



Linlithgow Academy Parent Council Meeting

7:00pm, Thursday 11 March 2021, Zoom Video Conference

Attendees:

Parent Council Members:	Helen White (Chair), Douglas Maxwell (Vice Chair), Campbell Ford, Jeremy Fuller, Dorte Al-Gailini, Iain Woodhouse, Dermot Murray, Pinelopi Louvrou, Pooja Gupta, Keith Mason, Ann Marie Penman, Nicola Gordon, Andrew Grant, Milca Menezes da Silva,
Head Teacher:	Represented by Avril McLean, Alison Bulloch, Alison Rutherford (Depute Heads)
Teachers:	Luisa Burgess
Pupil Council:	Finlay Watson, Eilidh MacDonald
Parent Forum:	Elsbeth Brown, Tania Burns, Kirsteen Cameron, Jeremy Armon, Claudette Boa, Martin Hawksey, Alison Spori, Catriona Garcia, Irene Sandham, Paul Hammond, Fiona Sargent, Yvonne MacDonald, Shona Smith, Kaylene Lindsay, Carolyn Burns, Roz Coe, Fiona Coupar Kenney, Rachel Brown
Clerk:	Karine McNair
WL Council:	CLlr Tom Kerr
Apologies:	Silvia Small

1. Welcome, introductions & apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were as noted above.

2. Minutes from meeting of 28 January 2021

Minutes were approved by email and published on the website.

3. Update from actions arising from the previous meeting.

- Action 1 – **Campbell Ford** to liaise with SMT/Karine McNair to put copy of webinars on website and Groupcall to alert parents to resource. – Resource on website but not yet publicised through Groupcall. Avril McLean will check that a Groupcall will be sent out.
- Actions 2, 3, 4, & 5 – Completed

4. Councillor's Report

Councillor Tom Kerr had nothing to report but offered to raise any issues with WL Council.

5. Headteacher's Report (Full Report at Appendix 1)

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

- Lateral Flow Testing – (AR) Approx. 160 students and 130 staff participating. Rolled out to all pupils from next week and consent forms being sent out shortly for under 16s.
- Transitions – (AR) P7-S1 still virtually with information on website and information also being sent to primary schools with extra activities for Pupil Equity Fund pupils. Hoping might get some P7s into the school but waiting on WLC updates.
- Wellbeing – (AR) – Trying to keep in touch with as much people as possible. School Counsellor being used by many pupils. PSE teachers doing live lessons as a check in to see how young people are doing. Checking in every week with vulnerable pupils and HWB focus for pupils when they return. 600 responses from BGE pupils to latest questionnaire and using responses to structure next few weeks for them. WL Council have been providing support for staff. As part of School Improvement Plan, HWB focus with a review of the Behaviour Blueprint focussing on restorative practice and meeting learners needs. Currently in crisis management to make sure that HWB at heart of school and pupils feel safe and engaged so can participate in learning again.
- School Improvement Plan (SIP) Updates – (AB) SIP written in June 2020 with a main focus on a learning plan and a Covid Contingency plan, especially remote learning readiness, ICT and learning from the first experience of lockdown. From Aug to Oct undertook intense ICT training for staff and pupils for remote learning. Developed a Virtual Learning Handbook for staff learning from mistakes and successes of first lockdown. Stronger links forged with Rachel Bryson (Developing the Young Workforce) and overall, there has been significant progress in many areas of the SIP.
- Engagement Data – (AB) Students' online learning engagement has been marked (Red/Amber/Green): Red = not engaging, Amber = online but not submitting work, Green = submitting work or engaging online with teacher. Information supplied to WL Council showed 83% engagement for Senior Phase and 80% for BGE, which was comparatively high with the rest of the region. Parents of BGE pupils have been contacted where there is concern in English and Maths. Parents of Senior Phase pupils will be contacted for any amber or red for any subject.
- SQA – (AB) – Remains an evidence-based system and evidence has to be collected under SQA conditions. SQA have issued some materials to the school to use and evidence will be collected until last day of summer term, 25 June. S6 pupils will likely not leave until mid-June once all their evidence has been submitted subject to a discussion with the Senior Management Team. Some evidence has been collected pre-Christmas but the January holistic assessment window didn't take place and SQA have said that the evidence collected later in the year will have more strength.
Currently in a Learning & Teaching phase so no assessments will take place in the next 3 weeks and Senior Phase will focus on their 'masterclass' sessions to consolidate lockdown learning. Most likely that assessments will take place in May/June. Assessments will be in class time but under SQA conditions and pupils will know when the assessments will be taking place. Longer exams will be sat over 2 different class periods and the combined result will form the evidence. Teachers will be able to discuss results of an earlier piece of evidence to help guide the learner in what they need to work on for the next time evidence is collected.
Teachers will mark the evidence using a Learner Evidence Journey standard as agreed by WL Council. Teachers will be given additional support and training to ensure they are confident marking. WL Council is using the 2 additional inset days to support this – dates are yet to be confirmed. Quality assurance will be undertaken by the School and WL Council to ensure no unexpected results. Provisional grades will be discussed with pupils so generally the official result from SQA should not be a surprise. SQA will undertake a sample moderation of schools marking requesting a variety of samples but no one learner will be looked at in their entirety.

