

LENZIE ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting held 06 February 2024 in the Library, Lenzie Academy.

Present:

Siobhan White (Chair), Brian Paterson (Head Teacher), Carol Nurbhai (Clerk), Jack McLean, Laura Beastall, Marjorie Buchahan, Gillian Cay, Mel Quince, Farhana Haseen, Fiona McLeod, Nauman, Gayle Duffus, Aminah Ahmed, Sarah Giffen, Mr Ortiz (Teacher), Ms Warnock (Teacher)

Apologies:

Nina Teasdale, Catherine Fraser, Laura Burlau

1. Welcome and Apologies

Siobhan White (Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone who was in attendance.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The only action from the previous meeting was to check outstanding maintenance issues and this will be covered within the Head teacher report.

Minutes were approved.

3. Chairperson Report

SW indicated that she had not received the latest parent forum information but believed this might have been due to a change in her email address and she would chase up and try to find the relevant information.

SW advised that she had not been forwarded any relevant information from the Education Committee and Nina Teasdale was not present at the PC meeting so no updates on that front.

SW advised that she had not been contacted regarding any PC involvement in the Quality Review that had recently been completed. BP advised that daily feedback was received on the Learning & Teaching observations by the review team. There was no feedback provided on any of the other aspects of the review or from the various focus groups involving pupils and staff.

It is anticipated that PC involvement will form part of the consultation for the new school building.

GC commented that she found it strange that a decision on the location of a new building had been made without discussion with the PC or community.

BP said that there had been as many 11 possible options including 3 using the existing site, a couple on the land currently occupied by the Rugby club but that he was not aware of any of the details of how the final decision had been reached.

4. Presentation by Mr Ortiz – Metacognition

Mr Ortiz presented a useful and informative guide to the use of metacognition strategies across the school.

A significant amount of work has been completed across the school in recent years around metacognition and supporting students with strategies for learning and revising.

Metacognition is essentially about learning how to learn. It includes developing strategies on how to arrive at answers, how to verify the information available and the thought processes involved in learning.

The reason Lenzie Academy focuses on metacognition is to encourage independent learners who are able to reflect, evaluate and improve.

Mr Ortiz provided several examples of metacognitive practice including use of a 'helpdesk' area in classrooms, retrieval practices such as 'Cops & robbers', WAGOLL – what a good one looks like and peer assisted learning. These help learners to develop independence in their learning and promote resilience.

While some strategies are more effective in some subjects than others, most can be adapted in some form across all subjects. Use of the same terminology is encouraged. Teachers use metacognition strategies in the early stages and with BGE so that the rewards can be reaped by students in senior phase.

SW asked whether these strategies work for pupils with differing abilities.

DO advised that the helpdesk policy was particularly useful for differentiation and that students could essentially adopt practices that were particularly helpful for the own learning style. There is work ongoing with OSIRIS on solo taxonomy by the Learning and Teaching committee.

The Quality Review observed a number of metacognitive practices in place during lessons. Teachers who participated in the quality review commented that LA were ahead in the council area with these strategies and were making notes on strategies they would like to take back to their own classes.

GD asked how parents can support these strategies at home.

DO indicated that there is information on the school website. Departments monitor their own usage and try not to over do certain strategies. They also learn from what has worked well in other subjects and find ways of incorporating into their subject. Helpdesk and WAGOLL are particularly easy to replicate in most subjects.

SG observed that class booklets her children had brought home contained a metacognition page.

LB opined that it was great to hear that pupils were learning these skills across a range of subjects and contexts and felt that these contributed to skills for life beyond the classroom.

Suggestions were made by PC members that it would be useful to include the presentation on the school's You-tube channel and to provide as a family learning workshop as it was felt this was a topic that many parents would be interested in.

BP advised that approval has been given for the school to develop its own app. This is intended to give direct access to resources on the website / youtube channel.

There was some discussion around parent engagement and how to roll out information relating to the school website, youtube channel and future app.

SW thanked Mr Ortiz for the presentation and the parent council as a whole felt it was a very useful session.

5. Head Teacher's Report

Staffing

Joanne Hutton has been appointed to the substantive position of Depute Head Teacher. We will now have a vacancy for a substantive PT Mathematics that will be advertised in due course.

S4-6 Assessment Block

This has been successfully completed and the data is now in our assessment tracker. Our current S5 results are not as strong as last year's. This isn't a surprise as they're S4 N5 results were not as strong as we would normally expect.

Supported Study / Easter School

This will be ongoing until late March, despite the council's very challenging economic circumstances. We will need to await further updates as to whether we can fund an Easter school programme.

UCAS

145 UCAS applications were processed across December and January. This is the highest number of applications for many years.

Holocaust Memorial Assemblies

These took place on Friday 26 January and were led by our Ethics Ambassadors – Olivia Newgreen and Jason MacMillan, who were assisted by a number of S2 and S3 House representatives and a few of our young musicians. The assemblies were very well researched and delivered by our young people. The key messages given to all assemblies were very well received and suitably respectful.

Last Wednesday Ms Byres and our Ethics Ambassadors attended an event at the Scottish Parliament where we received our Vision Scotland Level 2 award as a school who are recognised for their excellence in the provision of Holocaust Education.

