



Berwickshire High School Parent Council Minutes of Meeting: 2nd November 2016

Present

Parents:

Douglas Archibald, Rosemary Bain, Neil Bennett, Jane Boyce, Livvy Cawthorn, Audrey Gaston (Treasurer), Avril Hamilton (Chair), Kath Lothian, Katy Master (Secretary), Joanne Moore, Fiona Morris, Agnes Owtram-Temper, Diane Sinclair, Ali Thomson, Neil White

Staff:

Scott Steele (Acting Headteacher)

Apologies

Morag Mazzoni, Diane Murray, Val Redpath, Jane Taylor, Jason Waghorn

1. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Subject to the insertion of an additional piece of financial information, the minutes of the meeting on 5th October were approved as a correct record.

Letters have gone out to local employers in the area about Employer Partnerships.

Douglas Archibald was elected Vice-Chairman of the Parent Council. Avril Hamilton thanked Agnes Owtram-Temper for her years of service in the role.

2. Chairperson's Report

Avril Hamilton reported that she had attended a meeting of Parent Council Chairs on 1st November:

- A representative from the Scottish Parent Teacher Council gave a talk reminding parents of the existence of the SPTC and its role and resources. Avril encouraged members to look at the SPTC website.
<http://www.sptc.info>
- The National Improvement Framework is a Scottish Government initiative looking to close the attainment gap. SBC representatives gave a presentation about the associated monitoring across P1, P4, P7 and S3, which takes the form of teacher-led assessments. Naturally this raises issues about how the results of those assessments are reported back to parents.
- A document entitled, "Empowering Teachers, Parents and Communities to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education: A Governance Review" was discussed. The online consultation can be found at:
<http://consult.scotland.gov.uk/empowering-schools/a-governance-review>

3. Treasurer's Report and Fundraising

Audrey Gaston confirmed the current balance is £5,656.40. Since the last meeting, there has been expenditure of £317 on S3 folders. Income has been £425 in SBC Parent Council grant money and £5,000 from the Blackhill Windfarm. This latter sum must of course be ringfenced for gym equipment and is not for the general PC fund.

It was agreed that **Mr Steele** would see to it that a letter of thanks go to both windfarm funds for the recent grants.

Ali Thomson reported that she has spoken to Duns Golf Club about holding a charity tournament to raise money for the school and that this idea has been met favourably. She is now waiting to hear about potential dates and the likely cost of holding such an event.

Audrey confirmed that the Christmas Fayre will be held on 9th December probably from 6-8pm. Jane Taylor and Kath Lothian have volunteered their help. Morag Mazonni, although not present at the meeting, has also indicated that she would be willing to help with fundraising.

Raffle and tombola prizes are needed for the Christmas Fayre.

4. Parental Involvement sub-group

Katy Master confirmed that she has been in communication with Ms Moghadam and Ms Stirling to arrange a meeting to talk about Duke of Edinburgh award.

Ali Thomson reported that there has been no progress yet with meeting with the PT Health and Well-being to discuss involvement in extracurricular sport.

Joanne Moore reported that she had emailed Mrs Scott with the suggested ways in which parents can help with the Developing the Young Workforce programme that were identified at our last meeting and was waiting to hear back.

Mr Steele reported that there is to be a careers event aimed at S3 in the coming weeks.

Douglas Archibald suggested that it would be useful to see a list of the employers that the school as written to (see earlier minute) in order that parent council members might identify any gaps.

5. Headteacher's Report

The acting headteacher, Mr Steele presented his report.

Staffing

R. Griffiths is returning to Pupil Support full time.

We are re-advertising both Maths and Computing posts. We have got a very experienced and effective supply teacher coming into support Maths three days per week.

Timeplan has put out a request for Maths Teachers to professionals in Canada and America, and apparently got a favourable response. They will be available from January onward. Mrs Paulin continues to support in Maths.

There is a temporary Principal Teacher Guidance post advertised for Home House.

Recognising Wider Achievement

One of our committees has been tasked with setting up a protocol and system for recognising wider achievement across the school and in the community. They have come across a piece of software called Learner Journey which can be accessed from phones, homes and school. Further exploration of this is required.

Supporting Home Learning Evening

There will be an evening organised at the school tasked with the purpose of helping parents provide the best support for their children's learning at home. We will take parents through Glow and Scholar, and we wish to offer workshops to give parents strategies on helping their children across a range of subjects. Our target group is our middle 60% of young people in S4/5.

Funding for Gym Equipment

I have taken a look at Youth Chex:

<https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/youthchex>

There is a limit of £250.

Awards for All Scotland:

<https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/scotland/awards-for-all-scotland>

There is a limit of 10,000 and I wish to thank Avril for sharing the application she made for Swinton Primary School a few years back which will help our school application.

Vision, Values & Aims

We have completed our VVA exercise and we are consulting with a company just now to produce an appropriate corporate image to accompany our new VVA.

Parent Council members made some comments, particularly in relation to the 'Supporting Home Learning' event:

- information about supporting home learning needs to be communicated to parents right from the start, i.e. at the S1 induction;
- encouragement could be targeted specifically at particular students and parents where this is appropriate;
- motivation at S4/5 amongst students can be an issue, especially among boys;

- homework is a useful tool both for encouraging self-learning and for involving parents in learning;
- a 'learning mentor' scheme might be a useful way of encouraging students to become more motivated to learn.

6. Homework Policy

A query was raised about the implementation of the Homework Policy that was recently developed by the school in conjunction with members of the Parent Council. There was some confusion about the status of this policy and **Mr Steele** resolved to look into this. It was also agreed to revisit this at a future meeting as appropriate.

7. Issues Raised by Parents

1. **Named Person Legislation.** A query was raised in relation to how much work the school had put into implementing this before the recent legal challenge to this legislation halted it nationally. Mr Steele confirmed that all formal processes are naturally on hold until clarity is sought. He also emphasised the fact that Named Person legislation is not to be confused with Child Protection issues and procedures, which are of course still followed when necessary.
2. **Social Dancing.** A query was raised about social dancing in PE in the run up to Christmas and whether it has to be compulsory. There was some discussion about this. Parents reported mixed views from their children about social dancing, with some liking it and others not. Mr Steele confirmed that it will continue. It is something that the school thinks worthwhile for social and cultural reasons.

10. DONM

7th December 2016, 7:00pm

Items for future agendas:

Sixth Year Committees activity

Homework Policy

School Website

GLOW2 presentation

Minutes Approved by Parent Council on Wednesday 7nd December 2016

Avril Hamilton

Avril Hamilton, Chair, BHS Parent Council