



Ross High School, Well Wynd, Tranent, East Lothian EH33 2EQ

**ROSS HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL  
Meeting on Tuesday 28th March 2017**

**Present: G Walshe (Chair), N Neighbour (Vice Chair and Minutes), P Reynolds (HT), R Averbuch, C Christie, J Dall, B Esamal, A Muir (Treasurer), J Robertson, B Sanchez, Cllr S Aktar**

**Apologies: D Hill, D Middlemass, N McMillan, Cllr J Gillies, Cllr D Grant, Cllr K McLeod,**

| Minutes  | Action           |
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| <p><b>1. Introductions and Apologies</b></p> <p><b>GW</b> thanked everyone for coming along to the meeting. Apologies as above.</p> <p><b>2. Minutes and Matters Arising</b></p> <p>Finance update – <b>AM</b> confirmed that signatories on the PC account are Julie Robertson, Bev Esamal and Aileen Muir (not James Belton as previously thought), therefore no action required to change signatories.</p> <p>Area Partnership – <b>NN</b> reported that Area Partnership thanked the Parent Council for their votes on the projects taking place in the ward, only the PC and Recharge had returned responses.</p> <p>HT update – <b>PR</b> confirmed that the litter video is now available on the school website.<br/>There is also now a video of the P7 STEM event available on the website.</p> <p>Quiz Night – a date of September 22<sup>nd</sup> was agreed for this event.</p> <p>Wider Parental Engagement – <b>RA</b> was not sure that he had shared the link to the Google document on this issue; he will do so after the meeting.</p> <p>As an aside, a discussion was held about what sort of hardware parents might supply for their children to access Google Classroom at home. Chromebooks were discussed as a possibility (the application runs well on them, they are cheaper than other options and very light. On the downside, they have no hard drive); the Google Classroom App was also discussed – pupils can have this on their phone or tablet.</p> <p>Minutes proposed by <b>AM</b> and seconded by <b>RA</b>.</p> | <p><b>RA</b></p> |

### 3. Head Teacher's Update

Interviews have been held for various teaching positions in the school with posts being filled in PE, Physics, History, Maths and RME. A Drama post is also available but remains unfilled at this stage.

A bid for probationers has been made; **PR** will report back when numbers are confirmed.

**PR**, DHTs for relevant subject area, and faculty heads carried out department walkabouts recently. This involved observing classes and asking challenging questions of the staff. Staff responded well to the exercise. **PR** felt that the exercise went even better than he expected and he is confident that pupils are being well taught in Ross High School.

**PR** has volunteered Ross High for a new, more challenging, evaluation introduced by Fiona Robertson (Head of Education) and feels this was good preparation for that.

Dylan Shepherd, a pupil who is a member of the Children's Parliament, recently attended a Cabinet Meeting at Holyrood. While there, he informed John Swinney that **PR** is 'the best head teacher in the world'. After the meeting, the First Minister spoke to him and he invited her to visit the school. If her diary allows, this may happen later in the year.

The school celebrated World Book Day on 4<sup>th</sup> March with teachers and S1 pupils dressing up as favourite book characters.

The Easter Study programme for Seniors will be running during the first week of the holidays. **PR** did receive some feedback from parents about the late notice of the dates. Dates cannot be confirmed earlier because staff volunteer to come in, but have to first make arrangements for their own holidays. Next year, a provisional date may be given out earlier to help parents make arrangements.

A Senior Immersion day for Spanish was held this month, on a Saturday. This provided opportunities for pupils to practice for the oral part of their exam. The day finished with a meal at Giancarlo's. **CC** reported that results for oral exams have since been returned, and they appear to show that the day was a great success. Pupils also reported finding the day valuable for their studies.

Pupils attended the Developing Young Workforce Roadshow in Haddington, where many organisations were recruiting for full time and part time positions. The day was a success with some pupils reporting already that they may have secured some employment by attending.

The Pupil Voice Group visited Ormiston Primary to discuss the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Level 2 Award. RHS is currently working towards this, and Ormiston have already achieved it. RHS pupils worked with Ormiston to design

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posters around UNICEF Rights of the Child, which will be displayed around the school community (this may also include in Cluster Schools).

Learning rounds have taken place around the school. This involves ten members of staff at a time, with a group five observing five other teachers in the learning environment. The five teachers who have been observed then go round as a group to observe each of the five teachers from the first group. Each year the focus is on a different element of teaching, with this round focussing on classroom management. Feedback is still outstanding from the exercise but will be provided at the next meeting.

**CC** reported that she had taken part in this round and found that it was a good way of identifying things for the Improvement Plan. She also reported that it was beneficial for several people to be observing the same lesson at the same time.

This exercise is part of the Observation Policy where every staff member is observed twice a year. At the end of each observation, a dialogue takes place where an area of focus for the next observation is agreed upon. The next person to observe that staff member will look out for evidence of improvement on the area of focus.

S1 parents evening was well attended with 78% of parents attending. Feedback about the evening was positive.

Two pupils have been accepted for the Strathclyde University Space School this year. Physics teachers inform Senior pupils about this opportunity and are able to help them through the application process.

Some RHS pupils recently took part in a recruitment video for a Head Teacher for Saltoun and Humbie Primary school. This video has led to a number of applications for the post. The journalist who filmed the video said 'Ross High has terrific young people...I would work with them in a heartbeat.'

