



Linlithgow Academy Parent Council Meeting

7:00pm, Thursday 28 January 2021, Zoom Video Conference

Attendees:

Parent Council Members:	Douglas Maxwell (Vice Chair), Campbell Ford, Jeremy Fuller, Dorte Al-Gailini, Iain Woodhouse, Ann Marie Penman, Nicola Gordon, Andrew Grant, Milca Menezes da Silva, Silvia Small
Head Teacher:	Represented by Avril McLean, Alison Bulloch, Alison Rutherford (Depute Heads)
Teachers:	Rhona White, Luisa Burgess
Pupil Council:	Finlay Watson, Eilidh MacDonald
Parent Forum:	Elsbeth Brown, Andy Gray, Richard Payne, Jennifer Leonard, Fiona Couper Kenney
Clerk:	Karine McNair
WL Council:	Cllr Tom Conn
Guests:	James Cameron (Head of Education, West Lothian Council), Katherine Campbell (Senior Education Officer, West Lothian Council) - Item 13 only
Apologies	Helen White (Chair), Dermot Murray, Pinelopi Louvrou, Pooja Gupta, Keith Mason, Cllr David Tait, Cllr Tom Kerr,

1. Welcome, introductions & apologies

The meeting was chaired by the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were as noted above.

2. Minutes from meeting of 7 December 2020

Minutes were approved by email and published on the website.

3. Update from actions arising from the previous meeting.

None

4. Councillor's Report

Councillor Tom Conn noted the last 3 WLC Education Executive meetings had been swiftly followed by Scottish Government announcements which rendered some decisions redundant.

5. Headteacher's Report

Representing the Headteacher, the Senior Management Team provided the following information:

- Building works – (Avril McLean) New classrooms are finished and overall layout of school is being considered. Telephones are being installed in all classrooms which should save time with communication across the school building.
- Covid response – (Avril McLean) Mounted sanitisers for use when entering/leaving rooms. Staff and pupils to wipe down desks/equipment at start and end.
- Parents Nights – (Avril McLean) Most now completed. Overarching feedback positive. S4 night some issues – so Senior Management Team now offering technical support in office during evenings and Groupcalls sent with useful reminders. Most parents would prefer this system going forward. Uptake was in 70% – normal uptake is 67-80%. 5mins is the biggest problem especially if technical issues. Reviewing parent and staff feedback to use going forward. Some issues at first 2 events and teachers now told to stay online and check emails if possible. If appointments missed, written feedback provided on request.
- Course Choice – (Avril McLean) Presentations on website and online booklets are available now. Paperless 'Options' software purchased to input course choice information which will be uploaded into SEEMIS system and available next week.
- Reporting – (Alison Bulloch) New SEEMIS system for BGE allows reports to be issued through Parent Portal to which 70% of parents are signed up. S4-6 reporting window under review due to cancelling of January Holistic Assessment window.
- SQA Update – (Alison Bulloch) Latest guidance issued pre-Christmas so now obsolete due to school closures. Decision taken to cancel Jan/Feb Holistic Assessment window completely. SQA advised Jan/Feb should be learning and teaching window so staff focussing on course content. Once hear from SQA will decide how to gather evidence. All Scottish Schools in same position.
- Remote Learning – (Alison Bulloch) Initially followed timetable since lockdown was based on a few weeks of remote learning. Now working on mid-Feb return and changed to adapted timetable based on feedback from pupils, parents and staff to allow for more screen breaks. Also realigned school day (not 3 separate breaks and lunchtimes). Staff to publish week of work so pupils can plan for live lessons and can plan learning around them. Forms issued for feedback to pupils and parents with questions set by WLC and majority of feedback is positive. Parents sending emails to school to praise work and noticed improvement.
- Health & Wellbeing – (Alison Rutherford) – PSE lessons are now all live lessons with Pupil Support Teachers using lesson as Health & Wellbeing check in. Trying to keep supported and positive. Staff wellbeing important and they can also use school counsellor.
- Webinars – (Alison Rutherford) Thank you to Campbell Ford for help. Teams session and Wellbeing session very good feedback and reasonably well attended by Senior Phase parents.

Action 1 – Campbell Ford to liaise with SMT/Karine McNair to put copy of webinars on website and groupcall to alert parents to resource.

6. Teacher's Report

Luisa Burgess provided the following information:

- Everyone is working hard using a combination of live lessons, embedded videos, voice over presentations and trying to be as flexible as possible. Noticeable improvement of IT skills due to time invested in upskilling by staff for their own benefit and also upskilling pupils when they were in school. More cohesive plans across departments.
- It was noted that parents feel quite remote from 'Teams' since there isn't a parent interface. Alison Bulloch commented that staff are monitoring the progress and engagement of pupils. Senior Phase pupils' parents are being contacted if there are any concerns. At BGE level, the focus is on those who are not engaging at all and parents have been contacted especially for

Maths and English. No contact means there is no cause for concern and school are closely monitoring.

- A member of the Parent Forum commented that standard emails had been sent out in error for non-engagement which was due to a technical error and the email wording was very strong. Alison Bulloch agreed that there had been a problem with transmitting some work which is being resolved. Messages are sent from departments which can result in duplicate messages as don't want to miss anything. Contact details are on messages to resolve issues.
- It was asked whether parents could have access to SEEMIS information showing grades, lesson engagement etc. Alison Bulloch confirmed that the version of SEEMIS used by WLC does not hold this information and the only way to see such information is by getting pupil's permission to view Teams using their pupil Glow account.

