



MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY 19 JANUARY 2011

PRESENT: Tim Holden (Chair) Parent
Ian Smith Parent
Kim White Parent
Vicky Cole Parent
Andrew Greathead Parent
Derek Simpson Parent
Kath Anderson Staff
Linda McInnes Staff
Sarah Ingham Staff

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J Craig Head Teacher
Cllr Tom Trotter
Provost Sheena Richardson
Ms Beverley Skirrow Business Manager
Ms A Cosgrove Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the year.
Apologies were received from Mark Wyllie.

2. Minutes of November Meeting:

Amendments: Noted that "ASDAM" should read "ASDAN". Also that paragraphs should be renumbered correctly.

3. Matters arising

Update on Tesco – it appeared that there was no longer a problem with students attending Tesco.

Boxing Club – This had started on Monday with around 12 pupils attending.

Curriculum for Excellence Presentation – This would be held over until the next meeting.

4. Budget Presentation by Beverley Skirrow, Business Manager

Ms Skirrow introduced her presentation by stating that efficiency savings had been made within the School budget. More money had been allocated to resources for Curriculum for Excellence, so this would not be totally resourced from one year's budget.

Staffing costs in the current year had been slightly higher than predicted. There was a credit balance of £46,000. As yet there had been no indication of the level of funding available for 2011/12.

The Provost advised that the Council's budget meeting would be on 8 February, and information on individual budgets would follow shortly afterwards.

The formula for setting the budget was explained, and how this was dependent on the school census figures carried out the previous September. The Exceptional Needs budget had been reduced by 25% - this amount "followed" the pupils with these needs. Staffing costs had come in on budget and expenditure had met the projected figures. Departments had individual monthly statements.

On Staff Development, there was no per capita allocation as such. Funding was allocated by the Council and training was made available, with staff participating in free courses where available. This also included staff cover costs.

Ms Skirrow was thanked for her presentation.

5. Chairperson's Report and Action Points

Bad Weather – Information on bad weather procedures had been placed on the website.

A discussion on the use of the website during the bad weather followed, with Mrs Craig advising that Departments had been asked to put information on homework available. Parents felt that if a similar situation happened again, it would be very helpful to have specific instruction / homework suggested, if possible. Parents felt that future direction and structure of courses could be publicised and Linda McInnes agreed to take this back to the Heads of Department meeting on Monday.

The Chair asked that members consider Derek Simpson's co-option to the Partnership. This was proposed by Vicky Cole and seconded by Kim White and agreed by all present.

6. Pupils' Matters

The Chair noted that the pantomime had been very enjoyable, and asked that this be passed on those participating.

7. Head Teacher's Report

Mrs Craig reported on the following matters:

Exam Results - Mrs Craig described the process following exam results, when discussions with Faculty Heads and the Head Teacher took place. This could be followed by changes to the Development Plan if thought necessary.

All pupils were encouraged to achieve the highest target possible, but not all pupils needed the highest grades to achieve their required destinations. S6 were encouraged to sit all subjects, although some may not succeed.

On variations in individual year groups, Mrs Craig explained that year group performance could change every year. She also explained that pupils' performance at Standard Grade would influence the next stage of exams.

On individual subjects, Mrs Craig advised as follows:

- Biology – the best results since 2006
- Chemistry – good results and at Higher were in the top decile in Scotland. However, there were concerns about lack of uptake in S5.

- English – “A” grades very good. Everyone in S5 was expected to take English.
- Graphic Communication – There was concern about uptake
- History – an improvement in results but again uptake was an issue
- Physics – this had been very positive for many years and was a very stable department.

Considering how the School could raise its aims, Mrs Craig advised that tracking, mentoring and intervention took place, and staff could identify pupils where there might be concerns. Revision sessions took place at lunchtime, after school and during the Easter holidays; and staff looked at enhancing good practice.

Parents could encourage pupils to have quiet study areas and internet access, and the PSP could publicise the revision sessions so that pupils and parents were aware of these. Parents could also check that homework was done; check homework diaries; and also check that work was not sloppy. Encouragement of “good to do well” would also send out a positive message.

On languages, Mrs Craig advised that the move away from compulsory languages would change with Curriculum for Excellence. Intense language courses were not for everyone and a more European based language skills course might be more suitable for some students.

Kim White noted that while this last year's results were improving, the PSP had been concerned about an apparent downward trend in some subjects over the previous few years.

Sederunt – Provost Richardson and Cllr Trotter left the meeting.

There was more discussion on areas of concern and subject choice.

Kim White offered to help with work on the website and it was agreed that she would meet monthly with Colin Dempster to work on this.

Enterprise Week – Mrs Craig reported on activities taking place.

Staffing – a report on staffing was made to members.

Calendar – Mrs Craig gave dates of events taking place, including Burns Night and Holocaust Memorial Day.

Second Year Reports – These were on the way – there had been some delay with transfer of information.

8. Staff Members Report

Sarah Ingham advised that the Anti Bullying policy was being revamped, and she asked for comments from parents in due course.

Linda McInnes noted that the Murderous Maths course had gone well.

The cancelled concert had caused disappointment, but an audio version was on the website and a visual one would be up soon.

9. Parents Matters

Andy Greathead asked about access to teachers at parents' evenings and Mrs Craig advised that if it was not possible to get an appointment, to contact guidance staff who would obtain feedback or an appointment.

10. Correspondence

This had been circulated by e-mail.

On training courses available, Derek Simpson would attend The Role of the Parent Council; and he and the Chair would attend the Cluster Group meeting. Information on the East Lothian Association of Parent Councils would be circulated.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 9 February 2011, when the AGM would be held immediately after the ordinary meeting.

Signed: _____ (Chairperson) Date: 9 February 2011

Signed _____ (Clerk) Date 9 February 2011

	Who	When
Curriculum for Excellence Presentation	JC	For next meeting
Revamp of Anti Bullying Policy	SI	For next meeting