



MEETING OF PARENT COUNCIL
on
Tuesday 28th January 2020
at 6.15 pm

AGENDA

Members of the Parent Council must draw any conflict of interest to the attention of the Chair when it is relevant to matters under discussion or when they are in any doubt that it might be relevant.

1. Welcome, introductions and Apologies
2. Minutes of Meeting on 3rd December 2019
3. Matters Arising & Action Points from the previous meeting.
4. Head Teacher's Report
Presentations
 - a. Feedback from HMIE visit
 - b. Social Subjects
 - c. Discussion on Resilience
5. Staff Member's Report
6. Chairperson's Report
7. Senior Leadership Team Report
8. ELC Councillor Report
9. Active Schools
10. Any Other Business
11. Date of Next Meeting: 24th March 2020

John Wrinn
Chair of the Parent Council
parentcouncil@knox.elcschool.org.uk
All meetings will be held in the School Library unless otherwise specified.

Future Meeting Dates: 24th March (includes AGM) , 26th May.

DRAFT/

Knox Academy

Parent Council

<http://knoxparents.org.uk>



MINUTES OF KNOX ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

DATE: 3 DECEMBER 2019 in the School Library

Present: John Wrinn, Chair
Andy McBain, Vice Chair
Louise Elder, Parent PC Member (until Item 4)
Katrina Booth, Parent PC Member
Caroline McKinnel, Parent PC Member
Caroline Taylor, Parent PC Member
Anne Hunter, Parent PC Member
Phillip Ross, Parent PC Member
Janet Imrie, Parent PC Member
Elaine Towler, Parent PC Member
Kuba Stepniewski, Leadership Team
Catriona Dee, Leadership Team
Hannah McBride, Staff

In Attendance: Sue Cook, Head Teacher
Alice Clubb, DHT
David Russell, DHT
Steven Illingworth, DHT
John Taylor, Faculty Head, Science Department
Thomas Salkeld, Active Schools
Allison Cosgrove, Clerk

Parent attendees: Sue Langlands, Theresa Casey, Fiona Dee, Chris Doig.

Attending: Cllr Shamin Akhtar, Elected Member

Attached documents circulated in advance of the meeting:

- Agenda
- Minutes of Meeting of 29 September 2019
- Head Teacher's Report
- Chairperson's Report
- Staff Member Report
- Leadership Team Report

1. Welcome and Apologies

John Wrinn (Chair) welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Cllr John McMillan, Tom Trotter and Craig Hoy, Nicola Cunningham and Calum Blair.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 3 September

The Minutes were proposed by Katrina Booth, seconded by Caroline McKinnel.

3. Leadership Team Report:

This item was taken first to allow the pupils to leave early if they wished, due to exams.

They reported that Prefects were now undertaking Breakfast Club and Front Door duties, and they hoped this would make them more approachable to other pupils. They had updated their Improvement Plan which included paired reading with the Primary Schools.

The second Pupil Parliament had taken place including work on the Achievement Ties; prefects had helped with Poppy Scotland and had done a lot of fundraising, around £4,000. They had attended a veterans' Coffee Morning and hoped to continue this attendance in future months.

4. Presentations:

The first item was a presentation on the Science Faculty, made by Mr Taylor, Faculty Head. This addressed different areas from How Good is our School (HGIOS): Leadership of Change; Learning, Teaching and Assessment; Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion; and Raising Attainment and Opportunity. The presentation highlighted the work that had been or was planned to be carried out and the evidence that such work was obtaining results.

Mr Taylor highlighted discussions under way with Edinburgh College to possibly have the School involved in a partnership in foundation apprenticeships in engineering, which would guarantee a university place to those pupils not obtaining high enough exam results to qualify. He also advised of a new National 5 level course in Laboratory Science where the skills were unit based.

On a question from the Chair as to the progress of pupils, Mr Taylor advised that this work was being done within BGE so it may be a while before results showed – the best evidence was obtained through talking to pupils undertaking the work.

Steven Illingworth then did a short presentation on the Pupil Support Faculty, advising of the priorities for the faculty in the Improvement Plan – Support for Learning; the Base; the Pastoral side; Improving Attendance; Careers Standard and Work Experience.

