

Parent Council

TUESDAY 18 March 2025

Forrester High School

Present; Susan Stevens (Chair) Steven Small (Head Teacher), Sandra Donaldson (Secretary), Emma Spence (Treasurer) April Forsyth, Laetitia Wilson, James Hardacre, Samm Hamilton, Kate Givan, Katy Guthrie

1.Welcome/Apologies Kate MacPhie

2. Previous minutes/Action points.

Action points

- HT to review timing of issue of tracking reports – All confirmed this appears to be working much better
- All PC to send questions for QIO to SD to collate and pass on – None received
- SS to check if there are any funding needs within the school - No additional requests, SD to go to Costco for Easter study Snacks. AF to email Burtons or Morrisons. Maybe approach Forrester Rugby Club for funding at some point?
- ES to bring forms from bank to transfer name to AF – All online now. In progress
- PW/SS to send P7 transition dates to SD for PC volunteer – 17-19 June. Parent info evening volunteers James & Katy.
- SD to contact Broomhouse and Gylemuir about promoting PC – c/f
- SS to see if P7 parent pack for transition can be updated to include PC info – still to check with Lisa Coffey

3. Head Teacher Report

Staffing:

- New temp Modern Languages teacher
- New Drama teacher – 2 days per week until the end of May
- There are now 3 CDT teachers instead of 2.
- 2 new office staff
- 1 H.E. loss
- Interviews for Maths but none deemed suitable, so this is now going for a National recruitment campaign

P7s were at the school for a Maths challenge last Thursday which went well. There were 212 students from the cluster groups.

There are a number of upcoming events:

- Easter study. The updated timetable is now on Google forms for students to register their interest so they can manage numbers and have appropriate staff
- Immersion days for extra study before exams – the timetable is being finalised

HMIE inspection

The letter has been drafted and a timetable sent. Can't go into detail at the moment but it was relatively positive and staff were more positive than last year. There was recognition of their efforts and increase in attainment. The final paragraph seemed a bit harsh, however this is on a standard template. The next review will be 18 months after the publication of the letter, which should be out in the next few weeks. Therefore the next inspection is likely to be Sept/Oct 2026. After that, the council will prepare a report for HMIE and if they are happy with the outcome, it will be closed off.

- 17.5%-20% of students looking at mid 20% and they are looking at where the school sits within the virtual comparator.
- SQA and SCQF have different measures for assessing and the school is looking to improve the quality of passes

The curriculum for Science in Nat 4 doesn't necessarily link up to the Nat 5 curriculum as noticed by some of the parents, SS agreed. Most other courses do link up and overlap. They are trying to get the balance right between Nat 3, Nat 4 and Nat 5.

The school is working on the pace and challenge of learning in S1 and S1 and they are looking at assessment and moderation even from P7, with the focus being on Broader General Education (BGE)

They are also focussing on the learner voice, which is about how students feel about what's going on in class. SS is meeting with the Learning & Teaching Leads this Thursday. They are looking at how teaching supports additional learning needs. Lisa Coffey is visiting Leve Academy to see how they work.

Activities week

Initial conversations are taking place. The person who used to structure it left and the new person didn't start until January. It won't be in May this year as there's not enough time to organise it, but looking into doing it at the end of June with sports day etc. They are drafting a list of activities. All year groups are likely to get a lesser offer than in previous years.

There are 176 in S4 this year compared to 140 in S3. Pupils have been involved in tours of the school including New S6s and S1s for P7s. A lot of parents are unfamiliar with the layout of the school. The school is liaising with the Primary clusters. There were issues with the swimming lessons this week due to clashes which affected the P4 swimming.

Feedback given on parental communication, the new format seems to be better. Discussion around frequency of issue – monthly?

There will be a bake sale on 26 March. PC members explained there was a lack of communication around events in school, for example purple day was not widely advertised and more information to be passed to parents. SS to look into this.

4. Inspection feedback

See HT report above

5. Treasurer's report

A donation of £450 was made for activities week last year. There is approx. £800 available to spend. There is approx. £800 available to spend. There are still 2 cheques that have not been cashed – One for Green Shoots and one for referees fees. SS to check with Business

Managers as they were issued at the end of November and may need to be cancelled and re-written. £850 in total (not included in balance of £800).

6. Activities week

See HT report above

7. PC Activities

The S1 Parents' Evening is on Thursday 3 April – JH and SD to represent PC

8. Teacher recognition

Names put forward.

9. AOB

There has been an issue with students not being allowed out of school for appointments without the parent being present for an S5 student. SS to check as a phonecall to a parent should be sufficient. This is an Edinburgh-wide piece of guidance which has caused issues.

PC raised issue of long lunch queues, as some students don't have enough time to eat this before classes re-start and is making them late for class. SS confirmed there has been a staff shortage. Thursdays are particularly bad days for queues as chips are served on Thursdays. SS is aware of this and is looking into it. This is compounded because of the restructuring of the school day and lunchtimes are shorter. One dinner lady was re-deployed due to staff shortages at a primary school.

Meeting ended 8.30 pm

Action points

- SS to look into Comms to parents around events in school (such as Purple Day)
- SS to look into uncashed cheques
- SS to check procedure for releasing students for appointments
- SS to look into queues at lunchtime
- AF to look into donations from Burtons/Morrisons for Easter Study
- SD and JH to attend S1 parents; evening
- JH & Katy G to attend parent info evening (12 June?)r
- SD to contact Broomhouse and Gylemuir about promoting PC
- SS to speak to LC to see if P7 parent pack for transition can be updated to include PC info

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