

Minutes of Wallace Hall 2-18 Parent Council meeting 14th January 2019

Present: Mark Blount, Sharon Young, Caroline O'Hara, Claire Wilson, Suzanne Renwick, Nicola Robertson, Jillian Maxwell, Louise Cochran, Melanie Halliday, Lynne Maxwell, John Blair, Grahame Arrowsmith, Marissa Larisma

Item		Action
1	<p>Apologies and Welcome</p> <p>Christine Carson, Natalie Hare, Ray Fulton, Kerry Fry, Audrey Murray, Carol Hamilton.</p>	
2	<p>Approval of minutes of 04.12.2018</p> <p>The minutes were approved.</p>	
3	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Concern was raised regarding the phrasing of the complaint of Primary Teachers not being included on the Pupil's fundraising Tea Towel.</p> <p>"JB expressed concern that not all primary teachers were included on the tea towels that the PC produced for sale to parents and at the Christmas Craft Fair. This oversight was not intentional but occurred, it seems, largely because the volunteers involved were concerned not to impose on teaching staff. The PC will take care in future to ensure that all staff are asked if they would like to participate. The PC apologizes to all concerned"</p> <p>Parent Volunteers involved in helping the Pupils with their portraits were not involved in putting the final design, this was the role of the PC Fundraising Subgroup.</p> <p>Natalie Hare would like to stand down as PC Secretary due to work commitments. MB asked members if there was anyone who would like to take on the role. There were no volunteers, however if anyone feels that they would like to they can contact MB.</p> <p>All other matters arising are covered in the Agenda.</p>	

4 **Grahame Arrowsmith feedback stakeholder survey**

As part of the WHA self-evaluation process a survey was sent out to parents/carers in November. A further survey has just been completed with pupils with the results to be discussed with the PC at a future date.

GA gave a hand out to members detailing the results (see appendix 1), and welcomed any feedback.

A focus group has been set up with parents to discuss the results and how the school can implement any improvements, this will take place in the coming weeks.

GA highlighted some of the key comments given:

Q.2, Staff regularly discuss how my child makes progress.
31% of parents don't know how teachers discuss a pupil's progress.

Q.8, I am regularly asked for my views on how my views on how learning experiences could be improved.
49% percent of parents disagreed with this.

Q.11, Staff treat all pupils equally.
44% Agreed with this (improvement on last years result), although 21% still strongly disagreed. A small number of incidents may be the cause of this and are being looked into.

Q.15, If your child has additional support needs and receives support from our support for learning team, do you feel this support is effective?
60% Agreed and only 10% Disagreed, this is a great improvement on last years results and staff involved have been congratulated on their efforts.

Q.19, I am actively involved in setting priorities to improve the school.
30% Agreed, this is an improvement, looking at different ways to communicate with parents may improve this further.

Q.24, Q.25 Concerning Senior and middle management level, has seen large improvements.

Q.27, I am happy my child attends Wallace Hall
A very positive result of 95% of parents/carers agreed with this.

Over-all the results are positive and the key area's for improvement have been identified:

- Way's for parents/carers to communicate with the school alongside the PC
- The way that the School communicates with parents/carers and what is included in the reports.

There was a disappointing response from parents/carers with only 60% completing the electronic survey. The survey had been drawn up to be simple and easily completed. The focus group will discuss the possible reasons for the lack of response.

GA discussed the spread sheet displayed, which will be circulated in an email for further study.

Sarah Hannah will be putting out a similar survey to Primary parents/carers in the coming weeks.

A discussion took place on the reasons for the lack of response.

5

JB – HT Update

Staffing

SMT – Mrs Hannah's SMT days are now a Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

P7 – Mrs Graham has returned from maternity leave and is with the class Monday through to Thursday. Mrs Johnston is taking the class on a Friday.

P6 – Mrs Johnston has been appointed as a permanent member of staff two days per week and will be with the P6 class on a Monday and a Tuesday.

ELC – Mrs Milligan will be working in the ELC on a Friday to allow Mrs Smith to continue her 0.2 DHT role.

