

## **Lenzie Academy Parent Council**

### **Minute of Meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024 in the Library, Lenzie Academy**

Present: Brian Paterson, Siobhan White, Laura Beastall, Marjorie Buchanan, Catherine Fraser, Farhana Haseen, Carol Nurbhai.

Apologies: G Duffus, Gillian Cay, L Burlau, Jack McLean

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

Siobhan opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. Apologies were provided and noted as above. It is also noted that D Abson has withdrawn from membership of the Parent Council by email to clerk.

#### **2 Minutes of previous meeting**

Minutes were noted as accurate and no outstanding issues were recorded.

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

Siobhan advised that she's not had any emails, however is still trying to recover a previous account so might be able to trace something from there. She is not anywhere of any ongoing Parent Forum issues.

No emails from parents have been received by either the Chairperson or clerk.

Brian indicated that EDC are particularly focused on budget discussions and as a result there appears to be reduced activity in other areas of work until plans for the forthcoming year can be resolved.

Brian advised that he had recently questioned whether the teachers that were previously funded directly from ScotGov funding would be retained as not included within council funding. LA quota is currently 2fte. Brian has had to put together the workforce plan for the school with two version, one including the 2Scotgov funded teachers and one without. There have been further difficulties putting together a plan as the budget meeting had not yet concluded and there were several unknown factors such as recruitment planning and quota of NQT teachers.

It is now believed that the 2 fte teachers can be retained in the forthcoming year's workforce but it is likely that one position will be lost next year and the other the following year.

Another discussion that is taking place is the option to move down the route of faculties within the school rather than departments. This links similar subject types together in a faculty and reduces the overall number of school subject departments. This plan costs money in the short term, however longer term it makes a difference to the management points included in the workforce plan and when and how Principal teachers can be recruited.

Siobhan asked if the faculty plan would make a difference to the structure of the staff and school when moving to the new building. Brian indicated there might be some 'geographical' impact depending on where subjects were located in the building if linked faculty subjects were not close together.

## **4 Head Teacher's Report**

### **Staffing update**

1. PT Maths – Ms Ness was successful at interview and now takes up the position substantively.
2. PT Guidance – Ms Buchanan will leave for a new post within Falkirk Council at the end of next week. We will be interviewing for an Acting PT Guidance on Thursday. This will be a brief post until we can fill Ms Buchanan's post on a permanent basis.
3. PT HFT – Ms Fairman will leave for a new post in Renfrewshire Council in late May and an advert for a replacement closes on Thursday. We hope to interview quickly and get a new PT in post asap.
4. Other posts – We will be interviewing for a number of posts in the coming weeks – Music, Business Education, DT, HFT, Modern Languages & Chemistry. There will be other Acting / Temporary positions advertised due to some maternity leave situations.

It is expected that the number of NQTs allocated to the school will be advised in mid-May.

Catherine asked what the arrangement was for pupils affected by the change in guidance teacher. Brian advised that this will be covered internally in the meantime (8 teachers will be interviewed later this week) until a permanent replacement is confirmed.

### **DYW Event**

On 15 February, we held our annual DYW event where in excess of 50 organisations including colleges, universities and employers came to give our S3-6 pupils a greater awareness of the wide range of post-school career pathways available to them. We had a huge number of parents/carers and pupils attending the evening which was a great success. Our thanks go to Ms Gibbons, Acting PT DYW, for organising such a positive and successful event.

### **Celebration of Culture Week**

On week beginning Monday 19 February we launched a new initiative within the school. The detail was provided at the last PC meeting and I'm pleased to say that the week was a great success. In particular, the Culture Evening on the Thursday night was superb. We had a number of pupils playing music, dancing and informing the audience of the significance of the clothing that they were wearing. Prior to the evening entertainment provided by our young people, there was a huge feast of food from around the world.

The event was conceived, planned and implemented by our S6 pupils and great credit goes to them for taking on and delivering such an excellent event. Credit is also due to Miss Munro, DHT for S6 who acted as a sounding board for the pupils ideas and for her steady hand on the tiller. We hope this will be an annual event.

### **Pupil Improvement Plan**

We engaged with all pupils in March to gain their ideas for what they would like to see improve within the school for next year. Our S6 captaincy team took the results and collated under generic themes. Our new S6 will work with the Pupil Councils to take these issues and devise a Pupil Improvement Plan with meaningful targets. It will be the job of the captaincy team and the Pupil Councils to drive this improvement plan forward. Some of the topics mentioned included wider corridors, canteen food and toilets.

As an aside, new detectors have been installed in toilets to assist with deterring vaping in these areas. The anti-vaping technology is fairly expensive and the PTA had discussed funding additional units, however this is not a suitable use for PTA funds. The school may purchase further units in due course.

There was some discussion about the possible toilet area layouts in the new building both in terms of accessibility arrangements, gender splits and deterring poor behaviour. A number of newer school buildings have different layouts.

### Parent Improvement Plan

We are interested to know whether the PC wants to lead on a Parental Improvement Plan for next year. If so, there are a number of areas that would need to be agreed upon:

- How do we elicit the views of the wider parent body on this?
- Who will decide upon the agreed priorities?
- Who will be responsible for devising the plan?
- Who will be responsible for implementing and liaising with the school?
- Others?

A couple of suggestions were made and there was discussion about examples from other schools.

A number of people felt that they didn't have wide enough experience of the school to be able to contribute to the plan and wondered whether there might be low engagement with the wider parent body who may feel they don't have the knowledge to inform an improvement plan.

Brian advised that pre-Covid, Neil Farquhar had completed a parental engagement project and at the time we were measured as very good for communication. While nothing has changed in the interim the latest responses from parents seemed critical of communication, though the number of responses was low. It may be appropriate to ask parents to come in and work with us to better understand the issues and work to an improvement.

