



## **LENZIE ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL**

### **The minutes of Lenzie Academy Parent Council Meeting held remotely (MS Teams) on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

#### **Present:**

Melanie Quince	Nauman Dar	Fiona Wright	Laura Forrester (Deputy Chair)
Sandra Thornton	Carol Nurbhai	Enya Chen	Joanne Haggata
Jack McLean	Gabriel Kaifala	Gillian Cay	Aileen Aitken
Stewart Murray	Jean Barbour	Steven Hale	Gayetri Ramachandran
Nina Teasdale	Mr Farquhar	Mr McKinstry	Mr McDowell
Mr Paterson (Head Teacher)			

#### **Apologies:**

Sarah Giffen                      Siobhan White (Chair)

#### **1 Welcome and Apologies**

Mrs Forrester (Deputy Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone who was participating. She offered an overview of how the Parent Council functioned and highlighted the various resources that were available to parents / carers on the school website.

Apologies had been received from Siobhan White (Chair) and Sarah Giffen.

The meeting was informed of the resignation of a Parent Council Member, Damion Cooper, who was standing down as his daughter had recently moved from Lenzie Academy. Mr Cooper was thanked for his involvement.

#### **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 were accepted as a true record by Gayetri Ramachandran and seconded by Nina Teasdale.

#### **3 Chairperson's Report**

Mrs Forrester advised that as she was chairing the meeting at relatively short notice, she was unable to offer a formal Chairperson's Report, but she obtained verbal updates from members in relation to some current activities and concerns that had been raised previously.

#### **4 LAPC Pupil Survey 2021**

##### **Action**

Siobhan White and Laura Forrester to work together to develop an initial draft of a Pupil Survey for early circulation to members.



Following discussion at the previous meeting about the move from in-school learning (up to December 2020) to on-line learning (from January 2021) and the change in teaching style and delivery it was agreed that the Parent Council should canvas the views of the young people at Lenzie Academy about the various changes they had experienced and how this had impacted on them both personally and in their learning experience.

A Pupil Survey was produced by the Parent Council which was checked by both teacher and pupil groups for verification before being circulated throughout the wider school. Permission for pupil participation was obtained from parents via an email encouraging them to ask their child/children to complete the questionnaire. All responses were anonymous and there was no compulsion for pupils to participate. A total of 181 young people completed the survey.

Mrs Forrester provided a detailed overview of the responses received and highlighted, that overall, the comments received were positive. Pupils highlighted that despite having concerns about the changes they were enjoying the new style of learning and the way in which it was being delivered.

Mr Paterson offered an overview of the results from a school and a wider local authority perspective and this provoked a great deal of discussion and comment. The survey was viewed as being a valuable exercise for the Parent Council as well as serving to offer reassurance and support for the school. The full results of the survey have been posted to the school website for the information of all interested parties.

## **5 Head Teacher's Report**

### **Staffing update**

Mr Paterson highlighted several recent staffing appointments:

- Principal Teacher Chemistry – Mr M. McDowell
- Principal Teacher Guidance – Ms S. Carr
- Teacher of Chemistry – Mr C. McGinley and Ms K. McComb
- Teacher of Physics – Ms K. Warnock
- Teacher of Biology – Ms M. Paterson
- Teacher of HFT – Ms A. Heron
- Teacher of English – Ms S. Kelly and Mr C. Quinn
- Teacher of Mathematics – Ms R. Sutton

### **Pupil return on a blended learning model**

- This has been the third timetable change in the space of three months and has been very time consuming for staff and confusing for pupils.
- Head Teacher spoke to year heads, guidance staff and teaching staff to ascertain their perspectives
- Generally, a positive return for pupils.
- Pupils are very quiet and reserved at the moment and the school feels very quiet. This can be put down to only one third of pupils being present at any one time; small classes of 7-10 pupils; being 2m distanced at all times and having different teachers than pupils are used to.
- Mark McDowell and Iain McKinstry offered a class teacher perspective and Niel Farquhar, a year head perspective, on the use of the blended learning model.
- The school are still having some minor issues regarding the wearing of face masks but thankfully it is a small concern.



### **Preparations for a full return on 19 April**

- The same procedures will apply in terms of the Health & Safety Risk Assessment that was in place prior to lockdown – different entrances; one-way systems; daily class checklists and the wearing of masks for all pupils in class as well as in corridors.
- Opening windows more to ventilate rooms as milder weather is forecast.
- Changing rooms will still not be in use so if pupils have PE, they should wear their PE kit coming to school.
- New timetables will be issued to S1-3 pupils.
- Lateral flow devices – consent forms will be issued prior to the end of term on Thursday and the school will issue a pack as soon as is practicable.
- Detailed letter to be issued by the Head Teacher prior to pupil return outlining a reminder of our systems and procedures as well as reminding pupils of the times of periods; intervals, lunchtimes and end of the school day.

