

Minutes

Present :

Parents/Carers: Steven Budge – Co-Chair (SB), Claire Whyte – Co-Chair (CW), Mark Elder – Treasurer (ME), Martin Bennett (MB), Susan Evans (SE), Eileen Grant (EG), Jacky Knickelbein (JK), Graeme McKinley (GMcK), Anne-Marie Boyd (AMB)

Teaching Staff/Other: Craig Downie – Head Teacher (CD), Kevin Thomas – Deputy Head (KT), Ben Lewis – Deputy Head (BL), David Flint - QDCC (DF)

Minute Taker/Clerk: Susan Evans

Apologies: Sarah Bennett, Sarah Baird, Lindsey Devin, Katrina Closier, Pamela Cranston, Louise Wilson

1.	Welcome	
	CW welcomed attendees to the meeting.	
2.	Apologies	
	Apologies were noted and are listed above.	
3.	Minutes of the last meeting	
	The Minutes of 14 March 2023 were approved by MB and seconded by SB.	
4.	Chair Update	
	<p><u>Action Points from Minutes dated 14 March 2023</u></p> <p><u>Action 1</u> – CW/SB Consider content of Parent Council area of QHS Website. Include date of next Parent Council meeting. Update – Complete by SW/SB. Action carried forward - website updated but certain items such as minutes of Parent Council still to be put on website (Action 1).</p> <p><u>Action 2</u> – Consider how best to utilise Parent Council money and report back at next meeting. Update – Discussed at this meeting (see HT Update section) but action to be carried forward to AGM for a final decision (Action 2).</p> <p><u>Action 3</u> - Ask for latest information from Locality Group and share with Parent Council at next meeting. Update – Complete. MB shared this detail with meeting.</p> <p><u>Action 4</u> – Open All Hours Consent Forms to be available from School Office. Update – Action carried forward. AMB advised forms were complete for current session so forms will be available from office for next session (Action 3).</p>	<p>KT</p> <p>CD/All</p> <p>CD/KT/AMB</p>



	<p><u>Action 5</u> - Parent Council members are encouraged to contact GMcK or AMB if they have or know of anyone who has any skills which they can share with either the Open All Hours or Transition Club.</p> <p>Update – Complete. Although not directly from Parent Council there have been many offers of skills (e.g. Bold Bakes and local Police) as well as monetary and equipment donations made. AMB thanked the local community for their generosity.</p> <p><u>Action 6</u> – Speak to Ben Lewis about National 5 Maths Prelim.</p> <p>Update – Complete. BL gave the meeting an update on this. BL is a very experienced Maths exam setter. He has reviewed the particular exam in question and has concluded that, whilst difficult, the exam was a reasonable challenge within examination boundaries. Improvements could however have been made therefore he has provided feedback to staff and run training sessions to upskill staff who set the papers. A further Maths prelim assessment opportunity was provided later in the term once pupils were further through the course thus giving further evidence for projected final grades (that will be used in exceptional circumstances).</p> <p><u>Other matters</u></p> <p>CD gave an update on the recent exam diet which had just finished. He said the overall feeling was that papers were fair. Maths was called out as being hard, but BL said he believed this was due to the last few questions being more difficult which left the lasting impression the exam itself was hard. CD thanked pupils and parents/carers for their commitment and behaviour during this exam season.</p> <p>CD advised that BL will be taking over from KT as Parent Council Deputy Head representation from next academic year.</p> <p>CW advised that Sarah Bennett (SB) will be standing down as Parent Council clerk after the AGM. The Parent Council is therefore looking for a new person to take on this role, whether from the existing Parent Council body or another parent. There is a small contribution towards expenses for this role. CW thanked SB for her commitment to the Parent Council and highlighted the great job she has done.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Treasurer’s Report</p>	
	<p>ME confirmed a balance of £1,256.18. ME did not print evidence of this to bring to Parent Council however he downloaded the online banking statement and SE verified the balance by email.</p> <p>ME updated Parent Council on recent Connect guidance issued for Parent Council and PSA Money Matters which allows these bodies to identify how well money matters are dealt with and whether there are any areas of improvement. The guidance covers areas such as Treasurer duties, controls over bank accounts, recording and controls over income, expenditure and donations made to the school, audit requirements and information security. ME took the Parent Council through a detailed checklist provided by Connect. All items were either complied with or were not applicable with the exception of the accounts being kept up to date and presented at each meeting – ME agreed to do this going forward with the help of SE (Action 4).</p>	<p>ME/SE</p>



