

MINUTES OF  
PRESTON LODGE PARENT COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON  
THURSDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2018  
AT PRESTON LODGE HIGH SCHOOL

Present Lynne Lewis, Parent Representative and Chair  
Lynn Russell, Parent Representative and Vice Chair  
Colin Yorkston, Parent Representative and Treasurer  
Pamela Currie, Parent Representative  
Malcolm Brydon, Parent Representative  
Judith McNeill, Parent Representative  
Jean Harper, Parent Representative  
Gavin Clark, Head Teacher  
Cllr Neil Gilbert  
Jacqui Dunlop, Clerk

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were intimated on behalf of Nicky Stannage, Dawn Yorkston, Russell Devine, Stacey Graham, Saddah Azziz, Cllrs O'Donnell, Bruce and Innes.

2. MINUTES OF 11 JANUARY 2018

It was unanimously agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 11 January 2018 were a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 11 JANUARY 2018 BUT NOT ON THE AGENDA

a) Longniddry Buses– A new letter has been issued by East Lothian Council, but it appears to contain exactly the same information as the last one and makes no reference to the buses returning from school, or that the second bus on a Friday leaves from the Hawthorne Road. It was also noted that it was a very poorly worded letter which was difficult to understand. Gavin Clark noted that if parents in Longniddry feel that there is no reliable bus service then this is concern to the school and he agreed to write to the Council as he felt it was now a school issue. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

Malcolm Brydon and Lynne Lewis agreed to forward Gavin Clark a copy of the letter. (*Action Malcolm Brydon/Lynne Lewis*).

It was noted that the Council needs to write to all new S1 pupils coming to the school, in August 2018 to ensure that the correct information is given to parents.

b) Bank Account – Lynne Lewis has written to Val McIntyre about the Credit Union account is waiting for a reply.

c) Homework – Gavin Clark confirmed that he is looking at Homework. He noted that nationally S1-S3s have been not been given the attention they merit, due to the development of the senior phase. He also reported that getting Homework onto the School Improvement Plan can be challenging.

Pamela Currie noted that the weekly update which is sent to parents on google-classroom is very useful but seems to be inconsistent across subjects. Gavin Clark noted that there were issues with permissions with pupils having to give permission for parents to access google classrooms and he felt that there was a lot more homework being issued that parents were aware of.

Gavin Clark agreed to check the motivation for the google classrooms summary. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

Malcolm Bryden asked if it would be possible for the school to provide a list of which teachers are using Google Classroom and Gavin Clark agreed to provide this. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

Colin Yorkston noted that he is resistant to the use of electronic devices provided by school in the home. Gavin Clark noted that the school is required to develop digital literacy and he felt that google-classroom was a positive development. Malcolm Bryden noted concerns at pupils using such a small screen for homework.

It was noted that most resources used in school are now electronic and not text books as school cannot afford them.

Pamela Currie initiatives such as Mathletics and AR were good as parents knew about the and could offer support at home. She suggested that a teacher is given time out of class to prepare homework for literary/numeracy/wellbeing – 12 tasks which could be given as monthly homework. She felt it was the process of engaging with the homework which was important. Gavin Clark agreed to give consideration to this idea. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

Judith McNeill noted that at a parents evening she had asked teachers if her child had been given homework and she was told every time that they had been. She is not sure if this is right as there was not a lot of homework given out over the year and would prefer if teachers just said that there was none given out.

Gavin Clark noted that at a recent Head Teachers meeting, each school is reviewing their S3 and looking at the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. At Preston Lodge there will be an assessment and moderation plan for every S1-3 class and homework is central to this.

#### 4. PUPIL EQUITY FUND BID

Gavin Clark circulated a paper which outlined the submission for the Pupil Equity Fund. The submission included:

Attainment Manager – this post will be appointed internally for March-June 2017 and will be available for up to x3 days per week. The post holder will primarily be responsible for managing the data. The school needs this post to ensure that they are effectively identifying the gap, addressing it and measuring impact.