He advised of a change to the Work Experience programme, with this being extended across years 4, 5 and 6 instead of concentrating on 4th year. Wellbeing monitoring and intervention evaluation was also underway, and this included whether pupils had caring responsibilities, in-care experience or had suffered bereavement.

Mr Illingworth noted that the pupil's experience of the forthcoming Careers event would be improved if the School could show pupils what skills might be useful in future. He also noted the development of the Pupil Support Base.

3. Head Teacher's Report:

Ms Cook gave a staffing update.

Her written report provided a review of activities between October and December, which included in-depth reviews of the SQA results, where areas of focus would be taken forward by faculty staff members. Faculty Reviews of Health and WellBeing, Pupil Support, Science and Communications had also taken place, which identified strengths and areas of challenge across these subjects.

Thirteen Achievement Ties had been awarded, and the Diligence Certificates programme was due to launch at the end of the week next week. Many other activities had taken place, including a visit from the Tsung Tsin Christian Academy in Hong Kong, who had spent two days in subjects with the host pupils. A reciprocal visit would take place when possible. There would also be an opportunity for ten pupils in S3 were studying Mandarin and there would be an opportunity to visit China next year.

School Improvement Groups were in place to take forward the School Improvement Plan; the Work Positive Group was continuing with a programme of events with the help of the PTA; assemblies had been held on Rights Respecting Schools; and the LGBTQ+ Group was aiming for a silver charter.

6. Staff Members' Report

Hannah McBride advised that any School payment must now be done online via Emma Maguire in the School Office. She informed parents of "Easyfundraising" when ordering products online, where a benefit was payable to the School on purchases.

7. Chair's Report

The Chair advised that the next round of HMIE inspection was taking place the following week and noted that two parents council members will join him in meeting the lead inspector on 10 December.

He noted that new members would be needed for the Parent Council after the AGM next March, saying that if Parent Council members attend Parents Evenings, this could encourage new members. Dates for the Parents Evening were given as follows:

S1 – 4 December

S5/6 – 9 January

S4 – 15 January

S2 – 4 February

The Chair also gave information on the School Careers evening on 4 February, and would like to explore with School how Meadowpark might be included this time, and providing a link to a website providing estimate job openings between 2017-2027 – <https://www.dyw-edinmideast.com/regional-labour-market-insight.html>.

He noted that there were catering difficulties around the Burns Supper and it looks likely it will not go ahead in 2020. However Katrina Booth was willing to help organise if caterers could be found and enough parents to help.

Finally, Phillip Ross advised on the Haddington Area Partnership which had £40k left in the Education Budget from which Knox could benefit.

8. Councillors' Report

Cllr Akhtar noted a great interest in the recent Maths projects when funding applications were considered at the Area Partnership meetings. She advised of several community events recently involving a number of parents and carers. The Education Committee had received a Standards and Quality Report across East Lothian which had very positive results and she asked the Head Teacher to pass thanks on to staff.

9. Active Schools

Thomas Salkeld advised that since Steve Wand went on secondment, hockey had suffered the most and he had recently met with coaches to try and get more participation. Rugby, Netball, Football and Basketball were all making good progress with good numbers of pupils attending. Tennis and cricket will be worked on next term, and Girls Fitness was also being fitted into the Girls Get Active day.

On a question about hockey lacking an enthusiastic champion from the staff members, Ms Cook said that there is an expectation that there would not be a full time member of staff in Active Schools until the new financial year. Meanwhile, an application could be made to the Area Partnership for funding for more hours for Mr Salkeld – Andy McBain will investigate.

10. Other matters

A request was made for the Youth & Philanthropy Initiative finalists to attend the Parent Council.

The new Clothing Grants of £100 were noted, with a request that this be mentioned at the Parents' Evenings.

Ms Clubb asked for any comments on the Learning & Teaching guidelines to be submitted before the end of term.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be on 28 January 2020.