	<p>GK asked about the personal liability of Parent Council members should something go wrong financially. ME/CW to investigate but it was thought this would not be a risk (Action 5).</p> <p>JK suggested the accounts could be put on the school website and shared by email in advance of the Parent Council meetings – ME agreed to this (Action 6).</p>	<p>ME/CW</p> <p>ME</p>
6.	Head Teacher's Report	
	<p>CD shared slides with the Parent Council.</p> <p><u>School Events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junior Awards • Sports Awards – John Robertson has been secured as guest speaker. • Senior Awards • School Show – We Will Rock You show is taking place on the 21 and 22 June. CD asked Parent Council members to promote the show amongst the community as sales have been slow and it might be cut back to only one night (Action 7). CD agreed to promote this to primary schools during transition. CD stated the price point of the show is high, but the show has been expensive to stage (license fees etc). <p><u>Staff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Head Teacher – CD advised Natalie Honeyford has resigned for personal reasons. Recruitment is well underway with closing date 5 June 2023. Interviews will follow shortly, including a panel with SB, with a decision to be made before the summer break. Start date will depend on notice periods of the successful candidate. • Michael Clerk – CD advised he is returning to the school PE Department in the new term. • Kenny Manson – CD advised he will be returning to resume his Deputy Head role. This means KT will return to his Pupil Support role. BL will take over as Parent Council rep. • Probationers – CD advised the school has been successful in securing probationers for next term in English, Maths (x2), Physics & Maths, History, Geography, PE and Health & Food Technology (H&FT). The Maths probationers will cover upcoming staff maternity leave. The H&FT probationer will be a valuable asset to reduce the waiting list for this subject. <p><u>School Policies</u></p> <p>CD outlined three new policies which would be rolled out to junior pupils and parents/carers on 1 June 2023. A letter will be sent to parents/carers along with an FAQ document whilst pupils will be informed in assemblies. Senior pupils will be briefed at an assembly upon their return on 5 June 2023.</p> <p>As an introduction to the changes, CD highlighted this was the next phase in his positive changes for the school. Upon becoming Head, CD had evaluated the school, identifying</p>	<p>All</p>



the areas he was happy with and those where there were issues. CD addressed the immediate priorities in the last academic year. The focus was now on the other priorities.

CD advised that consultations have taken place with working groups from the pupil body, the Parent Interaction Group (PIG) and all staff regarding the new policies and feedback has so far been positive.

CD detailed the new policies as follow:

- 1) **Mobile phones** – learning environments will be a mobile phone-free zone without exception. This is in line with the school values and will be rolled out as a “disconnect to reconnect” mantra.

Ideally phones should not be brought to school. If they are brought then they should be switched off and placed in a school bag. If pupils do not have a bag then staff can help obtain one. If this is not an option then as a last resort phones will be placed in a “phone box” which is a clear plastic box at the front of the classroom. A refusal to comply will be noted on Class Charts but with no negative score attached. Staff will not press the issue to avoid disruption to learning. However persistent non-compliance will be noted as a behavioural issue and referred to the school senior leadership team (SLT) and parents/carers.

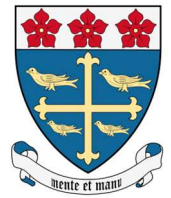
Staff have been briefed that they must be consistent in implementation of this new policy. They have also been asked to welcome pupils to class outside the classroom and remind pupils about the mobile phone policy.

