



**PENICUIK HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION MEETING
WEDNESDAY 11th MAY 2021
AT 6 PM VIA ZOOM**

Present

Helen Armstrong (Parent)
Julie Begbie (Parent)
Craig Biddick (Head Teacher)
Sharon Bravey (Parent, Treasurer)
Caroline French (Parent)
Daniella Gentile-Watt (Parent)
Carol Hodgkin (Parent)
Pauline Kerr (Parent)
Sharon Leitch (Parent)
Audrey Lynch (Parent)
Katrina McDonald (Parent)
Pauline Pender (Parent, Chair)
Jenny Sprott (Parent)
Sandra Vick (Parent)
Lynsey Weir (Minute Clerk)
Leigh Wood (Parent)
Lyn Young (Parent)

Apologies

Bernadette (Parent)
Amanda Crawshaw (Parent)
Lorna Glasgow (Parent)
Lee Robertson (Parent)

**ACT
ION**

1.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

PP opened the meeting by welcoming all to this zoom meeting, lovely to see so many faces. Apologies noted.

2.0 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES 100321

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

3.0 TREASURERS REPORT

- 1) The balance of our account up to 7 April is £3,156.50.
- 2) There is £776.75 in outstanding cheques.
- 3) There is £75 allocated for 50/50 prizes to be drawn.

4.0 50/50 CLUB

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

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
- School return
- Recovery of attainment and learning
- SQA Assessment and the ACM
- Course Choice Update
- Uniform
- Policy updates
- BGE Pride Awards

Satisfactory progress continues to be made in terms of Covid infections- Midlothian 4 per 1000

Full expectation is that from August 2021 we will return to normal Education service

We will still need to operate in Recovery mode and look at risks with BGE progress and attainment as well as positive destinations for at risk seniors.

1. Budget/ Staffing

The out turn for the 2020-21 budget was better than originally forecast. It was well within tolerances during what was a turbulent session. Pleasingly, I was able to use the budget to increase staff access to IT – including laptops for direct access at home, new printers and smartboard (over £10,000).

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. As mentioned 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. I am looking for additional NQT's in English/ Maths to help focus on literacy and

numeracy and a CDT teacher to relieve stress on timetabling in that area. We have also now requested further additional free NQT.

A reminder - Indicative Staffing originally 44.19FTE (full time teacher equivalents) but negotiated to a stable 47.17 FTE and with addition of 3 NQT and possible further free NQT will likely be above 50FTE. This will help with slight current overstaff of 0.93.

NQT Requests:

2 English

2 Maths

1 Biology

1 CDT

1 PE

Other – part funded but not guaranteed will get any

1 Art and Design

1 Biology

1 Chemistry and Biology –

1 English

Recruitment

We have recruited to Modern Languages and Physics:

0.63 FTE successful candidate – Ms Lana McKay

1.0 FTE successful candidate – Ms Sam Preedy (currently an NQT in school)

0.4 – DFYW Coordinator – Funded by Scottish Government – Mrs Hazel Jobson

Other staff movement:

Ms Lisa Forbes (History) who has been on secondment and will return in mid-April. She has taken over Ms Blake's class in her absence

Ms Docherty will be on maternity leave from late May

Ms Laura Graham is Acting PT RMPS while Ms Lyon is covering the Acting DHT role

Mr Alasdair Proctor will change to 1.0 FTE Fulltime next year in Chemistry.

Final staff movements will be covered in my June report. Some future staffing adjustments are to be made based on career break and flexi working applications

Return to School

We have made a very successful return to school and generally students are settled and things are working well while we remain on the split and staggered timetable. A comprehensive risk assessment remains in place with masks compulsory and the usual FACTS mitigations – however there is no 2 m rules for students in place, only adults.. There is some evidence of S2 in particular being unsettled and we have put additional staffing into duty rotas via our PTs to ensure good order the safety of all at school. These behaviour issues tie in with some earlier concerns about some of our young people's behaviour in the community. We have had conversation with PC Cassidy our community Police Officer and all S2 classes have been visited to discuss anti-social behaviour in Penicuik and I will continue to work closely with the Police and Children Services staff to look at any on-going issues.

Recovery of Attainment and Learning (long term)

Our share of the attainment of recovery funding from the Scottish Government (£240,000) was approx. £27,000. Diane Burgess successfully developed a Senior Phase programme which involved:

Face to face revision sessions for targeted students leading up to Easter – although any student could opt in, some Easter school offers and then after Easter, face to face sessions from all subject areas open to all students. There were 63 individual session per week leading up to Easter, 15 Easter sessions and over 60 sessions per week up to 25 May. This is an outstanding effort and staff have

gone above and beyond to ensure students have every chance of succeeding.

Recovery of Learning -The second strand of funding requested will be used to support longer term recovery of learning. This increase in teaching staffing across a range of roles using additional NQT was discussed above, under staffing. A focus will be promoting work in:

Numeracy

Health and well being

DYW

Tracking Attainment Risk

LA Quality assurance will closely consider equity and the poverty related attainment gap. We will be working back on our data to check SIMD and LAC/FME. Data will be reviewed after 7 May (any change of levels to be sat completed within information management system - SEEMIS) to assess movement of red/ amber / green groupings. We will be requesting that staff look at current spreadsheet list and adjust based on current information/ knowledge. Will be a 7 working day turnaround 25 May – 31 May

SMT will the meet urgently to assess red ranked students and risk and PTG/PTC will be involved as required to follow up as decided by SMT

We will need to be two further inputs at S4-6 in terms of Tracking and Monitoring and for final Provisional Grades to be reported to students / parent carers (23 June) Diane Burgess is looking at risk in terms of 5 @ Level 3 i.e National 3 (26 students)

Parental contact has been positive. Students who were red graded before Easter have been targeted for study support classes through direct messages to parent/ carers.

