

BOCLAIR ACADEMY

Parent Council Meeting

Monday 6th December 2021 (6.30pm by Zoom)

Present: Chris Allen, Duncan Beattie, Paula Brown, Ruth Candy, Suzanne Chase, Jacqui Clark, Elaine Dallas, Varinder Dhaliwal, Jenny Kerr, Fiona Lockhart, Regina Marti, Geoff Miles, Jillian Mooney, Adrienne Shaw, Chris Sheerin, Susan Sinclair, Claire Taylor, Flora Thomson.

Staff: Douglas Brown, Chris Brisbane, Fiona Curran, Clare Morgan, Glenn Thomson, Maxine Trainor, Nick Walsh

Apologies: Joanne McArthur, Susan Johnstone, Graham Murray

1. Welcome and Apologies

Chris Allen opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their virtual attendance. Apologies were received from Susan Johnstone, Joanne McArthur and Graham Murray.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2021 were approved by Susan Sinclair and seconded by Flora Thomson.

3. Matters arising:

Geoff Miles asked if the publication of minutes and agenda could be updated on the school website. Douglas Brown would endeavour to get the minutes straight on.

Suzanne Chase suggested that we meet at other venues, perhaps feeder primary schools or different locations to encourage parents to attend. Discussion followed as to whether moving the venue would change anything, as in, would it include the wider parent forum?

Geoff Miles asked that the wider parent body might contribute to the agenda well in advance of the meeting and Chris Allen suggested a Pre-Agenda Meeting. It was agreed that Chris, Douglas and Geoff would meet to discuss.

Chris Sheerin suggested that local councillors should be involved in discussions re Active Travel.

4. Parent Council Forum

Chris Allen recently attended the quarterly Parent Council Forum. One of the main contributors was Boclair Academy with a power point presentation showcasing what it does. This included engagement of every child in the Wider Achievement Programme, Wellbeing Suites, Food Share as well as residential study weekends to name a few. The feedback from East Dunbartonshire Council was that Boclair is a Centre of Excellence.

Chris Allen will post the Education Committee Minutes from the Forum, after these meetings.

5. School Improvement Plan

Douglas Brown looking at the improvement priorities for next year as well as taking in government and East Dunbartonshire expectations. With the new school, the Improvement Plan is set to be ambitious this year and will cover 2 years priorities.

Douglas Brown shared a power point of the priorities:

5 key improvement priorities

1. Leadership and career long professional learning.
2. Improving health and wellbeing and promoting positive relationships, (one of biggest concerns/priorities).
3. Improving learning, teaching and assessment with a particular focus on digital learning. Outdoor will come (will need a 2-year strategy for this area).
4. Raising attainment and achievement and closing the attainment gap. Praise from HMI but far more critical now with Covid.
5. Planning for the new school. (Reviewing vision, aims and values, curriculum etc).

Chris Brisbane reported on the new school (tying in with IP): Work was on schedule, started decorating and carpets down in first block. Consulted with Pupil councils re toilets and survey out to parents.

Various consultations re ICT, Assembly Hall.

Met with removal people again and they will come back in Jan re the move and how to go about it. Materials, boxes, bubble wrap etc have all been delivered to the school.

The old solar panels, (asked at last meeting), will be used at a community project.

Planning visits for staff and pupils will be sorted in the New Year.

Chris Allen asked when they could see it. Chris Brisbane commented it was down to Health & Safety and the interruption to their work of showing people around.

Susan Sinclair suggested someone could film part of it.

Formal opening will be through the council. There will be opportunities to come and see the new school for the current sixth years and past staff and pupils will be able to come and see the old school.

6. Mental Health First Aid

Claire Morgan reported that many staff and pupils have been through this excellent 3-day course run by social enterprise, Be-inn Unity and she was overwhelmed by the engagement of pupils. Individuals work with the social enterprise, looking at brain function and stress response and the impact on the body and how it can lead to anxiety and mental health. Also teaches about attachment theory and the importance of the first 5 years of your life in terms of whether your needs are being met. If needs are not being met, it can impact on mental health as an adult and gives an understanding as to why they respond the way they do in certain situations. Individuals learn how to understand themselves better and others better. Now need to raise awareness amongst peers and younger pupils.

KIT bag – tool used in early years/primary to open conversations and get meaningful conversations. S6 keen to use this with S1 buddies. Young people keen to fundraise for Be-inn Unity as well as a Mental Health Hub.

Discussion about the benefits of this course to Parent Forum, Parent Council and Boclair parent community. Douglas Brown suggested using a Family Learning Event to reach out to parents as a helpful first step. If parents involved, it would be more a community approach rather than just a school approach and give parents a better understanding.