Literacy Intervention – this includes the purchase of 80 Chromebooks.

Literacy Worker – this full-time post will initially be appointed for April – June.

S4-6 Tailored Tutoring – following the Small Group Tuition pilot the school would like to offer a more closely targeted 9-week programme focussed on students who meet key criteria including SIMD 2-5, free school meals and those who face other educational barriers.

Inclusion Fund – this will be used to ensure students face no barriers to learning ahead of the start of the new timetable in June 2018. This fund would provide small grants for students in specific groups to enable them to properly resource their studies in 2018-2019.

This year the school received £63,000. The amount of funding is awarded by based on free school meals for S1-S3 pupils and work is being carried out to ensure that parents are claiming these, even if they do not want the meals. It is also important that those who are entitled to claim the funding in S4-6 do so as they will benefit from the measures put in place if they are in receipt of free school meals. Gavin Clark noted that next year the amount the school gets will drop by £1,000. Colin Yorkston asked if the school knew how much it has lost out on PEF funding by pupils not claiming meals and Neil Gilbert felt that overall it was 10-15%. Gavin Clark noted that he has not specific data just now but will be doing analysis on this and he will then be doing direct contact with parents to encourage them to take up the provision of free school meals

Pamela Currie asked if pupils were not eligible to attend the Tailored Tutoring as they did not meet the criteria could parents pay for this? Gavin Clark said that he would clarify this with East Lothian Council. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

It was noted that the voluntary After School revision provision may suffer as teachers are involved in the tutoring which may be detrimental to those pupils who are not able to access the Tailored Tutoring. Gavin Clark noted that he needs to make sure that this does not happen and will ensure that this is part of the recruitment process for the Tailored Tutoring staff.

Pamela Currie asked if there was a list of study clubs available and Gavin Clark agreed to circulate this and then he will also be able to analyse if less After School Revision Clubs are being offered. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

## 5. PRELIMS AND EXAMS

Pamela Currie noted that the timing of the letter with advice for Prelims and study was too late and it would have been more useful to parents if it had been issued before Christmas. Gavin Clark noted that the letter had been due to be issued ahead of the Christmas break and he would find out why this had not been the case. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

Gavin Clark reported that there will be a parents evening to offer advice on helping pupils study before Easter and there will be another letter going out with advice. He noted that previously they had issued a longer letter with a lot of advice but feedback from parents was that this was too long. Malcolm Brydon suggested that there should be a link on the website which gave the longer letter and parents could access this if required.

There is a lot of work carried out in S5 on studying and Gavin Clark noted that he could share the programme with parents via Google classrooms. It was agreed that this would be a good idea. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

## 6. EMPOWERING SCHOOLS

It was noted that this consultation had closed. Gavin Clark issued a paper which outlined the East Lothian Head Teachers' response to the consultation. He noted that there seems to be a different culture in East Lothian Council than that of other local authorities, as Head Teachers currently have a lot of freedom, transparency and are empowered by the Council to make decisions.

There was a discussion on Regional Improvement Collaborates (RICs) which have been set up and there is nervousness about taking the local authority role in running education away. There is no extra funding for staffing for RICs and it will be local authority staff who are doing this. There was a feeling that it would be taking control further away. Gavin Clark noted he could not release any staff as they are needed in school.

He noted problems currently with cover as there are no supply teachers and this is a national problem. At one-point last week there were 7 classes being covered in the dining hall. Gavin Clark has been covering classes.

It was felt that the problems in education won't change with the restructuring. It was agreed that this was something which the parent council would need to discuss further.

## 7. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

- a) Just Giving Letter – Gavin Clark agreed to distribute. (*Action Gavin Clark*)
- b) Staffing – staffing is currently fine but cover is very bad.
- c) Charitable Trust – the interest from a donation has meant that the Charity can employ the Head of Development in perpetuity. Adverts have gone out for a part time admin assistant.

Date of Next Meeting – Thursday, 8 March