### **School refurbishment**

- 3G Rugby pitch is still on track for completion in early to mid-May.
- New computing suite has almost been completed.
- New HE kitchens are to be designed and fitted. There is no finalised date yet, but it would need to be over a prolonged period of a summer holiday or Easter break.
- Guidance base – this has been designed but no details yet as to when the work on this will take place. Hopefully this work can be completed over the summer break.
- Feasibility study – East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) have set aside a budget to undertake a broad feasibility study into a possible new school. This gives the council officers a year to look at possible sites; review roll projections and sketch out possible designs etc. These proposals will go to the council next year when any final decisions will be made.

### **SQA**

The Head Teacher and SQA coordinator have met with all Principal Teachers (Curriculum) as part of the school's quality assurance procedures to discuss the following issues:

- S4-6 assessments – what's been undertaken and what has still to be done.
- Departmental moderation and quality assurance procedures.
- EDC moderation partners.
- School quality assurance procedures.
- Approaches to issuing provisional grades.

### **Easter School and Supported Study**

The school will be offering an Easter school programme on the first week of the holidays for S4-6 pupils and a programme of supported study for senior pupils when pupils return after the Easter holidays.

## **6 S4-6 Assessments**

Niel Farquar offered a detailed update on the arrangements that were in place to deal with the assessment of pupils in S4-6. During November and December, the school completed plans on what the direction of travel would be to gather evidence and to help determine provisional grades for the young people.

It was very clear from the SQA that unlike last year, where the school could apply 'inferred attainment', this year grades would have to be firmly based on 'demonstrated attainment' and supported by demonstrable evidence. When this became apparent the school took early steps to plan for the required evidence



gathering. At that time the school were hopeful of running Prelim Exams for S5 and S6 pupils in January and February but it was going to be very challenging running two exam diets, so the school considered planning for in-house exam diets for the S4 year group during March. This could offer a further chance if necessary to pick up on other improved work during April. Regrettably the announcement of lockdown in January put paid to these proposals. And so the time period that the school had available for the pupils to demonstrate their attainment and gathering such evidence was severely restricted at that point.

Thankfully, the plan that was in place for S4 was still ready to be implemented and this was adapted to incorporate S5 and S6 as well. This will allow pupils to provide demonstrable evidence over the next five or six weeks. Thereafter principal teachers can then arrive at the grades which will be quality assured prior to 23<sup>rd</sup> June when the school would be well placed to submit the pupils' grades.

The plan will come out to the pupils later this week at assemblies. One of the ideas that the school have received from principal teachers, was focussed on maintaining the credibility of the assessment they were using. The running of assessments requires the use of double periods within each subject and this has proved very challenging to organise as there is considerable variety across year group and subject type. The school have to make sure that the young people were neither advantaged or disadvantaged over others due to the timing of multiple examinations. There would have to be equity in the process and principal teachers were keen that there should be a model to work to.

The school also had to be mindful of the demands that were being placed on pupils at this time and to come up with a balanced plan that wasn't putting too much pressure on the young people and that they weren't going to be facing a large number of assessments on the same day. To counteract this, assessments will be provided when pupils have a double period. In S5 and S6 this is straightforward. The only day in the week where pupils have two double periods is on a Monday and fortunately on the first double period is first thing in the morning and the second is last thing in the afternoon. Whilst not ideal this is still a workable solution. The S5 / S6 Assessment Block will run from 4<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May.

The planning for S4 is slightly more complicated and the school have had to be very creative when timetabling these assessments. The S4 block will take place between 26<sup>th</sup> April and 14<sup>th</sup> May which is a three-week block but contains a middle week containing a holiday weekend with two in-service days. These assessments will predominantly take place within pupils' classrooms. It should be emphasised that these are NOT exam diets. No examinations will be held this year.

Mr Farquar went on to offer the Parent Council a detailed explanation of how the assessments would run particularly in respect to the Covid restrictions.

Principal teachers were keen that a spreadsheet was created to allow them to add any other assessments that may be necessary to support pupils. This has been developed and can be booked in advance to allow the school to monitor and check that pupils are not being overburdened with too many difficult assessments at the same time.

