

Parent Council

ZOOM PANDEMIC MEETING

TUESDAY 7 September 2021

Forrester High School

Present; Lorraine Kneebone (Chair), Stephen Rafferty, Jackie Barn, Irene McGinnis, Amanda Walter, Sandra Donaldson (Secretary), Gillian Murray, Julie Scott, Hilary Brown, Gillian Napier, Donna Dennis, Samm Hamilton, Angela Watson, Kate MacPhie, Letitia Wilson, Lisa Coffey (Deputy Head)

1. Welcome/Apologies. Meeting commenced at 7pm. Lorraine welcomed everyone. Apologies – Cllr Claire Bridgman, Mark Peart, Emma Spence (Treasurer), Angela Watson. Marianne Sandison, Sarah Montgomery, Sharon Robertson, Cllr Mark Brown,

2. Action points from last meeting:

- HE/CDT funding to be added to agenda

3. Getting to know the School Leadership Team

As part of the structure of the PC meetings, it will be an ongoing thing to invite one of the Leadership Team to the meetings.

Lisa Coffey introduced herself and said that she has found the school very welcoming. The school feels very calm and there's a real sense of engagement. Part of the remit of her role is support and pastoral care, working with the Pupil Support Leaders and enhanced support. Will also be linking with the English department for attainment. As part of the curriculum, will be including inclusivity, attendance, anti-bullying and prejudice, and linking in with Telford House. This is alongside the day to day running of the school. She felt the school was ahead of the curve for inclusion. LK said we were all grateful for the work being done on the Enhanced Support Base and the PC try to be active and supportive.

4. Head Teachers Update

LK had conversation with SR on Friday and Covid/pandemic have been at the fore in a lot of conversations and it feels like we've been talking about it for some time, so will try to move away from this and be more active moving forward.

It was a good start to the new term, and everyone was well turned out and well prepared. There was a general nice attitude but will expect some bumps in the road.

There is a terrific new Senior Leadership Team with LC having good knowledge of processes and pastoral background and will compliment the team.

The team are now at full compliment. The roles were quite congested and are looking forward to the team having more specific roles.

- Tamara Jennings – PSA (ESB)
- Rossella Maucione – PSA
- Michaela (Kayla) Pew – Clerical Assistant
- Beth Macleod joins us in PE
- Calum Sinclair - Closing the Gap Teacher
- Lisa Coffey – DHT
- Rachel Sharp – Teacher of English
- Claire Duguid – Art (on Mondays)

New to permanent staff

- Gerardine Renwick – Home Economics
- Helen Burr – Mathematics

NQTs

- Kimberley Dickie – English
- Riccardo Romano – Physics/Mathematics
- Natasha Robertson – Drama
- Euan Ross – CDT

New Roles:

- John MacPhie – DHT
- Eilidh McLaren - Development Officer (DO) PEF
- Helen Kennedy - Pupil Support Leader (Mondays - Telford & Fridays - Telford)
- Craig Nisbet - Pupil Support Leader Burns (Wednesdays only)

Hoping to improve attainment over the next 2-3 years but are on the back for because of Covid. There are some vacancies.

It has been hard for the new S1s due to their school experiences in P6 and P7, and that they have not had a formal transition, however they have adapted well. Still on the 2 week rotation and pupils are coping with it. It's probably affecting S3 most due to course choices etc and tough to keep focus/concentration for double periods.

We have been lucky with the weather for lunch breaks. S1 and S2 are opting for new food in the canteen so it's back to queueing.

The school role was around 600 2 years ago and at the start of term it was 840. This has been caused by other schools being full, new housing etc. Hoping more families will find Forrester a viable option.

Alternative Certification Model – would normally be doing improvement planning which was paused but is being started up again.

Major aspects this year:

- Align PC work with school work
- Health, wellbeing, resilience
- Teacher learning and assessment
- Equity and inclusion
- Curriculum Pathways

A positive unintended consequence has been reaching out to student online and access to materials. Benefit of being back in school but have lost things as well, such as working collaboratively due to facing forward. The teachers are making sure they are gathering evidence for assessments.

Curriculum Pathways – have started to work on the model, which was put on hold due to covid. Looking for better improvements to the curriculum to reach better attainment and engagement.

Alternative Certification – such as CDT, construction, photography, travel & tourism and music. Level 5 is the limit for a lot of these and they need to get to level 6, looking at what can be put in place. Construction is being pulled from high schools. Others are going back the following year to more traditional qualifications. The end point is not just about qualifications, but also things like motivation and confidence.

There will be a Quality Improvement Officer to review the alternative assessment. There have been lots of positive discussions and SR is feeling supported by staff, Parent Council and Councillors.

Reviewing curriculum should make it more exciting and engagement which should lead to higher levels of attainment and achievement.

