

**minutes of meeting held on: 19 November 2013****Leith Academy Parent Council****Minutes of Meeting held on 19 November 2013**

<b>In attendance</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>In attendance</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Trisha Emblem (Chair)	TE	Victoria Mitchell	VM
Diane Anderson	DMA	Laura Brown	LB
Christine Wallis	CW	Ann Monaghan	AM1
Jack Simpson (Headteacher)	JMS	Linda McKay	LM
Fiona Fitzgerald	FF	Craig Renwick (Active Schools Co-ordinator)	CR
Bridget Linton (Clerk)	BL	Angela Mercer	AM2
Penny Radway	PR	Bobby Dickens (Pupil Council)	BD
Sheila Ralston	SR	Oscar Shirlaw (Pupil Council)	OS
Mary Taylor	MT	Michelle Whitelaw (Pupil Council)	MW
Roslyn Gaunt	RG		

<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	
<b>Maire Johnston</b>	<b>MJ</b>	<b>Bridget Linton</b>	<b>BL</b>
<b>Jackie Beer</b>	<b>JB</b>		

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	

	TE opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. Introductions were made. TE noted the significant number of attendees.	
2.	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Noted above.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2013</b> – were accepted as an accurate record.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>Locating teachers by faculty in a smaller area of the school for Parental Consultations has been trialled. Parents of S5/6 pupils were canvassed and seemed to prefer the new arrangement though staff were divided. It will be further researched at the S4 event on 21 November.</p>	
	It was noted that SR had sent her apologies to the September meeting though they had not been recorded.	
5.	<p><b>Edinburgh Council Proposed Cuts to Budget</b></p>	
	<p>DMA attended the Budget Consultation Meeting for Parent Council Chairs on 11.11.13. This was chaired by the Convenor of Education who reported that the income and expenditure forecasts over the next few years will result in a considerable financial challenge. Among other points:-</p> <p>Ø Changing demographics will entail increases in demand far outstripping resources, and significant year on year savings will be required.</p>	
	<p>Ø Frontline Children and Families departments to be protected wherever possible – but definition of ‘frontline’ is somewhat clouded and clarification was sought.</p> <p>Ø It was pointed out that the approved budget does not take account of pay awards, which will thus cut the available funding still further.</p> <p>Ø Support was recorded across the City for librarians in the light of the proposal to ‘share’ librarian resources.</p> <p>Ø The consultation document can be seen online at <a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/budget">www.edinburgh.gov.uk/budget</a> and all present were urged to look at</p>	

	<p>the proposals and share their feedback. We have until 20.12.13 to record our views.</p> <p>TE thanked DMA on our behalf for attending this meeting</p>	
	<p>A major impact on Leith Academy will be the above mentioned proposed cuts to the Library Resource Centre which would result in librarians being 'shared' between two schools. Christine Boal, Resource Centre Manager at Leith Academy, attended the meeting to spell out exactly what these cuts will mean and the attached document describes in further detail the many areas across the school that she is involved in. CB's passion for the school and its pupils, and the considerable amount of her own time she gives up was noted. Also her disappointment that if this proposal goes ahead, loyalty to their current schools would probably necessitate librarians having to start again in two completely new locations. It was pointed out that this proposal only saves 12 salaries which is hardly a fair return for the upheaval and potential loss to the school community of a valued member of staff, together with the upset that many pupils are already voicing.</p> <p>SR spoke to support and thank CB, and outlined the considerable cross-curricular expertise she brings to LA. One particular example are the new National courses, which involve more research skills for pupils, especially in the Added Value units – again supported by CB. The meeting was unanimous in its support for CB and once again, members were urged to record their views on the Council website at <a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/budget">www.edinburgh.gov.uk/budget</a>.</p> <p>If anyone needs further information, CB will be glad to hear from them:  <a href="mailto:Christine.boal@leith.edin.sch.uk">Christine.boal@leith.edin.sch.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Feedback on budget proposals/All present</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Active Schools Co-ordinator Update</b></p> <p>Craig Renwick reported that 146 pupils are involved in the after school sports activities and they are well on track for the target of 180 by the end of this session.</p>	
	<p>Leith Academy was asked put forward the name of a bearer for the Edinburgh stage of the procession of the baton for the Commonwealth</p>	