Mrs Lauren Robertson returns following her maternity leave and she will take on the role of PT Pupil Support for pupils in Nith.

Mrs Susan Priestley has joined us on a temporary basis and will be teaching Home Economics and Art.

Mr David Dillon who was successfully appointed to the role of Depute Head Teacher at Dumfries Academy during the last week of term. We anticipate that Mr Dillon will be taking up his new role in the middle of February.

Alice Bainbridge has been appointed to the permanent position of Office Manager.

Pupil Achievement

In the Welsh Skating Championships, primary pupils Lily Simpson achieved a Gold medal, Mikayla Larisma, Paige Guest and Ruth Little all achieved Silver medals. Secondary pupils Abby Little, Heather Gibson, Charlotte Guest and Aidan Kennedy all achieved Gold medals.

WH ELC News

The ELC Celebration of Christmas event was very well attended by parents and carers.

ELC pupils are starting their new learning topic "Countries of the World". The first country they are learning about is France and they will move onto Scotland in time for Burns night celebrations. They will be learning some Scottish songs and singing these at an assembly.

P1 enrolments will be taking place this coming Monday and Tuesday. No date has been set for ELC enrolments as yet. Numbers for P1 are looking tremendously healthy.

Primary News

Our school show "Behind the Stable Door" was a great success last term, children participated in both afternoon and evening performances.

ELC and all primary classes participated in Christmas parties. Santa visited the ELC and P1 and P2-3 parties.

Primary 1 made cookies in the WHA Home Economics department and delivered them to Thornhill Hospital. Primary 6 joined them on this visit and they sang songs from their school show and Christmas carols. Children thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity.

Academy News

All three of our Christmas dances were a huge success with 142 pupils attending our S1/S2 dance, 113 pupils attending our S3/S4 dance and over 125 pupils either attending or helping out at our senior dance. There was also an excellent turn out of staff at all three dances. Well done to Ellie Arnold, Darroch Wood, Declan McGarva and Kyle Anderson who played for some of the ceilidh sets at the junior dances.

Mr Corrigan took 8 pupils from GLIC, our Robotics team, down to Westminster at the end of last term. It was an incredible experience, particularly given the pupils were there at the time of the Brexit no confidence vote. Pupils involved were: Luke McKay, John McKay, Abigail Fletcher, Emily Cochran, Hannah Ogilvie, Faith Goodburn, Bethany Nicholson and Greig Dunbar. The pupils were a real credit to the school.

The Higher Photography students are very busy preparing for their forthcoming exhibition at CAMPLE LINE Art Gallery. The exhibition titled 'Work in Progress' will open on Friday 18th January 5pm-7pm. The students have created, printed and curated their images for this event. All are welcome to attend and see the fantastic photography our senior pupils have been busy creating.

Creation of the HUB

Following on from the Head Boy and Head Girls talk at the beginning of term, the HUB is now almost ready to start being used. We had a meeting last week to look at how this would be furnished to make it a more homely/nurturing environment for pupils. Our plan is to create an area which is more homely and nurturing –

4 three seater leather sofas	approx. £2000
Fridge freezer	£500
2 large dining tables	£1000
Lamps, soft furnishings, crockery, cutlery, etc.	£750

The School will meet some of these costs. The breakfast club will put funds towards the fridge-freezer and the PC had in a previous meeting had stated that they would be happy to contribute. The treasurer has provided the PC balance a balance of £7382 split between the Primary (5,330) and Secondary (2,052).

Members discussed how previous bids for funds for Academy projects and equipment had worked. There were no applications were made last year. It was agreed that the PC would be happy to contribute to the Hub. Members suggested that shops could be asked for donations or reductions in price. JB confirmed that this has been done with the Sofa's, tables and fridge freezers including a whole life guarantee. Members approved the funds of £750 for the soft furnishings.

JB raised a proposal from the Expressive Arts Department, requesting funds for the cost of Display Boards of £400. See appendix 2. Members discussed this and approved the funding.

6 JB School day

The local authority have stated that they won't be approving any changes to the times of the school day as they are at the moment considering an authority wide change.

