

**Earlston High School Parent Council meeting (via Zoom)
Thursday 29 October 2020**

Agenda

Welcome
Apologies
Approval of previous minutes
Head Teacher's Report
SQA update
Family Learning
Interventions
Treasurer's Report
AOCB
Date of next meeting

Attendees

Mel Brookes
Justin Sinclair
Damian Hayes
Judith Weston
Jill McDonald
S6 Head Team
Jess McBeath
Alison Cameron
Gordon Craig
Claire Karr
Jacqui Millar
Karen Wexelstein
Annie Jones
Shaad Mehdi
Lynne Graham
Pooee Pitman
Mariana Nogueira
Kate Richards
Kate Jackson
Dean Sewell
Mercy Daniel

Apologies

Gavin Tweddle
Annabel Howell
Fiona Donaldson
Kate Farnsworth

Welcome and apologies

Mel welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above.

Minute of the previous meeting

Minutes from the previous meeting on 20.08.20 were proposed by Mel and seconded by Claire.

Head Teacher's Report

Justin provided an update covering the following areas: -
School priorities:

- Health and Wellbeing: Focus on becoming more a 'nurturing' school.
- Earlston Excellent Learning: Building on digital capability with Inspire Learning.
- Lockdown gap: Identify those that require additional support following lockdown and put appropriate measures in place.
- Time capsule: Being taken forward by S3. Parent Council will be asked to think about something to include.
- Winter Wonderland: To create a positive seasonal atmosphere within current restrictions.
- Thank you from Head Teacher to all staff, pupils and Head Team for their continued support and understanding.
- Continued weekly meetings with PC Chair.

SQA update

Judith Weston provided an update on current plans for assessment in AY 2020/21

National 1-4 level assessment will continue as normal.

There will be no external assessments (including exams) for National 5. Assessment will be made via an Alternative Certificate Model. This will involve estimating grades based on class work and teacher judgement. The emphasis will be on quality of work and not quantity. The model will also be supported by a continual verification of standards via both informal networks and formal departmental, regional and national SQA structures.

Higher and Advanced Higher exams are expected to take place with prelims in January. Planning is currently underway on how prelims will be delivered under current restrictions.

Communication methods with parents on plans include:

- Parents' evenings: Currently being planned
- Curriculum overviews
- Production of videos
- Pupil learning logs

It was also emphasised that parents can contact the school at any time to discuss curriculum development and assessment plans.

Family learning

Jill McDonald reported on plans regarding family learning communications. It was noted that the lack of face to face events at the school would require a rethink on how family learning is delivered. Current plans included recorded tutorials and live facilitated on line sessions.

Provisional topics for these sessions included:

- Anxiety support
- Exams
- Inspire learning

PC members also suggested the following topics:

- Information for S1 parents
- Help with University applications
- SQA deadlines and dates
- Using Teams and Satchel One
- Parent/carers and schools partnership framework
- Mental wellbeing

Action: Jill, Justin and Mel to discuss the delivery of family learning events taking into account the above suggestions.

Interventions and actions

Damian outlined the approach to supporting pupils with learning in the current environment. During lockdown, Satchel One had provided valuable information on engagement with learning to allow the school to focus on those requiring support. There were two basic stages:

1. Recognising the possibility of further lockdown, and the potential for individuals to have to self isolate, maintain the availability of work online so it is accessible outwith school hours.
2. Identify individuals struggling and provide bespoke support, often through one to one mentoring.

Presentation from Head Team

The Head Team gave a presentation highlighting some current key actions/issues. This included: -

- Dux Medal ceremony: held outside in September.
- Funding for additional seating: £10k secured from SBC following a request for funding by the Head Team.
- Covid-19 video: showcasing stories from pupils and staff (some very hard hitting) and shown at assembly.
- Suggestion box.
- Committees are now up and running.
- Halloween dress up day.
- General appreciation of being able to be in the classroom and recognition of the work being done to facilitate this.

The Head Team were thanked for their presentation. It was noted that their request for funding to SBC was being held up as an example of good practice.

Treasurer's report

It was noted that access to the PC bank account was proving problematic.

Action: Mel and Jacqui to take forward access to PC bank account with Faye (previous treasurer)

AOB

- **QR codes:** It was noted that there had been teething problems with the introduction of QR codes on tables to allow for the monitoring of pupils sitting together at break and lunch time. The form activated by the QR code had been changed to include an option for a pupil to input only their name instead of the names of all pupils at their table.
- **Lockers for S1s:** A process had been put in place to allow S1 pupils to access lockers.
- **School meals and Grab and Go:** It was noted that the quality and choice of food had improved. The new socially distanced queuing system was working well.
- **Home Economics aprons:** The recent call for aprons to use in home economics classes was noted. It was agreed that the PC should provide funding to purchase aprons.

Action: Mel and Justin to discuss scale of funding support for aprons.

- **Quiz night:** It was agreed that the possibility of holding a quiz night to raise funds should be explored.

Action: Mel and Jess to discuss quiz night.

- **SBC Inspire Parent Ambassadors:** The recent call for volunteers to become inspire parent ambassadors was highlighted. It was noted that there was not much information on the detail of the role. Mel agreed to investigate.

Action: Mel to see if further details on the role of Inspire Parent Ambassadors is available.

Action: PC members to contact Mel if they are interested in becoming Ambassadors.

- **Easyfundraising:** It was noted that Earlston High School Parent Sub Group was listed on the easyfundraising charity shopping site (<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>). Purchases made using this site would generate donations to the PC.
- **Water bottles:** It was agreed that pupils must be encouraged to bring water bottles with them to PE and take breaks for drinks.

Action: Justin to ensure that PE staff are asked to remind pupils about water bottles.

- **Extracurricular activities:** It was noted that, at present, there were no plans to reintroduce extracurricular activities.
- **Biking:** The possibility of accessing funds to train up biking coaches at the school was raised.

Action: Kate J, Mel and Justin to discuss applying for biking coach funds through the PC.

Date of next meeting

It was agreed that meetings should alternate between Wednesdays and Thursdays. The date of the next meeting was agreed as **Wednesday 13 January at 7.00pm.**