SQA will be sending a handbook to all candidates with this information and LA will put a link to the information on the website.

- Course Choice Update (AM) – S2-S3 complete. S3-S4 98% complete. S4-S5-S6 still ongoing conversations and then will use online system. Timetable will be next stage. Don't know exact date for implementing new timetable given SQA evidence window is 25 June.
- Next 3 weeks (AM) – House groupings for BGE. Max 30-40% of young people in school in any one day. Max 12 in a class. 3 x 2 hours and 1 x 2 hours will be a PSE teacher to make sure they are all okay. Some literacy, science, social subject, numeracy and mixture depending on availability of teachers. Individualised Groupcall so time consuming. Senior Phase seem to be liking masterclass with specific subject teacher which will continue to consolidate learning from lockdown. Teachers will also look to see how they can support pupils with learning and how to get ready for holistic assessment window in May/June. Bespoke Groupcalls for each young person so Groupcalls will be issued shortly. Dining hall is single desks at 2m distance & assembly hall set up for 2m distance - limited capacity indoors for lunch.

6. Teacher's Report

Luisa Burgess provided the following information:

- Rachel Bryson (DYW) noted that 13 pupils doing Law Society engagement project and 2 successful acceptances onto Weirs Women into Science.
- Thanks to parents for support

The Parent Council noted their thanks to all the teachers for their continuing efforts.

7. Pupil Council's Report

Finlay Watson & Eilidh Macdonald noted that the Pupil Council have been collating information about the improvements in digital learning so they can feedback to teachers and help inform future teaching and learning. Young people are making presentations for Scottish Elections to talk about importance of voting and they have been making plans for when less restrictions are in force.

It was recognised that from a Pupil point of view, the information tonight on SQA exams has been very helpful and it would be useful to share some of that information with the Senior Phase to give a better idea of what the next 2-3 months might look like.

8. Senior Phase Exams

Following the Headteacher Report, members of the Parent Council and Parent Forum raised some points for clarification:

Pupils will know their provisional grade by the end of June because they will know the results of their holistic assessments. The School do not want to over-assess students and they will give advance warning of the assessments to give students a chance to prepare. It will be clear when evidence collecting exams are being sat and teachers will mark these then give feedback before any subsequent assessment.

The SQA materials have been issued in a secure manner as usual. No school in WL will use the materials in their entirety to reduce the risk of copying across schools. Each school will develop their own assessment using a blend of the SQA material and school questions. However, within the school, all classes will be sitting the same papers albeit at different times. The papers will be sat under exam conditions and the papers will be collected at the end of the class. It is accepted that there may be some advantage to sitting the exam later so when doing Quality Assurance, first sitters vs last sitters results will be considered.

9. Communication

Basecamp – It was agreed to review the use of Basecamp at the final meeting of this Parent Council session. It was commented that Basecamp is practical and has helped communication when meeting remotely but that it is only as good as the engagement invested.

Communications Sub Group – An update report was circulated before the meeting from the Communications sub group (Appendix 2). It was noted in particular that the FB page has now been published with good engagement and comments – over 200 likes in the past week – and considerations was now underway to further increase communication with parents/carers such as use of twitter, a notice board and pop-up banner, with possible funding requirements. Next steps for the sub group included looking at how to gather the views of the parent forum on what they would like their PC to look like and sharing with them achievements of the PC. The sub group also put forward proposals to the PC to maintain a regular PC meeting agenda item for issues raised by the parent forum and for the PC to consider developing an annual PC work plan and evaluation framework.

