

Parent Council

TUESDAY 12 November 2024

Forrester High School

Present; April Forsyth (Chair) Stephen Rafferty (Head Teacher), Sandra Donaldson (Secretary), Laetitia Wilson, Samm Hamilton, Kate Givan, Susan Stevens, Katy Guthrie, Kate MacPhie

1.Welcome/Apologies Emma Spence (Treasurer), James Hardacre, Mark Peart, Cllr Euan Hyslop, Jeimmy Suarez Martinez

2. Previous minutes/Action points.

- SR to let SD know interview dates once released – email sent 28 October
- SD to circulate dates for interview volunteers – circulated 28 October
- SR to email J MacP about MAP for parent's evening
- KG to raise awareness of Forrester PC to Carrick Knowe Primary PC – c/f
- AF to raise awareness of Forrester PC to Murrayburn Primary PC – c/f
- ES to send PC parent information sheet to SR – c/f
- SR to work with J MacP around the tracking reports – Reports can be printed out. Texts can be sent but all felt that a bit of context could be provided. J MacP has been speaking to students and the criteria has been explained to them. Emails will be going out to parents – particularly to senior phase. Learning conversations are taking place in classrooms. The council produced a cover note which had alarmed parents. There have been issues with accessing the new system, which doesn't have the functionality of the new system. It's better for the school but not for parents.
- KG to send email to SD about inclusion finding cuts for distribution – circulated 28 October

3. Head Teacher Update

Staffing:

CDT – There is currently a vacancy in CDT. There is one staff member short. There are currently 2 staff doing the work of 3. Some classes are not currently getting CDT. This is a national issue. Some schools are considering removing from the curriculum due to shortages in staff.

English - There is a staff absence in English. However, Benjamin Talbot has been covering consistently. Mrs Collins has adjusted the timetable.

Art - There has been a long-term absence of our Curriculum Leader. However, we have an art teacher covering.

PE – there is a medium-term absence and the timetable has been adjusted.

Lochiel Camp – SR hadn't been on board from the start and was drafted in to help. There were 36 students and 3 staff. The experience was very good and SR praised Outward Bound. They were great with the students and accommodating for food etc. This was a consort of S2 and S3 students who did not get to go to P7 camp. The school is currently looking into an S6 trip. There are additional qualifications/certificates that can be gained for SQA1 awards.

There will be a school Remembrance Service.

SR will be putting out a general update including an update about the first interviews. The Long Leat is with 19 candidates, and will be reduced down to 7 on 18 November interviews. There has been a lot of interest in the post. These are possibly Head/Deputy Heads.

Candidates will get a tour then a Pupil Panel interview. The long leat interviews will include Senior Officers from Edinburgh Council. Pupil feedback will be part of the discussions. The panel will then choose 3-4 candidates to go forward. It is likely to be February before take-up unless a current Deputy Head in Edinburgh gets the job.

The Head Teacher from Royal High has agreed to step in and support during the run-in. The council will back-fill 2 days per week to enable support to be given. Pauline is an experienced inspector so can assist with the next inspection, which will provide continuity and a bit of stability.

There will be a handover as the new inspection will be within 12 months of the last one. The last inspection report was on 12 March but the inspection could be sooner. 2 weeks notice is given. The school has been under constant scrutiny so it might be better for staff if the inspection is sooner.

QAP has been walking the corridors and had a light touch in classrooms. This feeds into quality assurance. JMacP is looking to hold a parent walkthrough with parents in pre-arranged lessons. This involves going into classrooms to observe lessons. Comms about this to be sent by SR to SD. They will be looking for parent feedback and whether this matches with expectations.

There is a pre-follow through visit by the City Team which is a supported self-evaluation on 3/4 December and SR is looking for volunteers (Katy Guthrie). The school should be putting the most engaged pupils and parents forward. The school needs parents from the wider group that's representative. PC to contact SR re availability – 6 parents required and it will last for 0.45 minutes to 1.00 hr. KG can possibly attend.

