

PEEBLES HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL/PTA



Parent Council Meeting
Tuesday, 6th December 2016 at 7.00pm
In the meeting room in the new Sports Facility

MINUTES

Present:

Campbell Wilson, Margaret Hogg, Tommy Davidson, Lorraine Sykes, Glenda Barton, Lisa Houston, Gail Jackson, Kirsten Worsley, Vivienne Leckie, Monica Shaw, Mirren McLeod and Kevin McCall (SBC, Senior Lead Educator).

Apologies:

Vanessa Rice, Michael Pryor, Kate Whalley and Laura Robertson.

Minutes of Last Meeting:

Minutes accepted.

Matters Arising:

E-mailing List: This has been reduced.

SPTC Insurance: Paid and Margaret Hogg has the paperwork back.

Developing Young Workforce (DYW) Presentation:

Kevin McCall came to update and do a Q&A to the Parent Council. They are focussing on curricular development and challenges going forward.

The key point is learning pathways. They are looking at a more flexible approach with both academic and vocational opportunities.

They have been planning a working partnership with Borders College. It is a very good college that is recognised nationally. Five years ago we had 40-50 pupils attending college and school in their senior phase, last year we had 400.

There have been changes to modern apprenticeship models. They start at level 6 (Higher level) or post-school. Advanced modern apprenticeships equivalent to a masters degree.

Foundation apprenticeships can be started while at school (at Higher level).

There is now worked based learning starting in S3 with 1 week work experience. This now can be done as part of your senior phase, ½ day a week in a profession you are interested in.

They are now looking at employer partnership agreements with schools. For example instead of a project in S6 mathematics, students could do a project with an engineering firm solving a real life problem. They would like to do more work around the sciences as there are not enough graduates in these fields. £450,000 of Government funding has come to the Scottish Borders to be used for partnerships with employers. Worked based learning which can be done over the senior phase ie; 1 day working while studying.

They are looking at developing of employability skills of students. Of the top 5 skills employers look at, the bottom one is academic skills. Attitude to work, then aptitude to work are valued as the top two skills. These skills need to be taught in the classroom.

Positive destination – tracked for 4 years after school to see where the students end up (within Scotland). It was a 6 month snap shot but has now moved.

The S3 profile reflects the progress made in their learning. Paul Fagan has come up with the idea to use the S3 profile to be given to a local employer to then interview them based on what they have written.

Each of the 9 high schools in the region has a DWY lead in their Senior Management Team. Resources come into the school through them. There is a three year action plan for all high schools. Two foundation apprenticeships this year.

The aim is to keep doing well in sustained positive destinations.

Rector's Update:

Review

We are generally pleased with the feedback received from the recent review of our school by SBC. Our very good attainment was recognised and praised. Our good learning and teaching was noted and the areas for improvement identified match our own understanding of what needs to be better if we are going to improve from good to great: learners' voice, learners leading learning and differentiation. We have not received detailed feedback on our leadership of change yet but I will provide an update at the next PC. We also asked the review team to focus on how well we work with our partners and our good work here was recognised, particularly the willingness of the school to be open to, and enthusiastic about, working with all of our partners. The fact that we plan together, deliver together and evaluate the impact of our work together was praised – we now need to formalise those partnerships more.

Staffing

Temporary Business Manager Post – successful applicant accepted the post today.

PT Maths – request for PC involvement on the panel for appointment of new PT (permanent post). Anticipate interviews will be on the last week of term.

History – successful applicant has accepted the temporary post in History. Due to start on first day of new term.

Mr. Rudra leaves at the end of term to be replaced by Russell White from January (Technical maternity cover)

School Library – currently being covered by rearrangement of current staff working flexi-time and overtime.

PHS Bookchat

PHS Bookchat goes from strength to strength. We would love PC to contribute some pieces for *The Peeblesshire*.

Wider Achievement and Successes

Ideas please – equestrian, table tennis, rock climbing, skiing... ; engineers, entrepreneurs, mathematicians...

Homework policy and update on Show my Homework:

English and mathematics homework is all on Show my Homework. 60% of staff are using Show my Homework. Last week 42% of staff used Show my Homework. A training day has been set up for January for staff to show them how to use the new features. Biggest barrier to more staff using SMHW is the apparent low numbers of parents using it and also children not using it. At the moment only 11% of parents are using it.

If parents sign up to it they will only see their child's homework. You can also put it as an app on your phone. However feedback from parents was very positive at the meeting and they are using the front page of the website to access SMHW. They felt it was an essential tool and want more teachers to use it. Even though some parents are not using SMHW themselves, they feel it is an important tool for pupils.