Pupils will be able to use their phones at break and lunch but not in lessons or moving between lessons. If parents/carers need to get in contact with pupils then messages will be picked up at break and lunch. For anything more urgent then parents/carers should contact the school office who will get in touch with pupils on their behalf.

The recording of whether pupils are in class and the automated messages for parents/carers to contact the office is being reviewed as there have been some instances of pupils being wrongly recorded as missing from class when they are actually there.

SE asked about iPads and whether these also a distraction to learning. CD stated that iPads are to aid learning and since they are Council-enabled they have restricted apps and navigability. Whilst a minority of pupils use them as a distraction, and this is dealt with appropriately, the majority benefit from using the iPad. Pupils will be encouraged to bring charged iPads to school which in turn encourages them to bring a school bag so that phones can be placed in the school bag.

MB stated that this had been discussed at previous Parent Council meetings and a “RAG” status was agreed at that time that the school maintained an Amber position – that phones were not banned (Red) or fully allowed (Green) but that they were allowed if required for learning (Amber). CD stated that this thinking



was now outdated due to the introduction of school owned iPads (which were used for learning).

SB asked about smart watches as they can be used as a communication device and be a distraction. CD stated that there were no plans to extend the rules explicitly to smart watches but that teachers would encourage watches also to be off, and could use their discretion if pupils were being overly distracted by their watch. Also if phones were turned off in the pupil's bag then the connection between watch and phone should be off.

EG asked what would happen if the phone were damaged in the "phone box". CD replied that this would be covered in the FAQ but he did not believe the school were liable as the phone box is a last resort for non-compliance with the school policy. Phones should be at home or turned off in school bags in the first instance.

CD further stated that trials of the policy had taken place in areas such as PE and they had been successful. In addition 2 other local schools had implemented this policy successfully and 4 or 5 other Edinburgh Council schools were implementing this.

The Parent Council were supportive of the new mobile phone policy and await feedback on its success at future meetings.

- 2) **Leaving class** – CD reported that a small number of pupils were leaving classes on a regular basis without a legitimate reason for doing so. The school is therefore looking for parent/carer support to limit this from happening. No teacher will stop a child going to the toilet on request and this will not impact any child with a legitimate need to leave class or have movement breaks. When the child leaves class this will be logged on Class Charts, not as a negative behaviour but just so that teachers and parents/carers are able to track the frequency of this. If patterns emerge for a particular pupil then this can be addressed via pupil support, and if necessary involving the SLT and parents/carers.

GMcK stated that this was linked in with the mobile phone policy as it was all about not distracting from the learning experience. CD echoed this saying that mobile phones were being used to arrange meet-ups outside class so one policy would help the success of the other.

The Parent Council were supportive of the new leaving class policy and await feedback on its success at future meetings.

- 3) **School uniform** – CD was clear to say this he is not reconsulting on the uniform policy but is looking for a more consistent enforcement and clearer definition of the rules of the current school uniform policy. Any reconsultation would be in 2025 at the earliest.

Most pupils are adhering to the policy but there are a small number who are not. CD advised that members of the SLT will be at the entrance points at the start of the school day to welcome pupils and check their uniform adheres to the policy.



