



## Balerno HS Parent Council

6.30pm, Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023  
Minutes

### Attendees:

#### Parent Council Members

Alison Robertson - Chair, Trish Lumsden, Lara Gregson, Simon Marr, Nick Weir, Emma Mowatt, Nanda Gronewald, Neil McHaffie, Jen Reay

#### Parents

Claire Porter, Mandy Irvine, Julia, Sarah, Aydin Coskiner, Catherine Currie Brown

#### Senior Management team:

Maree Anderson (MA) - Deputy Head Teacher  
Shaun Ferguson (SF)- Deputy Head Teacher  
Evonne O'Doherty – Deputy Head Teacher  
Cara Prot – Deputy Head Teacher

#### Teachers:

Jill Nitsche

#### Apologies

Ros Ranger, Karen Davidson, Marion Milne, Susan Kirby

#### Faculty Presentation - English, Media and Drama      Jill Nitsche

Jill Nitsche gave a very interesting presentation on the English, Media and Drama Faculty. Slides are available separately.

She reported that N5 Latin is available in S6 along with Higher Classics.

#### Rights Respecting School

Catherine Currie Brown reported that Rights Week is the 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> November. There will be various events happening throughout the week and as part of the week there will be a collection of for for Community One Stop Shop. There will also be a collection of study resources.

Pupils and parent are also encouraged to sign a petition for a Balerno to Livingston bus route.

#### Senior Pupils Report

Sophie Rushworth, Head Pupil and Euan Robertson, School Captain for Cockburn were at the meeting. The Senior Pupil Team have been busy:

- The House Points system has been reintroduced
  - House Captains are going to run events to compete for house points.
  - There is a Logo competition for the houses.



- There will be monthly quizzes.
- Prefects have been appointed.
- Senior Pupils will be involved with the Wider Achievement Evening
- It is hoped that the Senior Pupils will run a Christmas Fair for pupils.
- Inclusion House Captains are involved with Rights Week
- The Senior Pupils are coordinating the collection of Study resources for the study swap.

## **Headteacher Report**

Headteacher Report is available separately.

Prelim timetables will be out by the 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

## **Home Study Policy Maree Anderson**

Maree Anderson updated up on the new Home Study Policy. This is a rebrand of homework to try and encourage the consolidation and review of learning and not just being set specific tasks to do. This review started before covid and is now happening. It comes after consultation with parents. MA noted that an encouraging number of parents and carers engaged in the consultation and most parents and carers wanted their young people to be doing home study from S1.

The policy is still being fine tuned but it is hoped that it will;

- Be different to current homework
- Be flexible
- All learners should be able to take part
- Develop study skills from S1
- Support learners.

MA noted that in some situations traditional homework tasks will be necessary and that most of the home study will be digital. It is hoped that it will launch before Christmas.

There was a comment that certain subjects were still inconsistent with the homework on Teams. MA said that this would be tightened up and that every subject teams should have a homework section.

## **PC funds**

AR advised that the PC funds were still untouched. MA to find out about the Padlet costs that we had agreed to cover.

It was suggested that additional funds could be used to fund Vape alarms for the toilets. AR and NW are to investigate the possibility. This would then need approval from the council.

## **Toilets**

The toilets continue to be an ongoing issue with pupils finding toilets locked at times the school think they should be open. This was highlighted to the DHT's as the toilets should only be closed after break and lunch for cleaning. Boys toilets have had to be locked during class time due to vandalism but the girls should be open.

Prefect are helping monitor the toilets during break and lunch to try and ease the vaping problem.



There was extreme concern voiced by a number of parents regarding the QR codes that the young people have to scan to use the toilets during class time and the general toilet situation, some of the concerns were:

- What is the data used for, how is it stored, it is not anonymous so is this a breach of their confidentiality/ GDPR / Human Rights?
- Deeply personal data being stored on children
- As adults how would we react to having to scan a code to use the toilet. This is humiliating for young people and doesn't foster a feeling of respect.
- Teachers are still refusing young people access to the toilet, not just those that are known to be abusing the facilities.
- Parents need informed of all pupils abusing the toilets. SF noted that he had moved 30 pupils on from the toilets last week, to contact all the parents would be impossible. It was suggested that a generic email the office could send would make that easier and highlight possible vaping to parents.
- Young people are not accessing the toilets during the day, often reducing their water intake and rushing home and straight to the toilet, this is not good for their health.

Cara Prot let us know that the Pupil Council had been in agreement on the toilet QR codes.

### **Industrial Action**

There is proposed Industrial Action on the 8<sup>th</sup> November. Communications will be sent to parents and carers tomorrow.

**Next meeting Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023**