



**PENICUIK HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION MEETING  
WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2021  
AT 6 PM VIA ZOOM**

**Present**

Helen Armstrong (Parent)  
Julie Begbie (Parent)  
Craig Biddick (Head Teacher)  
Sharon Bravey (Parent, Treasurer)  
Pauline Kerr (Parent)  
Sharon Leitch (Parent)  
Katrina McDonald (Parent)  
Pauline Pender (Parent, Chair)  
Jenny Sprott (Parent)  
Lynsey Weir (Minute Clerk)  
Leigh Wood (Parent)  
Susan Woodyer (Parent)

**Apologies**

Lorna Glasgow (Parent)

**1.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

PP opened the meeting by welcoming all to this zoom meeting.  
Apologies noted.

**2.0 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES 200121**

1) Previous minutes approved and no action points to note.

**3.0 TREASURERS REPORT**

- 1) The balance of our account up to 8 January is £6,018.52.
- 2) There is £3,459 in outstanding cheques.
- 3) There is £480 allocated for 50/50 prizes to be drawn for August – January.
- 4) £500 donation to be transferred to school office. SB to action.

**4.0 50/50 CLUB**

- 1) The recent draws for the 50/50 club will be advised separately.

**ACT  
ION**

**SB**

## 5.0

### **SCHOOL UPDATE REPORT**

Craig Biddick provided a school update report:

I am pleased to report under the following headings to this meeting of the Parent association this Evening:

- Budget / staffing
- Senior phase return – Phase 1 and Phase 2 planning
- Key Worker / Vulnerable Hub
- Recovery of attainment and learning
- Health and Safety
- Course Choice Update
- Remote Learning Update
- SQA matters
- Survey updates
- Uniform
- New Guidance/TLC/SfL areas
- Policy updates
- BGE Pride Awards

#### 1. Budget/ Staffing

The out turn for the 2020-21 budget is better than originally forecast due to pressure on the staffing budget that supports the non-staffing budget which is not really adequate. At this stage we will be somewhere between a balanced budget to approx. £10,000

over budget depending on acceptance of further additional IT costs that are Covid expenses.

Work is currently still ongoing in relation to the staffing budget for next session as we work through distribution of New Qualified Teacher placements and vacancies. The School roll is predicted to be down 20-30 students due to lower S1 intake but we are predicting higher stay on rates at S5/6 due to Covid.

Indicative Staffing originally 44.19FTE (full time teacher equivalents) but negotiated to a stable 47.17 FTE.

We are bidding for NQT in PE/ Biology/ English and Maths

Current Vacancies in Modern Lang/ Physics to be recruited

Mr Colin McAndrew has resigned from his 0.6 FTE post. He has been replaced by Mrs Margaret Hogg (0.6 FTE)

Mrs Robin Charles who was covering in Music will end her fixed term contract at the end of this term (Easter). Ms Kornilia Theodoru who is covering in English will finish in June 2021.

Staff returning next session will be – Sarah McIntosh- Music (actually from end May 2021) and Suzy McLennan- Guidance /Art in August.

Mrs Luke Witton (PE) will be on a career break next session and will be covered by a NQT

Ms Jessica Burrows will be on maternity leave next session

Ms Lisa Forbes (History) who has been on secondment and will return in mid-April

#### 1. Covid 19 Update

(i) Senior Phase Return – Phase 1 Practical Activities – 3 weeks until 12 March 2021

Students are completing work in Design and Manufacture, computing, Music, Music Tech, Art and Design, Photography,

Sports Leaders, practical cookery, childcare, Media – students attendance is good and thanks to all staff contributing to this work

Challenge in this work is we are effectively running 3 schools that all have a staffing / time demand:

Hub – KW/Vulnerable – 50 students from S1-5 at various stages. Only a few are Key worker children

Senior phase practical activities – up to 8 % of school roll

Remote learning – Senior phase and BGE – majority of students still at home – over 550

(ii) Phase 2 Return – limited student return from Monday 15 March 2021 until Easter

Planning for return on 15 March 2021 is advanced and information will go out on Wednesday 10 March 2021 with Senior phase and BGE (S1-3) information sent separately to students/ parents and will also be available via the website.

