



Minutes of Perth High School

Parent Council & PTA

7.00pm – 24 March 2022 by Zoom

Present:

Grant Wooler (Chair); Susan Morrison (Secretary); Caroline McEwen (Joint Treasurer); Sam Pettigrew (Joint Treasurer); Paula Collin (PTA); Martin Shaw (Headteacher); Chris Farrell (Depute Head); Tom Jamieson (Depute Head); Olivia L (Head Team); Ryan Sands (Head Team); Ian Ashton; Cllr. Liz Barrett; Susan Brown; Cllr. Sheila McCole; Mike Marley; Bruce Renfrew; Bill Russell; Daniel Paterson (Stevensons Clothing); Merrick Whyte; and Jill Young.

Apologies:

Steve Elliot; Tony Fry; Rob Jarvis; Ailsa McLellan; Rebecca McSherry; Gail Meek; Graeme Milne; and Dave Shenton.

Agenda Item	
1	Welcome by Chair The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The next meeting will be the AGM and it is hoped to have it in the school however if the Covid situation means it has to be held via Zoom, this is legal providing all participants can be seen and their correct name is displayed.
2	Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising Grant money has been made available to the pupils and discussions are currently underway as to where it should be directed. So far, suggestions have been boxing equipment, photography equipment and a bench to commemorate a recently deceased member of staff. Susan Morrison proposed the minutes and they were seconded by Bill Russell and Sam Pettigrew.
3	School uniform Mr Shaw reiterated his vision to increase uniform wearing to ultimately make the school a 100% blazer wearing school and sought the backing of the Parent Council towards this. Evidence shows that where this has been done in other schools, the effects have been positive e.g. increased sense of wellbeing; increased self-esteem; better behaviour; positive perception of the school and better academic success (St. Andrews, Carntyne Glasgow being a good example). In addition, it creates a sense of safety as non-PHS pupils are more

	<p>easily identified and removed from the school.</p> <p>Pupils have been collaborating with Stevensons in Scott Street, Perth (who bought over Aitken and Niven), to come up with new, improved designs that are fit for purpose to include a new hoodie and blazer along with shirt and tie. The cost will be significantly less than some of the designer label clothes currently favoured by pupils thus making uniform more equitable.</p> <p>Daniel Paterson (Branch Manager Stevensons) proposes to hold an event in June at the school to come and try the new clothing. The blazer will be 100% recycled polyester and offered at a reduced cost of £31.50 at this event. The normal retail price is £34.50 and stocks will be held in the shop all year round. Any size larger than 36" will be subject to VAT. Hoodies will cost under £20. The school colours (navy) will remain the same.</p> <p>The school would retain a stock of second-hand uniforms and there is a £150 uniform entitlement to those families struggling. Wool blazers would be phased out in favour of the less expensive polyester ones, preferred by pupils.</p> <p>Concerns were raised regarding appropriate clothing during inclement weather. The Headteacher reassured that there would be no outlawing of outdoor jackets though it would be expected that they would not be worn indoors.</p> <p>There was a perception from one long-serving teacher that pupil behaviour and standards have slipped over the last 2-3 years due to Covid issues and no PE changing rooms being available. He believed that a uniform provided stability to pupils and a preparedness for school as well as a defined break between school and home and an improvement on how pupils present themselves in public.</p> <p>The Parent Council voted 13 in favour of uniform proposals and 2 against.</p>
4	<p>Update from Head Team</p> <p>There will be a charity walk in aid of 'Lighthouse' where some senior pupils will be sponsored and encouraged to dress up. Route still to be finalised.</p> <p>Leavers' hoodies are being organised with nicknames and colours and should be available to pay for via Parentpay shortly. The cost will be £18 per hoodie.</p> <p>There will be a Leavers Day for S5/6s and food van options are currently being investigated along with photo opportunities to mark the occasion.</p> <p>There may also be a Prefect Day, possibly at Willowgate. This is still being considered.</p> <p>The Prom Committee have looked at a few venues and will hopefully have the event booked within the next fortnight. The provisional date is 27 June, though this is yet to be finalised.</p>
5	<p>SQA and examinations</p> <p>Mr Jamieson outlined that the SQA exam format is still going ahead and there are new invigilators in place. The SQA provided learning and study material</p>

	<p>which was met with a mixed response regarding use.</p> <p>Any SQA material requiring separate submission has already been sent off for marking which puts the school ahead of where it was at last year.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed about the number of extra assessments undertaken by pupils however this evidence will be required should exams be cancelled or missed and would also be pertinent should any appeals be made.</p>
6	<p>New school building</p> <p>No update other than the proposals were passed by planning on 16 March 2022. It is hoped that there will be 100% availability of lockers for all pupils. Two Council representatives will be invited to the next Parent Council to give further updates.</p>
7	<p>A new charitable source of funds</p> <p>An additional information brief was circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Following on from discussion at the last meeting, Bill Russell explained that there was no intention to seek charitable status for the Parent Council or the PTA. What was proposed was that the Parent Council were encouraging to the setting up of a separate wider charity or piggybacking on an existing charity. That this charity would raise funds for other schools as well as Perth High and would the Parent Council be receptive to funds from this separate charity to distribute for the benefit of the pupils for extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the complexities of charitable status and paper trails required by OSCAR, in addition to being clear that any funding was ethical. Many members would like to have more information before deciding. It was stressed that neither the Parent Council/PTA, school or any other body overseen by either group, would be involved in the charity, or setting up of the charity, but the question being asked was would either be happy to receive extra funding from such a charity for the benefit of Perth High School pupils.</p> <p>It was noted that there are currently funds within the PTA which are yet to be spent and discussion took place on whether further funding was necessary.</p> <p>The consensus was that further information would be required but at this stage would the Parent Council be in favour <i>'in principle'</i> for Bill Russell to continue to explore setting up a separate charity. 2 voted for, 0 against with 4 abstaining.</p>
8	<p>Toilets</p> <p>The issue of the current toilets not being fit for purpose continues. Pupils are not going to the toilet and waiting until getting home to do so. Problems include, locked toilets being unavailable due to vandalism or left in a state by pupils crowding into one cubicle during lunch. Monitoring is difficult due to already overstretched staff resources. It is not currently a prefect duty and quite different to other prefect duties also questionable as to how effective prefects would be.</p> <p>Other toilets are available within the PE block though access is restricted. It is</p>

