

CASTLE DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL
PARENT COUNCIL
Minute of Meeting held on Thursday 24th May 2018

Present: Mr J. King (Chairperson), Dr. S. Little, Mrs S. Hall, Mrs S. Ross, Mrs L Smith, Mrs L Budde, Mr D. Stevens, Mrs G. Hodson, Mr D. Burns, Mrs M Eakin Watt

Apologies: Mr I Howie, Mrs L Callander

In Attendance: Mr J Smith (Headteacher), Mrs L. Porteous (Clerk)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Mr King welcomed everyone and as two new parents were in attendance, members of the parent forum, the parent council members introduced themselves. Apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Those who attended agreed the Spring Concert was excellent - better run than previous Christmas concerts, shorter and less repetitive. Having a concert at this time of year gave pupils more time to rehearse.

The Informal Database should be discussed at the next meeting.

Mini bus driving - Midas training is being given free to eight teachers, but only those who passed their driving test before 1997 as those who passed after that year have to sit an additional driving test which is more expensive.

3. Head Teacher's Report:

Staffing: The School Support Manager, Mrs Reid is retiring. A new CDHS/Dalry and Glenkens Primary SSM - Mrs Susan Allison - has been appointed. PT Social Subjects is being advertised. HE - Hopefully a trainee who will spend some time at Dalry and some in CDHS. SIP: Some of the equity funding has been spent, but due to a new managements team being in place for a short time the school is being allowed to carry some of the PEF funding over to next year.

The exams are taking place just now and the Chief Invigilator has commented on the good behaviour of the pupils, not just when sitting exams but also other keeping quiet when near the exam rooms.

The timetable is being put into SEEMIS. The staff are happy with the new period changes.

The later time for S2 choosing subjects this year is better for teaching as pupils are continuing to work in subjects rather than saying they had opted out of a subject. Pupils are not so happy with the late time in choosing.

Discussion took place regarding BGE, S3 and 3 sciences. Some parents wondered if there should just be general science in S3 rather than biology, chemistry and physics.

S5 into S6 Option Form was issued the day it was due to be returned. There are new Highers being offered if there are enough pupils to merit them being run. Parent present felt there is a lack of communication and understanding regarding subject choice and whether subjects would run.

Parents present felt the S5 option form should have been issued earlier but Mr Smith explained this was due to staffing issues. Parents present also felt the S4 and S5 reports were issued too late for parents to take action if a pupil is not on track. It would be helpful if the S5 report would mention if Adv Higher is recommended.

4. **2017 SQA Results Analysis**

This was e-mailed to the Parent Council. The school results in all areas are above the virtual comparative school and in line with or above the local and national comparators. In Maths, for example, the results are above the comparators but the per cent of No Awards is significant. This percentage is below the national average but still needs to be looked at as a significant number of those who sat the exam. There could be many reasons for this including teachers being willing to gamble that a pupil might just pass; or a parent insisting against advice that their child should sit the exam. Mr Smith explained that the pathways document that we considered at a previous parent council coupled to better monitoring and tracking will show and provide evidence of whether a pupil should sit Nat 4 or Nat 5.

5. **School Improvement Plan**

Two versions were e-mailed to council members, a more detailed document and a parent friendly version.

The School Motto "Forward" has been taken from the motto for Castle Douglas. This could be **a topic to be discussed at a future parent council** in terms of a motto specific to the school.

The school tried to make an improvement plan which is achievable but there other issues the SLT hope to improve on in future: Mental Health, Behaviour Management.

Discussion took place on what the Parent present described as poor communication between the school and parents regarding whether pupils are on track and the parent council is pleased to see this has been taken on board and has been set as a target.

6. **Anti-Bullying**

The school's anti-bullying policy was e-mailed to the council. The school is hoping to address the problem of bullying within the school but sometimes parents mistake anti-social behaviour for bullying. Facebook and on line sites cause many problems.

The school held an IDAHOT day which was about inclusion and raising awareness of the harm that can be caused by homophobic , biphobic and transphobic bias.

Some parents present felt the message sent home was promoting LGBT rather than what it was intended to be - an day where we underlined our commitment to supporting all young people in our community. Discussion took place as to whether in future this should be a day teaching tolerance and understanding of others. If pupils wear uniform on a non-uniform day they should not be ridiculed and the council felt the school should reinforce this.

7. **Diary Dates**

Council felt that parents were not informed of forthcoming events at the school. The school calendar is difficult to find on the website. Although dates have been put into the Head Teacher's report parents who are not in the council will not see these unless they take the time to read the parent council minutes. It was agreed these dates should be put on the school Facebook page. A school newsletter will be issued prior to the summer holidays.

8. **Fun Raising**

To be **discussed at next Parent Council Meeting**

9. **Any Other Business**

Discussion took place regarding the Junior Awards Ceremony. Some of the parents present are unhappy this takes place in an afternoon when they are unable to attend due to work commitments.

The school is having consultations regarding school uniform and there will be a survey monkey for parents and pupils with some debate to follow. Some of the parents present like the idea of all pupils wearing blazers to school. The head teacher pointed out that enforcing uniform was a process that had to start in the home. The school staff will intervene with young people who do not adhere to the agreed school uniform policy but the responsibility for sending each pupil to school in uniform rests with the parent.

No results from the Education Department regarding the school holiday consultation.

There being no further business the Head Teacher left and parents had a brief discussion.

Date of Next Meeting Thursday 20 September