Action 1 – Avril McLean will send a list of all the school Twitter pages to Ann Marie, who will see if there is a way to link the twitter page to the PC FB page.

Action 2 – PC members are asked to like and follow the PC FB page

Action 3 – PC members are asked to email to the sub group PC achievements they are aware of over the last couple of years to allow us to share work of the PC with the parent forum.

Thanks were noted to the subgroup for all their time and effort.

10. Remote/Blended Learning

Following the Headteacher's Report, members of the Parent Council and Parent Forum raised some points for clarification:

In the next 14 school days, Senior Phase pupils should expect to be in school for 6 days. BGE pupils will be in for 3 days. Break and lunch will be taken in the dinner hall or assembly hall at 2m apart. There will be provision for circulation of fresh air in the classrooms – open windows and doors. The use of reusable masks will be encouraged.

WL Council have requested that all students wear school uniform apart from Senior Phase pupils coming in for PE. SMT understand that the availability of new uniform at the moment is difficult, so will adapt a reasonable approach to the uniform policy.

When BGE are not in school, they should be following their current timetable and doing online provision which will be input by teachers in advance. Teachers will be present in classes so can't guarantee that they will be available for questions during lesson time and there will not be any live lessons. Concern was raised about the ability of younger pupils to organise their own day and be independent.

There has not been any clarification on how the school will operate after Easter although if similar to before Christmas, all pupils would now have to wear masks and the school would continue with the 3 different break and lunchtimes.

11. Capacity of Linlithgow Academy Building

The work on the assembly hall and breakout areas has finished which has made a difference to being able to socially distance at lunchtimes for the next 3 weeks. The 2 converted classrooms are now in use and larger school reorganisation will take place but not until normal service is resumed. Another phase of work is planned for science but have had no confirmation if this will take place or of any other planned works.

The school building capacity is 1320 and the current school roll is 1345. The expected S1 intake for 2021/22 is 240. It is expected that the school roll will be higher than normal as it is a small S6 leaving (150) compared to the S1 intake and less S4/S5 leavers.

There was concern about the new housing developments and their impact on the school capacity. Cllr Tom Kerr stated that the present catchment area can cope with the developments but in the long term there may need to be a catchment review. He hoped that there wouldn't be a need for temporary accommodation at the school and noted there is a current catchment review at Bathgate in line with a proposed extension to Bathgate Academy which may take in some of the LA current catchment. It was acknowledged that there was a general upward trend for the school roll at LA and Cllr Tom Kerr offered to raise these concerns at WL Council level and report back to the Parent Council.

It was noted that under Covid-19 restrictions, the over capacity at the school is under even more pressure. It has been over a year in the pandemic and it was felt that the situations and restrictions are no longer short term so a longer-term solution needs to be found.

12. Parents' Evenings

All parent evenings have now happened. Feedback was that online meetings went well, were slick and an efficient use of time. However, some felt that teachers were under prepared, auto shut down was abrupt and there were some technical issues mainly with the BGE sessions.

It was noted that some teachers didn't have sufficient appointment slots to meet all parents and SMT recognised that last year they had been able to put on a second S1/S2 evening which was successful in creating more slots for everyone. However, due to timings this year, there simply wasn't enough time to fit this in but it is something they would look at again for particularly large year groups.

The school are putting together a working group of teachers, pupils and parents to decide on the best way forward to parents' nights, taking into account all the feedback to date. There may be some amalgamation of the formats and a review of the 5 minutes auto shut down and it was noted that while generally the online format worked, some BGE parents value a visit to the building although that could be incorporated into some other event.

13. Any other business

Mrs Jarvis will be taking some more time before her return. The SMT are in discussion with WL Council about the next steps. The Parent Council noted their thanks and support for the work being done by the SMT in the most difficult of circumstances and passed their best wishes to Mrs Jarvis.

Next Meeting is on Wednesday 5 May 2021.

