

BOCLAIR ACADEMY

Parent Council Meeting

Monday 24th January 2022 (6.30pm by Zoom)

Present: Chris Allen, Paula Brown, Ruth Candy, Jacqui Clark, Elaine Dallas, Kirsteen Graham, Fiona Lockhart, Geoff Miles, Jillian Mooney, Graham Murray, Claire Taylor, Flora Thomson.

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

1. Welcome and Apologies

Chris Allen opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their virtual attendance. Apologies were received from Duncan Beattie, Suzanne Chase, Regina Marti, Joanne McArthur, Susan Sinclair.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2021 were approved by Ruth Candy and seconded by Geoff Miles.

3. Matters arising:

Chris Allen reported that the minutes of the previous meeting were on the school website.

Chris Allen reported that one of the Parent Council, Regina Marti had now moved back to Switzerland but wanted to give her sincere thanks to Douglas Brown and all the staff as well as the other members of the Parent Council.

At the last meeting, Chris Sheerin had asked if local councillors could be more involved in the meetings. Chris Allen had contacted Andrew Polson and although he couldn't attend this meeting, was keen to make the next one on the 21st February.

Graham Murray wanted to raise a question about the prelims.

4. Careers Advice

Douglas Brown and Claire Morgan gave a full report in this area. Advised the parent council that the school, work to career education standards set by the Scottish Government. Skills matrix planned in from an early age, starting in P7 right through to the end of secondary.

2nd Year: Pupils looking towards narrowing their subjects. Lots of work done around subject choice in PSE. Careers Conference including employers from different sectors, talking about both the general skills and specific skills needed. Parent Information Evening to be held. Pupils supported by Guidance Teacher and Kirsty Young from Skills Development Scotland, (SDS), who works with all the young people in the school.

3rd year – Careers Advice through Guidance Teacher and Kirsty Young from SDS. Trying to get subjects right but for many, the subjects will remain general as they are unsure what they want to do.

4th year – Course Planning Process, Parent Information Evening and pathways beyond school as well as college workshops. Encouraged to take subjects that they have already studied before.

5th/6th years -Kirsty Young visiting PSE lessons and much of the focus on UCAS and college applications.

Parent Information Evenings as well as training providers and employers talking to the parent body.

Work experience been difficult due to the pandemic but many pupils have had experience as a result of the new school build. Some have managed to get their Construction Skills Certification Scheme card and Employment Ready Certifications. Going forward the school are currently enquiring about an online platform that would help pupils arrange work experience.

Online Parent Information Evenings dates coming out soon re course choice and Family Learning Events to be held towards end February as well as a work coach available for students that need extra help.

The UCAS/College pathways programme which started in August, is just finishing now. This year, 116 pupils have applied to university. College workshops currently taking place.

Nick Walsh is the Principal Teacher of Developing the Young Workforce and leads on equity in the school. His role is to support with family learning and help with contacts for work experience. Ask the Expert Sessions are held at school where pupils can ask a wide variety of the workforce about their day-to-day work, hours etc. Sometimes former pupils are asked for their input with regards to studies to give the pupils a better understanding of what is involved. Partners to the school have been able to contribute to sessions online and this has made it easier all round.

Maxine Trainor commented that one of the benefits of the school's partnership with Rangers Football Club was the chance for pupils to be able to get work experience opportunities in marketing, physiotherapy, hospitality and sport.

Geoff Miles was approached by some parents regarding Careers Advice. He is overwhelmed with the amount the school offer in this area but would like to make this information more visible to other parents, perhaps a section on Careers on the school website with links to useful websites. Douglas Brown and Clare Morgan will tweet careers events in the school.

Useful websites:

www.myworldofwork.co.uk

www.mykidscareer.com

www.planitplus.net

Ruth Candy asked if there is a list of parents that pupils could speak to online regarding careers advice, particularly for pupils who are not as well supported by parents. This is something that could be supported by parent council.

Clare Morgan commented that the school do their best to reach out to their partners so that all pupils get that input.

5. Pupil Exit and feedback Interviews

These are held to ensure that pupils are well supported as they leave school and to make sure they are successful in their transition to the next stage from school. Some parents will not know what to do if their children do not get into what they were hoping to do and the school and Skills Development Scotland are able offer support and advice for that period.

