

minutes of meeting held on: 26 October 2011

LEITHACADEMY SCHOOL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26 OCTOBER 2011

Present: Diane Anderson (Co-chair), Christine Wallis (Co-chair), Doreen MacKinnon, Angela Mercer, Ann Monaghan, Sheila Ralston, Mellissa Berry, Olivia Irvine, Jackie Gleave, Hilary Marsh, Trisha Emblem, Fouad Abbas, Alexander Bouch, Ewen Crawford, Amy Montgomery, Katie Evans

Action

1. **Apologies:** Nancy Burns, David Burns, Jane Laidlaw, Jackie Beer, Alan Monaghan, Paul Laird, Bridget Linton, Gary Peacock, Rob Munn, Ewan Aitkens, Marjorie Thomas, Maggie Chapman, Louise Lang

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

These were accepted as accurate.

1. Welcome and Introduction

CW opened meeting and introduced herself and invited everyone to do the same. CW thanked pupils Alexander, Ewen, Amy and Katie for attending and representing pupils.

1. Matters Arising

Membership

DM organised a short article for Leith Links regarding parents getting involved with the Parent Council.

DM is to send a letter to Councillors re their involvement in Parent Council meetings and attendance. DM

Roles and Responsibilities– AMo and NB represented the Parent Council at the S1 Parents' Information Evening on 5 September. Unfortunately they managed only to get a few contact details from parents due to the timing constraints of the evening.

Cooking Bus– SR informed that this went very well and hopes that the Bus will return. Unfortunately the press declined getting involved in raising the Cooking Bus profile due to the miss-understanding that it was mainly for pupils during school time. CW attended the event on the Cooking Bus.

CCWP – CW attended first school year meeting which was chaired by Councillor Marilyn MacLaren. Gillian Tee, Director of Children & families gave an interesting presentation on 'Priorities for the year ahead' under headings of 1) achievements 2) future landscape 3) aspirations and 4) priorities for improvement. Achievements were highlighted (e.g. school attainments, new buildings, increased parental satisfaction with schools) while awaiting government spend and ongoing financial pressures.

Priorities for improvement:

a) continue to strengthen support for children in early years b) early support for families so fewer children need to be looked after c) increase attainment of lowest achieving 20% d) improved health outcomes for children e.g. healthy weight & emotional health & wellbeing e) improved life chances for Children Looked After f) young people into positive destinations

Andy Gray, Head of Planning & Performance gave a presentation on educational attainment in Edinburgh (while there are some good results - Lothian is poorly achieving in some areas- more info to follow)

Small group discussions were facilitated at meeting and we fed back items for meetings over the next year (will circulate the list when it comes from CEC).

DA hopes to attend the next meeting on 15 November on Resources.

Bank Account (Treasurer) – DA hopes to have a meeting with DB and the previous Treasurer JB regarding the financial situation.

Pupil Council– KE to bring minutes and Cafeteria Legislation to the next meeting.

Agenda

1. Active Schools

Mel Berry attended the meeting to give parents a brief overview of her role in Leith Academy and cluster primary schools and to also inform the group of money that is available for projects that are linked to sport/health.

DA

MB started in LA in May and has changed the timetable format of After School Sports. This term there are 23 extra curricular activities being offered by Active

Sports and activities will change termly. This is to offer a varied choice of sports to allow pupils to sample all types of sport rather than the basic type and will also link with the cluster DA/DB/JB

Pathways.

KE

Leith Academy's facilities are regularly used by the cluster primaries and this is linked with primary pathways and transition. Pupils at Primary school are familiar with the Active Sports co-ordinator by the time they start at Leith Academy. Therefore, this helps with overall transition from primary to secondary school as it offers consistency and familiarity.

MB asked that parents get involved with after school clubs by getting involved with coaching, helping with after school activities or attending matches.

MB could help LA access an amount of money from £500 - £10,000 depending on the purpose from the Communities 2014/Awards for All budgets (paperwork was distributed). MB suggested that an outdoor basketball court could be a really good starting point as this would free up the games hall. It was decided that the link for this would be sent to all parents that we currently have an email address for in the hope that parents will have a view on how to take this forward. Funding can be accessed for cross-curricular purposes not necessarily regarding sport. DA – this links well with the Parent Council toolkit – food, family and fun – could we ask for assistance with shows/Olympics in the summer? Trisha Emblem gave a brief overview of the key functions of a Parent Council:

Supporting the school in its work with parents:

- Representing the views of parents
- Promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils and providers of nursery education and the community
- Reporting to the Parent Forum

March 2012 is the deadline for applying for funding. MB will give the Parent Council guidance when filling out the paperwork for asking for funds for such a project.