<p>7</p>	<p>Christmas Fair Feedback</p> <p>The fair was very well attended with a total of £1600 raised. The different types of stall holders were put into different area's this year which was very successful. DD and the PC thanked everyone involved for their efforts and especially GM who worked very hard and gave up a lot of her free time to ensure the event was a success.</p> <p>Preparations for this year will begin in September.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Quiz Update</p> <p>The date and time for the Quiz has been confirmed for the 1st February at 19:30. CC requested baking and volunteers on the night. Further promotion of the event will continue via social media and flyers.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Playing field update</p> <p>All the requested information has now been collected. It was agreed by members that the issue will now go on hold until the matter becomes an issue, i.e. rainfall causing the pitches to flood and become unusable. Once this happens then Councillors can be called to inspect the lack of drainage.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Primary Maths</p> <p>A member raised the concern from parents not being given enough information on how they can help their child at home to improve on their maths skills.</p> <p>P3 have been taking part in weekly a 'beat that' timed maths challenge, answering 17 maths questions in 30 seconds. Many parents were unaware of the assessments and therefor have missed the opportunity to support their child to progress.</p> <p>SR responded that information regarding this was given out to parents at the start of the year and information was available on the Open afternoon. Unfortunately this may have been missed in the amount of information given out. SR reassured members that the staff do keep detailed information on any difficulties and questions that pupils have to ensure anyone struggling will have the support they need by targeting areas.</p> <p>This has been discussed with Staff they are currently happy with what they have in place and any additional support will be discussed with parents.</p> <p>A discussion took place on how parents could be involved in supporting their child and understand the maths activities that they are partaking in.</p>	

<p>11</p>	<p>A.O.B</p> <p>JB informed members that the application ‘Show my homework’ for the Academy, although very successful is unfortunately not going to continue in the current format. This is due to the provider increasing the cost by £1,700 from the initial introduction price. A Microsoft Teams package has been found to be cost effective and this will be implemented as quickly as possible.</p> <p>A member raised concern regarding ‘rowdy’ behaviour of pupils on the Stage Coach bus from Thornhill to Dumfries. This is dangerous as it is distracting for the driver and a bad reflection on the school. DD assured the member that the school does take this seriously and asked the member to pass on details to enable him to take the matter further.</p> <p>A discussion then took place on transport on a whole and support for the Train Station reopening.</p> <p>MB and the PC members wished DD well in his new role at Dumfries Academy and Thanked him for his time and contributions to the PC.</p>	

The next meeting will be

11th March 2019

19:00 in the Library

Appendix

Appendix 1. Responses to Academy Parents' Survey

DRAFT

	Responses to Academy Parents' Survey	2018			2015			Variances		
		Agree / Strongly agree %	Don't know %	Disagree / Strongly disagree %	Agree / Strongly agree %	Don't know %	Disagree / Strongly disagree %	Agree / Strongly agree %	Don't know %	Disagree / Strongly disagree %
1	My child has opportunities to achieve outwith the classroom (extra curricular etc.).	75.4%	11.5%	13.1%	79.8%	6.7%	13.5%	-4.4%	4.7%	-0.4%
2	Staff regularly discuss with my child how to make progress.	59%	31%	10%	46%	34%	20%	12.9%	-2.6%	-10.4%
3	Staff regularly discuss with me how to help support my child's learning.	51%	8%	41%	36%	11%	53%	14.9%	-3.0%	-11.8%
4	My child is given activities which meet their learning needs.	67%	26%	7%	65%	26%	9%	2.0%	0.4%	-2.4%
5	My child is involved in setting learning targets.	47%	47%	7%	38%	51%	11%	8.5%	-3.9%	-4.6%
6	My child is provided with regular feedback on what they need to do to improve.	62%	30%	8%	51%	34%	16%	11.7%	-4.2%	-7.5%
7	My child is provided with opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of others e.g. self assessment and peer assessment.	55%	42%	3%	47%	45%	8%	8.4%	-3.8%	-4.6%
8	I am regularly asked for my views on how learning experiences could be improved.	30%	21%	49%	25%	9%	66%	4.5%	12.2%	-16.7%
9	If you answered 'Disagree' or Strongly Disagree' to the above question, how do you think we could improve in this area?	Click here for comments								
10	My child takes an active part in their learning.	85%	13%	2%	81%	15%	4%	4.3%	-1.5%	-2.9%
11	Staff treat all pupils equally.	44%	34%	21%	38%	28%	34%	6.1%	6.3%	-12.4%
12	If you answered 'Disagree' or Strongly Disagree' to the above question, do you have specific reasons/examples? If so, please give details below.	Click here for comments								
13	Staff and pupils respect each other.	73%	23%	3%	60%	21%	19%	13.8%	2.0%	-15.8%
14	The pupils are well behaved.	64%	26%	10%	69%	24%	7%	-5.4%	2.4%	3.0%
15	If your child has additional support needs and receives support from our Support for Learning team, do you feel this support is effective?	60%	30%	10%	25%	64%	11%	35.3%	-34.0%	-1.2%