Action Points for Next Meeting:

HMIE Inspection	Chair/Parents/HT	28 January
YPI finalists to attend next meeting	HT	28 January
Area Partnership Funding for extra Active Schools hours	Andy McBain	28 January

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Parent Council – Head Teacher’s Report

28th January 2020

STAFFING

Recruiting:

Science Technician – full time, permanent

ASN Auxiliary x 2 (one Meadowpark/one Knox Academy)

Activities ongoing at the school between December 2019 and February 2020:

December

Diligence Certificates issued to pupils. Most (but not all pupils) attained diligence awards for some of their subjects and a small number of pupils attaining diligence awards in all of their subjects. These awards replace our old merit scheme and count towards the evening of achievement at the end of the year – those with significant multiple mentions will get an award on this evening. These will also go towards House points. The diligence awards are based on hardwork/commitment to learning and not academic ability so are inclusive and not just for highly able.

School Christmas Dance – popular with our young people and a working group to take place to look at a way forward with future years.

S6 Panto – written and performed by S6. Again, other options being explored going forward.

January

Post Prelim attainment reviews with HT/DHTs meeting with Curriculum Leaders to review results, presentation levels and areas to address over the next few months to raise attainment in all subject courses from S4-S5/6. Focus also on S5/6 not dropping subjects but moving to units or NPA equivalents if not going to be presented or attain the overall award. This approach is in line with our new SQA presentation policy. Parents/carers and pupils will be fully informed of presentation levels by the end of March if not before and no changes to presentation levels will be made without parents/carers being involved in the discussion too.

S5/6 Parents’ Evening – 55.7% - how can we get this increased as given this was post prelim discussions and next steps a low turnout on the evening

S4 Parents’ Evening – still awaiting final figure but in the 70% bracket.

February

Faculty Reviews of Pupil Support, RE, Communications, Technologies and Social Subjects start week beginning 3rd February and run for 2 weeks – with classroom observations and S1-S3 and S4-S6 pupil Focus Groups (asked about their experience of learning in these faculties). We have a number of HTs and DHTs supporting us in our VSE (validated self-evaluation). The findings from both sets of reviews (first tranche in November) will provide us with our improvement for next year’s School Improvement Plan and QI 2.3 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Careers Fayre – all year groups – taking place on 3rd February – numerous agencies/businesses involved – thanks to all involved in organising this and those attending (many parents too).

Communications – Drama programme – ongoing – working towards performance at the Traverse Theatre

Duke of Edinburgh –community groups and school groups running, with a number of pupils attaining their bronze, silver and some now going on to the gold award.

Rugby/Hockey –matches both during the week and at weekends

Numerous trips to the theatre – English and Drama departments

TLCs

There are Teacher Learning Communities leading on:

The Growth Mindset; Feedback; Questioning; Literacy across learning (incl.Digital Literacy); Mental Health and Wellbeing; Professional Reading; Work Positive. Presentations on all these TLCs take place in May 2020.

Progress on our School Improvement Plan:

School Improvement Groups to take forward our School Improvement Plan and details of these are below:

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change

- New vision agreed:
"Always to choose kindness and create a respectful environment where staff and pupils can inspire each other to achieve their goals and become life-long learners."

The four words highlighted in bold were the top words identified by pupils, parents/carers, staff and our community partners – so truly a joint vision and this vision sits well alongside our school values of Ambition, Respect and Community (ARC).

Attendance – new policy in place and letters home on a regular basis to those parents/carers of pupils under 85%. Attendance monitored at House meetings and Senior Leadership Team meetings.

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

Staff have been training in a new four phase approach to teaching and learning to ensure that pupils have a consistent approach to their learning across all subjects. Two of the four phases have now been covered and the other two stages will be completed by May. Quality assurance of learning and teaching has shown that the first two phases (phase one: how classes are started e.g. starter activities and explaining learning intentions and what pupils need to do to be successful is becoming embedded and phase two, which looks at how our young people connect with their learning is also embedding).

QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Our new Diversity and Equality policy is finalised and can be read on our website. This was written after a period of consultation with pupils, parents/carers and staff.

The school continued on its journey to the LGBT Silver Charter. LGBT Youth delivered their second session to staff in October. The LGBT and Allies pupil group continue to take a lead on a range of initiatives, and staff are looking at how our curriculum helps promote equalities in this area.

All staff took part in training led by the Educational Psychology Service on Managing Distressed and Challenging Behaviour and this ties in with our work on promoting positive relationships, attachment and trauma informed practice.

We are working with St Columba's Hospice to deliver a programme for young people who have been affected by bereavement, loss or change, and this will run this term.

