



Berwickshire High School Parent Council Minutes of Meeting: 1st March 2017

Present

Parents:

Cathy Anderson, Douglas Archibald, Rosemary Bain, Livvy Cawthorn, Audrey Gaston (Treasurer), Avril Hamilton (Chair), Kath Lothian, Katy Master (Secretary), Joanne Moore, Fiona Morris, Val Redpath, Ali Thomson, Jason Waghorn

Staff:

Scott Steele (Acting Headteacher), Peter Macklin (Depute Headteacher),

Apologies

Neil Bennett, Jane Boyce, Morag Mazzoni, Diane Murray, Agnes Owtram-Temper, Diane Sinclair, Jane Taylor, Neil White

1. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Subject to the addition of Kath Lothian's report concerning the gym equipment, the minutes of the meeting on 1st February were approved as a correct record.

2. Chairperson's Report

Avril Hamilton reported that she had recently attended a Parent Council Chair's meeting and had news about the following:

1. Pupil Premium. There are three strands to this – reporting to parents and carers, publishing attainment, and pupil equity funding. [see also Headteacher's Report for more on Pupil Premium]
2. Teacher Recruitment. SBC is currently reviewing staff numbers. Recruitment is proving challenging across the region. SBC have a number of positive actions in place: trying to retain good NQTs; putting out an general advert earlier than they did last time; 'growing their own' – i.e. encouraging local people to become teachers; looking abroad for trainees; encouraging aspiring teachers to return to the Borders for placements; an apprenticeship model for recruiting teachers; improving the perception of the Borders and promoting the region as a place to live and work; and working with the GTCS on creative ideas for recruitment.
3. Growing in Confidence. This is a mental health programme, a pilot for which has been successful. SBC is currently training people up to roll it out across the region.
4. Child Exploitation Strategy. This strategy, which focusses on preventing the sexual exploitation of children, is looking at how to raise awareness of this issue across the Borders. It includes peer-on-peer sexual exploitation ("sexting" and other social media based activity).
5. School Estate update. Following on from the consultation last year, there were no immediate school estate issues affecting BHS. However, SBC intend to revisit the issue due to the low turnout at the local Berwickshire session last year.
6. Dyslexia Strategy. SBC is developing a new strategy for dyslexia across the region.

3. Treasurer's Report and Fundraising

Audrey Gaston reported that the current balance is £1,611.04, following the £5k payment for the gym equipment.

Ali Thomson had obtained some information about setting up a 100 Club. Avril Hamilton and Douglas Archibald agreed to take this away and look into the practicalities of getting this up and running.

4. Parental Involvement sub-group

Katy Master reported that the next step with the DoE group is to ask parents to come into school to get PVG forms to get that paperwork and certification process underway. She is waiting to hear what sort of first aid requirements there are from DoE.

Ali Thomson reported that she had met with Mr Harvey, who confirms that help required with extra-curricular sports centres on three areas:

1. Having more parents with PVG certificates who can help with clubs/sporting events
2. Updating the sports section of the school website, so that club information is up to date and to help facilitate communication between clubs
3. Finding qualified coaches for hockey, tennis and netball to ensure the sustainability of these clubs in the future.

Kath Lothian pointed out that it is more appropriate to put information on the school's Facebook page, regarding qualified coaches, the school's sports and clubs, as it is a more up-to-date way of communicating with parents at the moment, and will still enhance the school's website, once updated. Following on from this, reporting on sports and other events organised in the school, together with wider achievements outwith the school, was also discussed with a view to giving pupils as much support, praise and encouragement as possible. The school is still looking at an effective means of capturing the wider achievements information, but in the meantime, further discussions (with Mr Harvey for sports results, for instance) are merited to find a way in which we can support the school to get successes publicised promptly and widely, and also for up-to-date photographs to be used in the PE department.

Joanne Moore reported that she was disappointed not to have been invited in both her DYW and her professional capacity to the DYW meeting for employers taking place on Friday afternoon. Mr Steele apologised and welcomed her to the meeting if she can make it.

5. Headteacher's Report

The acting headteacher, Mr Steele presented his report.

Staffing

We have successfully recruited a Maths Teacher who will start just after the April holidays, and we are in the process of recruiting another.

I am interviewing on Friday afternoon for our Computing post.

We are getting support from SBC in a sizeable advert which is going out next week.

We have a few short term absences which are still with us, but our arrangements are holding up.

Windfarm Funding

Letters of thanks and accompanying photographs have been sent to Lammermuir Community Fund and Black Hill Windfarm.