There is continuing pressure to provide demonstrable evidence and the school will be working within a very condensed time scale which makes that very challenging. Mr Farquar was very confident that the school have the planning in place to meet the aims that have been set out. More details of this will come to pupils at the end of this week. Please understand that these arrangements are moving very quickly to ensure that a straightforward and easy evidence gathering system is in place to support the young people.



Mr Farquar invited questions relating to S4-6 Assessments:

- Q What contingencies are in place for older pupils who either test positive for covid and/or will have to self-isolate during the assessment blocks?
- A The SQA have put out guidelines subject by subject to assist in this matter. They are very aware that a school may be dealing with a situation where learning will be disrupted. This can be dealt with by rearranging the assessment times to allow every pupil to participate. Also, when the principal teachers are arriving at grades, they will consider periods of absence due to pupils having to self-isolate. They will take all such circumstances into consideration.
- Q How much weighting will be applied to the work that is being completed in April and May in comparison to what that has been completed previously?
- A The SQA stipulate that demonstrable evidence is required but there has been no stipulation as to when this information can be provided from. Principal teachers have identified what evidence they have already gathered and what evidence gaps remain to be gathered. Certain subjects have more meaningful evidence gathering opportunities later in the year compared to some other subjects.

Mr Paterson re-emphasised that the assessment block is a formalised block. Initially EDC were looking for all assessment data to be inputted into the system by the 11th of June which made it incredibly difficult for the school due to the additional work that was required relating to marking of the assessments and the moderation and standardisation process across schools that takes so much time. EDC officials have agreed to move their timeframe back a week which will ease that pressure. This will give young people an additional week to provide evidence if, for example, they are required to shield during their assessment block.

To support our pupils further, the school is putting in place an Easter School during the holiday time and when pupils return after Easter there will be a programme of supported study where most if not all departments will be contributing.

Mrs. Forrester offered her thanks to Mr. Farquar and to Mr. Paterson for their contributions and asked them to pass on the thanks of the Parent Council to the teachers and staff at Lenzie Academy for their ongoing work and commitment. It is particularly pleasing to hear that some teachers and staff have committed to working during their Easter Holidays at the Easter School in support of their pupils.

## **7 Lenzie Academy PTA**

Mr McDowell updated the Parent Council on matters relating to current PTA activity. Fundraising activities are very much restricted currently but the PTA are still encouraging departments to submit bids for funding opportunities to support the pupils.

## **8 AOCB**

A vote of thanks was offered to Mrs. Forrester for stepping in at very late notice to Chair the meeting.

- Q The expectation would be that schools will return to a normal full timetable on 19<sup>th</sup> April to the timetable they were on pre-Christmas? If that is not possible, will they remain on the timetable they are on at present?



- A Pupils will return to a normal timetable between August and December. All the statistical evidence that is coming in is showing significant reductions.
- Q Are there any plans to have work set for pupils on the in-service days given the amount of disruption this year?
- A There is never normally work set during in-service days and this is unlikely to change.
- Q Do the school feel they have sufficient tools to gain an insight into whether children may have become vulnerable during this period?
- A At a previous Parent Council meeting the range of activities that were ongoing in relation to health and wellbeing was outlined and that is being repeated. EDC have offered the school additional staff and most of that staffing has been based on what was asked for, to support guidance. That will allow the guidance staff to be more proactive and to do a lot more in relation to pupil wellbeing matters etc. The school also ask departments to liaise with guidance about any young person who does not appear to be themselves. We are very mindful of such issues especially at this time.
- And do we have enough tools? The short answer is no. But this is a process we must manage. What we do have is a clear strategic plan about how we address health and wellbeing.
- Q When will S3 begin S4 work.
- A The timetable will change on the 14th of June.
- Q Do you know how many pupils and staff have tested positive over the past few weeks and have had to self-isolate? and is there a requirement for parents to notify the school of such an occurrence over the Easter Holiday period?
- A There is no requirement for pupils to inform the school directly. The school would become aware from the national Track and Trace system if there was an issue. Four members of staff and six young people have tested positive to date. None of the infections were school based transmissions.

No other competent business was raised.

## **9 Date of Next Meeting**

Mrs Forrester thanked everyone for their active and constructive participation and advised that the date of the next meeting would be circulated in due course. She acknowledged the challenges that lay ahead for the pupils, teachers and staff and offered her thanks to everyone involved on behalf of the Parent Council. Mrs Forrester offered her good luck to all pupils who would be completing assessments over the coming weeks. The Deputy Chair called the Parent Council meeting to a close.