Rights Respecting School Award – we are focusing on embedding the values of respect for all across the school. We are also using the CIRCLE document to improve our environment and approaches to supporting pupils with ASN.

Health and wellbeing – awareness raising through whole school events that follow national initiatives e.g. Mental Health awareness day; Autism Awareness week in April.

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

Our Achievement Ties were launched in October and are designed to recognise the hard work and endeavour of pupils who have excelled in a particular area, and that deserves to be recognised at a whole school level. Pupils can nominate themselves, others or parents/carers/coaches/community partners can also nominate pupils. Nominations take place twice yearly – October and March. More information is available in [this document](#).

Diligence Awards- the first of our new awards were issued in December and resulted from a working group made up of pupils, staff and parents/carers who wanted a system that recognised hard work and commitment of our young people on a day to day basis. This new system replaces merit awards. The diligence awards are issued twice yearly - Term 1 (August-December) and Term 2 (January-April). The aim for pupils is to be nominated for a diligence award in **all** of their subjects. This links in with our school value of Ambition – that if you commit to your education through hard work you will achieve your potential.

HMIe Continuing Engagement – S Cook to present feedback to Parent Council on 28 January

Parent Council Staff Report January 2020

Eco-Committee

The Eco-Committee is organising its annual Eco-Week this year from March 9-13. We're in the process of planning events for the week and we will be running another clothing collection for Rock Trust (this will be our 3rd year running the clothing drive). If any parents want to get involved with Eco-Week, they can contact Miss Laudi.

Activities Week Trips 2020

Payment deadlines and information can be found on the News section on the school website please ensure you keep checking for updates. Any issues with payments please contact your trip leader to access the school's inclusion fund.

Leavers Dance 2020

The Leavers Dance this year takes place on Friday 19 June at Eskmills. The next payment deadline of £20 is at the end of January. The total cost is £65.00. It is important that pupils get the payments finalised as soon as possible in order that they can concentrate on preparation for their exams.

Dietary requirements must be given to Miss McBride or a member of the Leavers committee by the end of January also.

S3-6: PRIDE & PREJUDICE TRIP, TUES 28TH JAN

Pupils attending the theatre trip to Lyceum to see Pride and Prejudice on Tues 28th Jan, please return your PC1 by Friday 10th Jan, when tickets shall be confirmed.

Coach leaves Knox 6.15pm, returns us at approx. 11pm. More details are available on Lyceum website.

Miss Whitfield & Miss MacDonald

Knox Academy Parent Council
Chair's report for meeting of 28th January 2020.

1. HMIE report

Thanks to those PC members who attended a short session with the HMIE inspectors during the HMIE visit in December as well as all parents who took part in the parent survey and or separately met with the inspectors during the visit. The outcome of the visit will be provided by the HT at the January PC meeting.

2. Parent Council representation at school events.

Thanks for those who helped at the various parents evening this year. I believe it's a valuable exercise however it's only possible through volunteers and I do appreciate how busy everyone is. That said, are there parents from the PC, PTA or other parents who'd like to get involved for the last one for the time being, 4th Feb for the S2 Parents evening, which runs between 5 and 7pm?

School Careers event – The 2020 event will be held on February 3rd. Planning is going well and we're hoping for another successful evening. As before this is a joint venture with Knox and DYW.

The link below provides estimated jobs openings between 2017 - 2027 alongside the skills required to enter the world of work now and in the future. This relates to Edinburgh, Mid and East Lothian.
<https://www.dyw-edinmideast.com/regional-labour-market-insight.html>

3. S6 Employability Interviews

As part of S6 Employability Skills Programme, we have been asked if can assist in mock interviews. These take place on two further occasions throughout the year:

Monday 9th March, and

Monday 16th March.

If you're able to help with these interviews, or for more information, please contact Mr Flood, via the school office.

4. PTA

Christmas Dance

As we know, there were issues around numbers of tickets available for the Christmas Dance. It's proposed that we set up a small working party with staff and parents to look at the issues and look at options for the 2020 Dance. To be discussed.

We continue to promote the 100 club. Please encourage friends, family and neighbours to get involved. This is a great way to raise funds and you stand a chance of winning £50 in the monthly draw (£100 in June and Sept as there is no draw in July and August). To join, email knoxacpta@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/knoxacademysupportgroup?fref=ts>

5. HLAP

The next HLAP meeting takes place in February, there are no updates at this time.

