



BOCLAIR ACADEMY
Parent Council Meeting

Monday 25.1.21 (6.30 pm by zoom)

Present : Chris Allen, Chris Anderson, Duncan Beattie, Paula Brown, Ruth Candy, Suzanne Chase, Jacqui Clark, Elaine Dallas, Kirsteen Graham, Aileen Hamilton, Fiona Lockhart, Laura Lyons, Regini Marti, Joanne McArthur, Anne McKenzie, Geoff Miles, Jillian Mooney, Graham Murray, Susan Rae, Adrienne Shaw, Chris Sheerin, Susan Sinclair, Claire Taylor, Flora Thomson, Douglas Brown, Chris Brisbane, Glenn Thomson, Fiona Curran, Clare Morgan, Maxine Traynor.

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. Apologies were received from Susan Paterson and Kathleen Seath.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of the Meeting of 2.11.2020 were approved by Aileen Hamilton and seconded by Claire Taylor. There was only one matters which arose from these minutes: Chris Allen asked if the Time-lapse camera had been purchased, which Mr Brisbane confirmed it had. It cost £250 and is in situ currently.

3. Head teacher Report

Impact of Lockdown. D Brown confirmed that they already had a contingency plan in place, and also a plan B & C. He informed the meeting that Government Guidelines only allowed for 3 days' notice before the school closed.

Senior phase are following a full timetable, as closely as possible.

DB spoke about his staff delivering live lessons. He did say that some unions are against this, but very thankfully all his staff are delivering some lessons live. DB did say that obviously some devices can cause issues, but all his staff had been given visualisers, which is really helping when delivering live lessons.

Chris Allen added that he had had a meeting with Jacqui McDonald, Jan Pollok & Greg Bremner regarding experience of online lessons. His summarised feedback was all very positive.

Regarding the survey it was confirmed that :

- Everyone was pleased with the way it was working
- Concern had been raised about the lack of breaks away from the screen
- Parents had concerned that it is dark when the children start their schoolwork, and it is dark when they finish – so there is no opportunity for them to get up and about and stretch their legs.
- Long Classes, triple periods for senior phase
- Issues with Tablets now working on TEAMS

Douglas was able to reassure the meeting that his staff had been advised to slot in some time in between periods where the children could get up and have a stretch of their legs etc. He confirmed that he had asked his staff all to stick to the usual breaks in the morning, lunchtime etc. Also, during triple breaks if anyone needed to get up and stretch their legs, this is not an issue so long as they advise the teacher in the chat. Both Douglas and Ms Curran confirmed that everyone both in first lockdown and this lockdown who had requested a PC had been issued with one, and this was being done within a few days of the request being made. Fiona Curran was able to advise during this 2nd lockdown around 100 devices had been distributed.

Douglas was also able to advise the meeting that the estimated marks for all pupils must be with the SQA by 18th June 2021. When the pupils return to school they will be given a 3-week rolling programme of assessments, similar to what they are currently running with just now.

DB also advised the meeting that pupil reports are run via a Data Management System (SEMIS). This has to be done in the school as no-one has access to this at home.

DB advised that the usual transitions will still go ahead, and these may be done via a live session.

Induction days are being planned etc for the current P7 pupils and again these will be done online via an Open evening. Ms Curran has already been in touch with the cluster schools regarding this and they are discussions options.

DB was asked when the school is likely to return, and he advised that currently it is looking like the end of February.

PEFF funding: Chris Allen asked if this 60K had been used, to which Douglas confirmed the majority of it has been allocated due to the purchase of Visualisers, additional PC etc. DB also confirmed that they have also used money to put together some food packages to support some families whom they are aware in need of help.

AOCB

On-line Discussion:

S1 & S2 timetables

Adhoc feedback is that the S1 and S2 years aren't getting as full a timetable or as much work as the parents would like/expect and don't feel as if they are being challenged enough. Another member felt that the balance in S1 is right at the moment with a good number of live lessons and time to complete independent learning etc. Another parent raised similar query for s2. They asked if extra course work could be provided to fill some of the space if the child had time and was able to confirm that this is being addressed already.

Senior Phase work

Various parents with children in S3, S4, S5 & S6 commented that all are very busy and think the school is doing an excellent job. Another parent commented that the school and its staff are doing an excellent job in difficult circumstances

“I'm really happy with the balance for my daughters in 3rd and 6th year. I think the live lessons have been very impressive and credit to the staff for all their hard work.”

Pupils who have been isolated

A parent asked if the school will still take into consideration the children that have had multiple isolations when doing the predictions. DB confirmed that yes, this will definitely be taken into account.

Non-return to school this year

A parent asked what will happen if they can't return to school during this school year? DB confirmed that they are hoping this will not be the case & that they will get back & be able to do their assessments.

Parent Evenings

DB was asked are there any plans to have a virtual solution for parents' evenings, as direct access between parents and teachers is important, particularly in the potential absence of the usual reports. DB advised this would be really tricky – but the school are hoping to come up with some idea.

Choosing of Subjects

The question was asked about reports for S2 & S3 parents & children to help them choose their subjects? Again, this is being looked into by the school & hopefully will be able to update the relevant year groups shortly.

Leaving date for current S6 pupils

DB was asked when do you envisage the S6 pupils will leave school? DB confirmed that as the school has until 18.6.21 to hand in all evidence, it is likely that the S6 pupils will leave school at the end of May which will then allow the other year groups to move into their “new classes” for the following year, and for all transitions to take place from P7 – S1.

Primary Groups

The primary children have been bubbling in groups of 25. It was stated thought the jump to the large numbers at high school is going to be a real shock for some children.

Promotion of Future Meetings

We were asked to look at promoting the dates of Parent Council meetings more widely so that parents have a greater opportunity to raise questions or direct issues through parent council members/attendees? DB & C Allan agreed this will be done as a matter of urgency and the last few months minutes will be added to the school website. It was agreed that this would give a wider spectrum of views & feedback, which can only lead to a richer forum.

TEAMS/Show my homework

It was advised that some homework is being published in TEAMS, so parents are not able to see it on Show My Homework. Douglas Brown agreed that he will ask his staff to make sure that everything is recorded on Show my Homework.

Twitter output

It was drawn to our attention that we should recognise the great Twitter output recently from various departments. Very engaging and feedback should be given to staff - Well done to all!

Date of next Parent Council Meeting will be Monday 22nd February 2021, via Zoom at 6.30 pm.