

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

**ROSS HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL
Meeting of Tuesday 24th November 2020**

Present: L Donohoe (Chair), W Thornton, B Sanchez (Treasurer),

In Attendance: P Reynolds (Head Teacher), Cllr S Akhtar, V Anderson (Clerk), L Pardoe, R Averbuch, D Middlemass, Cllr F Dugdale, K McFarlane, H Boyle, C McMillan, J Fraser, C Scott, D Hill, G Kennie

Apologies: Cllr K McLeod, Cllr T Trotter, Cllr C Hoy, Cllr C McGinn, Cllr J McMillan, K Furr, L Taylor, S Fitzpatrick, M Macdonald, Cllr G Mackett, A Cameron, C Douglas, T Trotter, Cameron, M Harrington, F Connal, J Dall,

Minutes	Action
<p>1. Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>LD – welcomed everyone to meeting</p> <p>2. Minutes of last Meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes from October 2020 were approved with no further comments. Approved by WT 1st and 2nd by RA .</p> <p>Actions for PR from previous meeting – Activity Booklet, Prelim changes, all cover in Head Teacher updates.</p> <p>3. Head Teacher Updates</p> <p>Staffing</p> <p>L Girot retired. Position advertised, interviews this Friday. Additionally each school in EL cluster will get a mental health worker.</p> <p>COVID</p> <p>East Lothian moved to Tier 2 this week. Lesley Brown issued letter to all parents letting them know the change but encouraging continued wearing masks when possible. PR noted that today the vast majority of seniors were still choosing to wear these in classes.</p> <p>ASN/Complex needs department has 4 classes. 2 classes effected with a positive case. A 2nd case came on Friday evening and Lesley Brown, Paul Reynolds, made decision to move to on-line learning until end of isolation. Moved all 4 classes to on-line to be cautious due to the vulnerability of some students.</p> <p>2 further cases on Monday in main school, affecting 2nd year & senior pupils. Around 40 pupils asked to isolate for a week. Some of these same pupils were also isolated when there was a previous positive case. Liaising with SQA on how that is taken into account as this is a concern when some pupils isolating multiple times.</p>	

Some frustration with on-line learning from both parents & teachers. Making sure on-line is up to date, prepping classes, covering teacher absence and teaching classes is a challenge which PR is managing a balance around.

LD – parents will be understanding but concerned about pupils/getting pupils through Highers regardless. Set expectations clearly and encourage any parents concerned with pupils struggling/falling behind to contact school team.

DH – suggested could pupils do ZOOM/Google live alongside teachers taking class.

PR – responded. IT challenges around band-with/desktop kit/laptops. On a positive note the issue of laptops has been raised over last couple of years. The PTs now all have these and ELC have said laptops should be available to all teachers by Christmas.

DM – what about kids access to IT equipment.

PR – responded. 80-90 pupils getting chrome books on loan. Challenge now on do we know meeting all children who have IT issues. We wrote to parents and encouraged pupils to let guidance know.

Additionally PR applied for 80 free data cards from Vodaphone.

WT – suggested to work round bandwidths issue could teachers record lesson then post to classroom after, only a day behind then.

PR Action – will look into this & see if it's possible. It's a real challenge to emulate actually being in class. There is lots of links, materials, ESGOIL. Some pupils are feeding back they are finding this difficult as it is difficult from the class room.

RA – observed that some pupils will stick with it and make most of that but not all kids will.

SQA & Prelims

PR working on document detailing the subjects/changes/approach to assessment/dates. PTs are working on the Prelims/H & Ad H now. Waiting on date for Nat 5 to final info for these.

This will be shared with Parents and on school website. PR thanked PC for putting this idea forward.

Weightings – opportunity for SQA to review these and put more onto all year course work due to these challenging times. This is what has happened for Nat 5. PR advised that Mark Priestly provided the recommendations to SQA and advised stick with exams for Highers & Advanced Highers.

PR

PR

Will be reviewed in February s no-one knows what Christmas will bring. Also review required Post COVID on what happens moving forward.

DH – observation that inequality across Private & state schools with access to IT. PR said difficult to comment as he wasn't aware of Private school approach. DH – classes live on zoom/google so kids isolating can join/don't miss out.

PR – advised working on P7 transitions just now. Pulling together video clips, intro to school. PR will also have 1 hour virtual meet with parents. Hopeful of some kind of physical transition.

PR asked if there were any further questions on Prelims/SQA.

DH – Are they starting January again & getting 2 weeks study leave before exams?

PR – the timetable is for planned prelims for Higher & Advanced Highers is 25 Jan – 5 Feb (2 week block). Flexible study time is available over this two week period no '2 week study leave pre-prelims).

Issues/challenges around invigilators and visitors to school/COVID meaning schools will need to invigilate themselves.

LD – Will study sessions be available?

PR – some are available now. Booklet will be available soon & on website/communicated with parents.

PR advised for Nat 5 no prelim. There will be a formal diary of exams for last 3-4 months

LD – Question on Nat 5 assessments. 4/5 assessments is a lot. Will it be for example 1 – written/1 listening or will they be mini-assessments?

