

Parent Council

ZOOM PANDEMIC MEETING

TUESDAY 22nd June 2021

Forrester High School

Present; Lorraine Kneebone (Chair), Emma Spence (Treasurer) Stephen Rafferty, Jackie Barn, Irene McGinnis, Amanda Walter, Sandra Donaldson (Secretary), Gillian Murray, Julie Scott, Mark Peart, Marianne Sandison, Cllr Mark Brown, , Hilary Brown, Gillian Napier, Donna Dennis, Samm Hamilton, Angela Watson, Kate MacPhie, Letitia Wilson, Sharon Robertson, Cllr Claire Bridgman

1. Welcome/Apologies. Meeting commenced at 7pm. Lorraine welcomed everyone. Apologies –

2. Action points from last meeting:

- ES to send LK forms for changing bank account signatories from CS to LK - outstanding
- ES to send cheque for school bids for funds – Now sent

3. Chairpersons report – Annual update

Last June we were a couple of months into the pandemic. The young people were out of school until after the summer holidays but even when they went back it was far from normal. There were restrictions in place and trying to catch up from home schooling. There were restrictions and covid testing, some staff and students were still having to self isolate and a contingency for exams had to be put in place.

Everyone was stretched and the school had to consider:

- The impact of the pandemic
- Wellbeing of staff and students
- Improving communication

There was huge value in the discussions and the school were very good at taking forward concerns. For wellbeing, everyone was trying to support each other and there was a feeling of community spirit which we hope to build on. The Raising Teens with Confidence was a success and hopefully there will be further courses in the evenings in future.

It's been difficult for the Parent Council to engage with the wider community as everything has been cancelled. Hopefully this will improve in the future starting with the new school website.

Lorraine & Jackie helped with the interviewing for the recruitment of 2 new deputy Head Teachers. Amanda & Kate helped make the Philanthropist awards become a success and input is being given to the new behaviour policy.

The elections for the new year were made:

Chair – Lorraine Kneebone nominated and first/second votes by Amanda/Kate

Deputy Chair – Jackie Barn nominated and first/second votes by Amanda/Gillian

Treasurer – Emma Spence nominated and first/second votes by Mark/Hilary

Secretary – Sandra Donaldson nominated and first/second votes by Hilary/Samm

4. Head Teachers Update

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.

There has been a lot of changes, from 1/3 capacity, back full time in August, one-way systems, double periods etc. The main focus is everyone's safety and hopefully avoid the need for isolation. Have started to see a rise in cases although there is no evidence of transmission within the school that they are aware of. It's a modern building and windows have been open. There have been extra breaks and lunches to supervise and wanted to thank the teachers.

There was the rollout of I-pads from second year upwards and hopefully first year moving forward. There was no parent's evening as the trials were not successful. Everyone has missed this because it helps to build the school community and will hopefully get back to in-person next year.

The face masks were brought in from October and everyone took it in their stride. There was fantastic compliance with face coverings. There had been talk of a circuit break in October but it didn't happen. There was an extra week off after Christmas and then back to online learning. The school has received phonecalls from parents giving praise, which has given staff confidence from the positive feedback.

Those with practical subjects returned back first. It was a big logistical operation organising the rotation and because of the class sizes. Students were back 1/3 which was the 4th or 5th timetable. When the students went back they seemed to have a different approach seemed to be more engagement. Some teachers were doing learning online at the same time as teaching in class which was really impressive.

After Easter everyone was back and there were risks as Covid cases were rising again. There were cases in school and some were self-isolating for themselves or for family members.

The school capacity is increasing and need to be change ready. The school is doing well with this. Staff are trying to give everyone the best starting chance. There has been a mixture of assessments and back-up/previous assessments. Students have

been really focussed but some have had tough weeks and adjustments have been made with help from the Support Team.

Stage 3 or 4 ACM – There is a narrow window for assessments and quality assurance and the button will be clicked tomorrow to sign off. The next phase is the results via the Edict system.

There might be issues for the 6th year leavers but parents will be emailed. Appeals should be made through the SQA website but if unable to in certain circumstances, appeals can be made through the school, unlikely grades would go upwards, will give feedback whether on track/better or not as good.

12 noon Friday was the last head teacher update and there have been 36 updates this session. Kate has a video she will put out ahead of the newsletter.

Staffing:

- 2 retirements
- 2 new depute heads (will need 3 in future, one will be funded by the school for a year)
- Newly appointed English Teacher
- New Drama teachers (one for NQT)
- Development – gap in PEF which has been advertised
- .Part of middle leadership Principal level 1
- Recruiting for 3 day Pupil Support Leader
- Recruiting for Art teacher

This year there is a cap of 180 for new intakes (160 last year). The school is growing more quickly than anticipated. The maximum roll will be 900. Outside agencies have been asked for spaces back.

PSAs – 1 enhanced support base. Are working to get parent's night online.

Launch of 1-2-1 empowered learning project – not much change. S1-S1 will all have iPads on a rolling basis. Budget top sliced to pay for it but although expensive the first year, will be cheaper longer term.

The school are looking at the cost of the school day – finality touch and are looking at picking up the cost of HE and CDT but this has not been finalised yet. Will then be looking at funding streams – cake crafting is expensive. This is nearly £14,000 across different year groups and trying to obtain via PEF. Suggested the school approach the Parent Council for a contribution. The school has now secured funding for 2 years for the breakfast club so that cheque may be used differently now.

Question asked about how young people will be certified in the future. Will need to plan well in advance. The hybrid model showed focus and merit. Will need a lot of planning when SQA exams are scrapped.

The timetable after the summer will still need to have similar mitigations like last year. If the numbers come down and this change will probably try to communicate during the summer. As it stands will be double periods with double breaks and lunches. The last time it was manageable for one lunch period was when the number in school was 630. The new structure doesn't fit with split breaks/lunches. It will depend what the guidance is at the time.

4. PC workstream

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

5. Accounts/Financial

£2144.91 at the start of the year (accumulated)

£841.58 funding October 20

£2986.49

Less £1500+VAT for breakfast club.

£225.76 for badge maker

Cheque to school for £2025.76

Closing balance £960.73

6. Any Other Business

None

P7-S1 transition

A small number of students have attended for transition as planned

School Website

This is still in development stage and some Parent Council input has been given

No other business and meeting closed at 20:00.

Action points

- Add agenda point for funding for HE/CDT for next meeting

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)