6. Empowering Parents and Carers

the Document appended to this report set out how Parents and Carers play an important part in improving outcomes for children and young people. The figure below shows where parents and carers fit into the 'jigsaw'.



Extract from NPFS Empowering Parents & Carers

7. Special content for meetings 2019-20 session

Ms Cook and I have proposed specific items for presentation/ discussion/ review for each meeting. This was tabled at the May meeting, however is retained here to remind parents that these meeting are to meet our needs and wishes and this slot provides an opportunity to discuss particular issues. **These are provisional, and of course we'd welcome suggestions from the parent body.** Examples we might like to consider include safer internet use or use of digital technologies.

Suggested special content -	
24 th March	Numeracy and Computing (CB)
26 th May	Health and Wellbeing (JL)

John Wrinn
22 January 2020

Empowering parents and carers

What is the 'empowered system'?

It means that parents, children, teachers and others involved in children's education are valued for the different parts they play.

The picture on the right shows all those, including parents, involved in children's learning. When everyone works together and feels that what they are doing is worthwhile, the end result for children is much stronger: the jigsaw is complete.

This way of working together supports children while they are in education (from age 3 to 18) and for life.

This Nutshell explains how parents and carers fit in the jigsaw. For more information about the empowered system, and to tell us what you think of it, go to: education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/an-empowered-system

What it means for parents

It means that you are recognised for how important you are because you:

- Are vital for what children learn at home and outwith school
- Add to what children learn in school
- Contribute to what goes on in schools and decisions made about children

You matter to your children

Parents are central to children's lives. You're not the only influence on them, but you are the first, and very important, one. You matter to your children in their earliest years, when they completely depend on you, and as they grow up and become adults.

You, out of all the adults around them,
know your children best.

What you do with your children at home counts for a lot: playing with them, speaking with and listening to them, taking an interest in what they're learning at school, reading to them and helping with homework, and giving them the chance to learn from you.

What they learn from you,
they learn for life.



Parents are an equal piece in the jigsaw

When parents are involved and interested:

- Children do better
- It's easier for children to learn
- Children, parents and schools all benefit

Schools will support parents to be and to feel:

- Involved in their child's education
- Active in the life of the school and decisions about their children's learning

Schools know that parents:

- Know their children best
- Help their children learn
- Need to be involved in the right ways from the very start
- May need some help to feel confident about their part in supporting their children and being involved in the school



You matter to schools

Parents matter to teachers and others because you are such an important part of the jigsaw. When parents are involved in the right ways, it can add a lot to what children learn at school. This works for everyone, including children and their teachers. It's so much better for children, now and for the long term, when everyone is working together.

Teachers and others in education want to show you how important you are, and to make sure that you are involved in decisions about your child: not just some of the time, but all of it.

Schools may have changed a lot since you were there and they are still changing. Although some parents are already active in education such as through Parent Councils, it will take time for all parents, children, school staff, councils and others to feel 'empowered': equally valued, respected and supported in the education system.

You should notice schools and teachers opening their doors to you, listening to you and speaking to you. You can expect opportunities and encouragement to play an active part in your child's education: at home and at school. You should feel confident that schools want you to be involved, and value you and your part in your child's education.