SR and Oliver Cook have been looking at starting a Breakfast Club at Leith Academy. They could access £500 to set up such a group however they aren't sure about the sustainability of starting such a club as £500 will not go far. SR to report back to the group at a later meeting.

DA – the Parent Council will be happy to work with MB to take her objectives forward. It was decided that an email should be sent to parents asking for volunteers to get involved in after school clubs and to start a data base of skilled parents. MB suggested that it is a quick and cheap process to set up parents on the new PVG Disclosure system. There is also money available for paying towards such Disclosures that she can help the group access. Action – Parent Council, Prefects and Pupils Council to read these documents and at the next meeting discussion regarding taking this forward will be discussed.

1. Headteacher's Update

Monitoring and Tracking Reports – these will be sent out soon. DM asked for parental feedback on M&T reports and what parts parents find helpful and suggestions to improve the report.

Attainment – at all benchmarks, is improving steadily. Full details are available on request.

HMIe – HMIe were back for a 'scoping' on 10 October 2011 JMS, DM and LG engaged in a dialogue with them. HMIe will continue re-engagement with LA. HMIe praised the school's self evaluation but expressed concerns about the progress of improvements in attainment.

Self – evaluation– Karen Prophet (Head of Pupil Support in CEC) did a presentation to BoS on this.

CfE –course choice for S1 and S2 – A dummy run will take place before Christmas. Parents will have a chance to discuss this with their child and there are two meetings planned before final choices are made.

SR

Wider Achievement– A new display board has been set up to advertise the wider achievements of our pupils that normally go un-noticed.

Management Restructuring – This is under review and will make significant changes to the structure of the Pupil Support.

November is Perfect Attendance Month– The school is starting to hit the amber area on attendance (between 90%/95%) but should still be in the green area at this time of year. S5 appears to be the worst Year Group regarding attendance and is nearly in the Red. Parents can help attendance by encouraging pupils to attend. CW suggested a consultation with pupils on how the school can improve pupil attendance. DA offered to meet with pupils to discuss the importance of good attendance in terms of future employability.

DA/CW/AM

Morning Registration– The reintroduction of this is being discussed in place of Tutor Group. AmyM/KE suggested that they didn't know the point of TG and would prefer morning registration. KE - At TG most of the time they don't do anything and find it pointless but it is good for mixing with mixed Year Groups as the teacher does encourage discussion.

ALL

IT Refresh– This will take place by August 2012. All existing kit will be replaced and upgraded. By the end of Refresh it is hoped that each pupil will have a handheld device. It is unclear at this point if parents will need to pay in full or contribute to this. DM to feed back at next meeting.

1. Pupil Council

Two pupils Katie Evans and Amy Montgomery represented the Pupil Council. A discussion took place regarding issues that the Pupil Council deal with and it was agreed that the Parent Council would be happy to support them with issues regarding the cafeteria. KE is to bring along the findings of the cafeteria survey, previous minutes and the Cafeteria Legislation to the next meeting.

1. Emailing List

The LA Parent Council needs to expand the email list as it is the cheapest and quickest mode of communicating with parents. After wide ranging discussion it was decided that Prefects should ask parents for their contact details at Parents' Evenings as they sign in. A contact form is to be designed for this purpose.

1. Parent Council Notice Board Revamp

A volunteer was requested to update and revamp the Parent Council Noticeboard. DM agreed that this would be useful as parents do come into the school. Until a volunteer is found CW will start the process. CW also suggested envelopes be put on the noticeboard to collect supermarket/product vouchers that parents wish to send in. AM has made a banner and this will be put up.

1. Next Years Objectives

Decisions on this are on going and will be discussed further at the next meeting.

1. Meetings/Events/Issues

This is deferred to the next meeting.

DA/CW closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

AOCB

- **Other Parent Councils-** CW suggested contacting other PCs to learn about how they do things.
- **Queens Diamond Jubilee-** CEC's proposal is to change the Victoria Day holiday on 21 May and the Inservice Day on 22 May to allow for this event over the 4/5 June 2012. Parents are invited to email; graham.douglas@edinburgh.gov.uk with their views. It was suggested that some school staff and families have already made commitment based on the May holiday dates and some parents felt it falls very close to the end of term.

Date of next meeting- Monday 5 December 2011 (please note this will be held in the Staffroom at 7pm). Please note – the Parent Council may go for a drink locally at the end of the meeting for a more informal way of parents meeting. DM

KE

DA/CW/AM

CW/

AM

CW/DA