	<p>Games. Following nominations from staff and pupils, Leon Rendall was selected – a worthy representative for our school, with Kirsty Burgess as back up.</p>	
	<p>Individual sports were discussed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ø Tuesday swimming will be on Monday for the next four weeks</li> <li>Ø Mountain Biking will resume when the evenings are lighter – though opportunities may still arise through IBike and Sustrans and parents would then receive a letter to this effect.</li> <li>Ø A Teamer account has been set up to keep school rugby players updated.</li> <li>Ø North Neighbourhood are hoping to pool resources to put a basketball team together (as is currently the case for rugby with Broughton HS)</li> <li>Ø CR is also looking at sources of funding and CW added that Parent Council support can be relied on too.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Work Plan for 2013/14</b></p> <p><b>Parent Council Website</b></p> <p>CW's son Jaime has put some mock-ups together to show how the Parent Council Website could look. There would be information for parents about its structure, it would have the logo, navigational tools linking to other useful articles, websites etc. and be inclusive for the whole school community. Some disquiet was expressed regarding information governance and security and this will be checked out. In the meantime, Jaime will make his proposals available for consideration w/c 25.11.13 and TE asked CW to pass on our thanks. Bobby Dickens also expressed an interest in being involved.</p>	
	<p><b>Speed Careers Night</b></p> <p>The current ideas for this pilot, are to arrange it in the Resource Centre for around 4.30pm and for 10-12 parents to be available to each give a 5 minute chat about their jobs. The event is to be relaxed and informal and can then be followed up by teachers in school within careers guidance. Parent Council will liaise with JMS regarding suitable dates. If you are interested in taking part, please email Christine Wallis on wallisandco@hotmail.com</p>	<p>Any interested party/CW</p>
	<p><b>Leith Academy Pupil Council</b></p>	

	<p>Ø It was good to welcome three members of the Pupil Council to the meeting and parents were able to speak to them about how pupils can become involved. Currently they are looking for younger members – recruitment is done through assembly; speaking to Council members directly or using the Have Your Say cards. A Twitter page is also being considered.</p> <p>Ø They are also trying to raise awareness about the competition to design a mural that will be painted in the Science area with Diversity at its theme. As agreed at our AGM in June, the Parent Council will make some funding available.</p>	
8.	<b>Leith Academy will not be used as a polling station</b> JMS confirmed.	
9.	<b>Head Teacher’s Update</b>	
	<b>Budget Proposals</b> that will have an impact on LA, include the changes to the library service; removal of the capping of English and Maths classes at 20; a review of community high schools, consortium teaching for Advanced Highers – 12 per subject at least, and a review of special school provision. Each of these will have an impact on staffing levels and how we use our budget. Despite the assurances that frontline services will be protected, these proposals will have an impact on the curriculum.	
	<b>Curriculum for Excellence – Highers.</b> JMS advised the meeting that pupils entering S5 in 2015 will all be following the new Higher Syllabus. Until that point there could be differences between various departments as the best interest of the cohort they are teaching will be put first. During this transition period, the subject content will remain the same but the method of assessment may alter.	

10.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	A parent raised concerns about the lack of homework and progression on the Monitoring and Tracking report for her son in S3, despite having spoken to the relevant teachers. JMS highlighted that the school website illustrates homework guidelines and expectations and undertook to speak to her individually	JMS

	TE asked for volunteers to man the Parent Council stall at the S4 Parents' Consultations on 28 November – please advise TE or CW if interested.	Any interested party
	Photos taken of the Parent Council at a recent event by Roslyn Gaunt were circulated and will now be displayed on our noticeboard.	/TE
	LB expressed concern at the lack of progression for her daughter in English where she felt the increased class size was a concern. It was also felt by some parents that DVDs were watched in class too often. However both BD (S6) and MW (S5) were able to give examples where use of a relevant DVD had greatly helped them understand and put into context the work they were studying. SR commented that teaching in CfE is sometimes less traditional, with visual learners especially, finding this a more successful way to access the curriculum.	
11.	<b>Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday, 5 February 2014</b>	

School Budgets – we have until 20 December to respond:-

- 1) Speak to local councillor
- 2) Use budget email address: [councilbudget@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:councilbudget@edinburgh.gov.uk)
- 3) Fill in online feedback form: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/EdinburghBudget](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/EdinburghBudget)

Full budget details at:-[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20104/council\\_budget/2061/council\\_budget\\_2014\\_15/5](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20104/council_budget/2061/council_budget_2014_15/5)

North Neighbourhood Group:-

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/859/schools-parental\\_involvement/2079/neighbourhood\\_groups](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/859/schools-parental_involvement/2079/neighbourhood_groups)