

EARLSTON HIGH SCHOOL PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes : Tuesday 25th November, 7pm Hybrid in person and online meeting

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| <p>Attendees:</p> <p>Chair: Alice Caldock (AC) Vice Chair: Charlotte Shortel (CS) HT: Alex Johnson (AJ) Hilary Shand Andrea Hall Eleanor Deardon Adam & Leslie Ward Gavin Tweddle Heather Toal Hilary Thomson Louise Johnson Eilidh Gourdie De Shan</p> | <p>Apologies:</p> <p>Treasurer: Travis Burne Alex Heneveld</p> |
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| Agenda Item | Actions identified Who? When? |
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| <p>1. Approving the Role swap of Vice Chair and chair – attendees agreed the swap of Charlotte and Alice swapping roles (Chair and Vice Chair) since the AGM. Travis Burne is remaining as Treasurer.</p> | |
| <p>2. Approving the Constitution – discussed and agreed. Issues arising from this discussion were-</p> <p>a) Name of group to be decided – is Parent Council too formal sounding ? Would another name encourage more participation?</p> <p>b) Consideration to be given to communicating with local community groups – starting with the Community Councils.</p> | <p>a) Chair to create a form with different ideas of group names to send to attendees to vote / give suggestions</p> <p>b) Chair / Vice chair to reach out to all Community Council Chairs – to share minutes. Gavin Tweddle to support finding the contacts.</p> <p>c) Chair will finalise the constitution and distribute.</p> |
| <p>3. Head Teacher’s Update - (not full update this time due to Agenda around Constitution) etc</p> <p>Jill McDonald is going to retire in February. 40 years in the Borders. Parent Council agreed to a gift and card for her at her retirement. Recruitment will commence for her replacement. Mr Johnson will be looking for Parental representation in interview panel for this process.</p> <p>What would we like to hear from the HT in his report?</p> | |

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| <p>Staffing changes This might depend on what is currently happening?</p> | |
| <p>4. Chairperson's report - no report this meeting due to the nature of the meeting – first meeting as a new committee and re-establishing the constitution etc.</p> | |
| <p>5. Treasurers report – No report as yet. Looking at the most recent statement in the Parent Council inbox there appears to be a balance of £6468.33.</p> <p>Due to there being some funds available it was agreed to approach the Faculty Heads to ask them what their wish list items would be for PC future consideration. (PC are not expected to support the funding of core educational experiences and materials).</p> | <p>Chair to send HT the form to distribute to the Faculty Heads</p> |
| <p>6. Fundraising -</p> <p>Idea of a Family Ceilidh was proposed. Music department has already agreed to Fri January 23rd, however it was discussed asking if they were able to push back date to Feb / March. This was to give more time after prelims / more time to organise and it was decided it didn't have to be on Burns night. Also, the High school are considering re-instating the Burns Supper for S6 pupils and parents and this would allow this to go ahead.</p> <p>Members of the PC would be needed to support this event when we have a confirmed date!</p> | <p>Chair to email Music department to ask if they have dates in Feb – March that would work for them instead - asap</p> <p>HT to liaise with High school staff (Mr Woodcock) to let them know there hopefully won't be any clash – allowing them the opportunity to reinstate the Burns Supper on the 23rd January.</p> |
| <p>7. Syllabus outline –</p> <p>Faculty heads are working on a standard template, HT to bring examples to next meeting. Ultimately they will all be uploaded to the school website.</p> | <p>HT to include in his report for next meeting</p> |
| <p>8. Year Group representatives –</p> <p>Discussed Facebook group which is working really well for current S4 parents. Can we identify other existing / new Year group representatives? How should channels of communication work?</p> | <p>Decided to add to agenda for next meeting</p> |
| <p>9. Encouraging attendance by communicating the dates to the whole Parent body</p> | <p>HT to communicate all future dates to parents in newsletter.</p> |
| <p>10. Any other business</p> <p>a) S4 parents' representative brought the following questions to the meeting for discussion:</p> <p>S4 parents have noted and very much appreciated the amount of support children are getting for their Nat5 study support from the teachers in preparation for their prelims. However -</p> | |

Why no study leave? Parents concerned their children are taking an extra subject and without study leave it is affecting their children – high levels of stress / wellbeing affected – especially for children with additional support needs.

HT response - SBC eradicating study leave, for schools with prelims, across the authority – some schools have some this year as they are moving school buildings etc but next session there will be no study leave in any school for prelims.

Lost learning time for all learners but in particular those with ASN is also an issue. There was also a substantial cost associated with employing invigilators.

Discussed – what is the purpose of a prelim?

In S4 it can give them practice for the exam hall experience. But it isn't the only evidence used for appeals anymore and appeals are less likely / routine these days. Are they then just in class assessments? Some teachers are saying they are prelims – some are saying they are not. HT explained they are in a process of change in terms of approaches to assessment. Agreed that communicating this change / vision to parents as clearly as possible is valuable and that he welcomes all parental feedback for this session.

Why were Nat5 prelims brought forward not the Highers?

HT response - Fitting them in when they would have that class. For teachers to be able to mark and return to children giving them meaningful feedback

Discussed timings -Some parents feel having Christmas holidays to prepare for prelims are beneficial, others are aware their children are planning to study and are feeling the loss of their Christmas break and holiday time.

Parental concerns raised about communicating clearly and timely the Additional needs arrangements – the lateness of notice and potentially not knowing where they should go – children with additional needs can find this very stressful.

HT response – agreed this is important and that every effort would be made to improve this going forward.

Can we have more communication from teachers regarding ongoing assessments? If your child isn't letting you know how they are doing by the time a parents' night comes round it can leave little time to respond

HT response - Reports not fit for purpose at the moment. Looking for parental input in the calendar regarding parents' evenings and reports – parents will be consulted on these.

Could the booking systems for the Parents nights be more consistent?

4.30pm / 6.00pm when bookings opened for example (and 4.30pm is not suitable to many parents. Could we have a consistent time in letting parents know the booking time as the S4s had less than 24 hours notice.

HT response – This shouldn't have happened and was mainly due to issues in office staff changing. Will be consistent moving forward.

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| <p>Pupils (and teachers!) were having difficulty understanding the prelim timetable. HT response - DHT Judith Weston left with very little notice and her rapid departure meant the timetables for each individual pupils wasn't finalised. HT wanted parents to get the timetable as it was, but it will be clearer next session.</p> <p>b) Advent Calendars have traditionally been bought – agreed to buy a box of treats for each faculty from PC due to lateness in getting this organised.</p> | <p>Gavin Tweddle to check with HT how many needed and purchase.</p> |
| <p>11. Date of next meeting – Thursday January 22nd @7pm</p> <p>Future meeting dates:</p> <p>Wednesday 4th March @7pm Tuesday 21st April @7pm Thursday 11th June @7pm</p> | |
| <p>Agenda items next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreeing the name of the group currently known as Parent Council • Mobile phones policy (Dr Morton) • Year Representatives and channels of communication | <p>Vice Chair to contact Dr Morton to invite him to meeting.</p> |
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