Appendix 1 – Headteacher’s Report

- **LF Testing underway**
 - Senior Phase students and staff who are in school have been offered Lateral Flow Testing Kits. These are to be completed twice a week and the results uploaded to the Government site for tracking and data collection purposes. This is voluntary

- **Senior Phase**
 - We are continuing to work within SQA advice which is that the priority for seniors at this time should be **learning and teaching**, including for those practical subjects that some seniors are currently attending school for. Students who are in school are working in the key skills they need for that subject to ensure that they that they have a secure foundation and course coverage **prior to formal assessment** taking place. We do not plan to assess students as soon as they return to the building, it will be important to ensure that they are integrated back into school life and get some face-to-face time with staff before we embark on an assessment window. SQA have moved the submission date for provisional grade entries until 25th June to give more time for course completion and assessment.

 - At the time of writing this we are still waiting for further clarification from Scottish Government regarding arrangements for more seniors returning to school from March 15th and we will communicate further details around this as soon as we are able to.

- **BGE Students**
 - We rotated the BGE “No Screen” period on Monday 22nd February and will look at another rotation ready to start on Monday 15th March. Feedback from parents and students has been supportive of this time away from the screen but we know that it can be challenging for the students who are in school. The periods are chosen to support equity across the subjects and we will continue to do this until there is a return of all students.

- **Vulnerable and Keyworker students**
 - The numbers have increased since the 22nd February and we are now operating 6 rooms. Our staff have a rota system at the moment for coming into school and the pupil support workers have been amazing each day working with some of our most vulnerable young people.

- **Engagement Data**
 - Senior Phase Engagement – 83%
 - BGE Engagement – 80%
 - Curriculum and Support team are working together to try to get the others engaged either via email, phone calls or Teams calls. Offering support on how to engage and trying to remove the barriers to engagement.
 - Laptops to support engagement – over 70 have now been issued for a variety of reasons.

- **Transitions**
 - **P7 into S1**
 - "Welcome to S1" section of website updated to include activities and virtual tour of school
 - Still unsure about further transition activities and WLC will update in due course
 - **S2 into S3**
 - Online Course choice worked well for S2 into S3 almost 100% completed online from home with little or no issues.
 - **S3 into S4**
 - S3 have completed course choice interviews with their support teachers and have now completed their online choices again with little or no issues.
 - **S4 and S5 choices**
 - S4,5 students will be finishing course choice interviews this week and have a submission date of 15/3/21. Once all of this is complete the timetabling process will begin for session 21/22 – the change date is still to be confirmed at WLC level to ensure consistency with all schools.

- **Feedback**
 - There has been a significant amount of time spent following up from parent and pupil surveys. The support team have called to help students and parents access TEAMS or show them where feedback can be found. The PTC team also created an information sheet for students explaining the different ways in which feedback is given.

- **Wellbeing**
 - **Staff** - Rest, Relax, Recover for Feb break
 - **Pupils** - Tic Tocks, Snowman Challenge, Autism Resource Escape Room, "Miss you" videos from staff
 - WBI self-reporting and check-ins

School Improvement Plan (SIP) Updates

The SIP was written in July/August and there have been many significant changes to school life since then. We asked departments/faculties in October to reconsider aspects of the SIP and to create a **Learning Recovery Plan** and also **Covid Contingency plans** to ensure that we were well prepared. These have since been put into action.

- **Raising Attainment for all**
 - L&T handbook has been reviewed and we also created a staff Virtual Handbook to support online working and how to continue to develop pedagogy in an online platform.
 - Staff CLPL this session has had to focus on upskilling staff in the use of Teams, time well spent given the current situation and the quality of the provision we now have.
 - The professional reading group has started and is organised by C Byers as part of his Masters qualification
 - Teams very much embedded into the classrooms both when in school and when at home.
 - CAT and SNSA completed in December ongoing analysis of data will support progress and identify areas that require remediation
 - Literacy and Numeracy evenings didn't happen in December as we chose to do Teams webinars instead. Ongoing work with PTC Literacy and PTC Numeracy and their WL links.