Emergency First Aid at Work

Over the past week and through to the February holiday all our S4 pupils will participate in a Skills for Work day where they learn about giving emergency first aid. The pupils attend for the day in classes of 24 each Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and are delivered the course by an external organisation. As a result of attendance all S4 pupils receive a Level 6 Award that lasts for three years.

Show Racism the Red Card

On Monday 5/2 and Tuesday 6/2 all S3 pupils engaged with the organisation 'Show Racism the Red Card'. They learnt about stereotyping and unconscious bias as well as how to be pro-actively 'anti-racist' rather than just being against racism. We have worked with SRtRC for many years now and we will evaluate the sessions in due course.

Culture Week

This will take place w/b 19 February and will consist of:

- **Monday** – Year Group assemblies to outline the purpose of the week's events.

- **Wednesday** – Scavenger Hunt with national flags that represented all the nationalities represented within our school.
- **Thursday** – Music from around the world will be played at lunchtime. In the evening there will be a parents' event from 6.30pm onwards. This will consist of food tasting; pupils will make foods for the audience, there will be music / dance and fashion events in the hall.
- **Friday** – Dress up in clothing that is representative of young people cultural heritage. If young people don't have anything appropriate they can just treat the event as a dress down day.

It is important to note that the whole event is being organised by pupils and Miss Munro will have an overview of proceedings.

EDC Quality Review (Survey Results)

Whilst the parent/carer survey results were generally positive we'd like them to be more positive if we can. It was a concern that only 242 parents/carers completed the survey.

How do we try and encourage more parents/carers to complete the HMle survey when this is to be completed?

How do we make parents/carers more aware of family learning opportunities? How should we do this?

We plan to issue an annual parent/carer survey based upon the HGIOS (4) Quality Indicators. The first one will relate to QI 1.3 (Leadership of Change). We'd like the Parent Council to review and give feedback on this before it is issued to all parents/carers.

Nb – a link to a survey was forwarded to PC members in March requesting feedback.

School Improvement Plan (2024-25)

What would parents/carers like to see in our Improvement Plan for next year? Some thoughts /considerations for the next PC meeting. For example, would parents like the Show My Homework (Satchel One) system back?

Sleep Research

One of ex-pupils Catriona Ewart contacted me to engage with us as part of her PhD studies into sleep patterns of teenagers. As a school this is an area of concern for us so we've agreed to participate in the programme. It will engage an S1, S2 and S3 class and there will be a range of different aspects to the research.

Christmas Dances

It is becoming increasingly difficult to get S1-2 and S3-4 pupils to attend the Christmas Dances.

There was a general discussion about what pupils might be put off by and it was felt overall that pupils perhaps don't realise that the dance is not only social dancing. The school are keen to boost attendance and want to find activities that will engage the pupils.

Pupil Successes

1. Evans Chou (violin) and Eilidh Reid (voice) won the Lenzie Academy Young Musician of the Year Award. They have now won through two more rounds of the competition and will be participating in the West of Scotland event that will take place in the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.
2. Our S1 Football Team won their last 16 match in the Scottish Cup by beating Woodmill HS, Fife 8-2. They will now play against St John's HS, Dundee in the quarter-final.

6. Water Issues - HFT

BP explained that there have been ongoing issues with hot water over the past 18 months. This is possible related to the Biomass boiler installation that was intended to resolve some of the previous issues.

A number of approaches have so far been taken and the school are now awaiting a bespoke boiler specifically for the HFT department. There is a significant impact on staff and their ability to conduct or plan for lessons whilst there is no date for the boiler to be installed.

There was a second issue as a result of a burst pipe. Copper oxide was present in system when sampled which turned water blue. There was a 10 day work around to resolve this but the water is now normal.

There was some discussion about the communication from the school around the water issues, HFT staffing and the impact on pupils and assessments. It was felt by some parents that the school could have been more proactive in communicating the issues and planned resolutions which may have reduced speculation and unhelpful comments on social media.

There are staffing challenges within the HFT department due to a vacancy and long term sickness which have also impacted on the provision of classes and as a result a reduction of 1 period per week of HFT has been introduced for first and second years. Recruitment has thus far not attracted any suitably qualified candidates.

Discussion continued in particular about the impact on students who were due to complete assessments. Prelim practical assessments did not go ahead. It was also raised that pupils' recent experience of HFT may impact on the number of pupils selecting this subject as one of their option choices.

BP advised there was a procurement delay which has been raised at the Corporate Management Meeting which was slowing down progress on the new boiler. As there is currently a delay with provision of the new boiler, reassurance was sought as to mitigation for affected students at the exam period.

SW wondered whether it was time for a further letter from PC stating the frustration with the current situation, citing related health and safety issues and looking for a speedy resolution.

BP indicated he would provide an update to parents/carers in next newsletter.

7. New school Building

There is not a lot of information available. It is believed that funding is still being sought.

There is a meeting with the construction company and the architect on 16th February to discuss the design. The provisional design doesn't now fit with the preferred location of the new site.

8. PTA

BP attending meeting on 20th February.

KB advised that all is going well. The race night is forthcoming.

A display board is now in place for PTA events and news in the school foyer.

School departments are submitting funding requests for PTA funds for resources.

9. AOCB

CN asked on behalf of Laura Burlau whether it was possible that future face-to-face meetings could also include the option to attend virtually.

10. Date of Next meeting

Tuesday 16th April 6.45pm, Library