Clare Morgan and Gemma Campbell carry out a 1-2-1 for each pupil and ensure they have a positive destination. Meetings held in March in the hope that they will have heard from colleges or universities by then. Pupils will then know what they are working towards and have a Plan B. Conversations will be held for those that might be at risk of not reaching their destination. Will also ask if they have enjoyed school and what has and hasn't gone well. Ask for areas that they think they could suggest for improvements. In recent years, these have mainly been about the fabric of the school or Covid.

6. Head Teacher's Report

Staffing update

Jack Halley has taken up a temporary position as PT PE in Bishopbriggs Academy

Two new PE teachers have been employed to support the loss of Ewan McRae and Jack Halley from the department

Two classroom assistant posts have been advertised and interviewed – final interviews this week.

Ms MacGregor has now started maternity leave.

Overall Staffing Levels

School FTE:	73.8
Actual FTE:	86.7
Additionality:	12.1

Impact of Covid on pupil and staff absences

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.

Covid update

- Prior to return to school after Christmas, additional guidance was provided to schools
- At the EDC HT Covid Planning meeting it was set out that blocking should continue, split lunch times should continue, separate lunch areas for different year group bubbles should continue, one way systems should continue
- Essentially, local authorities and schools should continue to apply all the mitigations that were in place at the end of last term,
- Recent update indicated that mask wearing and other mitigations are now in place until further notice
- Pupils should all face the front as far as is practicable
- Assemblies and large gatherings of young people are still not allowed.
- Pupil movement round the school should be reduced
- 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

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. We continue to remind staff and pupils twice a week.

Other areas of school life

SQA Assessments and Prelims

- Our Senior Phase Prelims are underway. These assessments are taking place in classes rather than in the assembly hall as discussed at the last meeting
- This type of assessment does not fully replicate the SQA assessment being in a large hall with external invigilators
- SQA have stated there is no requirement for prelims as part of their courses.
- Absent pupils will be given an opportunity to sit the prelim where practical.
- At the moment not all pupils are not ready to sit SQA style assessments which fully replicates the final exam
- Accommodation is a further barrier to this at present
- It may be possible hold a second Prelim diet that more closely resembles the final exams mid-March. This will be Covid 19 regulation dependent

Three Plans remain in place for SQA Exams:

- A. Normal exams
- B. Adapted and supported exam diet e.g. further changes, advanced notice of topics etc
- C. No exams – in-year assessments instead

Parents Information Evenings and Subject Choice process

We are ready to commence this year's Curriculum Choice process for pupils in S2, S3, S4 and S5. This will involve online information evenings and individual interviews with young people. Work is carried out in PSE in preparation for this process and information will be available to parents on the website.

UCAS / College update

The UCAS process closes for initial applications on Wednesday this week. Altogether, we have 116 applicants currently completing the process. Young people have already started to receive offers from various Universities.

New School Update

Work is continuing of the new school. We are currently in discussion with EDC regarding the ICT provision in the new school. We are also working with the contractors on the strategy for moving materials and equipment from the current school.

We have completed an initial consultation on the toilets in the new school and on the Values we should have in the new school. The Pupil Council are due to meet after the Prelims to consider the results of the consultation.

Chris Brisbane reported that they have been sorting out room allocations in the last few weeks and meeting with the Move Manager.

They had a recent consultation with the pupil body on the toilets for the new school and this will be reported back at the next meeting.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Thomson are to meet this week regarding the ICT in the new school.

Douglas Brown informed the parent council of the community café that will be part of the new build Pupils will be able to get an SQA qualification in Barista Training, offered as an option in S5/S6 as well as work experience to help engage young people and give links to industry.

7. AOCB

Ruth Candy asked if the pupils had been asked about their thoughts on another prelim diet at end of March?

Graham Murray expressed concern on the young people's mental health if another set of prelims were to go ahead but could appreciate the need for evidence gathering.

Douglas Brown commented that it was a difficult decision as to whether to go ahead with another prelim diet. He said a plan was in place for it but that he was meeting with heads of department this week to discuss. His concern is getting the best evidence to reflect the child's ability as SQA use demonstrated attainment for results.

Chris Allen asked when we might know if another prelim diet is going ahead?

Douglas reported that we would know as soon as possible but that they would normally do evidence gathering and further practice at that time of year anyway.

Chris Allen thanked everyone for their attendance and commented on the immense effort put in by Douglas Brown and the Senior Management Team for the benefit of the children's school experience.

The next Parent Council Meeting will be on Monday 21st February 2022 at 6.30pm via Zoom.