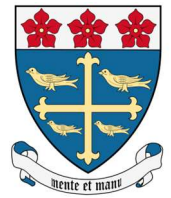
	<p>If it does not they will be told to go and change into the correct uniform using a bank of donated uniform that the school has a stock of. The rules will be applied consistently and proper uniform is seen as key to the school values of TEAM. Pupils and the PIG are all supportive of this. A trial period will begin 5 June 2023 with full consistent implementation at the start of next term.</p> <p>CD stated that hygiene was a key factor in this decision and that pupils would always be required to get changed into PE kit then changed back into uniform. The relaxation of the rules for arriving or leaving in PE kit, brought in partly due to Covid restrictions, is no longer in place. Pupils must bring a change of clothes for PE and be in uniform out with PE sessions.</p> <p>AMB asked about whether shorts are part of the school uniform. CD stated that dress shorts are part of the uniform but buying these may not be cost-effective for the relatively small amount of use the Scottish weather would allow. Therefore, black shorts could be worn on hot days.</p> <p>The Parent Council were supportive of the reinforcement of the uniform policy and await feedback on its success at future meetings.</p> <p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>CD met with representatives of the PSA to discuss what to spend fundraising money on for the benefit of the school. He proposed that the PSA and Parent Council come together with an agreed funding plan. CD stated that overall the school departments were well stocked so there was no urgent need for equipment to support learning. CD therefore raised the possibility of funds being used for the school's equity agenda to support disadvantaged pupils and those that miss out on things due to their circumstances. CD also said any monies raised by a future sponsored walk could be considered alongside this. CD asked for the Parent Council to consider this and bring their thoughts back to the next meeting/AGM (Action 2).</p> <p>DF and GMcK mentioned the excellent work that Ferry Elves had done for the community since Covid and in light of the recent refugee crisis. They suggested the school get in touch with Ferry Elves to co-ordinate on the equity agenda to avoid duplication of work and to learn from some of the experience of Ferry Elves. KT agreed this would be a good idea and will make contact with Anne Mitchell (Action 8).</p>	<p>CD/All</p> <p>KT</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>PC Reps Update</p>	
<p>7.1</p>	<p><u>Locality Meeting</u> MB fed back that the main focus of the locality meeting was about the Future of School provision outcomes for the area. The overwhelming feedback was for a new high school to be built in Kirkliston. MB urged the Parent Council to keep a close eye on developments in this space as it will have a significant impact on QHS whether a new school is agreed or not. QHS will still need to go though a temporary or more permanent expansion in the near-term. There are still significant housing developments ongoing in the Ferry which means school aged pupils moving into the area.</p>	



	<p>CD stated that the S1 intake for 2023/24 is currently 234 which takes the school roll to 1,132. QHS capacity is 1,200.</p> <p>MB asked that the Parent Council reach out to the local Primary School Parent Councils to ensure everyone is joined up and aware of developments as they arise (Action 9). CD said he lets the Parent Council know if he receives any correspondence.</p> <p>GMcK stated that there is no further development planned in the Ferry for the 2030 plan but that this could change.</p> <p>CW thanked MB for his commitment to the Parent Council and for his service as Locality rep. In order to fill the role going forward she requested that MB email a list of the responsibilities to her (Action 10) and this would be used to advertise for a successor at the AGM.</p>	<p>TBC (new locality rep)</p> <p>MB</p>
<p>7.2</p>	<p><u>PSA</u> Liz Martin is standing down as PSA Chair to be replaced by Rebecca Saunders and Gillian Rhodes sharing the role. The Parent Council formally thanked Liz for her tremendous commitment to the PSA over the last 13 years.</p> <p>The PSA will be providing support to sell raffle tickets at the upcoming school show to raise money for PSA funds.</p> <p>BL said that he appreciated the PSA donation to the S6 leavers celebration and that a good time was had by all. CD said the S6s had been a credit to the school and had set a great example for future years to follow.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Community Council Update</p>	
	<p>DF updated that the QDCC and others (local retailers etc) had met with the community police and in particular the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) team to discuss youth behaviour around the community. The good news was that incidents of anti-social behaviour had fallen to low levels. Illegal vaping was however considered to be an increasing issue with some retailers breaking the law with their sales to young people. A survey of attitudes to alcohol among young people was conducted and showed a fall but still remained higher than CAP would like.</p> <p>AMB and GMcK then updated on Out of Hours and the Summer Programme. Overall the schemes are very successful in reducing anti-social behaviour and keeping youngsters off the street. The team also recognise they cannot be run without the support of the community and local business, for which they are thankful. Specifically AMB updated on the Summer programme which they are hoping to run for three weeks offering over 500 sessions to hundreds of young people and their families. Most of the funding is in place with some fundraising still to be secured.</p> <p>AMB discussed community “hot spots” which are known as trouble spots in the area. CD said he was also aware of these areas and undertakes to visit then frequently to dispel trouble and also tries to educate pupils about not gathering in these areas.</p>	