7. HT report

Staffing update

Ewan McRae has been appointed to the post of acting Depute Head Teacher in Bishopbriggs Academy

Grant Irvine has been appointed to the post of acting PT PE – currently PT HWB in Bishopbriggs Academy

Aileen McKenzie has been appointed to the post of Teacher of Business to cover Rebecca McGregor until the summer

Nicole Bittar has been appointed to the Office Team

Laura Faulkner has been appointed to the Office Team

Three new SLAs have been appointed – Iona Oliver, Lydia Suder, Laura Beggan

Dr Amit Delori has now left the Chemistry Department

Overall Staffing Levels

School FTE:	73.8
Actual FTE:	86.7
Additionality:	12.1

Covid update

- Local authorities and schools should continue to apply almost all the mitigations that were in place at the end of last term,
- This approach to maintaining mitigations was expected to remain in place for a period of up to October but has now continued beyond and will be in place up until Christmas
- Recent update indicated that mask wearing and other mitigations are now in place until Christmas holiday
- Pupils should all face the front as far as is practicable
- Assemblies and large gatherings of young people are still not allowed.
- Hand sanitising stations in every room without a sink
- EDC policy of clean as you go for surfaces and computer key boards etc using the materials provided

The number of Covid related absences for young people and staff in Boclair Academy continues to be high. Details were provided to the Parent Council.

Lateral Flow

A central mitigation against the spread of Covid is the lateral flow testing required by all young people and staff. The new tests are now nasal only swabs which we hope will help with increasing uptake and recording of the tests. Nationally the numbers remain low.

Other areas of school life

SET UP – Mr Walsh

SETUP stands for... Sustainable Essentials Toiletries & Uniform Provision. SETUP is a new school resource room, designed to make the life of young people and staff more eco-friendly and stress-free. Anyone can access SETUP to access essential items. There is no cost for any of the items – all that we ask is that young people **respect** others by only taking items that you need. The SETUP Room is stocked full of lots of essential items including:

- Blazers, Trousers, Ties, Tights, Shoes, Underwear, School Bags
- Toiletries including shampoo, shower gel, deodorant, sanitary products
- Learning materials such as paper, pens and pencils

The SETUP Room will be supervised by staff and S6 prefects. It can be accessed at **intervals and lunchtimes** by different year groups on different days. Pupils can also access SETUP any day of the week including before and after school by speaking to their Guidance Teacher or Year Head. If they need particular items from SETUP, they can also make a request for these using the QR code, which can be found around the school

Christmas Hampers

We have launched an appeal for items to support our Christmas Hampers for our most vulnerable families. All items are welcome but at this time of year items that would be appropriate for Christmas time would be helpful.

SQA Assessments and Prelims

Three Plans remain in place for SQA Exams:

Normal exams

Adapted and supported exam diet e.g. further changes, advanced notice of topics etc

No exams – in-year assessments instead

January Assessments

SQA have stated there is no requirement for prelims as part of their courses. Assessments will go ahead in January over a three week programme avoiding more than two or three assessments in a single week. Meetings will be held with PTs this week to discuss how best to support young people through assessments, assessment arrangements and issues related to sharing what's in the assessments.

Study skills workshops are now being undertaken with all Senior Phase pupils. Supported Study is still ongoing. We may still have proper prelims later in the year

Parents Nights

We have now undertaken three online evenings – with clear improvement each time. We are now satisfied we have a stable platform for the evening and are now working on the timings. For example 5 minute appointments mean that not all pupils in a class of 30 can see the teacher but 4 minute appointments would allow this.

New School Update

Walls are now being painted and carpets laid in some parts of the building. Discussion is nearing an end in terms of toilet decisions and a survey will be out soon. A similar discussion regarding values is also taking place.

Website update

Two members of staff have volunteered to help support a refresh of the website.

8. AOCB

Geoff Miles asked if there would be study leave for prelims however this is not built in at the moment due to the nervousness of learning loss. Douglas Brown suggested that in line with other schools, there may be a proper prelim exam diet in March. Geoff also gave his appreciation to the supported study programme which was currently on.

Ruth Candy asked if there was any scope to review triple period set up as she was aware of fatigue and lack of concentration. Douglas Brown commented that there was no likelihood of it changing this year and that it wasn't ideal but good for keeping young people in a tighter group.

Varinder Dhaliwal asked if Show my Homework was no longer being used by teachers? Douglas Brown commented that this predated Covid and then Teams was used during Covid, which parents have no access to. Unfortunately, it is too much work for staff to do both.

Chris Allen thanked Douglas Brown and the rest of the Senior Management Team.

The next Parent Council Meeting will be on Monday 24th January 2022 at 6.30pm via Zoom.