	<p>envisaged that allowing full access would only displace the problem. The school is open to any suggestions as to how to improve the current situation.</p>
9	<p>Mentoring</p> <p>Mentoring is targeted at those on an 'at risk' list to help boost their grades rather than being universally available to all.</p> <p>Dr Jones has been leading in establishing a Supported Study timetable which is available to all. In addition, it is hoped that there will be support available during the Easter holidays for pupils sitting exams.</p>
10	<p>Constitution</p> <p>A working group was established to rewrite the Parent Council Constitution. So far it has compared four constitutions including the 'Connect' example and found that all have defects. Considerations include verifying who has voting rights, making the constitution inclusive or exclusive.</p> <p>It was noted that 'Connect' (the body responsible for Parent Councils) has final say in approving a new constitution.</p> <p>The working group will prepare a new constitution to be brought before the next Parent Council for approval. Concerns were raised about the next meeting being the AGM and a proper constitution should be in place to allow the election of office bearers thus it will appear as the first item on the agenda.</p>
11	<p>Headteacher report</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>Staffing has been problematic with the recent Covid spike having an impact on staff absences. Nonetheless the school has been resilient and managed to stay open. Staff are now returning from isolation and hopefully this issue will wane once this current Covid wave has passed.</p> <p><u>Other issues</u></p> <p>Pupil standards, behaviour, uniform wearing, attendance and expectations require improving.</p> <p>Assemblies are back on the school timetable.</p> <p>Weekly updates are shared via the Headteacher's letter with various sports teams performing very well in competitions and very good results in the recent Scottish Cross-Country event.</p> <p>Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is back up and running with expeditions currently underway in Doune and Dunkeld.</p> <p>A Young Musicians event will be taking place.</p> <p>School Improvement Sub-Groups with teachers are ongoing and a Learning and a Teaching Fair that took place recently was well received.</p>

	<p>All year groups have had a parent contact evening.</p> <p>Finalising Easter School Study Programme for SQA exam pupils.</p> <p>Chris Farrell, Depute Head Teacher, newly in post, introduced himself.</p>
12	<p>Chair report</p> <p><u>Tesco Blue Button Scheme</u></p> <p>It was noted that this has been very successful, and donations are now onto a second box. The awareness of this scheme went viral after it appeared in the Headteacher letter and is a great example of community involvement.</p> <p><u>Chairpersons Meeting</u></p> <p>The Chair attended the Connect Chairpersons meeting for all schools. Staffing is an issue with lots of staff absences everywhere. There is a Bronze Command Unit dealing with this and staff are being pooled from other schools.</p> <p>More supply teachers will be available.</p>
13	<p>Secretary report</p> <p>The proposal to hold the AGM in June rather than after the summer holidays was questioned. The reasoning being that it makes the transfer between office bearers smoother. The current constitution stated that the AGM should be 'no later than 30 August' however this risked incumbent office bearers potentially leaving before new ones were in place.</p>
14	<p>Treasurer report</p> <p>Recorded paperwork of signatories about to be signed off.</p>
15	<p>PTA report</p> <p>One meeting had taken place and funds have been made to Dr Jones for the cost of t-shirts for the Cancer Trust Run.</p> <p>There will be a family quiz night hopefully on 24 June and held within the School Assembly Hall. Confirmation of this will be announced when finalised.</p>
16	<p>AOCB</p> <p><u>Inchture School Buses</u></p> <p>A parent had raised concerns about the state of the buses used on the Inchture route, concerns substantiated today as the bus went of fire and pupils were evacuated.</p> <p>The Headteacher confirmed that he had received numerous emails that morning and the Public Transport Unit were on the case with Stagecoach, the bus provider.</p> <p>All pupils affected were met by the Headteacher on arrival to school and given time to destress from the incident. Some subsequently returned home and the</p>

	<p>Guidance Team also spoke with affected pupils.</p> <p>The driver was highlighted as showing a high level of care to the pupils with his quick thinking and responsiveness. Many of the emails received reiterated that.</p> <p><u>Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme</u></p> <p>The PRISM group had not heard back from DofE.</p> <p>Action: Headteacher will chase up with Lisa O'Brien, the DofE Co-ordinator</p> <p>There remains a lack of staffing with teachers being unavailable due to commitments firstly to the delivery of the normal school timetable. There may be funding available to train up volunteers to become 'Leaders'. The PTA gave money towards the climbing wall previously so any bids would be welcomed for discussion before September. Anyone wishing to volunteer to help should get in touch with the Co-ordinator.</p>
17	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>15 June 2022 (provisional). Venue and time to be confirmed.</p>