9.	School Strategic Issues	
	There has been covered elsewhere and there was nothing further to discuss for this agenda item.	
10.	AOCB (Any other competent business)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S4/S5 Leavers – CW raised the point that leavers in S4 and S5 are not able to participate in the same leaver activities as S6 pupils. CD stated that the majority of celebrations are centred around S6 as they have completed the full six years of High School but conceded that those that leave earlier should be able to purchase a leavers hoodie. BL further commented that the school office had tried to get in touch with S4 & S5 leavers to offer them this but had left it late in the year to do this. BL will therefore liaise with the school office to contact all S4s and S5s so that those who intend to leave can obtain a leavers hoodie (Action 11). • Disabled parking spaces – CW stated it has been commented that there have been instances of non-disabled drivers parking in the disabled bays at the school. CD said he had been clear with staff on multiple occasions not to do this and that office staff were keeping an eye on this. However, he noted that some vehicles dropping off or picking up pupils who needed extra support could legitimately use these spaces. • Mobile phone reception – this item of AOB was not discussed as it had been referred to under the policy updates • Class Charts – KT stated that Class Charts is currently down while improvements based on feedback received are being made. The app should be available again on 5 June 2023. As part of this exercise KT and his team are disabling S6 leaver’s parents access and archiving the data. Any information required to be cascaded to these parents will be done by text. KT also noted that the pupil support colleagues all have accounts set up on Class Charts but were unable to readily access the system due to lack of tech equipment. CD stated that all staff should now have the required access to tech equipment. • S6 year book – BL informed the Parent Council that S6 year books will be given to pupils once they have returned their iPad and charger. • Automatic messages regarding absence – CW raised that there were concerns about the automatic issuing of messages to say pupils were not in school and to call the office which caused undue stress to some parents (as the pupil was actually in school). This was also raised by PIG. CD stated that this was an automated system and Michelle Gordon was going to remind staff of our processes and procedures for school attendance. Our new cluster (consistent primary & secondary) attendance policy will be launch in August, CD will ensure the accuracy of systems will be looked at and appropriate changes would be made, if necessary (Action 12). • Thank you – CW extended her thanks to EG and MB who will be leaving the Parent Council. She also extended her thanks to all members for their contribution and to SE for standing in as minute taker. 	<p>BL</p> <p>CD</p>
11.	Date of next meeting	
	The next meeting will be the AGM – date to be confirmed.	



ACTION LIST

1.	KT	School website to be updated for Parent Council minutes.
2.	CD/All	Consider how best to utilise Parent Council money and decide at AGM.
3.	CD/KT/AMB	Open All Hours Consent Forms to be available from School Office.
4.	ME/SE	Parent Council accounts to be presented at each Parent Council meeting.
5.	ME/CW	Personal liability risk for Parent Council members to be assessed for next meeting
6.	ME	Parent Council accounts to be shared on school website and by email on advance of each Parent Council meeting.
7	All	Promote school show amongst the community to boost ticket sales
8	KT	Contact Ferry Elves to co-ordinate on equity agenda
9	SB/CW	Engage with local Primary School Parent Councils to keep up to date on developments with future of high school provision
10	MB	Email role spec for locality rep to enable a successor to be found at AGM
11	BL	Liaise with school office to contact all S4s and S5s so that any intending to leave can be included in leavers hoodies
12	CD	Investigation and resolution of issues in automatic absence messaging system