

## **Castle Douglas High School**

### **Parent council meeting**

**13/10/22**

#### **Present:**

Helen Keron, Sara Dutton, Amy Graham, Julie Irving, Sharon Mitchell, Kim Hiddleston, Kim Glover

James Smith

Representatives from Sixth Year House Captains: Eva, Alice, Kate and Alicia

#### **Report from House Captains:**

We were delighted to meet the Sixth-Year house captains.

Their main priorities thus far have been helping transition; Charity fundraising; organising Prom.

##### *Prom*

Have deposits ready for GG yard at Laggan Only 44 in year so have invited some of previous school leavers as needed 70 people

Will be attending the Christmas Fayre as a further fundraising opportunity.

Have some donations from previous years and some charity fundraising already and Halloween disco (not much interest from S1 but P7 keen to come and hoping may be more) and have bake sale – raised £50 from this

Charging around £30 for ticket price dependent on fundraising

Also organising for Christmas dances – social dancing will start after holidays

##### *Charity fundraising*

Raised over £100 for STEM for mental health with bake sale and silly shoe day

Have chosen two other Charities to raise money for: Dumfries and Stewartry Women's Aid and Shelter. They are hoping to arrange more charity based events

##### *Transitions*

They are keen to also work on transitions for P7s into next year S1s and are involved in planning the Christmas assemblies.

Christmas Fayre is 24<sup>th</sup> November

##### *Feedback from students*

Some of the students had taken 3 sciences which has been difficult but has been manageable. This year there are 3 advanced higher science classes

Some are having to do advanced higher via TEAMS i.e., history. This is delivered online via TEAMS covering pupils in Dumfries and Galloway and Ayrshire. There have been issues with Wi-Fi availability and network speed.

Mr Smith explained that the minimum number needed to run a course for Advanced Higher was 3. Schools across the locality have been working together to facilitate classes. For example, some pupils from Dalbeattie are coming here for Advanced Higher Chemistry.

The students reflected on the excellent support they have received from staff when trying to do self-study, however some students felt, quite understandably, that they would not have been able to complete a qualification solely through self-study.

The group discussed the parity of experience for students who have to travel to different schools. – At present local authority are suggesting that students use bus services but there are no available buses to allow transport at the right time for classes. Students are therefore dependent on family or friends of having access to their own car to travel. This raised concerns about the parity of experience for all students.

This is compounded by the lack of pupil equity funding for pupils above S3.

### **Staffing**

Still trying to recruit a science technician but no suitable candidates have come forward for this at this time.

Job being interviewed for 1.4FTE Principal Teacher Support

### **School Upgrade Risk Assessment**

Awaiting further response from estate management team

### **Turing Trust**

Mairi Henderson has kindly approached the Turing trust and applied for further computers for the school. We are very grateful for her hard work in securing this for us.

It is uncertain whether any IT support will be given for these.

We discussed inequity of resources for IT hardware and support for different local authorities across Scotland.

### **School improvement**

Still no progress on upgrade of school windows. Continue to be stacked up in Abercromby Road where unable to make a difference to school. Further contact to be made with councillors regarding further help in this matter

*Action: Sara to contact.*

Engineers have been in for 3 days to try and sort heating but still having issues with this

School has no control over when heating comes on or off as controlled centrally.

### **Supplies for Home Economics, Technical etc**

It is uncertain how much has been raised from appeal for donations from parents.

Concern was raised that some of the parental body had not understood the context of our appeal.

There has been a gradual reduction in budgets for school supplies. The school, with a roll of around 495 gets around £5000 to source all supplies for these subject areas. The school must order things through procurement but have accounts with local suppliers and supermarkets. Staff try hard to minimise costs but are still finding it difficult to access supplies which has the risk of reducing opportunities for pupils in these classes.

There was continuing concerns regarding school budgets and ongoing cuts to this and the impact this will have on pupil's learning.

## **Draft Parent/Carer Survey**

The initial plans for this were discussed and it was agreed that we would focus on communication lines and what people tend to value

Additional questions – discussed options for these to allow useful data to be collated and actioned.

## **Additional Support Needs**

The lack of provision for pupils with ASN to be accommodated within the school was discussed. Concern was raised as to the needed provision for pupils who may in the future wish to attend the school. At present there is no learning centre provision for children with Level 4 additional support needs in Stewartry.

We agreed that we should be continuing to ask local councillors for further support with this. Concern was also raised about the lack of ongoing funding for staff support.

Number of children with complex needs has risen from 1 in 10 to 3 in 10 over recent years.

As a group we highlighted the importance of all children being able to continue their education within their own local community to allow full inclusion.

## **Fund Raising**

Discussed option of a Parent Council Fundraiser and a few options were discussed:

Christmas Fayre – Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November and we discussed arranging for a table at this as an opportunity for survey to be put out.

Race Night

Ladies Prosecco and Movie night

We agreed to ask on survey regarding options for fundraising

As well as raising money we also highlighted the need to try and build community links within the school.

There is a pressing need for money for transport again.

Two bids are currently in for transport to regional cross country and athletics. Usually, the school will transport 40 plus children to both events

We discussed the possible use of Galloway Community Transport ***Helen will review.***

## **Funding options**

Option for Glenkens windfarm fund for trying to submit application for some transport needs of high school children. £500 micro grants are not often oversubscribed and may be an option to consider ***Helen will review***

**Next meeting** Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 6.30pm