The "Supporting Students" session received positive feedback. The team are doing this in their own time. It would have costed £3k for external support with this. They used the parent booking system.

S1 numeracy sessions had 58 people and was a good evening. Good feedback received. Good comms were issued around this and the school needs to learn from this. There were lots of support, such as "meet the team".

4. Treasurer's report

ES has sent apologies, however SD has sent on the email about the funding grant application.

The YPI presentations are on 10 December and KMacP said another fantastic cohort this year. The final charities have been chosen and the nominations have been fantastic. There are 9 teams with over 40 students. The teams have had 4 weeks to prepare their presentations, and the winning nomination will receive £3k for their charity.

Sessions for SAMH is being run on Thursdays "Time For Me", and many charities are already benefitting from the teams by way of fundraising efforts. Katy Guthrie will attend as PC rep.

KMacP is looking for funding for food on the night for the students participating of £200. SD to chase up Cllr Hyslop for the funding for this year as it hasn't been received yet. Forrester High School believes in "pay it forward" and are going into other schools to show the model.

5. PC Activities

The Business Manager is looking into the MAP for parents' evening. This could possibly have the PC parent information on the reverse.

It may be an idea to promote the PC through the Broomhouse & Gylemuir websites – SD to get in touch with them.

It also may be worthwhile to do a mailshot for the AGM explaining anyone can attend and possibly incorporate a slide in the S1 introduction session.

During parent evenings it may be an idea to approach parents to ask if they are willing to provide their email addresses for invitations to the PC meetings.

6. Interview Panel

KG attended the screening session and had to chase the meeting organizer for the invitation. There was no briefing and no framework to work to. It was all a bit disorganised. The next interview is on 18 November and KG and LW will be attending in school. SR to set up a meeting for 1.15 on Friday to give out the schedule for grading which should ensure fairness for the candidates. The final interview will take place on 3 December at the City Chambers.

7. Teacher recognition

Names put forward. Particularly those teachers that attended Camp. AF asked whether there would be photos available to be posted on Teams. SR will look into this.

Physics resources provided to one of the classes have proven to be invaluable. Could resources like this be shared across classes? Goos feedback provided around supported study presentation.

8. AOB

RAG status for reports is useful for parents. No dates have been given for prelims yet. An email was sent on 7 October with SQA dates, and the prelim timetable is being worked on. The calendar states these will be in January, however some classes have been told their prelim will be in December. SR to discuss timetables with ME.

Fire alarm – some teachers left the classrooms to get their jackets and left the students in class. SR to feed back to teachers.

Support is being provided for 1 hour per week for University applications. UCAS has a website. Teachers are helping with personal statements and building information for references.

Finally – thanks to SR for everything he has done for the school and that he will be sorely missed. Best wishes to him for the future from all at PC!

Meeting ended 9.00 pm

Action points

- SR to send general update to parents re interviews
- SR to send SD comms about parents going into classes to observe lessons
- PC members to contact SR about availability 3-4 December for supported self-evaluation
- KG to attend YPI presentations on 10 December
- SD to chase Cllr Hyslop about current year funding
- SD to contact Broomhouse and Gylemuir about promoting PC
- SR to set up meeting re Interviews
- SR to see if photos from Camp can be posted on Teams
- SR to speak to ME re prelim timetables
- SR o feedback to teachers re leaving classrooms to get jackets during fire alarm

Dates of PC meetings:

10 September 2024 – James Hardacre

12 November 2024 – April Forsyth

14 January 2025 – Kate Givan

18 March 2025 – Susan Stevens

29 April 2025 – Laetitia Wilson

10 June 2025 (AGM) - Joint

Role of Chair

- Meet with HT to review draft minutes & agree agenda for next meeting
- Chair the PC meeting;
 - make sure meeting runs smoothly & efficiently
 - run in an inclusive & friendly way
 - effective decisions are made
- Monitor PC mailbox
- Liaise with school & treasurer over funding plans for PC money
- Point of contact for the school to raise/discuss any issues or proposed changes
- Assist with interviews/recruitment when necessary (generally management level)
- Give an annual report at the AGM