Easter School

| Berwickshire High School - Easter Study Timetable April 2017 | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|
| Week beginning Monday 3rd April | | | | | | | | |
| Staff | Monday 3rd April | | Tuesday 4th April | | Wednesday 5th April | | Thursday 6th April | |
| | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 |
| C Kenneally | Maths H | | Maths H | Maths H | Maths H | | | |
| D Robertson | Maths N5/1 | Maths N5/1 | Maths N5/2 | Maths N5/2 | | | | |
| D Mackay | | | H&F H | | | | H&F H | |
| C Ellis | | | H&F N5 | H&F N5 | H&F N5 | H&F N5 | H&F N5 | H&F N5 |
| N Ralston | Geog N5 | Geog Higher | Geog N5 | Geog Higher | | | | |
| C. Grant | | | | | History N5 | History N5 | History N5 | History N5 |
| M Stutt | | | | | History H | History H | History H | History H |
| B Markham | BM Higher | BM Higher | BM N5 | BM N5 | BM N5 | BM N5 | BM Higher | BM Higher |
| Ruth Moghadam | | | | | Biology H | Biology N5 | Biology H | Biology N5 |
| S. Watt | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Week beginning Monday 10th April | | | | | | | | |
| Subject | Monday 10th April | | Tuesday 11th April | | Wednesday 12th April | | Thursday 13th April | |
| | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 | 0900-1200 | 1230-1530 |
| L Stokes | | | | | Chem Higher | Chem N5 | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Together we learn, we succeed, we excel | | | | | | | | |

Study Sessions

A number of study sessions are taking place for senior students during lunchtimes and Friday afternoons:

Maths N5/Higher - Friday afternoon

English N5/Higher - Monday-Thursday lunchtimes

Biology N5/Higher - Friday afternoon

Chemistry Higher - Monday lunchtime

Chemistry N5 - Tuesday lunchtime

Physics Higher - Monday lunchtime

PE - Monday -Thursday lunchtimes

Computing N4/5 - Wednesday

Computing Higher - Daily

Computing Higher - Monday P7

Computing Higher - Friday P2

Graphic Communication - N5, Higher & Ad. Higher - Tuesday & Wednesday

PCS Metalwork - N4/5 - Wednesday & Thursday

BM Higher - Monday lunchtimes

BM N5 - Tuesday & Wednesday lunchtimes

Prelim Results

Our SQA targets are 40, 40, 20. This means 40% for 5+ National 5s; 40% for 3+ Highers and 20% for 5+ Highers. Our prelim results show that we are on track.

S3/4/5 Options Evening, 7th March & S2 Personalisation and Choice Evening, 9th March

The purpose of the evening is to share with parents the ambitions we have for our young people and explain the practical process of choosing subjects within the senior phase. Furthermore, it is important we have the opportunity to explore subject choice and how it relates to career opportunities. The evening will cover the following topics:

- Subject choice and career pathways
- The process of subject choice and key dates
- Consultation and support for the choice process
- My World of Work

Parent Questionnaire

A parent questionnaire has been e-mailed to all parents and will be issued at the next S3 Parents' Evening and Open Nights. Feedback will be collated and shared with the Parent Council. We have had some trouble with the word document sent out to parents so that will be resent with the link to Survey Monkey.

Developing the Young Workforce

We are hosting an event on Friday 3rd March for a wide range of employers: SBC, National Health Service, Uniformed Services, and range of small to medium sized local employers.

York Trip

There is an additional Parents Evening for parents of those who are attending the York Trip. This will take place in the assembly hall on Monday 6th March at 7pm.

Pupil Premium

This emerges from the Scottish Government's Excellence & Equity Policy. Excellence is about raising attainment for all, equity is about addressing attainment for those who are in poverty.

There is a fund of £1,200 per pupil who has a free school meal entitlement. We have 21 pupils in S1; 14 pupils in S2 and 15 in S3.

The focus of the pupil equity fund should see demonstrable improvements in literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing. This will be monitored, tracked and quality assured. Progress of which must be included in the Standards & Quality Report, and will be included in any HMIE inspection.

I also believe this should include stronger parental engagement.

A query was raised about the effect that teachers filling in for absent teachers is having on the staff. Mr Steele confirmed that whilst of course there is increased pressure on staff, the commitment from them to help and make sure that lessons continue is high.

A second query was raised about the possibility of offering Life Skills Maths at national level
5. Mr Macklin undertook to ask Mr Robertson about the merits of this idea.

6. Issues Raised by Parents

An issue was raised about the availability of staff at parents' evenings with particular regard to teachers who teach many pupils in one year group and their ability to see all parents in one evening. Mr Macklin responded by saying that it can be problematic, but the school does everything it can to ensure that all parents can speak to teachers if not at the evening than at other times if there are concerns.

7. School Website

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

8. DONM

TUESDAY 28th March 2017, 7pm

Minutes Approved by Parent Council on Tuesday 28th March 2017

Avril Hamilton, Chair, BHS Parent Council