

## **Preston Lodge Parent Council Meeting 13.01.22**

**Present:** Judith McNeill (Chair), Gavin Clark (HT), Jean Harper, Siobhan Graham, Claire Jamieson, Malcolm Graham, Lachlan Bruce, Sasha Maguire, Rachel Menzies, Fiona O'Donnell, Cate Duff, Sarah Lusk (Co-opted Staff Member), Jill Brown (Clerk).

**Apologies:** Russell Devine, Gillian Neilson, Pamela Currie, Pauline McGowan, & Lynn Russell.

### **Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising:**

At the last meeting it had been agreed that Derek France, School Librarian, would join this meeting to discuss his role in school. However, due to illness he was unable to attend, Sarah Lusk, PT Support for Learning, shared this instead.

Regarding the lack of feedback and support from Open University for students involved in YASS courses, this has been raised. However, there has been no response back yet. Calum Stewart is taking this forward. He will be looking to set up a Google Meet with all the OU students for feedback. **Action - GC will provide another update in due course.**

### **Sarah Lusk – Principal Teacher for Support for Learning**

Sarah gave a very informative talk about the role of Support for Learning. The team consists of 3 teachers, one of whom specialises in dyslexia, and a team of 13 auxiliaries. The team work very closely with a wide variety of external agencies. They also work very closely with Deaf Scotland and support this throughout the community. They have currently a number of students who are supported through literacy and numeracy programmes and offer a wide range of programs that are delivered alongside timetabled classes. The team are constantly looking to raise attainment to help the students. Guidance are another department that they work hand in hand with. The Enhanced Learning Provision looks after a range of students with different levels of need - some are full time and some are part time. There is also support from S6s and some S4s support students in Home Economics. An ASDAN curriculum has been purchased and will be rolled out soon, and the team also work alongside QMU. A large part of Support for Learning's work involves organising Alternative Assessment Arrangements for SQA qualifications and the team work extremely hard to make sure students receive the right support. Members of the team are currently learning braille.

Sarah was asked if the number of students involved with Support for Learning decreases as they progress. Sarah advised that actually more pupils were taken on this year in order to meet learning needs.

Sarah was asked if the pupils dip in and out of learning support, and she replied that some pupils are there all the time and some only attend some enhanced provision with most of their time spent in mainstream classes. Students who receive support in their learning access all areas of Preston Lodge to ensure full inclusion.

Active citizenship was discussed, and whether this was part of the Enhanced Learning Provision. Sarah said that those students follow a life skills programme, working alongside East Lothian Works and Edinburgh College. The team use emoji's with students to gather feedback and their young people use ICT as a common way of working.

Support from the community was discussed. During lockdown it was noted how much digital learning was embraced, and this is still being used more. There is closer working with Social Work and much earlier interventions.

Parents commented on how much they had enjoyed the presentation and praised the team's work.

### **Headteacher's Report**

There have been some covid-related staffing challenges on return to school, as there have been in all schools. Yvonne Binks is looking after a guidance caseload, as well as her Depute Head duties. Course choices are coming up and details will be sent out at the end of January. There is a comprehensive website explaining course choices, which will be updated for this year, because Course Choice will once again be virtual. Active Schools groups have been suspended at the moment, but the school are hoping the programme will return soon.

### **Covid Update**

There has been one instance when the S3s had to go to home learning due to covid-related staff absence, and staff have worked hard to cover classes. The school is still managing to have students outside at break and lunch, although it is getting colder. This approach allows students to remove their face coverings and get some fresh air, as well as purging the air in the building. There has been a fair amount of positive cases and self-isolation in all schools, including PL. Pupils missing school so close to prelims was discussed, and it was clarified that prelims will not determine a student's grade. Letters informing parents that their child has been a close contact have now been reduced to going out once per week. One member revealed that a student who had tested positive received a letter stating they had been a close contact, which was a consequence of Health Protection processes. During prelims students are expected to attend school. The mental health and wellbeing of young people continues to be a challenge and is ongoing.

### **SQA assessments**

There is going to be a change to the prelim table, and further information will be sent out to students shortly. The school are trying to finalise the prelim timetable and Alternative Assessment Arrangement as quickly as possible - there are a wide range of arrangements to be looked at. There is a structured school programme of study support for S5 students, but S4 study approaches are covered in subjects. **GC will find out the extent of S4 revision advice being offered in subjects and feed back to the next meeting.**

### **Preston Lodge Learning Foundation**

At December's meeting a new strategy document was produced. New Blindwells residents will be given welcome leaflets as part of Preston Lodge community because more and more students will join the school from the new development. It is anticipated that the school roll will be 1300 within 4-5 years. Many interesting projects are currently being planned out. Lynn Russell will step down as a trustee in June and there will be a vacancy for two Parent Council representative on the Foundation. Cate Duff and Rachel Menzies expressed an interest in taking this up.

### **AOB**

Epraise was discussed. Students are given up to 3 points for meeting the school's Aims and Values or 6Rs of classroom learning. Soon points will be exchangeable for items in the library. Vouchers are also given out for students who gain the most points in a month etc. It means that at the end of the year every student can receive an Aims and Values certificate detailing how they achieved their points. **Action: GC to ensure information is sent out via email to parents regarding this.**

The Parent Council thanked PL staff who, in their view, have been great in the work they have been doing and this has been appreciated by the parents.

**Next meeting will be 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022**