



Email: balernoehspsc@gmail.com

Minutes of Meeting of Balerno High School Parent Council 4th December 2017 at Balerno High School at 6.30pm

PC parent members

Andrea Brewster (AB) (Chair), Mandy Irvine (MI), Alastair MacLennan (AM) (Vice Chair), Utibe Udoh (UU), Jessica Bryce (JB), Sanjay Kallat (SK), Trish Lumsden (TL), Fiona McDougall (FM), Yvonne McEwan (YM), Blanca Nieto (BN)

Staff members

Neil McCallum (NM) (Head Teacher), Michelle May (MM) (PTC English, Media & Drama), Ros Ranger (RR) (Deputy Head Teacher)

School staff

Karen Thomson (CL Social Studies)

Senior pupils

Ben Wilson (Head Boy), Rhona Craig (Deputy Head Girl)

Councillors

Graeme Bruce

Parents

Angharad Storrie, Kirknewton PC Vice Chair

Fiona Bell, DPS PC Chair

Ruth Gillan

Elena Anoshkina

Apologies

Marion Milne (MM), Balerno Community Council rep

Caroline Anderson, Elaine MacMaster, Paula Miller, Christine Paterson, Peter Reekie, Parent members

Rehana Shanks, DPS Head Teacher

Carol Allardyce, Kirknewton PC Chair

Samantha Mitchell, Ratho PC chair

Annie Bowes, Head Girl

Ricky Henderson & Susan Webber (Councillors)

Introduction and Welcome

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

Minutes and Matters Arising

2.1 MI agreed to take the minutes.

2.2 The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

2.3 Alastair MacLennan was elected as PC Vice Chair, proposer: TL, seconder: FM

Head Teacher report

3.1 Mr McCallum gave his report

- **Staffing Update**

Leaving

Mr Terry Gilliland, FHT Teacher. Has left us to take up a Curriculum Leader position at Craigmount High School.

New Staff

Mrs Helen Kujawa (Curriculum Leader for Support for learning)

Mrs Kirsty Williamson – new support for learning teacher – starting December 18th.

Edinburgh Leisure

No further update at this point.

Events and News update

S4 Prelims – In process and results from the exams will be released from Monday 11th December.

S5/6 Prelims – The start date has been altered to a start date of 15th January and the school calendar has been updated. A Letter was issued to all S5 and S6 parents on Friday.

Parent Pay – A date has to be confirmed for the implementation of the Biometrics system. Letters will be distributed to parents of all year groups in due course.

Successes

Raising Teens with Confidence – V Wright and S Ferguson have run another successful six week course with over 20 parents attending.

Cool, Calm and connected – Where we have S6 mentors working with S1 pupils during their PSP time.

Tree of Knowledge – Worked with all of S4 on their “Laugh in the face of exams” course. This was to help prepare pupils to deal with the upcoming prelims and exam diet in May.

Leslee Udwin Visit – Today we had a visit from the BAFTA award winning producer and director. She met with S6 pupils’ delivering the MVP award and pupils from Currie HS. She gave a presentation and then did a Q&A session.

Excursions

Spanish Cinema trip – A group of S3 pupils attended a screening as part of the film festival

AH Biology trip – S6 pupils had a day of workshops at Edinburgh university to support their research skills.

Auschwitz visit – 2 senior pupils – Duncan Cameron and Rhona Craig visited Auschwitz concentration camp as part of a Scottish representation.

MUN Trip – 10 S6 pupils with two members of staff attended a four-day conference in Copenhagen.

February Study weekend – We have 24 pupils who have taken advantage of the study weekend at Ardentenny Outdoor Centre.

Sleep in the park - Six 5th Year Gold DofE participants - Jordan Mitchell, Esther Molleson, Thomas Lawson, Jack Lamb, Ciara McCulloch and Jennifer Mole (previously Balerno High School) are joining 8,994 others for Social Bite's Sleep in The Park-

<https://www.sleepinthepark.co.uk/> - this coming Saturday night, 9 December

- **Upcoming Events**

December

18th – Christmas Concert

22nd – End of Term (12.00)

January

8th – Staff Return

9th – Pupils return

15th – S5/6 prelims start

25th – S3 Parents Evening

25th – S3/4/5/ Coursing Evening

Head Boy / Head Girl report

4.1 Annie (Head Girl) could not attend this evening as she is at the screening of 'India's Daughter'. Leslee Udwin, the director of the film, came in to speak to the MVP groups earlier today. They found this very moving and inspirational.

4.2 PSP Survey - Going very well, $\frac{2}{3}$ done with just the S2s and S4s still to complete it. The results so far are very informative and helpful - displayed in graphs and charts along with additional comments as well. We look forward to presenting the final results at the next PC meeting.

4.3 Ceilidh - S5 and S6 ceilidh will take place next Wednesday afternoon (13/12). Donations will be accepted in order to dress down for the event, all of which will go to teenage cancer trust.

4.4 S1 Christmas Tree Decorations - S1s have been tasked with making decorations for their house's christmas tree which will be entered into the Balerno Christmas Tree Festival. The senior team and house teams have coordinated this and look forward to the competition.

4.5 Mallyen Variety Show - Mallyen's annual fundraiser, usually held in November, has been delayed until February due to several other events being organised by the house team.

4.6 Mallyen Trick or Treating fundraiser - This halloween collection managed to raise roughly £80 for charity.

4.7 Mallyen advent challenge - This fundraiser has just begun, all members of the school have been challenged to make a small donation every day on the advent calendar. The proceeds will go to Teenage Cancer Trust.

