

# BEARSDEN ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL



This meeting took place at Bearsden Academy on 10th May 2022 at 7pm

## **Attendees**

Chris Dorman (Chair)  
George Cooper (Head Teacher)  
Stuart Dickson (Secretary)  
Wendy McLaren  
Andrea Glendenning  
Alison McCloy (Depute Head Teacher)  
Peter Liddle (Depute Head Teacher)  
Ruth Higgins (Depute Head Teacher)  
George Stevenson (Depute Head Teacher)  
Michael Healy (Depute Head Teacher)

## **Welcome & Apologies**

Apologies were received from Lucy Roy, Jane Collins-Whyte, January Morgan White, Alison Ward and Lisa Manchanda. Arlene Wilson got in touch with Chris to confirm that she has decided to step down from the Parent Council.

## **Re-introductions to members of the Parent Council**

We went round the room to re-introduce ourselves, it having been more than 2 years since we were all together in person. We reflected on the difficulty many had experienced in attending the meeting, reflected in the apologies received above and considered hybrid meetings going forward to make it easier.

Chris also reflected on the need to boost engagement in the Parent Council by parents and we discussed how we might achieve this. These included:

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- A landing page on the Bearsden Academy website, including dates of the meetings, how to contact the Parent Council, and minutes of previous meetings for example.
- Twitter announcements
- We can also use the Groupcall function to alert parents of an upcoming meeting
- Parent Council Sway
- A special Parent Council Podcast as part of the school's series
- Getting the Parent Council involved in events such as transition events to meet new parents to help them settle down e.g. P7 transition. We are producing a welcome pack to new parents whose children are joining the school from local P7s.
- The PTA is a separate universe unlike at Bearsden Primary School and perhaps we can pull some across and do joint events.

Chris took an action to start this process and Stuart took an action to pass meeting minutes to Mr Cooper so that these can be posted on a landing page of the school website.

## **Matters arising**

We had a discussion about how keen parents were to re-engage with the school having been away for >2 years. Mr Cooper said that there have been parent surveys which show this clearly and so the school is looking at the calendar for next year to return to events that used to be done, such as parent evenings, visits around transition from primaries, and presentations from year heads.

In any given month the school has had multiple events per month in the evenings historically and many will be with parents, however the school is waiting for advice from the education department at EDC before proceeding. Historically, 95% of parents attend parent evenings and so the school are keen for them to return.

Mr Cooper re-iterated how hard the school has worked to ensure pupil wellbeing with regular surveys over the past 2 years, with teachers and guidance councillors following up with individuals and parents if any issues were identified. They are an immediate snapshot to give the school opportunities to engage.

## **Head Teacher report**

Mr Cooper distributed his Head Teacher's Report and discussed the many activities which continue to take place. Despite lockdowns, the school has not stopped doing things; they just tried to do things differently.

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The highlights of the document were presented. Mr Liddle discussed the school improvement plan – this will be emailed to us – in coming days. He asked for a couple of parents to help complete the process, which ideally should be complete by the end of term.

Ms McCloy discussed several issues, including

- The DYW (Developing the Young Workforce) curriculum, the rationale behind it, and, as an example, how the school was participating in the DYW SCQF qualification as a barista.
- Equalities curriculum
- The John Muir Award
- Supported study for pupils taking exams
- Young STEM leaders initiative
- Cycle friendly schools and offering Bike Ability Award (the school now has a stock of bikes to support this)
- People leadership conference

Mr Stevenson then discussed the launch of the refresh of the school values. Pupils and parents have been voting on this and there is now a presentation on this ready to be issued. He will distribute this to the PC ahead of general release to pupils and parents.

The SQA exams are underway and going smoothly. There are no concerns and clear guidance is in place to help in exceptional circumstances.

The S6 pupils had their final day event and their prom is on 9<sup>th</sup> June at Crown Plaza.

Mrs Higgins confirmed that the Health and Safety Committee continues to have regular meetings. Many restrictions have been lifted however everything we do has to be backed up by a risk assessment beforehand. We have a wellbeing sessions for the staff as well including things like mindfulness and professional development which ties into the school improvement plan.

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Mr Healy provided an update assemblies – these have re-started as one of a number of ways to motivate and engage the youngsters and celebrate the achievements. We also have ideas about how parents can help engage pupils, such as sharing their experience to help with the move to university and careers. Stuart passed on a question from Lisa about certificates of merit – can the pupils get a physical certificate of their merits during the year as a celebration of their achievement? This was noted.

The Duke of Edinburgh awards are all on track and the next cohort will start in the next few weeks. The school is also applying for the 'Rights respecting school' accreditation.

Mr Stevenson discussed how the school has been helping the pupils move to digital to make sure pupils are getting the best use out of systems such as homework diaries and submitting work electronically.

Finally, Mr Cooper discussed a number of interviews and appointments that have been conducted in recent weeks, such as appointing a new head of drama. These are mostly as a result of retirements. There are a few remaining vacancies but no lack of applicants and the school is confident of filling them. The school continues to be well supported by the local authority

Date of next meeting 14<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm – location to be confirmed.