Re-writing the timetable and looking at the logistics of the offer has been a major piece of work that has been quite disruptive. We, like all schools were surprised that the Scottish Government decided that BGE would be included in the phase 2 return before Easter as the 2m distancing rule makes that challenging in terms of staffing and rooming. We can only fit between 10-12 students in a room necessitating additional staff to supervise any overflow. We also must continue to offer the Vulnerable/ key worker hub, SFL support for ASN students and remote learning work for those not in school. i.e. blended learning

Senior phase students in S4/5/6 will be put into two cohorts across timetable columns and do the equivalent of two days a week- Cohort A Mon/Tues and Cohort B Wed/ Thurs. Due to the nature of our Senior phase and the fact S4 do 9 subjects compared to the 5 taken in S5/6, the S5/6 cohort will do a subject twice a week but S4 only once a week with an additional HWB period with their Guidance teacher.

The senior students will receive a letter home that lists the columns their classes are in and a timetable showing the cohort times for their classes.

School will start at 8:30 am with no registration period and the day will end at 3:30 pm. Periods are one hour and 15 minutes long with 5 periods. There is a 15 minute morning break and a 30 minute lunch break. Student do not need to wear uniform and must bring their own lunch and drinks

Although bottled water will be available. BACS payments remain in place for student in receipt of the free school meals allowance. Non-attendance will be followed up and absences should be reported in the normal manner.

Teaching will be restricted by the 2 m distancing rule and masks must be worn by all staff and student in corridors and classroom unless exempt medically. All other health and safety measures stay in place – hand sanitation/ enhanced cleaning/ one way system/ ventilation/ limited movement but with new home testing available through LFD testing kits.

Due to the SG advice to prioritise the Senior phase and staffing constraints we will offer a limited BGE reconnect programme over the 14 days possible. We will have a S1/ half S3 cohort programme on Friday 19 March and a S2/half S3 cohort programme on Friday 16 March covering work in Literacy, numeracy and health and well-being. This will require up to 20 staff to cover each set of 10 students. Additionally we will also offer Physical education slots to support fitness with sign up sessions on each Tuesday and Thursday afternoon over the three weeks with social distancing in place. This will give up to 72 students the opportunity to have some kind of recreation and fitness activity.

## 2. Key worker/ Vulnerable Hub

Up to 50 students have been supported during lockdown – with attendance split up over parts of the day and or week to suit their needs. This has been successful in supporting a range of students who would otherwise disengage. We do have 21 on how list on non-engagers who refused to be involved in attending the hub and we continue to look for ways to support them now and into

recovery phase. A handful of Key worker children have also been in but as schools reopen the need for their attendance will finish.

We have also put in place a Support for Learning (SfL) hub to mitigate risk to ASN students – particularly senior phase who may be at risk of failing SQA Certificated courses. I am looking to put in additional cover staff to attend the hub as we have a number of staff absent

### 3. Recovery of Attainment and Learning (long term)

The Secondary Head Teacher group are requesting two strands of funding for staffing:

Attainment Recovery- Use of funding to support additional learning opportunities for students in certificated courses  
N4/5/H/AH

Our share will be approx. £27,000 Diane Burgess is working on the Senior phase programme which will involve twilight Google classroom revision sessions for targeted students leading up to Easter – although any student can opt in and then after Easter face to face twilight or weekend sessions and some Easter school offers from subject areas.

Recovery of Learning -The second strand of funding requested will be used to support longer term recovery of learning. This could involve increasing all school staffing across a range of roles. A focus will be promoting work in :

Numeracy

Health and well being

DYW

This needs to have governance though through Council who will approve spending.

