



LINLITHGOW ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 28th May 2015

DRAFT

Committee

Parent members: Elspeth Brown (Chair), Jo Smith, Laurie Boles, Douglas Gray, Mark Fulton, Kathryn Morrison, Derek Wolfe, Jen MacDonald, Catherine Devlin, Allan Watson, Lindsay Guthrie, Helen Boxall

Head Teacher: Karen Jarvis

Clerk: Jennifer O'Donnell

Apologies

Kate Signorini, Stuart Borrowman (Councillor), Alex Davidson (Councillor), Sarah King (Councillor), Tom Kerr (Provost) Peter Scott, Rhona White, Neil Anderson, Rebecca Carey.

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING: 24 MARCH 2015

Minutes accepted as correct. They are available on the school website under Information for Parents>Parent Council>Meeting Minutes.

Actions from minutes:

School Handbook: Included in 2015/16 Parent Council Priorities

Lunch Time Policy: Included in School Handbook.

Cyberbullying: Internet Safety advice has been provided on the school website and will be included in the June Newsletter.

2. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Staffing update

- Janet Cavin is moving to West Calder High School on 1st June.
- Evelyn Gribben moving to Armadale Academy on 1st June.
- Graeme de Sancroix is currently on a leave of absence for two years. Gillian McGregor will be covering.
- Linda Forrest retiring in June.
- Lynn Wearing returning to Maths in August following leave of absence.
- Kim Allison joined us on 25th May in the English department. She is covering Lisa Boyle who has requested a leave of absence for one year.
- Jenna Wells will join us in August until Christmas as Sarah Carney is on maternity leave.
- Audrey Henderson from St Margaret's Academy is joining us on 1st June for one year temporary voluntary transfer.
- NQTs (Newly Qualified Teachers) expected in Biology, Chemistry, Geography, CDT, Maths, RME.
- Home Economics post has been advertised.
- French / Spanish has been advertised for August until Christmas while Louise Mellan is on maternity leave.

Changes to Extended Leadership Team

In light of the need to include Music and PE into our faculty structure, there will be two new posts created:

PTC Health and Well Being (PE/HE/RME) to be advertised (temp).
PTC Design and Creative (Music/Art/CDT) to be advertised (temp).

These are temporary posts due to the uncertain nature of the funding for the additional post.

Invigilation of SQA exams

The school received outstanding support from the SQA during the exam diet, ensuring the best experience for the young people.

Higher Maths

We are aware of concerns surrounding the SQA Higher Maths paper. The SQA have issued a statement which is on the school website and has been emailed to parents. Elaine Cook and I are writing to the SQA to express our concerns about the standard of the paper.

Exam Presentation Policy

We are aware that our exam presentation policy is in need of further review. SMT are gathering feedback from parents, pupils and staff which will be considered as we plan to move forward. We are aware of the need to move fairly quickly but it is important that our plans are well considered, informed and evidence based. Further information will be made available as quickly as possible in the new session.

Website

A short preview of what it will look like has been emailed to the Parent Council.

Handbook

Slimmed down version is now on the website. The links have had to be removed and referred to from the document to other areas on the website.

Online Safety

The primary cluster held an event for primary pupils and S1 parents regarding online safety. There was a good turnout and it was well received. Main message - the internet is a place not a thing.

School of Rugby

Linlithgow Academy is to become a School of Rugby. This will be funded by Linlithgow Rugby Club. The development officer will deliver rugby-specific and other workshops. Other sports will be able to join in clinics on nutrition, healthy lifestyle etc.

Achievements

Debating : S1/2 trio entered their first competition and came home with a trophy.
Mitsubishi Challenge: Final is next Friday. Team have attended training session to improve presentation skills. 3rd Years have been challenged to design a counter flow heating system for a park bench.
Attendance : Sarah MacDonald will be attending Howden Park Centre for West Lothian Council Attendance Award Ceremony.
House Competition : Bell won this year - lots of new staff, we will raise the profile of the system again in August.

Texas Exchange

Texas pupils will be arriving on Marches Day.

3. TEACHERS' REPORT

No teachers present.

4. PUPIL COUNCIL REPORT

No representatives from Pupil Council present.

5. SMOKING POLICY

The Parent Council had received a request for clarification of the school's Smoking Policy. Karen Jarvis reported that the school follows the West Lothian Council policy when dealing with smoking on the premises .

6. LINLITHGOW ACADEMY PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (LAA) UPDATE

The Big Quiz is on 29th May. Ticket sales have been low but it is hoped that people will turn up and buy tickets on the night. Information is on website. Event has been heavily advertised.

7. REVIEW OF PARENT COUNCIL ACTIVITY DURING 2014 -2015 ACADEMIC YEAR AND A LOOK FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR'S PRIORITIES

Review of 2014/15

2014/15 has been a year of change for the school with the appointment of Karen Jarvis as our new Head Teacher and the introduction of new (Curriculum for Excellence) Highers.

One of the highlights of the year, has been the collaborative way that the PC had been able to work with the Head Teacher and the school as the new exams and associated presentation policy have been implemented and updated. Parent Council has provided an excellent forum for parents, teachers and pupils to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

Parent Council were represented at several parent evenings during the year with the objective of encouraging parents to 'subscribe' to the school website to receive daily updates by email. By the end of the academic year, the majority of parents were aware of, and using, this facility.

The school have been using the website as the central means of communication during the year. This increased use has highlighted weaknesses with the current website. A new website is therefore currently being developed and will be live in time for the next session (see item 2 above).

Parent Council Priorities for 2015/16

The following potential PC priorities for 2015/16 were discussed:

- Advance/Pre-emptively communication of CfE/what to expect in each year (NABs, A/B tests, other assessments, reports, course choice etc) – potentially in conjunction with Pupil Council.
- 'Enhancing the Linlithgow Academy Experience' – via support of the website and handbook updates, targeted questionnaires at Parents' Evenings and online suggestion box.
- Attendance at wider Parent Forum events and sharing of National Parent Forum information e.g. revision guides.
- Involvement of feeder Primary Parent Councils in LA Parent Council.

10. PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR PARENT COUNCIL MEETINGS for 2015-16 academic year:

AGM - Wednesday, 2nd September 2015 (invite reps from catchment area primary school Parent Councils)

Thursday 1st October 2015

Monday 23rd November 2015

Tuesday 2nd February 2016

Wednesday 13th April 2016

Monday 30th May 2016

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- On- line Homework. Many teachers now use the internet to set homework but this is at the discretion of individual teachers.
- Use of e-devices to enhance learning. There was a discussion around the various ways in which electronic devices can be used to enhance learning. The school have recently invested in a set of ipads and these potential opportunities will be considered when planning how best to use these devices within the school.
- Home Economics payment increase. The fee had not gone up for a number of years, hence the increase.
- School Trip Summary – a summary of proposed school trips for 2015/16 will be prepared and circulated.
- Hockey Meeting on Monday 8th June.

Vote of Thanks

Elsbeth requested that Mrs Jarvis passed on the thanks of the Parent Council to:

- Neil Anderson from Pupil Council for all of his hard work with the PC over the last 2 years and to wish him well for the future.
- Rebecca Carey from the Pupil Council, who we look forward to working with again next year.
- Our teacher representatives, Rhona White and Peter Scott for their very valuable contributions throughout the year.

Elsbeth also thanked all of the Parents who have attended, supported and contributed to the Parent Council over the course of the year.

Karen Jarvis expressed her thanks to the Parent Council for their support during her first year as Head Teacher.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGM on Wednesday, 2nd September 2015.