

PRESTON LODGE HIGH SCHOOL
MINUTES OF PARENT COUNCIL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON
THURSDAY, 14 JUNE 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
Dawn Yorkston, Parent Representative
Malcolm Bryden, Parent Representative
Russell Devine, Parent Representative
Judith McNeill, Parent Representative
Jean Harper, Parent Representative
Nicky Stannage, Parent Representative
Sasha Maguire, Parent Representative
Stacey Graham, Co-opted Teacher Representative
Gavin Clark, Head Teacher
Jacqui Dunlop, Clerk

Two Members of the Parent Forum

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Pamela Currie and Cllrs O'Donnell, Bruce and Innes. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF 2017 AGM

It was agreed that the minutes of the 2017 AGM were a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 2017 AGM AND NOT ON THE AGENDA

- a) Credit Union – Coin Yorkston reported that the Credit Union was not suitable as the processing of EasyFundraising income was an issue.
- b) Account – Gavin Clark reported that he will report back to the Parent Council in the new Term about the Parent Council account. (*Action Gavin Clark*)
- c) Blazers – Gavin Clark noted that if any sixth years are having difficulty with buying the Blazers then they should contact the school. Going forward the school is using PEF funding for Inclusion and the Charitable Trust is also looking at inclusion funding. Dawn Yorkston noted that it would be more cost effective if 5th and 6th years wore Blazers as pupils would get two years wear out of them. There is also the impact of the change of shirt colour on families. Gavin Clark noted that previously pupils had been consulted on blazers and shirt colours, although it was noted that the parents may have had a different view as they were the ones paying. Gavin Clark reported that Uniforms will be re-visited next term.

- d) Co-opted Members – Gavin Clark noted that he will consult with staff for a parent council representative.
- e) Absences – Gavin Clark noted that absence reporting is much tighter now due to the Truancy Tracking System.
- f) Study Periods – Gavin Clark reported that for 4th and 5th year there is no study period unless the pupil attends college. For 6th year there are between 5 and 9 periods of study a week.
- g) Timetables – Gavin Clark reported that there is a delay in the student timetables, due to the work being carried out to complete the 3rd year tests. Nicky Stannage noted that it may be useful at parents' evenings for the opportunity to discuss options with other departments to gauge what level a pupil could study at, if it was a completely new subject for the pupil. Gavin Clark agreed to build this into the process. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

Gavin Clark confirmed that the Advance Higher subjects will be finalised over the summer holidays. It was confirmed that there will be a consultation taking place in Est Lothian regarding the Common School Day which will enable the transferability of pupils across schools, which should help with subject choices for Advance Highers in the future.

- h) Recoursing – Gavin Clark confirmed that the parents will receive confirmation of the subjects which pupils are studying.
- i) Transport – Gavin Clark noted that he will be meeting with East Lothian's Transport Team regarding the Longniddry Buses.

4. ANNUAL REPORT

Lynne Lewis provided the Annual Report – Appendix 1.

5. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

There were no changes to the Constitution.

6. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Colin Yorkston noted that there was £467.68 in the account at the start of the school year, with money being spent as undernoted:

£200 – Updating of Pictures for School Assembly Hall
 £200 – Inclusion fund

This left a balance of 67.68 and at 29 March 2018, £107.85 had been credited from the EasyFundraising account. The next payment from the EasyFundraising account is due at the end of June and this should make the total account £250.

The Accounts were unanimously approved.

It was agreed that there would be promotion of the EasyFundraising account at the P6/7 Parents Evening, and the information would be resent again to all families. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

Lynn Russell noted that she is the Administrator for the Parent Council Facebook page and would welcome some support with this. There was a discussion on what could be done to promote the Parent Council with Gavin Clark noting that there used to be a Communications Sub-Group. It was suggested that topics which were being covered at Parent Council meetings could be promoted via Facebook. Topics which may be of interest included Poverty Free School, Mental Health, Teenage Brain, Assessments. It was suggested that a survey also be issued to parents asking which topics they would like covered. Parents Information evenings to cover subjects such as Drugs/Internet Safety was also suggested.

It was agreed that there would be Parent Council representation at the forthcoming P6/7 Information Evening and Judith McNeil agreed to produce a leaflet. Nicky Stannage, Judith McNeil and Lynn Russell agreed to attend the P6/7 Information evening on behalf of the Parent Council. (*Action Judith McNeil/Nicky Stannage/Lynn Russell*)

7. ELECTION OF MEMBERS

The constitution requires no less than 6 members and no more than 12 parent members.

Eight members are one year through their two-year term (Colin Yorkston, Dawn Yorkston, Pamela Currie, Lynne Russell, Judith McNeill, Jean Harper, Malcolm Bryden, Nicky Stannage). Lynne Lewis was standing down at the AGM and was thanked for the contribution to the Parent Council. The undernoted were elected onto the Parent Council for a term of two years.

Russell Devine
Sasha Maguire

It was noted that the Parent Council now has 10 parent members and two vacancies.

Stacy Graham was also standing down as a Co-opted Teacher Representative and was thanked for her contribution. Gavin Clark noted that he will ask if any staff member wishes to be co-opted onto the Parent Council following the summer. (*Action Gavin Clark*)

8. ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE CHAIR/TREASURER

- a) Chair – it was unanimously agreed that Judith McNeill be elected as Chair. There being no other nominations Judith McNeil was duly elected as Chair.
- b) Vice Chair- it was unanimously agreed that Jean Harper be elected as Vice Chair. There being no other nominations Jean Harper was duly elected as Vice Chair.
- c) Treasurer – it was unanimously agreed that Colin Yorkston be elected as Treasurer. There being no other nominations Colin Yorkston was duly elected as Treasurer.