It can be disheartening for teachers when responses are low and/or critical. The Working Time Directive has an impact on the hours available and so it is necessary to spread workload for items such as pupil reports across the year. We endeavour to have these at appropriate times for each year group and taking into account assessment blocks.

There was also a brief discussion about the Easter school provision. Unfortunately this year there was little/no provision in some of the key subjects such as Maths, English, Chemistry and Biology. While teachers are paid for their time for these sessions it is voluntary as over the holiday period. The hourly rate for this work is £30/hour, however this pushes teachers into the higher tax bracket so potentially having an impact on uptake. This is also believed to be putting off some teachers from taking up promoted posts / extra responsibilities.

Marjorie advised that in her school a drop in session was offered for Nat 5 and Higher pupils while teachers were off timetable during study leave ahead of the exam dates.

### Youth Philanthropy Initiative

We held the launch of this year's initiative on 26 March with our S3 pupils. The initiative has now raised more than £21,000 for various charities over the years and, more importantly, raised the awareness of many young people to the importance of the third sector. This can lead to a lasting relationship for young people with various charities.

For example:

- One of our winning groups from three years ago still raise funds for their charity every year.
- Last year one group chose a charity called 'Families Outside'. The charity was very impressed by the film made by the pupils that they used it as part of their latest PR launch. The local MSP, Rona Mackay raised a motion the Scottish Parliament recognising the work of the young people within the school.
- Thanks to Mrs Davidson (PT Wider Achievement) and Ms Shiereffs (EDC Youth Worker) for leading the successful initiative over the years.

#### Maxwell Cay Cup

This took place on Tuesday 12 March P6/7 and involved S5 and S6. They played in football and netball tournaments and raised £250.00 for the British Heart Foundation. Maxwell's younger brother Fraser presented the cup to the winning team and cheered on the competitors.

#### Course Choice

All S2/3, S3/4, S4/5 and S5/6 course choice interviews are being carried out by our guidance team and will be completed this week. Ms Sinclair will now start to devise the school timetable for 2024/25.

#### SQA Study Leave

This will begin on Monday 22 April until Friday 31 May. Our new timetable will begin on Monday 3 June.

#### S1 2024/25

Provisional numbers for next year show that we will be full with an extensive waiting list for a place. All of next year's S1 visited the school today as part of our transition programme and engaged in a wide range of sporting activities.

#### Parents Meeting Evaluation Forms

These were issued at the meeting for feedback and discussion of possible changes. Copy attached to minutes.

## **5 New school building**

No new information is readily available.

Some of the design discussion work that was done previously is being reviewed now that a preferred site has been identified and the floor plan previously designed is unlikely to be suitable as the Whitegate site is a different shape. This is frustrating as a lot of hard work went into the previous consultation albeit it seemed odd to complete this work before a site was identified.

There is always a little tension between the requirements for the asset versus the education preference. Mr Paterson's current impression is that the design is better than the current school but perhaps not as good as it could be.

Siobhan asked when the Parent Council might be consulted however this remains unknown.

Catherine asked whether the consultation would normally take place before a decision is made. Brian was unsure. Ultimately there had been several options, it seems access was better at Whitegates.

Farhana wondered what the planned timeline for the new building is. Brian answered that the building requires to be completed by December 2027 as part of the Scottish Government mandate in relation to the funding.

It was noted that there was plenty of chat on local social media about the site.

Brian advised that the footprint of the Whitegates site is not dissimilar to the current school site. It is preferred not to have more than 2 floors.

The discussion turned to maintenance issues with the current building. Carol asked whether the new boiler had been installed yet but unfortunately it has not. However the hot water situation is currently satisfactory.

## **7 Future presentation topics**

Brian suggested the following topics for presentation at future PC meetings:

- Developing the Young Workforce (current school priority) & Skills for Life
- Health & Wellbeing
- Extra Curricular provision
- PEF provision
- Character Education (current school priority)

Character Education was selected as the topic for the next meeting.

## **8 Lenzie Academy PTA**

Brian attended the last meeting to clarify appropriate use of funds.

During the meeting the school minibus was discussed and it hoped that the PTA will continue to be able to support this. £2000 has already been awarded.

Unfortunately the current minibus is not LEZ compliant.

It would be useful to have more drivers trained and available to support the use of the bus for school groups. The cost of hiring buses is extremely high and the school is reluctant to ask for contributions towards bus hire when pupils are representing the school at events.

Carol asked whether the driver had to be teacher, this is not the case. It was suggested that volunteers could be recruited from the parent / local community body and trained which would free up school staff. Appropriate safe guarding processes would be followed e.g. PVG.

## **9 AOCB**

No additional items were brought forward.

## **10 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May at 6.45pm

There were 124 forms returned:

S5=153 (71%) S6=69 (40%)

Attendance on the night: 5FL1= 15

5FL2= 19 6FL1=11 6FL2= 11

5IG1=20 5IG2=18 6IG1=7 6IG2=5

5MK1=20 5MK2=21 6MK1=9 6MK2=10

5MT1=17 5MT2=23 6MT1=8 6MT2=8

# **LENZIE ACADEMY S.5/6 PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

**MARCH 2024**



Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
My son/daughter enjoys school.					
My son/daughter is making good progress this year.					
My son/daughter receives regular homework.					
I am pleased with the teaching and learning my son/daughter receives at school.					
I am pleased with the level of supported study and targeted support for SQA exams.					
The school deals effectively with bullying.					
Parents are made to feel welcome in school.					
Parents receive pupil/school information, as appropriate.					
This school responds to any concern I raise.					
I am pleased with the pastoral support my son/daughter receives.					
I have been well informed about the course choice process for my son/daughter.					