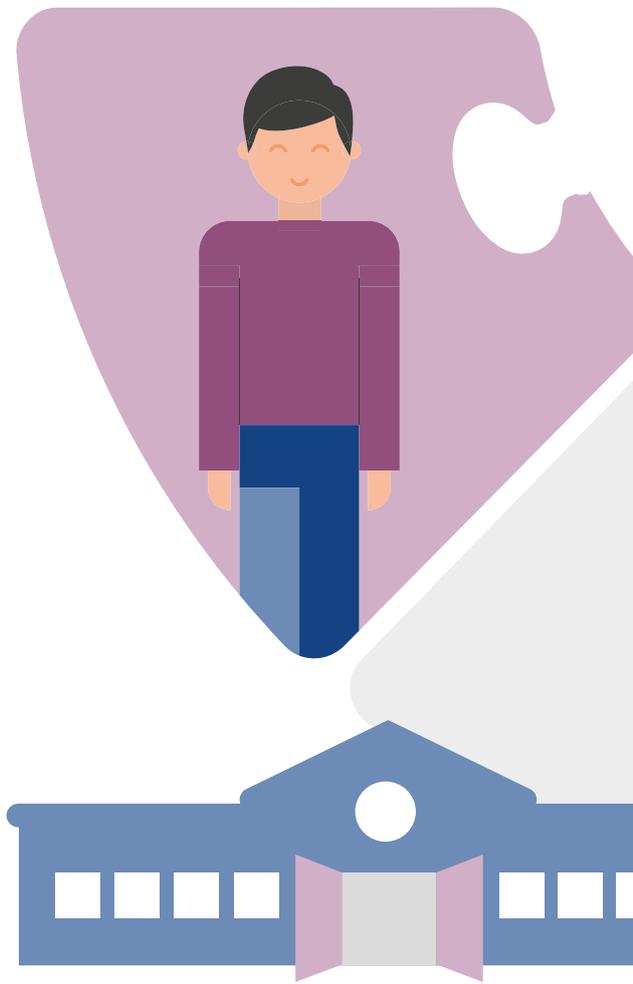
Parents' rights and responsibilities

By law, schools have to support parents to be involved in children's education and learning. They realise that not all parents feel confident about what they can offer. Schools are supporting parents by:

- ✓ Listening to parents and their concerns
- ✓ Involving parents in their children's learning and decisions about them
- ✓ Giving parents opportunities to take part in the life of the school
- ✓ Making it possible for parents to be actively involved in ways which fit with family life and work
- ✓ Showing parents how they can build on what children are learning at school
- ✓ Being flexible and creative, and doing all they can to help parents feel welcome and involved
- ✓ Looking for new ways to open up schools to parents
- ✓ Explaining how schools work for the benefit of the whole school community so parents know why things happen the way they do

In turn, it's important for parents to respect and value school staff.

By working together parents, teachers and others can help to improve outcomes for children and young people.



More information

National Parent Forum of Scotland
npfs.org.uk

Other NPFS Nutshells in this series
npfs.org.uk/downloads/category/in-a-nutshell-series

Parentzone Scotland
<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Parents as partners in their children's learning: toolkit
education.gov.scot/parentzone/Documents/parents-as-partners-toolkit.pdf



 the National Parent Forum of Scotland

www.parentforumscotland.org
enquiries@parentforumscotland.org

 [parentforumscotland](https://www.facebook.com/parentforumscotland)
 [parentforumscot](https://twitter.com/parentforumscot)

Parent Council Report 28/01/2020

Since the last meeting we have had our prelims and due to this there is not much that we have to report. However we would like to say that from a pupil perspective the new prelims dates have made a really big difference and we have had lots of positive feedback from senior pupils. The only thing that has been flagged is that pupils felt a lot of pressure coming out of october assessments, applying for university and then going straight into prelims, however we do believe this was just because it was the first year this has happened and hopefully pupils sitting prelims in the next few years will adjust to the change quickly.

In December last the head pupils met with the head and depute head of haddington primary school to discuss setting up a paired reading system between our school and there's. We have noticed that paired reading at Knox Academy has been extremely successful in increasing reading ages within our school. However, it became apparent to us that there was still a number of children entering S1 with low reading ages, this can be extremely challenging and can make the thought of coming up to high school even more daunting. To tackle this issue we want to get senior pupils at Knox to spend time reading with children who need extra support, this will help increase literacy skills, take pressure of support for learning staff and help to develop relationships between the two schools. We are hoping to start the program after the february holidays with 5 S5 pupils from Knox, we are starting small to test this first and hopefully we can gradually increase this number. We will keep you updated with the progress of this project.

The charities committee recently organised the fundraising that took place for children in need. We had a sponsored head shave, teachers being pied, S6s came to school in fancy dress and a couple of other activities. It was a really successful day and we managed to raise over £540 for children in need.

The committee have now started working with Miss Borwick and Mr Redford to organise a team of pupils to run in the Edinburgh Marathon Festival at the end of May. Last year, a group of S6 pupils and teachers ran the half marathon to fundraise for East Lothian Special Needs Playscheme. The aim this year is to have pupils from all years involved in many more of the races across the weekend.