The attainment visit was previously a visit around the school, now a 3 hour online meeting. Discussed quality improvement, met students, know attendance is an issue. The school is calm, no raised voices or shouting – calmness has returned.

Only managed to use Show My Homework for a year and it was used to set work, however moved to Teams during lockdown. SMHW is not being used but is still a viable option in addition to Teams, as it provides alerts to parents for work set and still to be completed. However this would result in duplicate work, loading to Teams and SMHW. Propose to add to Teams with clear instructions on how to share, and this should facilitate discussions with parents.

Teams for parents is coming. This will allow a view only access and not access to the child account. All agreed there is no point in duplication, that SMHW was a valuable tool, however students need to take responsibility to complete the work as well.

Comments made about tables and it isn't all about how the school looks, need to focus on what's best for the students. Looking into all the time for things that can go into senior school, to enhance the learning offer, depending on interest in the courses.

At the moment, S1 & S2 do all subjects and find that by course choices at S3 motivation is lifted. See there is an issue by doubling all subjects. Hopefully consultation to look into picking subjects from S2 this year. Course choices starting in November but this will have an impact on the school day. Will probably impact students who have not started in the school yet.

Question asked about school reports – how are these going to work in the future. All S3s should have received a report – appears not everyone got one and SR to look into. Parent's night didn't happen and trying to get up and running online. Won't be in person this year. Parents should get 2 tracking reports and one full report. Parents can contact PSE teacher if any concerns.

No information received on Young Scot Card. Don't need this for school lunches, can go to the office and get a PIN number. The students will need one to use on busses, and they are looking at doing more with the card. The website is really only for replacements.

Important cycles and dates will go on website. Reports will be the same for now. New reporting system being trialled in some schools.

The ranking system published don't consider context, attainment and deprivation and are only based on raw figures. The school is closing the gap on lower deciles. Focus on literacy and numeracy. Numeracy was lagging behind but there has been a vast improvement. Trying to ensure students are getting to the levels they are capable of. The school doesn't offer the full range of advanced higher, there is a huge tariff that comes with these.

Learning and teaching has improved, however there are one or two departments that are not as strong in attainment. The more courses taken, find not as successful as it takes away the depth of learning. 2 term dash for Nat 5 – prepping for senior phase and don't want to set students up to fail.

School looks at own figures and monitors own tables, tacking and relationship with parents. It's difficult to put out communication in response to the published tables. Three had previously been a powerpoint presentation, usually after the insight report around September. Might try and do an abridged version for the visit.

Some self-isolating students do not have work. SR will ask teachers to put work in Teams. Getting harder as higher levels are now isolating, and teachers still have classes to teach as well. Need to keep kids on track rather than play catch-up. Some students are using their iPads to join classes, however this is not standard practice

and cannot compel teacher to do this, it can depend on the class. This is probably better for senior classes, however also possibly data protection issues identifying those self isolating. Need consistency.

Locality and parental engagement meeting LK going to next week about support and challenges, happy to share with staff.

4. PC workstream:

- Website – PC page - Amanda
- Behavioural policy – survey & consultation - Hilary
- Wider school/engagement with parents
- Transition – input from new S1 parents
- Pathways – Leaps/college etc – more work to communicate to parents

Offers of support for anything else from PC. Would be good to have updates on the enhanced support base – IMcG happy to do this. To be added to future agendas. Further agenda item to be added is update on equality(KMCP happy to give update).

Work still going on to get the new website up and running for better communication and engagement with parents

5. Accounts/Financial

Apologies sent by ES, however further payment due to PC in October. Discussed PC helping with HE/CDT costs, £14,000 shortfall, however Scottish Government has committed to take curricular costs away. There is money from the PEF, however if government pay for the HE/CDT the money can be used elsewhere.

6. Any Other Business

Need a volunteer for judging panel for Young Philanthropy Initiative. Amanda happy to volunteer as the presentations were fantastic last year, but happy to step aside if anyone else wants to do it. Launches next week. Anyone interested should email Kate. Samm also volunteered.

House Captain interviews – need a volunteer to go into school for S6 interviews this Thursday – LK was going to do it but can't. LW and GM volunteered. Send email Martin and will be from 9.15 for up to 3 hours.

Connect membership and liability insurance due, paid for by the Council.

Teacher recognition – Once again celebrated all the fantastic work being done by the teachers.

No other business and meeting closed at 21:00.

Action points

- SR to provide list of teacher updates to SD for minutes
- SR to pull together abridged version of powerpoint for Thursday's meeting
- Agenda item to be added for Enhanced Support Base update from IMcG
- Agenda item to be added for Equality update from KMcP
- Anyone who is volunteering for YPI judging panel to email Kate
- Email to Martin with names for House Captain interviews

Proposed dates of PC meetings:

7 September 2021

26 October 2021

7 December 2021

18 January 2022

1 March 2022

26 April 2022

14 June 2022 (AGM)