SQA Assessment April – June 2021

The school sent out a comprehensive schedule of subject area assessment dates and times prior to Easter to enable ample warning of the schedule. This timetable was constructed to avoid a number of difficult logistical issues but primarily was about avoiding a very heavy timetable of small assessments every day for seniors,

protecting AAA timetabling, protecting staffing and resources and, spreading the revision load/ protecting class time at all levels.

There was some contention around two aspects of this assessment schedule that have been dealt with for several individual parents and via an online parent engagement last week. The two aspects were

Lack of chunking

Running high stake -100% assessments

These issues have been explained through our communications and to students.

Key Dates (indicative general dates only)

Assessments in School end 4 June, 2021

Next phase QA process in school – attainment and equity- from 25 May – 4 June 2021

ACM completion of QA and data entry 11 June – 25 June 2021

Report home student/parent on 23 June 23 – final Provisional grade

Course Choice Update

S2 - Course choice issued 29 January ended 28 February

S4/5 - Course choice issued 5 February return ended 7 March

S3 closed 15 March

Work has now begun on constructing a new Timetable for session 2021-22

Uniform

All Prefects have now received their new Blazers and there have been favourable comments on them. At the moment the old S6 tie does not match the Blazer as we didn't make them purchase the new senior tie but that will not be an issue next session

I have a range of sizes available for sale but at this stage we are going to look at an ordering process for all students for June and into August, particularly as an option at S1-3. Cost is £28 for the smart,

hard wearing blazer, no matter what size. We will also promote the swap shop as supplies build up in the system. Prefect photo on website.

6.0

Policy Updates

New Policies will need to be discussed into next session through new Pupil Voice arrangements at each year level. These includes Homework, anti-bullying and equity.

New policies relating to behaviour and teaching and learning will be released in August / September to all stakeholders.

7.0

BGE PRIDE Awards

These awards have now gone out and were based on teacher nominations in relation to our PRIDE values. While well received by parents we realised that there was a technical problem with the award outcomes as some staff did not transfer the earlier nomination from the ePraise cards and this meant there were some anomalies for the multiple award categories at Bronze, Silver and Gold. I asked parents to let us know of discrepancies and we are also looking at our own internal lists and we propose to hold an additional virtual Award in early June. This will ensure we maximise the Awards further and sort out earlier disappointments as the awards need to be inclusive and accurate

8.0

9.0

We are also in the planning stage for a Virtual Senior Prizegiving to recognise last sessions award winners e.g. Dux 2019- 2020. This year Senior Prizegiving for session 2020-21 will hopefully be held in September in the school Hall without any restrictions in place.

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S6 LEAVERS

- 1) Pauline Pender asked on behalf of another parent what the plans are for the S6 Leavers? Could we hold a BBQ, handout goody bags or create a Leavers book? Craig Biddick advised that latest guidance from the authority is no proms or parties. Agreed to try and do some sort of celebration either virtual or fund a gift. Funding can be discussed once plans finalised.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH

- 1) Sandra Vick asked for an update on the S3 joining the DOE Scheme – it would be great if they could start since a lot is done outside and for the social aspect. Craig Biddick advised that understandably everything was

locked down. Leigh Wood advised that Mr Mercer is hoping that the Senior phase will resume soon but the Juniors are unlikely to start for the time being.

WEBSITE

- 1) Pauline Pender has shared some information from the SQA on the school website.

TRANSITION

- 1) Pauline Pender highlighted the letter from Fiona Robertson regarding there will be no P1 transition or S1 transition or large gatherings and staff are not to attend any off site student events.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 1) Julie Begbie asked about the S5 finish date after their last exam. If they have to be in school what will they be doing? Would it not be safer to keep at home? Craig Biddick advised that the diet in terms of assessments in school finishes on 4/6/21 but some students may finish early. This may mean some parent seek permission for them to be at home. From 7/6 there will be work available for classes via Google classrooms and in classes. There is no official leave period so absences have to be unauthorised unless due to ill health.
- 2) Pauline Pender asked if the school blazers would be compulsory? Craig Biddick advised that they are not but we want to encourage them to be worn as part of the renewed focus on ethos and better uniform standards.
- 3) Sharon Bravey asked if there could be any night classes or support workers to help with youth "boredom" at night in a bid to help with youth disorder. Craig Biddick advised that the Community Learning team have been involved with this. Pauline Pender advised that the Midlothian Council Lifelong Learning and Employability team will be focussing on Street work with youths over the next few months.
- 4) Julie Begbie asked for clarification on importance of work for assessments? Craig Biddick ran through the process.
- 5) Sharon Bravey highlighted the effect on pupils with this sudden change in grading system. Craig noted the various strands of work being done in school since lockdown to try and mitigate the effects of stress but noted that the school was trying to manage a system that was prescribed nationally and was made worse by lockdown and the initial apparent cancellation of exams. This has meant quite a few students stopped working and

did not expect the level of assessment that occurred and that there was more intense pressure over a shorter period of time.

- 6) Pauline Pender thanked Helen Armstrong and Sharon Leitch for their support to the Parents Association over the years and wished their boys all the best in their future studies.

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

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

Name of Chairperson:

Signature of Chairperson:

Date Minutes Approved:
