****

**BOCLAIR ACADEMY**

**Parent Council Meeting**

**Monday 2.11.20 (6.30 pm by zoom)**

**Present :** Chris Allen, Chris Anderson, Paula Brown, Ruth Candy, Suzanne Chase, Jacqui Clark, Elaine Dallas, Duncan Beattie, Aileen Hamilton, Fiona Lockhart, Regina Marti, Joanne McArthur, Anne McKenzie, Alison McNair, Geoff Miles, Graham Murray, Adriennne Shaw, Chris Sheerin, Susan Sinclair, Claire Taylor, Flora Thomson, Varinder Daliwal. Douglas Brown, Chris Brisbane, Glenn Thomson, Fiona Curran, Clare Morgan.

**Chair**  Chris Allen

**Vice-Chair** Alison McNair

**Minutes**  Joanne McArthur

**Treasurer**  Flora Thomson

1. **Welcome & Apologies**

Chris Allen opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their virtual attendance.

1. **Minutes of last meeting**

Minutes of the last meeting were approved by Aileen Hamilton and seconded by Ruth Candy.

**3. Matters arising from minutes**

Chris Allen highlighted a couple of issues that he had received emails about and wished to discuss them with the group:

**Triple Period for S5 & S6 pupils.** It had been raised as a concern that it was thought the pupils would lose focus by, the end of the third period. Douglas Brown replied saying that this had been the focus of the recent In-Service day for teachers. The triple periods most definitely help with the COVID restrictions. The teachers have been tasked with keeping the lessons alive and active for pupils. It was acknowledged that this will take a bit of time to develop for the teachers.

**Time Lapse Camera** to record the building works of the new school building. Chris Allen raised this, and everyone agreed that this is an absolute must for the history of the new build of the school. Douglas Brown confirmed that they had already taken this into account and were hoping to take delivery of a camera very shortly. There is a slight issue as to where the camera will be positioned but in the meantime the art department are taking plenty of photographs which will be incorporated into the memory.

**4. Update on COVID arrangements**

Again, Parent Council wanted to acknowledge the huge amount of work being carried out by everyone at Boclair Academy to protect against COVID. We are extremely grateful to everyone within the school for their efforts in keeping our pupils safe.

**5. Digital Learning**

Susan Sinclair attended a meeting of Parent Council Heads of local High Schools on 5.10.2020 Gavin Haire (School Planning & Implementation Manager) spoke regarding Digital inclusion and the steps that were required to get pupil access to digital learning and internet access. Douglas Brown stated he is confident all those families within Boclair who were highlighted as needing Chromebooks, Ipads, MIFI boxes etc. have been issued them. It was acknowledged that this took a length of time to get these delivered & there were some people who were without access for 2-3 months. This could not be avoided. It was mentioned that more people may come forward as we near the end of the government furlough scheme, and people’s working situation change, new poverty may arise. Fiona Curran has been tasked with dealing with these cases as and when they arise. Susan Sinclair raised the question if it is possible to check if all the devices handed out have been used. This is difficult to prove as these devices were for use when children were not at school, and mostly since they have been issued the pupils have been back at school It was also confirmed if any pupil is self-isolating etc., then the guidance department make contact with them regarding their wellbeing and their schoolwork, so they would be able to highlight back any technical difficulties.

**6. Supported Study**

It is normally at this time of the year that supported study is offered. Douglas Brown discussed the practicalities of trying to offer this, this year. The Risk Assessment highlights many issues. This is adding extra pressure on teachers when asking them to be involved with another group of pupils after their working day. The cleaners need time to clean the classrooms & the building at the end of the day, and this additional group would only make matters worse. It is not feasible to have 35/40 kids in a group at the end of the school day. Other options are being explored whereby Online Supported Study may be an option. There are some departments where this would be extremely difficult, e.g. Art, Music, Modern Languages, Admin. Douglas Brown is in dialogue with all his staff & is encouraging those who can to set up TEAMS classes where supported study can be delivered. It should be noted that if we move in Tier 4 – then this would not happen, as the guidance dictates no after school activity.

**7. Continuous Pupil Assessment**

Adrienne Shaw highlighted the number of class tests the pupils are having just now with the continuous pupil assessment. It was felt as if they were doing their “Highers” every week. We are aware that it is all evidence gathering but the pressure on the pupils is immense. Douglas Brown added that it is worrying for S4 pupils going into S5 as they will never have needed to study before – meaningful study. We also acknowledged that the exams may not indeed happen again next year, and this is where the continual testing will come into force. It was confirmed that the assessments very much are required. Douglas Brown explained how the little & often testing works, they work through a topic/subject and then do a test on that as opposed to cover the whole course and then have one big test at the end. It was asked what impact this continuous assessment will have on those pupils who have had to be sent home on one or more occasions to self-isolate? DB confirmed that anyone who falls into this category will be exceptional circumstances when marking the assessments. Douglas confirmed that we will not be having prelims like before in the Assembly Hall. It is not feasible to have groups like that together and there will not be any invigilators coming into the school to cover this, as this would realistically be an additional 10 adults per day.

Duncan Beattie added that his son just received his 2nd letter to self-isolate and raised his concern at the lost learning for these pupils. Douglas Brown confirmed that any work lost would be posted onto TEAMS as soon as possible so that those at home can catch up. It was agreed that this is helpful but in no way equal to being taught a live lesson from the teacher. Douglas Brown then confirmed that the whole English Course is on TEAMS and he will investigate all other subjects in order that they are all on TEAMS as soon as is practically possible. Duncan Beattie thanked the staff for all their efforts and made the point that we are aware it is a huge amount of extra work for the staff to deal with.

**8. Head Teacher’s Report** was covered within the discussion of items above.

**9. Date of AGM**

The AGM will be held on Monday 7th December at 6.30 pm by Zoom.

**10. AOCB**

**Hot meals** – As per the mail received on 28.10.2020 Hot meals are available in school as of 2.11.2020 It was noted that only 35 pupils had ordered a hot meal on this first day they were available. It was noted that all food is given in ECO friendly packaging. Douglas Brown also acknowledge that many people are still being cautious and opting to bring their own packed lunches to school. Children pre-order their food & Track & Trace etc. is being carried out in the s same way as when they use Grab & go bags.

**Time lost due to self-isolating -** Duncan Beattie added that his son had just received his 2nd letter to self-isolate and raised his concern at the lost learning for these pupils. Douglas Brown confirmed that any work lost would be posted onto TEAMS that day so that those at home can catch up. Douglas confirmed that every classroom has been bought a visualiser so that the teachers can use this to show pupils workings on a big screen without a group having to stand in a tight group around the teachers’ desk.

**Wearing of face masks -** Ruth Candy asked the question if the pupils had been wearing face masks in school earlier, would this have reduced the number of pupils who had to be sent home to self-isolate? The answer to this was no. The pupils in question were from entirely different sources, class bases etc. so this would have made no difference.

**Health & Wellbeing of Pupils** – Suzanne Chase raised the point that those pupils who are having to self-isolate again are feeling vulnerable and asked if the school had any plans regarding their wellbeing. Fiona Curran advised that all Guidance Teachers touch base with all those who are self-isolating to check that they are coping with both their work, and also emotionally. Fiona suggested that they may set up a TEAMS chat just to say hello and check how they all are and what suggestions ideas they can pass on to each other.

**Soap in toilets** – Varinder Daliwal raised the issue about soap in the toilets. DB was unaware there was an issue but said they would investigate it immediately. Douglas confirmed that the cleaning had obviously been increased and Facilities Management should be on top of this. They have a regular check list, and have a new quality insurance person on board, so this will be dealt with. It was highlighted that the area of concern was the S2 boys’ toilets. Glenn Thompson agreed to pick this up. Prefects have also been checking the toilets etc., and they are great at replenishing anything that is out of stock if they cannot get FM right away. Alison McNair also highlighted that she has been informed that the year group bubbles are not being adhered to with regarding to what toilets the pupils use. DB agreed to highlight this at their assembly and stated that if they find pupils not using the correct toilet, they are spoken to, although it was acknowledged that sometimes an “emergency” arises.

**Date of next Parent Council Meeting will be Monday 7th December, and will be out A.G.M.**