PR – SQA guidance is out now. It's different for different subjects for example Science/Maths have more of a prelim feel but others are split like writing/reading etc. Working with Lesley Brown at local authority level on this currently.

The template on changes PR working on will provide clarity on that.

LD – Question. John Swinney has said a firmed decision will be made Feb at latest. Isn't that very late? Will pupils/teachers have enough evidence there?

PR – Teachers are managing a balance with this & not overwhelming students with both exam readiness & portfolio of assessment data.

PR

LD – Question. Are we advising pupils there may not be an exam?

PR – yes everything counts is what is being discussed.

WT – Question. Are the continuous assessments weighted – are they equal?

PR – will be subject specific. More in-depth evidence expected towards end of year.

As soon as information is in Schools and Local Authority are on it & moving with pace.

Parents Evenings & Settling in Interviews

Feedback from parents & teachers very positive. Discussed by group – less stressful, no child-care issues, different locations works, technical glitches with booking, google multiple log-ins but teething problems. Very impressed overall.

PR – really useful feedback, thanks. Office stayed to help – very few calls. Remarkable wasn't more glitches and we learnt from the 1st one. Like having parents in the school so food for thought on how this is done going forward.

PR – settling in S1 interviews going well. Due to resource constraints on Guidance teachers currently, maternity & absence some have been delayed but be assure they are/will happen.

Hibs Football Club Partnership

PR advised fantastic news that RHS are partnering with team to work with approx. 16 young people. Running Easter to June, 1 day per week number of different focuses for example – self-esteem, team work and engagement. May also be an opportunity for 1 of their workers in school 1 day per week. Will start again in August & run for a full year – with approx. 16 young people (2/3rd years). Strong partnership being developed and fantastic moving forward for the young people.

Pupil Senior Leaders Christmas Advert

Pupils came to Paul with a brilliant proposal to run from 1 Dec to end of term instead of usual 12 days of Christmas. Each morning in registration there will be a different focus on an element of mental health. The pupil SLT are liaising with Ms Duncan on this now.

4. Finance Update

3 Bids in so far. 1 needs more work so will be chased up. Will review & share for discussion.

LD – Introduced Charlotte McMillan who has joined to help us get Charitable status completed to allow RHS access to potential funding pots. Charlotte/LD have been doing some background work on this.

There are a number of areas where she will be asking further questions to establish what is the best way forward for example: Incorporated or Un-incorporated, admin, constitution, responsibilities, and trustees.

Charlotte has a planned meeting with Strive (Tracy) and will provide recommendations/summary/rational to the Parent Council following this for discussion and approval.

LD – Question. Are we clear on if we have to make money every year. CMcM will get clarity on this at meeting.

Charlotte also happy to draft the constitution for the charity.

PC happy with CMcM continuing to progress this.

LP – sending a link to a Facebook group page to CMcM that might be useful.

Separate discussion for PR/LD/CMcM to discuss RHS wants/needs. PR gave example that a mini-bus for school might be a good idea but is that the best use of funds – consider what would make the biggest difference.

LD

PR – thanked CMcM/LD/WT/LP for all their work on this to date.

5. Area Partnership

HB – attended Oct meeting. Huge number of attendees.

Lots of volunteer opportunities for senior pupils locally. Examples – Town Working, Active Travel Group (well-being group) signage for cycle paths, winter provisions – delivering & packing jingle bags.

PR – Nicola Duncan looks after Citizenship/Volunteers so be worth making contact. School now have Caroline Alego in school a few days a week – seeing some remarkable changes already. Please pass on our thanks to Partnership.

Physical Assess fund - £10.5K left in fund. Could put in a bit for funds?

Heather will put in a written summary/report to secretary to discuss.

HB

Re-cycling Bins discussed – LD/WT advised this is being picked up & funded by ELC (Stuart Wood contact). School Eco Club involved now.

Discussion on can/bottle bins to start.

CMcM asked if a can/bottle be put by astros also when done. PR – would be a cross-contamination issue potentially.

6. Parent Queries

Cllr S Akhtar – it has been a difficult & challenging time. Thanks to PR and staff/parent body supports you.

LP – How is contact with parents & PC?

LD – concerns parents are finding it difficult to communicate if not digitally connected/not engaging. We have face-book/twitter/web-site to encourage/make easier. LD always posts upcoming meeting info/open invitation to come along/make contact.

LD – what happened to daily/ monthly school info on school web-site?

PR – GF did that for us & now on Mat leave. PR will speak to team about getting this back up.

7. Community Climate Asset Fund - Update

WT did a great update following last PC meeting. Waiting on a reply from 'Zero Waste – Scotland. WT also hoping to speak with Dunbar Grammar. The funding PR spoke about didn't cover schools anyway.

9. AOCB

No further points.

PR – thanked everyone for attending/work.

Date of Next Meetings:

*Parent Council meetings on Tuesday 27th October 2020, 24th November 2020, **26th January 2021**, 23rd February 2021, 30th March 2021, 27th April 2021 and 25th May 2021.*