### 4. Health and Safety

A current and rigorous Risk Assessment (RA) is in place and we are well practiced as a school in promoting and supervising health

and safety guidelines. Our Risk assessment will be further checked and updated from the 15 March return but you are asked to note the following in particular:

- We need to remain vigilant about any symptoms of Covid – e.g. high temperature, loss of taste or smell, new continuous cough or even flu like symptoms with a sudden onset.
- All staff and students will have the opportunity to take part in our home testing Covid 19 Asymptomatic testing programme using the LFD kits. This has been well utilised by students who have been coming into school over recent weeks but it is not mandatory for any group.
- Students will enter through the specific doors at the front of the school used under the previous separate 2m on entry, in corridors and in classrooms.
- All students and staff must wear masks in the school building including classrooms – unless medically exempt.
- Student must sanitise their hands for 20 seconds on entry and exit of the school building and when they enter any room within school.
- All personal spaces work spaces used in school should be sprayed with the provided cleaner and dried for the next user. Staff will supervise the safety of this operation.
- Classrooms will be fully ventilated – student may wear jackets in normal classroom settings where it is deemed safe – BUT not in some practical classes e.g. woodwork. The teacher will direct students as to the appropriate wearing of additional clothing such as jackets.
- Students will not be allowed to wander at break times or congregate outside of rooms. All breaks will be taken in the classroom being used prior to the break and students MUST bring lunch/snacks to eat and drinks to school. Some bottled water will be available outside of this personal provision. Alternative arrangements will be made for students who are in laboratory spaces where they are not able to eat.

- The one way system remains in place.

Staff will strictly enforce these health and safety measures and if any student persistently and deliberately flouts these rules, they will be referred to senior staff and parent/ carers will be contacted.

### Course Choice Update

S2 - Course choice issued 29 January end date 28 February

S4/5 - Course choice issued 5 February return date by 7 March

S3 has been issued a week late – Friday 26/2 closes in a fortnight

Key actions now are possible level changes and staff working (PTG/PTC) with young people to make good choices across S2 into S3 and at senior phase.

### Remote Learning Update

Overall the feedback on Remote Learning through survey work has been positive. We have been monitoring feedback and current offer through surveys and feedback from the pupil contact team.

Feedback suggests we need to increase live learning offer within BGE but this will require cut backs elsewhere and coordination across staff groups. The increase of live learning for BGE was accomplished this week w/c 8 March 2021 and we are telling staff to prioritise live learning within the BGE from the 15 March on during our Re-connect phase

Quality assurance returns from Subject areas and other information shared with the Education Authority indicated high quality and creative approaches with staff reporting more confidence in using tools with the Google suite.

The remote learning offer for Senior Phase will switch to be more about self-directed work from the 15 March and reviewing content and will mostly be posted on a weekly basis. Staff will discuss this with students in school as the work on-line will relate to work in class.

For the BGE we will encourage a higher proportion of live lessons and less other types of interaction and feedback. This will also assist reconnection for students from S1-3.

### SQA Matters

The SQA has updated its advice on the Alternative Curriculum Model (ACM) and published a wide range of assessment options that include marking schedules that address the appropriate standard. At the moment we are collating information across subject areas via Principal Teachers on whether the courses are complete – many courses have had material taken out of them to mitigate the disrupted year. We will then look at assessment needs as we return in April looking to not have constant assessment every day that causes stress and anxiety for young people. We will try and take a planned and proportionate response. Current advice is to spread out assessment into smaller pieces covering different aspect of the course.

There is ongoing work on internal and Local Authority moderation to ensure the assessment and marking is at the correct standard. SQA will begin sampling May 2021 and we are uncertain what subject but will not confirm a grade. Sample work will inform in school adjustments for that subject and there will also be sense making of the results across us by subject and subsequent verification by schools with some form of QA by the Authority.

### Survey updates

Staff HWB survey – key themes to be summarised and sent to staff. We have already considered any required actions from feedback

Remote Learning – an SIMD informed phone survey of targeted staff/students was carried out last month and information has been shared with all staff. We sent an update to parents with a ‘you said, we did’ section to show how we had responded.

