



## ***LENZIE ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL***

### **The minutes of Lenzie Academy Parent Council Meeting held remotely (MS Teams) on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

#### **Present:**

Fiona Wright	Carol Nurbhai	Gillian Cay	Gayetri Ramachandran
Siobhan White (Chair)	Stephen Hall	Mr Paterson (Head Teacher)	
Jack McLean	Mr McDowell	Laura Forrester	Mr McGovern
Ms Byres	Nina Teasdale	Sarah Giffen	Stewart Murray
Jennifer Greenhorn			

#### **Apologies:**

Tanya Thorsen                  Graham Middleton

#### **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 21<sup>st</sup> September 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 an issue has arisen within the school relating to a reduction in water pressure within certain areas in the school estate. Representatives from the school met on Thursday 2nd December with members of EDC's Asset Management team to discuss the ongoing problems affecting the HFT department. The issue has been intermittent water pressure and lack of hot water and has been ongoing for several months. The school now appears to have a long-term solution whereby the water tank that was disconnected 2-3 years ago has been re-connected to resolve the issue of low water pressure and back-up gas boilers have been installed and commissioned to top up the existing bio-mass boiler, which had been struggling to reach the far ends of the school. This has been a critical situation as the fault has directly affected the Home Economics Department who require the provision of hot water daily. The position will continue to be monitored.

The Chair advised that she had attended a recent Parent Council Forum where the issue of Christmas Parties had been raised. Covid requirements have restricted the provision of such events and consequently no parties will be provided this year.

A remote S3 Parents Evening took place recently and there were some differing views as to how well this was received. Mr Paterson explained that for most of the teachers the new system of parental-teacher consultation was positive and was largely free from technical gremlins. The school are currently evaluating parental responses from 48 parents / carers that participated. The school have made some slight adjustments to the communications with parents / carers in light of some initial feedback. Several differing views were expressed



from Parent Council members who had participated, and Mr Paterson undertook to include these views whilst evaluating all of the parental responses. Overall, the experience seemed to work well in the circumstances.

#### **4 Teacher Presentation Series – Mr John McGovern**

Mr John McGovern, English Teacher was invited to speak to the Parent Council about Metacognition, Memory and Study Skills. John offered a detailed presentation including study techniques and use of memory. He discussed learning and teaching styles, memory and patterns, the use of Learning Grids, Motivation, Effort Pyramids and Retrieval Practice. He highlighted further reading that may be of further interest to parents.

The Parent Council found this presentation to be very interesting and asked if the information could be circulated further. It was suggested that the material could put together in a video for the school's YouTube channel. Mr Paterson highlighted that previously the school had produced 'Literacy and Numeracy' booklets for parents and could see no reason why a booklet about Metacognition could not be produced and circulated in a similar manner.

#### **5 Head Teachers Report**

##### **Staffing**

- Mrs Edwards, PT Performing Arts, is on maternity leave.
- Mr McEwan has taken on the Acting PT Performing Arts role and the school have employed Ms Bingham to fill in for Mr McEwan.
- Ms Heron, HFT Department, is also on maternity leave and Mrs McIver is returning to help cover Ms Heron's absence.
- Mr Gemmill, the school rugby coach has left for a new post after several years dedicated service and the school thank him for his contributions to the school and to rugby. This post will be filled in due course.

##### **COVID update**

The past few months have been challenging for everyone within the school. There has been higher than normal staff and pupil absence and this has been a feature across the term. Pupil absence was particularly high through September but declined overall (and through COVID related absence) across October and November but has risen quite steeply over the past two weeks, from a higher base than normal. Staff absence has been high across the session and is normally higher in November and December due to the usual seasonal viruses, compounded by COVID related factors. The school also has five long-term absences so overall the challenges with staffing have been significant throughout August to December. EDC have facilitated additional staffing to help schools, and this has been invaluable in helping schools manage through recent months.

Due to the spike in overall positive cases in recent weeks allied to much higher pupil absence the school decided last week to cancel the proposed S5/6 Christmas Dance and sent a letter out to parents / carers last Thursday. It was a difficult judgement call but on balance the school felt that to have a dance so near to the Christmas holidays was too much of a risk for pupils, for staff and for all their families.

##### **BGE and SP Councils**

Broad General Education and Senior Phase Councils met in November for their first meetings. These meetings were chaired by the S6 House Captains, who also took a minute of the meetings and fed back to all pupils at assemblies of the issues raised and discussed. The meetings were very positive and the pupils contributed sensible comments and suggestions. This included agreeing to participate in a national survey by a university commissioned to review school meal provision. The councils will also review the school's approach to Equalities within the improvement plan and they will also lead engagement with an Education Scotland document called 'How Good is OUR School'. This is a pupil friendly version of HGIOS (4) that schools across the country use as a basis for their provision. The House Captains will lead on this and be



assisted by staff to distil the key issues from the pupil friendly document to present to the BGE and SP Councils and thereafter deciding how to take this forward across the school.

