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LENZIE ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

The minutes of Lenzie Academy Parent Council Meeting held remotely (MS Teams) on Tuesday 21st September 2021

Present:

Fiona Wright	Carol Nurbhai	Gillian Cay	Gayetri Ramachandran
Siobhan White (Chair)	Stephen Hall	Mr Paterson (Head Teacher)	
Jack McLean	Sandra Thornton	Mr McDowell	Stewart Murray
Mr Smith	Laura Forrester	Nauman Dar	

Apologies:

Nina Teasdale	Sarah Giffen	Graham Middleton
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1 Welcome and Apologies

Mrs White (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. A list of apologies was noted.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 2nd June 2021 was accepted as a true record.

3 Chairperson's Report

Mrs White offered an update on various matters that had occurred since the previous meeting. She advised that Nina Teasdale was representing the Parent Council at the first Parent Council Forum of the year. She discussed Covid related matters that has an ongoing impact on schooling.

The Chair highlighted some new resources including a 'Guide to Learning Document' that is now included on the school web pages. She encouraged all parents / carers to access these documents. She updated members on changes that have been made to the management of school fabric and repair issues. A comprehensive redesign of the Guidance Base would not now be taking place. Ongoing repairs would still be undertaken.

4 Head Teacher's Report

Start of the new term

There has been a very positive start to the new term. New S1 pupils have settled well and are a lovely group of youngsters who exhibit respect for each other and their teachers. They are polite and very well mannered. All other year groups have also settled well with no major issues emerging in any particular year group.

The school roll is up and was 1326 and the beginning of the year and has now settled at 1312. This allied to more staffing and the facilitation of more classes to reduce class sizes has put a significant pressure on accommodation. It is also very busy at social times and the school have kept two intervals S1-3 at 10.25 and S4-6 at 11.15 which is working very well.

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Staffing update

The school have a lot of new staff this year and all have settled in well and are actively participating in whole school initiatives such as joining school committees and working groups and taking part in interval and lunchtime supervision. Mr Paterson offered a detailed outline of the various staffing moves that have taken place within the school in recent months along with some vacancies that are currently advertised. The addition of extra staffing has allowed some departments to offer subjects that might not have been possible and for the school to reduce class sizes in several curricular areas.

Staff / Pupil Absence

The rates of pupil absence have been higher than normally would be the case primarily due to COVID i.e., positive cases of COVID; pupils awaiting a PCR test or awaiting the results of PCR tests. Most results are negative, but pupils must self-isolate until results are known, and this causes absence. Pupil absence rates are hovering around 12% daily, though the picture varies from day to day. The trend is now downwards after a rise in late August / early September. Overall attendance is improving, and the percentage of absence attributed to COVID related reasons is falling.

Teams

Mr Paterson explained that teachers were using the lessons learnt from lockdown and remote learning and applying this to their normal curricular provision. Examples included providing a weekly record of work, using assignments for homework and to update pupils on the dates of assessments and so on.

Mr McDowell outlined the results of the staff GLOW survey on areas for future development as many new staff had used Google Classrooms or other formats in previous schools. Mr McDowell then explained how the Chemistry Department used Teams to help pupils – whether they were absent from school or not. The survey highlighted that most staff were very comfortable with the basics of Teams and this will continue to be developed as the year goes on.

Senior Phase Assessments

Mr Paterson explained that the school will be using continuous assessment to compliment the October assessment block and the January prelims. The prelims would equate to about 2/3 of a full prelim and there may be further assessment in March/April where required. It is hoped that the school could facilitate study leave for S4-6 pupils in January. This would depend upon the outcome of a Secondary HT meeting with council officers in October.

Mr Paterson explained that all departmental leaders were keen to facilitate study leave to enable them to properly carry out the requisite marking and thorough moderation of assessments that will be required. The experience of the Alternative Certification Model in May 2021 indicated that teaching staff needed the time to carry out their marking and moderation duties successfully by affording them time during study leave. The school's survey of pupils last year indicated that they were very much in favour of having study leave to allow greater focus on their subjects. The school will carry out another survey soon but would expect strong support for study leave to remain.

Parents Meetings

The current S3 year group have not had a parents meeting at all for some time so will be the first group to receive a report and a Parents Meeting. All S3 reports have already been written. Parents meetings will be 'virtual' and East Dunbartonshire Council is currently working on plans for delivery options. There are a few electronic ways to deliver these meeting such as the 'Parents Evening Booking System' (PEBS) which allows easy management of appointments and also has a video function to allow parents/carers to meet teachers on video. There are other alternatives that will be explored too such as Corporate Teams and SEEMIS.



Prize Giving

This will take place on Friday 1 October 2021. The school hope to live stream the event but there may be technical and administrative barriers that may prevent this.

School Captains / House Captains

The process of selection has been initiated and all pupils who are prefects are undergoing a probationary period. The results of this will feed into the selection process that includes a pupil vote, staff vote, formal application process and follow up interviews.

School Improvement Plan 2021-22

Mr Paterson took the Parent Council through the three broad targets of the Plan and explained some of the sub-targets e.g., the ongoing development of meta-cognitive strategies across all subject departments via the Learning & Teaching Committee i.e., retrieval practice, feedback and making thinking visible. He explained how the school were using additional staffing to further consolidate inclusion and wellbeing within the school. In addition to this EDC had passed a new 'Equality & Diversity' policy and as a school Lenzie Academy were addressing this also. This includes staff training during August and the teaching staff completing General Teaching Council (GTC) Equalities training and some completing LGBT training to enable the school to gain LGBT Charter status. During October all staff will be engaged in training from Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC). Last year the S3 cohort were given an input from SRtRC, and the school will repeat this again for another year group.

The third major aspect of the school improvement plan relates to the Parental Engagement Strategy. Mr Farquhar had come along to a previous Parent Council meeting and explained in detail all that was involved in this. The advent of COVID had put the brakes on developments but this would now be a major plank of the school's improvement plan.

School Refurbishment / Feasibility Study

Identification of a site for a new school is ongoing and the outcome should be known by February 2022. Several sites are currently being considered. Outstanding repairs and refurbishments are being undertaken in the school at present and extractor fan installation is a key consideration. Water fountain pressure is also being looked at as there has been a drop in local water pressure. EDC are aware and are considering the future usage of water fountains on school premises.

Parent Council Presentations

Mr Paterson outlined some of the previous areas that staff had given presentations on for Parent Council meetings. He suggested that moving forward it may be of interest to parents / carers to hear directly from school representatives about topical issues.

5 AOCB

No other business was raised.

6 Date of Next Meeting

Mrs White thanked everyone for their participation and advised that the date of the next meeting would be circulated in due course.