

**Please note** – These draft minutes are **PROVISIONAL**. Any revisions to this draft will be published once they are approved at the next Parent Council Meeting



**BOCLAIR ACADEMY  
Parent Council Meeting**

**Monday 29.3.21 (6.30 pm by zoom)**

**Present :** Chris Allen, Chris Anderson, Duncan Beattie, Paula Brown, Ruth Candy, Jacqui Clark, Elaine Dallas, Aileen Hamilton, Laura Lyons, Regina Marti, Anne McKenzie, Alison McNair, Geoff Miles, Graham Murray, Jane Paterson, Adrienne Shaw, Emma Shepherd, 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 Suzanne Chase, Kirsteen Graham, Joanne McArthur, Gillian Mooney and Jane Paterson.

**2. Minutes of last meeting**

Minutes of the Meeting of 22.2.2021 were approved by Chris Anderson and seconded by Laura Lyons

**3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from last minutes.

**4. Update on Covid arrangements / Impact of FM's latest announcement**

This will be covered during Head Teachers Report.

**5. Head Teacher's Report**

**Phased re-opening and blended learning**

Unexpected announcement of BGE pupils returning prior to Easter  
Expectations that:

- Senior Phase pupils to attend school for some of the time for face to face learning linked to SQA courses.

- Senior Phase pupils who are required to attend school to carry out practical activities linked to SQA Courses
- BGE pupils to attend on one occasion every week to help reconnect with the physical school and see their friends
- Continue to provide consistently high quality online learning for young people not in school
- Continue to run a Boclair Academy Hub for vulnerable pupils and for children of key workers
- 2m distance maintained at all times
- Movement around the school minimised

Overall this has been a positive experience although not ideal. There were issues regarding the amount of time in school for BGE pupils. Focus on safety and reducing the number of pupils in the building at one time

### **Next steps**

We are currently awaiting an update from Scottish Government about the full return to school. Expectation is it will be full return after Easter. This will bring a return to track and trace, masks in school, seating plans, one way system, avoiding large gatherings. All pupils and staff will be asked to carry our rapid flow tests as an extra mitigation. The hope would be to use this time in the Senior Phase for evidence gathering.

### **Assessments**

We now have the full assessment programme for S4, S5 and S6. In line with SQA advice assessments have been broken down into manageable chunks. This will help pupils in their approach to studying and managing the assessment load. On average this is looking like two or three assessments per child per subject over a five week period e.g. around 21 assessments for S5, 15 assessments for S5 and 12 for S6.

The full school assessment calendar for all subjects and all year groups and all levels contains around 400 assessments. To keep it simple we will issue a blank assessment calendar for pupils to complete with their teachers over the next three days. Assessments will start the second week after the holidays and run for five weeks.

Teachers will mark, moderate and finalise grades by Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June. SLT will further moderate and quality assure during week commencing Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June. EDC require grades to be submitted for EDC moderation by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June. Pupils are likely to be issued with their final provisional awards week commencing Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June. Final submission to SQA has to be made by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June. Boclair closes on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June – grades will need to be submitted by lunchtime on 24<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Moderation**

A great deal of planning has gone into moderation. SQA have issued assessment papers for centres to use. These can be broken up to suit the needs of centres. Departmental moderation has taken place throughout the session so far. Departmental moderation discussions will continue through April/May/June. March provisional awards have been issued to pupils and parents. SLT/PT moderation meetings have already taken place. Inter school moderation will take place through April/May/June. SQA will moderate a number of courses from each school in Scotland. This requires the school to send assessment evidence from the school to SQA. They will feedback to schools on assessment standards and provide further advice on arriving at final awards. SLT will have final moderation discussion with PTs at the start of June. EDC will examine attainment trends over time and undertake moderation discussions with schools

### **Easter Revision**

An Easter Revision programme has been developed to provide opportunities for pupils to engage with further directed study over the first week of Easter. Social distancing limitations means this will continue to be a blend on in school and online learning. We recognise that not all children will want to continue with online learning. The sessions will run in the morning and in the afternoons. More practical based activities will be in school.

### **Course planning**

Information evenings have taken place with all year groups involved in the process of course planning. Individual interviews were held with all pupils involved. Parents and pupils were then asked to finalise decisions and submit the information online

We are currently aiming for a new timetable early in June – either the 7<sup>th</sup> or the 14<sup>th</sup> June. A provisional S6 leaving date will be discussed further. Mr Swinney updated parliament recently and said S6 pupils may require to be available into June. This is still to be finalised. We are currently discussing end of S6 activities with the head boy and girl.

S6 End of year activities will include: Year book, Hoodies, paintballing and a potential prom later in the year.

