****

**LINLITHGOW ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL**

Linlithgow Academy Parent Council Meeting

Thur 1 May 2025

7.00 pm – 8.30 pm

Meeting in school and Zoom video conference

**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

**Parent Council Members:** Ann Marie Penman (Chair), Gina Vereker, Stuart Hamilton, Lindsey Campbell, Laura McGowan, Kelda Bryson, Nick Goldfinch, Andrew Small, Karen Marriott

**Parent Forum Member:** Helen Jenkins

**Community Representative:** Cllr Tom Conn

**School Representatives:** Grant Abbot (Head Teacher), Sarah Carney (Staff Representative, via Zoom)

**Apologies:** Luisa Burgess (Staff Representative), Adam Schofield (Treasurer), Ky Norton, Pamela Calabrese, Lesley Paxton

**1. Welcome and Apologies**  
The meeting opened with a welcome to all attendees, both in person and online. Introductions were made, and apologies were noted.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**  
The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without amendments.

**3. Items from the Parent Forum**  
A question was raised about pupils vaping in school toilets. The discussion included the following points:

* Acknowledgement that this remains an issue affecting a small number of pupils.
* Ongoing measures are in place, including increased supervision and communication with parents.
* The upcoming ban on disposable vapes in Scotland is expected to support these efforts.
* The school continues to balance keeping toilets accessible while preventing misuse.

**4. Focus Topic: Parent, Carer & Community Engagement**  
Grant Abbot provided an overview of the school’s work to strengthen community engagement and partnerships, highlighting a range of bespoke opportunities for students, including:

* Links with businesses and employers (e.g. Mitsubishi, Black Bitch Magazine)
* Career preparation activities involving parents and local businesses
* Support for wellbeing, including access to a counsellor and help for young carers
* A new partnership with a Community Learning and Development worker
* Learning partners and extracurricular activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh Award
* Changes to work experience post-Covid

There was discussion around these developments as well as volunteering opportunities for students.

**5. New Prefect System for Sixth Year**  
Grant Abbot outlined the updated S6 prefect system. Students can now sign up for specific leadership roles to make the prefect role more meaningful and ensure active contribution throughout the year. Roles include:

* Reading Ambassadors
* Faculty Ambassadors
* Wellbeing Leaders
* Zone Leaders

There was also discussion about the broader sixth-year experience, including balancing part-time jobs with school commitments and managing attendance during free periods.

**6. Fundraising Update & Treasurer’s Report**  
Laura McGowan gave the Treasurer’s report and shared an update on recent fundraising, which supported the purchase of:

* Graphic tablets
* A-frame whiteboards
* Microscopes
* Atlases

**Action:** Laura will create a communication to share with parents and carers about what has been bought, including photos of the items in use.

**7. Head Teacher’s Update**  
Grant Abbot updated the Parent Council on several key areas:

* **Staffing**
  + Three probationer teachers will join next session.
  + Some temporary staff will become permanent.
  + Staff changes are taking place due to maternity leave and other movements.
  + Recruitment remains challenging in some subjects, particularly CDT and Home Economics.
* **School Roll**
  + The roll is dropping significantly in the junior years, while the senior school remains large.
* **Exams and Timetable**
  + SQA exams are currently underway.
  + There was good attendance at Easter holiday support sessions and immersion classes. Parent Council members expressed thanks to staff for providing this additional support.
  + The new timetable begins on 26 May, and pupils have been informed about their course choices.
* **Leadership Update**
  + Deputy Head Alison Rutherford is retiring.
  + The role will be filled on an interim basis by an acting appointment.

**8. Any Other Business**

* Parent Council members were invited to consider taking on the roles of Chair or Vice Chair for the next academic year, as the current Chair will step down at the AGM at the start of session 2025/26.
* Ann Marie Penman read out a thank-you message from a Parent Council member.

**The meeting closed at 8:31 pm with thanks to all who attended.**

Dates and proposed focus topics for Parent Council Meetings for 2024/25

* + PC meeting 1 Mon 02/10/24 Senior Phase Curriculum Rationale
  + PC meeting 2 Tue 19/11/24 IT and digital training
  + PC meeting 3 Wed 15/1/25 Support for pupils including health issues and neurodiversity
  + PC meeting 4 Tue 4/3/25 Supporting parents to assist home learning
  + PC meeting 5 Thur 1/5/25 Parent/ & carer/community engagement
  + PC meeting 6 Wed 4/6/25 School Improvement Plan