### **Senior Phase Monitoring & Tracking**

The S4 and S5/6 tracking reports showed a positive picture of pupil progress thus far. The interim data shows the school are on track to receive results that are broadly similar to previous years for S4 and S5/6 (pre-COVID and COVID years). The various subject departments feel that they have made up for the inevitable learning loss that has taken place across the past 18 months. The SQA decision to remove parts of courses such as assignments has enabled schools to concentrate upon the externally assessed coursework requirements. As is normal, the school have allocated a mentor for all S4 pupils and they took part in mentoring sessions in November where a teacher takes approximately 12-13 pupils and discusses their reports and sets targets with the pupils. In S5/6 the school do things differently and identify pupils who have working grades showing 'No Awards' and those with two or more get one-to-one tuition with a dedicated mentor. There are 20 teaching staff who volunteered to be a mentor and they are allocated between 1-3 pupils to work with.

For all S4-6 there is a comprehensive programme of Supported Study, where attendance has been very positive, in particular for S4 in Mathematics and the Sciences. In addition, for S5/6 pupils the school use the Tuesday afternoon slots to put in either general private study periods or dedicated subject-specific study for Mathematics and the Sciences. This will continue until the prelims in January.

### **UCAS Update**

To date 65 UCAS forms have been finalised and processed. In a normal year the school process about 120-130 and the rest will be done before the last week of term.

### **School Activities and Events**

- **Geography** – Ms Glimour's S4 class undertook a challenge to support Plan International's 'Be Bold for Brave Girls' campaign aimed at supporting the aspiration to keep girls in school beyond the age of 12 years of age. The class set up a 'Just Giving' page and surpassed their target of £123.00 (enough to send a girl to school for a year). Well done to the S4 class for all their efforts.
- **HFT** – Ms Walls ran the London Marathon and raised £6,408.75 for 'Beat' an eating disorder charity.
- **Biology** – Several S3 Biology classes took part in the EDC Climate Change Challenge. Through internal presentations and voting the school entered several entries and one of the pupils (Alan W) won across other schools in EDC with his entry "The Fight against Flooding".
- **Rugby** – The U15 team won the West of Scotland B Conference.
- **Basketball** – The school hosted an S1 3v3 tournament involving 16 teams from six schools. Lenzie entered three teams and came 10<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>. Congratulations to all pupils involved.
- **Football** – One of the S4 pupils (Lucy B) took part in the Scottish Schools football trials over a period of two months and has been selected to represent Scotland at school level.
- **Remembrance Assembly** – The school held a virtual assembly at 11.00am on 11 November to listen to a presentation by two S6 pupils followed by a minute's silence across the school that was impeccably observed. Our school captains Katy and Oscar laid a wreath at the Lenzie Memorial Garden on behalf of the school.
- **Lynn McCosh** – On Wednesday 24 November staff gathered in the quadrangle on the first anniversary of the tragic death of Ms McCosh to commemorate her contributions to the school. A bench has been dedicated to Ms McCosh and this will form part of the school's contemplation area.
- **Scottish Youth Parliament** – Three pupils were among seven young people who entered the contest to be elected a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament. The pupils discussed their ideas in assemblies across all year groups and prepared a manifesto to be shared online and across all schools.



One of the two SYPs elected for EDC was from Lenzie Academy. Felix S, who is also a vice-captain in the school, was elected.

- **Martin Creed** – A couple of weeks ago Turner Prize Winner and ex-Lenzie Academy pupil Martin Creed spent time in the school, working with Performing Arts students while engaged in a retrospective of his life and work. This was an excellent opportunity for the pupils to work with an artist and see first-hand how artists work in real world contexts.

## 6 AOCB

Lateral Flow testing was discussed in some detail. Evidence suggests that home testing amongst children is relatively low and it was suggested that the practice should be reinforced at school assemblies etc. Comments were made highlighting that home testing was being done but that results of negative tests were not being recorded as they should.

Mr Paterson indicated that he had received some negative comments relating to the use of ‘throat and nasal’ Covid tests as opposed to the ‘nasal only’ test. He took the decision to order a batch of the ‘nasal only’ tests for pupils which hopefully will see a greater use and recording of the tests at school.

The issue of exams was raised and Mr Paterson confirmed that the school were working on the presumption that a full diet of examinations would be run during 2022.

A parent of a child who had been self-isolating highlighted that overall, the study material provided by the school was good and positive but added that some of the subjects had more limited amounts of support material than others. Mr Paterson emphasised that all subject areas had digitised all their learning resources but would highlight the ongoing need for materials to be provided. He did emphasise that when young people were absent through illness it is not expected that they complete a full body of work until they are fit and well enough to do so.

No other business was raised.

## 7 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.