



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

**ROSS HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL
Meeting of Tuesday 30th January 2018**

Present: N Neighbour (Vice Chair), A Muir, B Esamal, D Hill, R Averbuch, B Sanchez, J Robertson, D Middlemass, L Taylor

In Attendance: P Reynolds (Head Teacher), M Donnelly (Principal Teacher), G Forsyth (Teacher), M Macdonald (Parent), W Thornton (Parent), L Donohoe (Parent), J Dall (Parent), Cllr G Mackett, Cllr C McGinn, V Brown (Clerk)

Apologies: G Walshe, Cllr F Dugdale, Cllr S Akhtar, Cllr K McLeod, Cllr J McMillan, Cllr B Small, N McMillan

Minutes	Action
<p>1. Introductions and Apologies NN thanked everyone for coming along and will chair the meeting in GW's absence. PR also said huge thanks for so many to take the time to come along as the meetings are very well attended. Apologies as above.</p> <p>2. Minutes of last Meeting and Matters Arising The Christmas Fayre was a great success. Even P7 came along and was selling doughnuts. DH said that the Enterprise initiative raised lots of money. A great day.</p> <p>The Burns Night was a great night and had help from some of the pupils. It will be held again next year. NN and PR said big thanks to everyone. The tables and speeches were great, although the numbers were a bit low due to lack of advertising. An idea for next year is to have a reduced ticket price for the first year parents to get more of them to come along and on board early.</p> <p>Mock court case competition in The Hague last week for Jordan Smith, well done.</p> <p>A typo was noticed; Kuwait instead of Q80, VB will amend this on the minutes.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 28th November 2017 were approved. Proposed by DH and Seconded by RA</p> <p>3. Head Teacher's Update PR gave an update on the staffing with two new Principal Teachers of Guidance starting. There will now be six Guidance Teachers in total, two per house, which really makes a difference. PR will liaise with the parents so all are clear of which house each class will attend and who will be their Teacher. It will now be easier to track the pupil's attainment and progress and it will make things a lot more manageable. There are still pupils who are excluded every year and most of them were excluded because they weren't supported enough so to have the extra support will be invaluable and make a real difference. WT asked how Ross High School compare to other High Schools? PR said that it has one of the lowest exclusion figures in East Lothian, however to keep calm, safe and order in the school sometimes makes it necessary to exclude a pupil, although last resort. Cllr GM said that by giving very challenging pupils a different environment with more responsibilities, they sometimes flourish and really benefit from it rather than staying in a mainstream school.</p> <p>Great sports achievements again in International Karate, Football, Hockey and Rugby winning the Scottish National Bowl at Murrayfield. Well done everyone.</p> <p>YPI - Youth Philanthropy Initiative had their finals and Cllr GM was on the judging panel saying that the pupils were so confident and knowledgeable, making it really hard to choose the winner. It was Disability Football in Tranent who won it this year.</p>	<p>VB</p>

The Boys Hockey team is up and running and has now had their first ever competition. The School DJs and Podcasters have really grown over the last few months. This is a great team of people representing the voice of Ross High on Podcasts and the East Coast FM Radio Show. This runs live every Tuesday night at 7-8pm. The pupils are even helping other schools with their radio shows. Well done.

A pupil has been chosen as an illustrator for the National Book Trust for the first time, which is a great achievement.

The Christmas Concert 2017 was great and featured a brass concert, a talent show, a junior show and a senior show. It was a lovely event and will be held every year.

Thinking About You Christmas Campaign was featured in local newspapers and was very well received. Plans are to continue this very important work every Christmas and throughout the year with the food bank.

The Department of Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (RMPS) invited Dr Murdo Macdonald to speak to the pupils on the topic of Medical Ethics and, in particular, embryology. Much appreciated and really interesting discussions.

The feedback from the behaviour and attendance letter recently posted out to all parents was positive. The parents receive an automatic text if a pupil is late in the morning or after lunch for the second period. RA asked if absence was worse in specific year groups? PR said it is across the board and is about 90% at the moment with a target of 93%. Truancy is not an issue, usually pupils are late back after lunch or a school bus is late. There are a significant number of pupils who are absent because of sports, which is classified as unauthorised absence and is therefore included in the statistics. As an example, 90% absence for 10 years equals a whole school year in days, which is a lot to lose out on.