Pupils recently visited Crookston Care Home, talking to residents about being a teenager in 2017, showing residents how to use mobile phones, painting residents' nails and lots more. Both residents and pupils enjoyed the experience.

U18s East Lothian football team have reached the cup final, with 4 RHS pupils on the team. Declan Glass, a RHS player has also played for Scotland recently against England and Wales, being nominated Star Player in the Wales match.

Pupils took part in the East Lothian Piano Festival earlier this month.

S1 – S3 swim team won the East Lothian Championship.

The junior hockey team came second in the Cup.

East Lothian Showcase took place at the Brunton Theatre earlier this month, with pupils from Ross High playing at the event.

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| <p>Course choices interviews were offered to all S3, S4 and S5 pupils and their parents. As a result of the interviews, and following on from recent changes to the choices columns, a number of pupils have selected external options (eg Academies) as part of their course for next year.</p> <p><b>PR</b> asked PC members whether they feel the meetings are necessary. Some discussion about the matter, with parents who recently attended the interviews saying that they found it very useful, that it helped with the thinking process and with ensuring that the correct choices were made for pupils planning to go on to University. Discussion about how to make it clear the meetings are optional, whilst still emphasising that they are important and can be useful.</p> <p>On 29<sup>th</sup> March International Minister from around the world will be visiting the school for a tour and a presentation. This is part of an annual international education conference which is taking place in Scotland this year.</p> <p><b>4. Finance Update</b></p> <p>Balance on the account remains at £61.97.</p> <p><b>5. Fundraising</b></p> <p>Quiz night date confirmed as 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017. This is a family event normally promoted directly to parents and staff. This year, it may also be promoted to 6<sup>th</sup> Year.</p> <p>Burns Night will take place as usual in January.</p> <p>Discussion about the School Lottery and whether to introduce this as a way of raising funds for the school. Some concerns expressed about promoting gambling and a few questions asked about how the lottery works – How easy is to get out of it? How does the licence work? How is the money paid in split between the school prize fund and the national prize fund? Will there be any objections to it? NN to follow these up for the next meeting .</p> <p><b>RA</b> asked about Easyfundraising. <b>NN</b> confirmed that Ross High School Parent Council is signed up for this. Discussion confirming that it is possible to support more than one cause on easyfundraising, by changing the selection in your account each time you want to support a particular cause.</p> <p><b>6. School Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>No discussion was needed about the school improvement plan at this meeting.</p> <p><b>7. Parental Questionnaires (moved up from no 8)</b></p> <p><b>PR</b> distributed results from last year's Parental Questionnaires. In small groups PC members went through them, discussing the responses for each question and the validity of each question. Discussion followed about the nature of the questions, the number of questions, the science behind questionnaires. Suggestions put forward for merging some questions and adding new questions. Following the introduction of the Parental Engagement Strategy, an ELC annual questionnaire may be issued to all parents, will this questionnaire still be needed. This question cannot be answered until the ELC questionnaire</p> | <p></p> <p><b>NN</b></p> <p><b>PR</b></p> |
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is finalised. Discussion about publicising the questionnaire to encourage more responses. Suggestions included email (with careful consideration given to subject title), all school and PC Social Media Accounts, school website, Parents' evenings (could Chromebooks be used for parents to complete it on the night?). **PR** will prepare a new questionnaire to be sent out to all parents, possibly after the holidays.

#### 8. Area Partnership

**NN** reported that the Area Partnership Annual Working Area Plan for 2017 - 2018 is out, and that feedback is requested by 26<sup>th</sup> April. **NN** to circulate the document to PC members.

Discussion about storage of bikes at the school and how this might be improved, particularly now that the footpath link from Ormiston to Tranent has now been upgraded.

**PR** mentioned the petition recently raised by pupils about the school bus service from Pencaitland and Ormiston, which has now been presented to ELC. **PR** also mentioned that a pupil had contacted ELC directly about a drip from a ceiling, apparently prompting the bringing forward of plans to make the necessary repairs.

#### 9. Parents' Queries

A number of parents had queried why they had received absence texts when their children were at School of Rugby. **PR** to look into this

One parent had mentioned that they did not know about the LEAPS conference that their child could have attended. It is not clear how this is currently advertised to parents and pupils. **PR** to look into this and to make sure that it is better communicated so that all parents and pupils have the opportunity to attend. Parents LEAPS event is in May.

LEAPS is a scheme aimed at ensuring that pupils who wish to apply to University, but whose parents did not attend University, receive the necessary support and information for their applications.

#### 9. AOCB

**JD** is Chair at Tranent Amateur Swimming Club (TASC). The club is looking at the possibility of requesting sponsorship for individuals in races, or for races and **JD** asked whether the school or the parent council might be able to offer sponsorship. Concerns were raised about using funds which PC raises for school to sponsor another organisation. **PR** suggested that if a pupil at RHS who swims for TASC needs funding, for example to attend a meet, then it might be possible to apply to the School Fund. This may be more appropriate than sponsorship.

Nicky Nicholls, Clerk will be resigning from the post at the end of the year. An application has been made to fill the vacancy. **PR** and **GW** will meet with the applicant for interview.

**NN**

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PR**

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| <b>Date of next meeting: Tuesday 25th April 2016</b> |  |
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