- **Improvement in all children and young people wellbeing**
 - HWB Recovery Plan shared in August 2020 with staff, pupils and parents/carers
 - HWB Strategy implemented and shared with staff, pupils and parent/carers
 - Follow-up HWB webinar in December
 - Wellbeing Indicator self-reporting embedded for all young people, including tracking and monitoring and wellbeing check-ins
 - Appropriate strategies and interventions to support HWB shared with young people, staff and parent/carers on regular basis and targeted interventions shared on individual basis
 - LA Mental Health Policy (including Mental Health First Aiders, HWB Champs, Counsellor, HWB Pledge, HWB Noticeboard) launched August 2020 to support young people and staff
 - Pupil Support Data File shared with all staff with strategies to support young people with ASN in the classroom
 - Pupil Passports created for Looked After Children/Autism Spectrum Disorder/Support for Learning/Young Carers/Behaviour, Social and Emotional to help teachers support their needs
 - Review of Behaviour Blueprint - restorative practice and positive behaviour strategies shared with staff
 - Ongoing QA of GIRFEC processes including continuum of support and assessment of wellbeing to support young people across the school with emphasis on HWB strategy

- **Improvement in Employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations**
 - <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/wl/dywlinlithgowacademy/>
 - Amazing work being done by Rachel Bryson working with departments on Developing the Young Workforce links and the DYW Newsletters and Blog

Below are the “Next Steps” identified in the Standards and Quality Report (SQR) and the progress thus far

- *Maximise the use of online tools to promote and support learning for all pupils*
Making good progress
- *Continue to improve pupils experience through use of L&T handbook and evidence based approaches to learning*
As above
- *Increase opportunities for family learning to support Literacy and Numeracy*
Requires Action from PTC Lit/ PTC Numeracy
- Engage more widely with First Minister Reading Challenge
Reinstated the 10 minutes reading in Period 5 to help build a reading culture this is also part of the Scottish Book Trust accreditation too. Staff book swap at Christmas to build a reading culture amongst staff and working on the library is ongoing.
- Launch a BGE tracking system to support tracking of progression in BGE
Ongoing. Now using a different reporting system for the BGE
- Further develop targeted BGE Literacy and Numeracy targeted support programmes
- Extend Employability Hub pathway opportunities for disengaged young people
Partnership Planning Meeting planned
- Explore opportunities for further Outdoor Learning experiences
PC Higson has been working with some students on bike maintenance and has been taking them out for rides
- Further develop and consolidate other existing programmes (Transition, family engagement etc.)
Ongoing creative strategies under COVID
- Continue to develop the Health and Wellbeing strategy across the school
With particular focus on Responsibility of All
- Embed the work of the Mental Health First Aiders
Continue once COVID restrictions allow
- Build on the whole school input by Humanutopia organisation
Unable to do so due to restrictions will be carried forward
- Create a more vertical pupil leadership structure which aligns to the school values and the quality indicators in How Good is our School for Learners
Ongoing
- Raise the profile of the House System, including further embedding the Values of the School
Ongoing

Linlithgow Academy Parent Council Communications Sub-Group

Update for Parent Council meeting, Thursday 11 March 2021

Background

Communication was identified by Parent Council early in the 2020/21 school year as a key focus. This includes communication with all parents and carers to help ensure PC can best represent their views and communicate those views to the school's Senior Management Team and staff. The Communications sub-group was established by a small group of PC members who volunteered to progress this priority.

Ways of working

The Communications sub-group has met several times over the past few months. We provide a regular update to the wider Parent Council at formal PC meetings, and we invite input from all PC members.

We undertook a 'communications health check' using resources available on Connect¹ to help inform an outline work plan. Our remit is to identify, consider and propose ways to improve communication between the Parent Council and the wider Parent Forum (that is, all parents and carers with a child at Linlithgow Academy).

As a sub-group we aim to ensure that every opportunity to engage with parents and carers is positive and helps strengthen the relationship between the school and its Parent Forum to support communication, school improvement and partnership.

We will put in place a self-reflective practice approach to our work that we will seek to extend to all Parent Council activity. This means we will clearly set out what we aim to achieve on behalf of all parents, we will explain our approach, we will welcome other views and input, we will evaluate our impact and seek to improve based on feedback. We will ask ourselves 'are we doing a good job?'

What have we done so far?