7. Pupil Council's Report

Finlay Watson & Eilidh Macdonald provided the following information:

- Digital Events – online awards ceremony, end of term Spirit videos and online Big Quiz waiving participation fee to encourage engagement.
- Future Plans – Since unable to meet and future uncertain, the current team are writing detailed plans for their 2020-21 intentions so next year can have a head start.
- School App - Being developed by two S6s and launching shortly.

The Parent Council asked the Pupil Council to consider running another type of Quiz to help bring the school together again in Lockdown.

The Pupil Council conveyed their thanks to all the staff noting that the pupils are very appreciative and feeling well supported by teachers. Alison Rutherford thanked the Pupil Council for their dedication and hard work in this difficult year.

8. Items from the Parent Forum

No specific items raised for this meeting.

9. Employability

No sub group activity. The Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) co-ordinator has issued a lot of information including a virtual careers fair.

10. Communication

The sub group have had a few meetings and produced some documentation for discussion:

- Draft Social Media Policy – Outlines the approach taken and a subtle direction to etiquette. To be shared for any further comments on Basecamp.
- FAQs – Captures the main discussion points from previous meetings. To be shared for any further comments on Basecamp.
- Page Template – Basic unpublished FB page with pinned Social Media Policy and profanity filter.

The sub group requested agreement to trial their proposal for a Facebook page from now to summer term and find administrators.

It was noted that only by using a Facebook group, members could be required to accept a policy before being allowed access. By using a Facebook page, users would have to voluntarily read a user policy and it was suggested that a summary version of the policy be a pinned post to ensure the most important points are easily accessed.

Action 2 – Ann Marie Penman to liaise with school for input into Communication proposals

Action 3 – **Parent Council members** to read Communication sub-group documents on Basecamp and submit any comments or concerns on Basecamp or to members of the sub-group.

Action 4 – **Karine McNair** to run a Basecamp Poll by Thursday 11 February to approve or reject a trial run of the Facebook page.

11. Health & Wellbeing

No sub group activity.

Action 5 – **Karine McNair** to put a request on Basecamp for Parent Council members to engage with this subgroup and nominate a lead.

12. Senior Phase Exams

Alison Bulloch confirmed that the SQA have published some materials which were designed before the latest lockdown so SQA are now in the process of producing updated information but this has not yet been issued. It is confirmed that awards will be based on evidence without teacher judgement this year with a particular focus on evidence produced under SQA exam conditions. WLC guidance from 19 January 2021 states that where a subject normally sat an SQA exam, a test will be delivered in an exam setting in a classroom to ensure smaller numbers of pupils in one place at a time.

The school had prepared a presentation for pupils on the website which was based on pre-lockdown circumstances. The February Holistic Assessments had been arranged with timetabled slots to ensure pupils remained in 'bubbles'. It was acknowledged that parents' had concerns around validity and cheating which would have been minimised by invigilating to an SQA standard (no phones, no papers to be removed etc.). February Holistic Assessments are now cancelled.

Awards were to be based on the Learner Evidence Journey which comprised:

1. Holistic Assessment (heavily weighted and more value towards the end of the year) +
2. other elements depending on subject (stipulated by SQA) +
3. WLC interpretation of other elements by subject.

Results from school assessments up until December have been recorded. The Learning & Teaching coursework currently being completed through remote learning will not be used particularly as evidence as unable to guarantee the validity of work. WLC group are putting pressure on SQA to release more guidance but it is suspected that the SQA are waiting to hear from the Scottish Government about school plans next Tuesday before publishing any further information.

13. Capacity – Winchburgh School Building Update

The Parent Council welcomed James Cameron and Katherine Campbell of West Lothian Council to the meeting to discuss the impact of the Winchburgh Project on Linlithgow Academy.

- Building Update – Approval of the new project was granted in January 2020 with the planned opening to be in August 2022. Due to Covid lockdowns, there have been unavoidable delays. Currently working on a 6 month delayed opening – possibly January 2023 but no guarantee on dates at present. The building has been designed to enable further extension with as little intrusion into the existing building as possible since Winchburgh village is expected to grow.
- Contingency Arrangements - After consultation with Winchburgh Primary School parents, it has been outlined that S1 pupils would still enrol with the new school in August 2022. The new school would be established by August 2022 with staff appointed and pupils

placed even if occupation of the actual building isn't possible. The Winchburgh Academy pupils would attend Linlithgow Academy until the Winchburgh school building was available. It would up to the Headteachers of both schools to decide the practicalities of the transition. It was raised that parents at Winchburgh Primary school are very concerned about the contingency arrangements and would welcome guidance as soon as possible.

- Impact on Linlithgow Academy – There would be short term additional pressure on Linlithgow school capacity until Winchburgh is ready. Numbers are expected to be small (currently 56) but don't know final numbers as some people moving into area before then. No placement requests for Linlithgow will be granted that year.
- Sibling Guarantee – Nicola Gordon declared an interest. James Cameron confirmed that the Council will operate a sibling guarantee for Winchburgh pupils with a sibling at Linlithgow Academy.
- Future Linlithgow Academy Intakes – the 2021 intake for S1 is predicted to be 240 pupils.

14. Parents' Evenings

Nothing to add to the information provided by the Headteacher's Report.

15. Remote Learning

Nothing to add to the information provided by the Headteacher's Report.

16. Any other business

It was confirmed that the S6 Parent's Evening has been scheduled for 25th February 2021.

The Vice Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and participation in the meeting.

Next Meeting is on Thursday 11 March 2021.