### **Staffing**

We are currently recruiting for a Teacher of Physics, a Teacher of Chemistry, a Teacher of Biology, an acting Principal Teacher of Biology and an acting Principal Teacher of Geography.

## **6. AOCB**

### **Emma Sheppard reported back on the situation with Active Travel**

Active Travel is a big part of the EDC recovery plan and it would be great if we could benefit from this. A report from the council was expected just before the last lockdown, however this has stalled. Then it was announced that some money would be available from the Scottish Government via the "Safer Places" scheme, however to be eligible for this we required to have evidence of a need for investment in active travel. Thanks are due to Chris Brisbane who quickly did an active travel survey which had over 300 responses, and a subgroup suggested by Chris had a good meeting before lockdown and hoped to capture some of the Safer Places money. However, then EDC did not actually apply for any of the money which was very disappointing.

At a high level the survey feedback showed a good level of walking to school, with most who want to walk being able to. There was a good level of interest in cycling but clearly many challenges to overcome. Many more girls than boys responded to the survey and some felt worried about walking. With regard to access to the school Emma advised that there was no requirement to develop any new routes into the school as part of the new build project as the school is the same size as before.

In terms of where to next, the recovery plan has a lot in it and there is possibly some money we could go for to take things forward. It would be good if we could get an elected rep and council member on board, but there is some sensitivity around this after the negative reaction to the Bear's Way project.

We could try and get better access for pupils travelling by public bus. As there is no bus route within 5 minutes of the school there is a process where we can apply for an extended bus route to be within 5 minutes of the school. We could also look at whether it is possible to improve the access around Inveroran Drive as it is a very busy bottleneck. This could also reduce pollution and improve health.

Emma's group are feeling rather downhearted about the situation, particularly as the council did not make a bid for any of the Safer Places money. Emma has spoken to Vaughan Moody and Andrew Polson and senses a slight shift in their position. There may be an opportunity to apply for Covid recovery money. In terms of applying for money from Sustrans there is a question over whether the Parent Council would count as a constituted group.

Chris Brisbane advised that his last contact with Alistair Kyle of EDC was a year ago due to Covid. We had to do the survey to demonstrate a need for action on active travel so now we have done that we need to find out what we can do next. After the Easter break Chris will contact Alistair's replacement Isla Hamilton to ask for an online meeting to discuss where we go now with the information we have gathered from the survey.

Chris Allan said that he would contact Vaughan Moody to gauge his position on the matter.

### **Buses for Easter Revision**

Flora Thomson asked for and received confirmation that the council fees can go towards buses for Easter revision. As there will be morning and afternoon sessions we will need double the buses this year. Mr Brown advised that he will plan the number and size of buses required when he knew how many pupils have signed up for the revision sessions

### **Wider Promotion of Parent Council Meetings**

Geoff Miles suggested that wider promotion of the Parent Council via social media channels and Head Teacher communications would increase the profile of the group and awareness of parents. It would also be good to seek agenda content from the wider parent body in order that the Parent Council is truly representative of parent views and concerns. This could be done two weeks before each meeting by reminding the school community that it is taking place and inviting agenda items to be raised. Chris Allan and Mr Brown agreed that these suggestions should be taken forward.

### **New School Build**

Chris Allan asked if the new build progress had been affected by Covid etc. Mr Brown advised that new it is bang on schedule at the moment and the contractors are very confident that it will be ready on time. Chris also asked if there is any more information about the new build that could go on the Parent Council FB page to let people know how things are going. Chris Brisbane and Chris Allan to liaise on appropriate images, information etc. for the FB page.

### **Zoom On-line chat messages:**

Duncan Beattie asked when “final” grades will be known. Mr Brown advised that the school plan to tell pupils their grades by 14<sup>th</sup> June and the school expect those to be the final grades. Mr Brown is very confident that what the school put into the EDC moderation process will be robust and there will not be any “comeback” on grades of specific pupils. SQA moderation will already have taken place in May – and the extent of this will depend on the resources the SQA have available.

Laura Lyons asked if pupil’s previous work will be taken into account in the overall grade, and how the fact that some pupils have missed a chunk of the curriculum will be managed. Mr Brown advised that grades will not be based purely on the results of the final tests. The school have banked a range of evidence to build a profile for learners and for some young people there is a strong record of attainment. But that doesn’t work for every child. Some will have underperformed from August to December and some pupils take time to “get up to the higher level” as they move from one school year to the next. Mr Brown does not want pupils who did not “get it right away” to be penalised, and the aim is to build a profile for every child across the whole year. The SQA tests are set to give the SQA confidence in the school’s assessment standards and the school will take a holistic view of each child’s performance and assessments.

**Date of next Parent Council Meeting will be Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021, via Zoom at 6.30 pm.**