Update on Parents Priorities:

Updates were given in the recent parents bulletin. Languages issues has the least progress. CW spoke to Mrs Reville and thinks they should speak to SALT. Gail Jackson to meet with Mrs Reville to take this forward.

Communication:

E-bulletin is going out. Will be shorter next time. Feedback – bold bits at start were a bit shouty. Also, was sent out as an attachment rather than as main body text. We need to think about how to deal with situations where 2 parents of a child would like to receive the bulletin. Any further suggestions please let Lisa Houston know. One person has contacted Margaret Hogg on the Parent Council e-mail address.

Poverty Proofing

An e-mail has gone out to parents on poverty proofing. Uniform swapping has happened. More funding is in place for students. In January they are launching free printing and reading room. They are looking at making PHS a cashless school, even for dress down days.

Personal Support:

Staff have been surveyed and school looking at the results. In Easter they will survey pupils.

Parent Groups Updates:

PTA Update:

They made £150.30 in total from Christmas fair. Christmas concert is on 14th December – more volunteers needed. Concert is at 7pm, volunteers to come from 6pm. Sainsbury's have given £100 gift card for mince pies. Raffle prizes have been donated. Raffle tickets sold on the night. Two volunteers for the raffle already. They will be selling mince pies, and non-alcoholic mulled wine during performance.

Learning Support Update:

Nothing to report.

PHS 200 Update:

Balance on 1st July £3,677 and balance now is £5,682. Increased by about £2,005. New rails for costumes for the Drama Dept School Show have been funded by the 200 club .

Careers Night:

Update from Glenda Barton. Over 80 volunteers came from a diverse range of occupations which was very encouraging . We want to thank everyone who gave up their time, many who have done so for the last 4 years. Approximately 250 students plus parents attended. Feedback from volunteers was very positive. One volunteer gave some constructive feedback about timing of talks. The programme organisers will take on board all feedback on a how to continually improve for next year.

Glenda Barton also gave a report from Mr Fagan – The Developing Young Workforce programme is a big priority this year and 10 staff are already working with DYW in the school. To help support integrating career development into the curriculum, each department has identified an employer/college or university they can partner with to support them develop this within their faculty. The school has reinstated the workplace experience programme for 3rd year students. There are now 42 employers interested in working with the school, many of these partners are volunteers from the career night or are local employers. We would like more support please from parents to come forward or encourage more employers to work with the school. In addition, next year Borders College is coming to support guidance teachers on what they offer in courses and how to get even more from UCAS. Next year parents/carers could possibly notice students discussing at home that their lessons will contain conversations about how subject lessons relate to the world of work. Students will learn in English how to write a CV, they will experience having an interview at school by an employer. How students are progressing through this DYW programme will be tracked and monitored.

Entrepreneurial foundation is a new initiative that has come to the school –they are a national charity wanting to promote entrepreneurial skills. In order to develop this they are offering some students an interesting development opportunity . The school have identified 24 students in 3 groups in S1 to S6 based on the key attributes identified globally in entrepreneurs eg resilience, discipline, open mindedness etc. They will work with Peebles Hydro, Stobo Castle and other local employers. The students selected will get the chance to work on real business issues in the workplace and be mentored by these businesses to develop and market new product ideas.

Tracking and monitoring

The following report from Mr Noon was tabled

As a result of the changes made for this year's pilot year, there is a plan to engage in dialogue with everyone to agree our approach to tracking, monitoring and reporting for 2017 -> there will be pupil, parent and staff focus groups and surveys taking place in the New Year.

Early indicators are suggesting that some of the changes for the pilot year 2016-17 have been positive e.g. parental feedback from parents evening surveys and from staff surveys.

Staff survey 2014 v 2016 - staff feel things have improved.

When asked: Is reporting for parents "effective?"

Agree - 40% v 70%

Disagree - 60% v 30%

(NB the figures for 2014 have been taken from a floating bar graph and will be plus or minus a couple of percent)

S3 Parent Survey

When parents were asked: PHS keeps me informed about my child's progress.

Agree/strongly agree - 56 total or 86%

Disagree/strongly disagree - 9 total or 14%

(Some parents made particular reference to benefiting from the increased frequency, some made mention of wanting comments - this was discussed at last PC meeting)

Whilst there have been improvements, it is clear that work needs to be done to get tracking, monitoring and reporting right for every young person at PHS.

PC Response to Governance Review:

The link was sent out. MH to co-ordinate. 3 people have got back to MH with feedback. MH to put something together, send it around the PC and then send it off.

PC Feedback on SBC Strategy on Child Sexual Exploitation:

TD to give feedback to SBC by January. If anyone has feedback please send to PC.

Any Other Business:

Parents would like guidance on students wearing make-up to school.

Meeting finished at 9.10pm

Date of next meeting: 23 February 2017