DRAFT

	Responses to Academy Parents' Survey	2018			2015			Variances		
		Agree / Strongly agree %	Don't know %	Disagree / Strongly disagree %	Agree / Strongly agree %	Don't know %	Disagree / Strongly disagree %	Agree / Strongly agree %	Don't know %	Disagree / Strongly disagree %
15	If you answered 'Disagree' or Strongly Disagree' to the above question, how do you think we could improve in this area?	Click here for comments								
17	I am actively involved in the school and my child's learning.	66%	13%	21%	51%	7%	42%	14.4%	6.3%	-20.7%
18	If you answered 'Disagree' or Strongly Disagree' to the above question, how do you think we could improve in this area?	Click here for comments								
19	I am actively involved in setting priorities to improve the school.	30%	30%	41%	14%	17%	69%	15.9%	12.5%	-28.3%
20	If you answered 'Disagree' or Strongly Disagree' to the above question, how do you think we could improve in this area?	Click here for comments								
21	I have regular opportunities to help shape learning by having discussions with staff.	41%	13%	46%	24%	18%	58%	17.1%	-5.1%	-12.1%
22	If you answered 'Disagree' or Strongly Disagree' to the above question, how do you think we could improve in this area?	Click here for comments								
23	I am aware of the schools procedures for protecting children.	84%	5%	11%	56%	23%	22%	27.9%	-17.8%	-10.1%
24	Leadership at senior management level is effective e.g. Head Teacher and Depute Headteachers	70%	26%	3%	53%	28%	19%	17.7%	-1.9%	-15.8%
25	Leadership at middle management level is effective e.g. Principal Teachers of Pupil Support and Curriculum	74%	26%	0%	54%	34%	12%	19.8%	-7.5%	-12.4%
26	The school communicates effectively with me.	72%	5%	23%	68%	3%	28%	3.9%	1.5%	-5.5%
27	I am happy my child attends Wallace Hall	95%	3%	2%	80%	10%	10%	15.3%	-6.8%	-8.5%

Expressive Arts Display Boards Proposal

Hello! We are the Expressive Arts Faculty and we are planning on showcasing our Expressive Arts Faculties (Art, Drama and Music) talent on the 3rd April 2019. We will have our senior Drama and Music pupils perform their exam pieces and our Art pupils will display their folio of work they have been working on all year. This will be a great opportunity for our pupil's family, friends and school community to see the talent that can be hidden away in the classroom all year.

In order for us to do this we would require some money to get display boards made and used for this. We are writing to ask if we could apply for some money from the parent council to facilitate this. It will cost us £400 to make 18 display boards (David Simpson has kindly offered his time and expertise for this). It would cost around £100 per board if we ordered them from a supplier- so this is quite a saving. These boards can then be used by other department and areas of the school. David has designed them so they can be easily moved and stored.

We hope you are keen to support this as we are hoping to make this an annual event here at Wallace Hall!

Many thanks for taking the time to read our proposal and consider supporting us!

Kind regards,

Vickie Simpson (PT Expressive Arts)

Jozi Black (Art)

Gerry Griffin (Drama)

Nick Riley (Music)