Information about two future opportunities for parents was shared.

1. A Curriculum for Excellence Conference for parents on 24th November. Six parents are invited from each High School. A letter or email will be sent as soon as the system has been clarified.
2. There is also an opportunity for a parent to attend a South West Neighbourhood meeting which includes ourselves, Wester Hailes Education Centre, Currie and Firhill High Schools, all feeder primary schools and associated nurseries as well as special schools on 19th November to discuss Neighbourhood issues of interest to parents. One of the intentions of the meeting is to elect two Neighbourhood representatives onto Edinburgh Council CCWP (Consultative Committee With Parents) which is in the process of being reconfigured. Ultimately a parent representative will be invited to sit on the Children and Families Education Committee. It was agreed Helen would attend on 19th November.

Project Dream

Lindsay outlined some of the work that was going into the current S3 cross curricular learning experience which was being enthusiastically engaged with by all pupils and staff involved, generating, much creativity, excitement and anticipation – along with just a few nerves – about the forthcoming presentation to parents. This is on schedule for 15th November. About 300 people will be able to attend. It will take place in the concourse and drama studio. There is funding for a professional production company who will film the production from Tuesday pm through to the event itself. The filming is for inclusion on Education Scotland's information bank of Curriculum for Excellence practice in Scotland, and will also provide a means for the experience to be shared by other year groups and parents. The lyceum has provided professional expertise and resources. Lindsay praised the pupils and staff involved for their commitment to this which has been outstanding always keeping in mind that it is a learning experience for pupils.

The PC was keen to know if this would become annual. It is hoped by the school that the model will provide a template to repeat in the future.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 14 January - 6pm. Kirknewton Primary (TBC)