



**BOCLAIR ACADEMY**  
**PARENT COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**MONDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2024 6.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Christine Lee, Claire Arthur, Dominic Gonzalez, Elaine Dallas, Gaynor Bilton, Kirsteen Graham, Sandeep Kaur.

**Staff:** Clare Morgan, Douglas Brown, Glenn Thompson, Jen Cleisham, Maxine Trainor, Nick Walsh.

**1. Welcome & Apologies**

Gaynor welcomed all to the meeting

Apologies: Angela Thomas, Claire Taylor, Geoff Miles, Jillian Mooney, Susan Rae.

**2. Minutes of last meeting**

Minutes of the last meeting on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were approved by Christine Lee and seconded by Elaine Dallas.

**3. Matters arising - Nil**

**4. Head Teacher Report**

**Senior Staffing**

D Brown reminded Parents of his work with HMIE on Inspections at different points of the year. In a change to the agreement with Local Authorities, approved by the Chief Education Officer, he can now expect to be out on Inspection duties up to four times a year. In addition to this, the Chief Education Officer has nominated the HT to join the Scottish Government's National Behaviour In Schools subgroup on approaches in Secondary Schools. As a result, D Brown will be out of school more often than usual and given this. D Brown informed the meeting that Clare Morgan will deputise as Head Teacher in D Brown's absence. Congratulations to Clare.

**Pupil Council**

Last week our Pupil Council met on Wednesday to discuss matters relating to school improvement. During the meeting we discussed a number of items related to Scottish Government publications for schools to consider, as well as the curriculum offer across the school.

**RRSA**

At the end of this week, we held a dress down day to support the UNCRC's Rights of the Child. This is to promote and celebrate children's human rights, following the UN's adoption of the UNCRC on 20th Nov 1989.

**DYW**

S6 Mock Interviews, S3 Engineering event, Car Valeting, College workshops, ongoing UCAS, Hair & Beauty Trip.

## **Family Learning Events**

BGE, Senior Phase for almost all but English and Maths, English and Maths at the weekend. Very positive feedback and particular thanks to parents and staff who came in on Saturday morning.

## **Mentors in Violence Prevention**

S6 Peer Mentors have been in classes leading learning on topics such as healthy relationships, social media and the bystander approach of seeking help in a crisis.

## **Christmas Hampers**

Our Christmas Hamper appeal also continues this week, and I would encourage you to send in items suitable for a Christmas Hamper, or bring them in on your next visit to the school.

## **Canteen**

Following the launch of the new canteen menus in October, D Brown provided an update regarding the canteen service. School staff are working hard with facilities management staff to support the transition to the new menus and ensure that queuing times are kept to a minimum. The use of the pre-order slips, which pupils should complete during registration, supports the efficient preparation of meals. Any change to the menu will be highlighted to pupils during registration. As always, if any child has a concern regarding the lunch provided or has not been able to submit a pre-order form, they should speak with one of the Depute Head Teachers on duty in the canteen who will ensure that they are provided with food. D Brown thanked parents for their patience as the school works towards ensuring the new menus are fully embedded.

## **Reports**

Our S4 Reports are currently being completed, and we will have them ready for sending home to parents during week commencing 9th December. This will give a good understanding of progress at this S4 mid-point.

## **Prelims**

Our Prelims for S4, S5 and S6 take place in January and run from Monday 13th January to 24 January 2025. A Prelim timetable will be issued shortly.

## **Snow Ball and Christmas Events**

This Wednesday, 4th December, sees the first of our festive events, with our inaugural Snow Ball for S5 and S6 students. Following this we have our Christmas Concert on Thursday 12th December from 7.00pm to 9.00 pm, and our two dance shows on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th December.

## **Last week of Term**

We will have a busy last week of term with cinema trips on Wednesday 18th December for S1 and S2 and Thursday 19th December for S3-S6. We also look forward to our Christmas Assembly on the morning of Friday 20th December followed our Christmas Karaoke on the Friday afternoon. Please note that the school closes to pupils at 2.30 on that last day of term.

## **5. School Improvement Plan**

D Brown outlined the various self-evaluation activities that combine to inform the School Improvement Plan. He then presented to on the School Improvement priorities for the coming year along with the high-level

actions within each of the priorities. The presentation included the various staff and pupil contributions to school improvement work across the school.

## 6. Curriculum Discussion

D Brown outlined that the school are currently discussing the range of subjects and the restrictions placed on young people as they move from S2 into S3, which begins the pathway into the Senior Phase

Members of the Parent Council were invited to look at last year's S2 into S3 Course Planning form. They were asked to consider whether or not this offers (or offered) young people the opportunity to study subjects they enjoyed, and consider if it forces (or forced) them to choose a subject they felt they wouldn't do well in.

The following questions were considered:

<p><b>Does this form allow your child to choose subjects they enjoy?</b></p>	<p><b>No, because French was no a subject that would have been chosen by all children. Many would have liked to choose another subject.</b></p> <p><b>Spanish is not available as an alternative.</b></p> <p><b>French is a grey area. Scottish Government wants French as aprt of the curriculum until the end of S3 but many schools elsewhere are now pushing back on this.</b></p>
<p><b>Other than English and Maths, should your child have a free choice of subjects at the end of S2?</b></p>	<p><b>Spanish should be added to the languages column, but this should still not be compulsory</b></p> <p><b>Young people should be encouraged to choose a broad range of subjects.</b></p> <p><b>Completely free choice could be intimidating.</b></p>
<p><b>What are the dangers of not choosing a broad range of subjects?</b></p>	<p><b>The column system works.</b></p> <p><b>There can be a lack of knowledge at such an early age related to likes and ambitions.</b></p> <p><b>There are benefits to including a broad range e.g. atrs based subjects even it's not where pupils are interested.</b></p> <p><b>It can place limits on what you can take in S5</b></p>
<p><b>What changes should be made to the current choice form?</b></p>	<p><b>More knowledge of subjects which might not be possible to take on to Higher e.g. cookery and practical woodworking</b></p> <p><b>A question was raised regarding to what extent pupils get their first choice i.e. is it 100%? The school confirmed this was the case.</b></p> <p><b>S3 into S4 and S4 into S5 was also discussed</b></p> <p><b>The Princes Trust option was also clarified for parents</b></p>

## 7. Date of next meeting

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 6.30 pm in person

## 8. AOCB

Christine Lee asked for feedback following concerns raised by local residents about littering in the area. GT and MT assured that the matter had been addressed at various assemblies and is / will be repeated throughout the year. It was agreed that EDC do not provide enough bins in the area and those that are in situ are ravaged by birds, creating mess. If individuals are identified, parents are contacted.

GM asked to raise a query regarding the longevity of the supported study and associated bus transport. DB assured that both would continue. Although there is a finite amount of funding, the school is able to continue to provide all as previously. Fridays were cancelled due to low uptake and felt resources could be better spent elsewhere.

EDC has not set the next budget yet, awaiting Scottish Government.

GB suggested that for potential future proofing, PC could feed into the funding with some creative thinking.

The meeting closed at 8.25PM