QA Remote Learning – key themes to be discussed over coming weeks with Subject PT’s. Follow up Surveys April / May to be planned after Easter.

## Uniform

Students will not be required to be in uniform until after Easter though we will need to take a relaxed attitude toward non-uniform as lockdown would have prevented any renewal of uniform since the New Year began.

All Prefects will receive their new Blazers on return after Easter and I have an additional range of Blazers sizes to sell on for the subsidised price of £28. Information and photos will go out about this after Easter.

## New Guidance/TLC/SfL Office and Classroom areas in School

The old CLD rooms have been vacated by Sacred Heart Primary School and we have now located Guidance staff into this wing alongside TLC (The Learning centre – our behaviour support base) with separate Clerk Maxwell and Liddell Guidance offices as well as a small meeting room.

The PT Support for Learning (SfL) and DHT Pupil Support Offices are now both in this area

### 6.0

Hollie Lyon- Acting DHT will move into Diane's Burgess's old DHT Office near the old Guidance suite. We now have two PSE classroom areas in this wing and also plan to look at developing a sensory room for ASD students.

SfL will use the old Guidance base and Room 2 will be used as a timeout room/ Short term support area but this still requires a staffing resource.

CB

### 7.0

## Policy Updates

We have finalised our homework policy for when full schooling returns. We have shared this policy with the Parent Association. We will seek pupil feedback via our Student Council when pupils return. If parents have any queries or issue arising from this Policy update they should contact us at [penicuik\\_hs@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:penicuik_hs@midlothian.gov.uk) to give feedback. Likewise the anti-bullying and equalities Policy is

to go to the student leadership and partners or consultation when we return from lockdown.

### BGE PRIDE Awards

8.0

Staff have nominated students across BGE classes in relation to our PRIDE values and these have been collated. Student who have received multiple nominations have received and bronze, Silver or Gold Award. This information for these major winners will be posted to all parents via a video link. Other individual awards – over 390 awards were given will be posted on Google sites in the next few weeks. A letter will be sent out about this award celebration and plan to combine the final Senior Prizegivings to encompass awards missed last June e.g. Dux 2020

We are also continuing to send our PRAISE postcards and Letters of Commendation to learners within the BGE and Senior phase.

### **COMMUNICATION TO SENIOR PUPILS**

- 1) Pauline Pender raised the issue of how school communication gets through to Senior pupils. Emails are currently sent to Parents email addresses, however, some senior pupils are not receiving information from parents very quickly or at all. Could we find a way to bridge the gap by information being sent direct to senior pupils email as this may avoid unnecessary stress. CB will check with the office but there should be a way around this. He will ask views of Parents and the Pupil Council. CB confirmed that all information also gets uploaded onto the school website.

### **ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

- 1) Pauline Pender raised the issue of anti-social behaviour with local youths which has been raised quite a lot recently on the Facebook residents page i.e. throwing snowballs; throwing items at vehicles; hanging about in groups; intimidating others. Perhaps this has been heightened due to not being in school. Pauline highlighted the recent Facebook post from Police Scotland about the volume of alcohol which was confiscated from youths over the last weekend. Is this something that could be shared with parents who may not have seen this on Facebook. Sharon Leitch also highlighted recent problems with youths. Is there any way

- the Police can engage more?
- 2) Craig Biddick has been communicating with local Police regarding these issues and will continue to do so and liase with local shops and parents regarding any issues. Craig is keen to investigate those gathering in groups and work towards identifying the individuals.
  - 3) Craig Biddick advised that we need to revamp our PSE program and bring it up to date with current issues which can affect our young people.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 1) Pauline Pender welcomed the news that Leigh Wood will remain with the Guidance team.

Date of next meeting is set as 4 May 2021. Future meeting dates are set as 16 June 2021.

Meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice to allow for Covid-19 restrictions.

**Name of Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Minutes Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_