Colin Yorkston noted that the bank signatories will be required to be changed and the undernoted were agreed as bank signatories:

Colin Yorkston
Judith McNeill
Malcolm Brydon

9. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

- a) Staffing – Gavin Clark reported that the school will get 5 NQTs. The school are also interviewing for the computing vacancy next week, and the English vacancy will be advertised shortly. There is tightness in staffing in some subject areas.
- b) Aims and Values – Gavin Clark reported that the Aims and Values ceremonies will take place this week and both Prize Giving and the Prom went well.
- c) Lagganlia – the S1 trip to Lagganlia will take place in 2019, it will be run over 3 trips with a three-night experience. It will cost slightly more than the 2018 trip at approximately £55 and the funding is in place.
- d) Prelims – there will be two prelim diets this year, one in early December and one in early February.
- e) P7 Transition – the three-day visit takes place this week.
- f) House Prize – Grange won the Annual House award.

10. AOCB

- a) Burns Supper – Jean Harper suggested that as the Burns Supper was cancelled in 2018 was there something the Parent Council could do to help promote the event. It was agreed that it would be good if the Parent Council and the Charitable Trust could work in partnership on the Burns Supper and Gavin Clark agreed to invite Julie Lowe to a future meeting.
- b) Area Partnership – Lynne Lewis noted that she has represented the Parent Council at the Area Partnership and a new representative will need to be found. It was noted at the last Area Partnership meeting that there were no student representatives this year.

Date of Next Meeting

6 September 2018

APPENDIX 1

Preston Lodge High School Parent Council Annual Report – 2018

It's been six years since I attended my first parent council meeting at Preston Lodge High School. I came along during a time of change in education; the Curriculum for Excellence was being 'rolled out' and the national exam system was about to go through great change. I joined the Parent Council both to find out more about how the school planned to implement these new changes, and to be in some way involved in my child's education.

I have always been a huge believer that parents are the most important teachers in a child's life. We cannot underestimate the impact having an active role in a child's education can have on their confidence and enjoyment of learning.

During my time on the Parent Council, new national qualifications have been introduced and this has impacted on both how the school and curriculum is organised. Through the leadership of Gavin Clark and his team, Preston Lodge High School had always strived to make innovative decisions placing teaching and learning at the heart of the community. It has provided a model which has bravely led other schools in its innovative approach to curriculum design. This is something that I hope Preston Lodge will continue to do in its future.

The Heart of The Community

Preston Lodge has always been an inclusive school which recognises that the heart of education lies within its community. I hope that the strong partnerships the school has with parents continues to grow in 2018/19 and new ways of building on parental partnerships are explored to accommodate the busy lives that parents now have. As parents we must recognise the role we play in encouraging positive attitudes towards learning.

Friends of Preston Lodge

In September, along with hundreds of others, I attended the 'Friends of Preston Lodge' event, which brought together many members of the school community both past and present. It was wonderful to see the event so well attended, and to look through the many photos and memorabilia on display. In particular it was a privilege to listen to the many memories shared by past pupils; some happy, some sad, many of whom are now parents themselves. The event was organised by Julie Lowe, Business Manager of the Preston Lodge Learning Foundation who is clearly an asset to the school in continuing to build on the role of the Learning Foundation.

S1 Trip to Lagganlia

In January we saw all S1 children being offered the opportunity to attend Lagganlia Outdoor Centre. What a great addition to the S1 curriculum and an event which children will no doubt forever value and reflect back on later years.

Financial & Staffing Challenges

Throughout the year it has become apparent that Preston Lodge like many other schools in Scotland continues to face increasing challenges in staffing and resources. Staff vacancies continue to be difficult to recruit with some subject areas attracting little or no applications.

The impact of these have resulted in difficult teaching and learning conditions for our children, particularly within certain subject areas at key points of the year. This along with a lack of availability of temporary supply staff has often resulted in 'emergency procedures' to cover multiple classes.

School Transport

Provision of school buses to Preston Lodge has continued to face increasing challenges throughout 2018/19 with some services to and from Longniddry being reduced from pupil only provision to shared services with the public. This has resulted in some children having to cross the road to catch services rather than wait on the 'village side'. Services returning home from Preston Lodge to Longniddry still remain overcrowded. Throughout the year this has caused a lot of confusion with pupils, parents and at times bus drivers. I hope that the council and school are able to improve their means of communicating further changes with all parties.

Teaching Staff - Value Education

The main teaching union, the EIS, is currently seeking the support of parents during its campaign of 'Value Education, Value Teachers'. The EIS argues that through improved salaries there will be an increase in the quality and recruitment of staff.

Thank You

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff working within Preston Lodge on behalf of all parents and carers. Your dedication to the care and learning of all pupils is exemplary. We are very lucky to receive such a high level of commitment through the wide range of extra curricular trips, events and tuition classes provided throughout the year.

Finally

In 2018/19 Preston Lodge Parent Council will continue to meet and discuss a diverse range of issues, however, its future success depends on the diversity and participation of the parent body. Participation each month may not be an option for all, however, as parents we must make time for our children's future. We welcome parents in any month they attend.

Your child's years at Preston Lodge will pass by in a flash and within that small window please give a little time to share your views. We meet the first Thursday of the month (dates are always on school website) - everyone is welcome.

Lynne Lewis Parent Council Chair