4.8 Pupil Council - The pupil council is running fantastically well, with fortnightly meetings on a Monday during PSP. All representatives are engaged and keen to contribute to discussion. The issues discussed are reported back to a member of SMT on the alternate weeks.

4.9 MVP and CCC - Both S6 groups are running smoothly through their respective programmes. Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) are working with the S2s each week and the Cool, Calm and Connected (CCC) group are doing the same with the S1s.

4.10 Winter Prefect Rota - In order to protect the prefects from freezing conditions during the winter months, the prefect rota has been adapted to be better suited for this time of year. This will hopefully be implemented as of next week.

4.11 MUN - 10 S6s were lucky enough to attend the international Model United Nations conference in Copenhagen. The group have reported it to be an unforgettable experience which they highly recommend to all pupils who have the opportunity to attend in the future.

4.12 Parents evening - The senior team, prefects and other S6 volunteers helped out at the S4 and S1 parents evenings recently. All those who came along ensured the evenings ran smoothly and kept any slightly disorientated parents right.

4.13 Cockburn Candy Canes - The cockburn house team are now running the candy canes fundraising event - give a donation to send a candy cane to someone in the school - all money collected will go to Teenage Cancer Trust.

4.14 St Andrew's Day Staff Party - For St Andrew's day, the staff had a small celebration. This included performances from Duncan Cameron (DHB) on the bagpipes, Annie Bowes (HG) reciting Tam O'Shanter and Emma McCrudden (S4) doing highland dancing.

Other Reports

5.1 A message from MM reminding everyone of the switching on of the community Xmas lights on Thursday 7th Dec.

5.2 AB attended South West Locality Group (SWLG) on 22 November. Issues discussed include access to wifi in schools, a review of HWB in the curriculum; a request for support with the Pupil Placing (Appeals) Committee. The next Consultative Committee with Parents (CCwP) meeting is on 7th December.

5.3 PTA – no updates.

5.4 No reports from Ratho PS. Representative from Kirknewton PS PC and Dean Park PS PC were joining the meeting later to discuss the South West Edinburgh Schools review.

5.5 GB informed the main topic in discussion at present was the South West Edinburgh Schools review. This was discussed under section 12.

Social Studies – Special Presentation

6.1 Karen Thomson, Curriculum Lead gave presentation explaining what Social Studies within the BGE entailed highlighting the themes of learning in each of the subjects. It was encouraging to hear of the excellent pass rates at National 5 and Higher and that there is an increasing interest in pupils wanting to take Advanced Higher studies. Please see separate link 'Social Subjects Presentation_PC_041217' for full content.

Pupil Support Period (PSP) & Key Adult time - update

7.1 NM reported that pupil and staff feedback is ongoing. NM commented on the robust pupil survey on PSP and thanks were given to the senior pupils involved.

Financial Update

8.1 No update given.

ParentPay Update

9.1 NM reported that there has been no movement with Parent Pay since the last meeting.

Parents Evenings feedback

10.1 AB and MM attended the recent S4 and S1 parents evenings on behalf of PC. They have collected a list of things that parents would a) like the school to start doing b) like the school to keep doing and c) like to school to stop doing. A summary of the comments has been forwarded to NM who is working with senior staff to create a 'You said, We did' style document in response. More details to follow in a future meeting.

10.2 Next parents evening is for S3 on 25/01/18.

BGE & website content – working group update

11.1 YM, BN and AB met with NM last week to discuss. A requirements design document will be produced by YM. There will be an opportunity of website training for other PC members and staff members in the near future to support ongoing website maintenance.

11.2 TL suggested that the school's weekend sporting achievements could be included in the daily bulletin on a Monday morning. NM to take the suggestion back to staff.

South West Edinburgh Schools review

12.1 A lengthy discussion included representatives from Dean Park PS PC and Kirknewton PS PC who joined the meeting at this point.

12.2 It was noted that Kirknewton PS parents hadn't been informed of the proposal from Edinburgh council as they are under the West Lothian cluster of schools.

12.3 It was noted that there had been no feedback to date to the BHS PC from Balerno parents.

12.4 Dean Park PS PC were present during their recent parental consultations to gain opinions from parents.

12.4 Currie High school parents are very concerned about the changes suggested in the schools review and how they might divide their community.

12.4 Further to the letter from Edinburgh council there has been no further information sent out to BHS parents. As a PC, how do we get a message out to parents in BHS catchment to get them involved in making a response on the review? Should this go out from PC or via the headteacher? AB to discuss further with NM.

12.5 There is a 'have your say' button on the council website. Should individual responses be logged there by parents or should PC gather response and send collated responses to the council? There was question about the weight of one response from the PC compared to numerous responses from individuals via the council website. It is also unclear how CEC will use the responses and how long it is possible to use 'Have your say'. AB to query further in the meeting with CEC staff on 5/12/17.

12.6 AB, UU, NM are meeting with Julie Kelly (Communities and Families Project Officer) on 5/12/17 to discuss the schools review and forthcoming consultation meeting which will be held between 09/01/18 and 09/02/18. What should this consultation meeting look like?

12.7 Mr McCallum will endeavour to engage with the West Lothian consultation which could affect some of our feeder primary schools.

Date / Time of next meeting

22nd January 2018, Ratho Primary School.

(Post meeting note – this meeting will no longer go ahead as the community workshop meeting on the schools review will take place on this evening, 6.30-8.30pm at BHS).