LD suggested it might be an idea to see if Attendance Officers could be funded again? PR said that it is unlikely because there are now Family Support Workers instead.

4. Parental Engagement strategy 2018

MD is organising Ross High's first Parental Engagement Conference for parents of pupils from P6 to S6 on 28th March 2018 at 6pm. There will be various workshops going on throughout the evening with revision techniques, mental health, numeracy, literacy, study skills, online safety, anti bullying, alcohol awareness, and careers support. The local Community Police Officer Dougie Smith will come along and do a stall. There will be refreshments, Snapchat, STEM, sports clubs, and Duke of Edinburgh. MD asked if the Parent Council members could have a think of anything else the parents would want to see on the night and if so, just to let her know. GF has done another survey where in a week 52 parents had said yes to attending and the majority has already signed up to the workshops, which can also be done on the night.

PR said that there would be a course choice option for University's coming up soon for next year, with for example Financial services. BS said that it would be useful to know where to locate the information for University choices. MD will speak to Leaps to see if they can put something together for everyone to have easy access to.

One of the aims with the parental engagement is to make sure to reach all parents with updates and information in school. Where some are using social media often, others might not or prefer a paper copy. MD will do a new monthly newsletter on a trial basis and get feedback to see what parents prefer at the moment. The idea is to create news folders to put them in so it is easy to back to look at previous ones. RA suggested having a digital newsletter on the website and publish it on twitter with a link to different feeds so it updates all at once. This also gives people the choice to print a paper copy if they wish.

MD

<p>GF is going to help to set up youtube channels on a trial basis for some pupils because it is very current and would be great for the future. It needs to be justifiable learning however and it could prove difficult to find the time for it.</p> <p>NN mentioned that the communication could improve and to keep the calendar updated on the website. MD will add Parental engagement tab with link to document onto the Parent Council website.</p> <p>NN also mentioned the engagement strategy with a warm welcome in the school. PR said that this office isn't just a meet and greet place, it also has working staff that are very busy. PR will follow up on the discussions.</p> <p>NN asked what everyone feels that the Parent Council's priority should be and what to focus on and do better? This will be discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>5. Finance Update Balance of bank account at 29th December 2017 was £349.51.</p> <p>6. Area Partnership The Area Partnership is holding their next meeting on 6th February at Ross High.</p> <p>An Area Partnership Youth Group with pupils from P7-S2 has been set up and their meeting is held on 30th January. They have been given a budget of £1000 per year to allocate to important projects decided by them, which is a great opportunity.</p> <p>7. School Improvement Plan This will be discussed at the next Parent Council meeting.</p> <p>8. Fundraising NN has met with Soulacoaster and confirmed the gig in the school on Friday 20th April 2018 at 8pm – 10.30pm. There will be two indie / rock school bands as support as well. It will be run by the Parent Council members and it was decided to keep it as an over 18.s event. £10 per person and bring your own bottle. The art department is making a poster for the evening. The max capacity is at 400 people in the hall so plenty of space for tables, seating and dancing. Equipment has been donated, a sound engineer organised. NN to double-check if a fire warden is needed to empty the building, first aider and so everything is covered. PR said that it is all about having fun and not about fundraising. RA volunteered to help on the evening.</p> <p>9. Parents' Queries JD asked if Ross High could have a wizard online booking system for parent's night, as there are other High Schools that have this. PR will look into it.</p> <p>BE asked if there were any girls who wanted to join the rugby team, as at the moment there are spaces available and they might lose out on a trip if they are not a full team.</p> <p>10. AOCB NN and GW went to the information evening about the Education Bill Consultation - Empowering Schools, hosted by Head of Education Fiona Robertson. PR thanked them for all their hard work with this. They submitted their response to the local authority and NN would also reply to the Consultation directly to the Scottish Government on behalf of the Parent Council.</p> <p>PR showed everyone the High School extension and refurbishment plans. There will be an evening soon inviting the Parent Forum, pupils and staff to see the full presentation. It will be a three-year programme starting 2019 and will take the pupil capacity to about 1450 in total once finished.</p> <p>Date of Next Meetings: Next Parent Council meeting 27th February 2018 Area Partnership 6th February 2018 ELAPCM: 20th February 2018</p>	<p>MD</p> <p>PR</p> <p>PR</p>
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