- a) We undertook a 'health check' that showed us we could do more to improve communication. We see this as an opportunity to develop a continuous improvement approach to our communication that looks forward and creates space for fresh ideas and new ways of working together.
- b) We proposed establishing a Facebook page to gather views from parents and carers, and to share information with them. This proposal was endorsed by the Parent Council. We then took several weeks to discuss and develop our approach to this.
- c) We had a 'soft launch' of the Linlithgow Academy Parent Council Facebook page at the start of March.² We propose to trial the page initially until the end of March and then for a few

¹ Connect is a trading name of the Scottish Parent Teacher Council, which supports partnership working between schools, parents and carers: <https://connect.scot/>

² On 9 March 2021, we had 85 page followers, and posted daily on a variety of topics including school updates, links to SG and Connect information, and special interest topics

months further to assess whether it adds value to parents, to the Parent Council, and helps us better represent parents. We will discuss and propose how to evaluate this and will seek PC input on this after Easter.

Building our Facebook page

- Continue to build page visibility – by sharing on other relevant Facebook pages and by promoting via a school Groupcall message
- Variety of posts covering essential information (including Back to School arrangements), sharing Events (Parent Council meetings, Connect events), learning-based competitions (such as writing and other creative competitions), and links to Scottish Government, WLC and relevant Employability information
- Develop a programme of engagement through future posts, including themes linked to Parent Council priorities – this would involve posting over a few weeks and aiming to involve staff and PC members who wish to participate (for example, a feature on literacy where we ask volunteers to share their favourite book from high school and why they liked it, etc)
- Continue posting at least once a day – ask PC members for suggestions of posts and to engage with posts to boost visibility
- Boost posts (funding required)
- Share and like competition (funding required) – possibly approach local business/es. Link to PC priorities and ensure relevant to School
- Develop a page that is engaging and prompts discussion, and adds value through the ways in which we share information from the School and other relevant information

What else are we working towards?

Health check statements we are working towards:

1. We have a Facebook page/twitter (other social media)
2. We use different ways to communicate with parents
3. We have a presence at all school events (recognising the current constraints of Covid-19, but looking to the future)
4. We have our own noticeboard or space on school noticeboard (as above re Covid)
5. We run surveys/questionnaire to gather opinions from the Parent Forum
6. We always publicise our work and achievements to all parents and others in the school and wider community

Priorities for the Communications sub-group related to above health check statements:

- We are looking at other social media platforms to engage with parents and extend our visibility and engagement beyond Facebook – this is partly dependent on resource to support. We are aware that not everyone chooses to use Facebook or might feel confident engaging openly online. Parents can send messages via the page and are actively invited to get in touch.
- We want to invite parents and carers to share their views on key issues via a parent survey. We are considering the best ways to design, share and evaluate this, starting with a clear focus on what outcomes we want to achieve.
- We will aim to build the PC presence at future physical events with a PC banner – funding required from PC budget.
- We propose a Parent Council noticeboard at the School – funding required from PC budget.
- We will share examples of what Parent Council is doing on behalf of parents and carers to help increase visibility of PC work.

- We will seek to ensure that Parent Council meetings make it a priority to hear the views of parents and to balance this with hearing from the School. This supports the underlying principle of working in partnership.

Next piece of work from the Communications sub-group

As a group, we have a shared interest in finding ways to engage with and involve parents and carers in ways that are meaningful and helpful to them. Our next priority, both through our Facebook page and through other methods of contact, is to invite parents and carers to share their thoughts on what their ideal Parent Council might look like.

We want to find out what's important to parents, whether they currently have good visibility of the Parent Council and an interest in what it does, and how we can best represent what matters to parents and carers. We want to:

- ✓ have clear impact and value and be able to tell parents what the Parent Council is doing on their behalf and what positive difference it makes to the school experience of their child.
- ✓ share the achievements of the Parent Council so that the Parent Forum understands how it works on their behalf. We will invite PC members to share with us one or two achievements that they'd like to tell parents about from the past couple of years, and we will build on this approach in future.

Proposed actions for Parent Council

- i. Develop a simple but focused Parent Council annual work plan, to share with the Parent Forum.
- ii. Ensure that there is a standing item on every Parent Council meeting for Parent Forum feedback and views, keeping the focus of our PC on parents.
- iii. Develop an evaluation framework to critically evaluate the impact and value to parents of PC and PC meetings.