

GLEN URQUHART HIGH SCHOOL

Parent Council Meeting

10th November 2021, 7pm

Present: Alan Hood AH Chairperson
Karen Simpson KS Secretary
Lorraine Young
Debbie MacKinnon
Wendy Urwin WU
Brad Garrison
Katie Ashton KA
Deirdre Hart
Anne Dyce
Jill Hodge JH
Amanda Luscombe-Smith ALS

Apologies: Joan Nelson Head Teacher
Paula Cooper
Keri Westall KW

1.Welcome and Apologies

AH welcomed everyone to the online meeting and established the apologies as above. Noted that currently both Headteacher and Deputy indisposed, but the meeting should continue. Some parents experienced technical issues.

2.Approval of Minutes from the meeting on 15/09/2021 plus the AGM

Approval of the AGM Minutes 1) Lorraine Young 2) Alan Hood

Approval of the Meeting Minutes 1) Lorraine Young 2) Alan Hood

3.Matters Arising

(3.1)Scotmid grant for the benches. It was determined that the process to purchase the drama benches had halted about 2 years ago, the reason appearing to be, they would be difficult to store in the current building. AH stated the Scotmid grant does not state specifically what the £490 should be spent on. Decided to let Mrs Nelson make the decision if indoor/outdoor benches were of most

benefit to the school. ALS joined meeting later and stated the case for the multipurpose drama/community benches. AH suggesting JN should contact ALS for a discussion before any decision was to made as she would have best understanding of current school requirements.

(3.2) Amanda Graham not present to discuss the leavers event and fund raising ideas.

(5.2) Soirbheas Grant awaiting feedback from Rosemary Woodhouse.

(5.3) Strathglass Community Fund awarded and after school study bus funding secured for this school yea

(5.5) Money received from etape event.

(8.1) HPCP were sent a letter re the problem with GUHS 6th Year choices for students. No further communication received at present.

(8.2) Both the school and AH sent emails to the transport dept re the issues raised at the last meeting. AH has not had a reply as yet.

3.1 Treasurer's Post

Jill Hodge has kindly offered to take on the Treasurer's post. AH and KW will organise a handover.

New signatories to be sorted.

4. Correspondence

None.

Point made that a number of parents are not getting the posts advertised on the GUHS Parents Information and Events page. This is perceived to be due to how fb works. KS will contact Heather Gibb, group administrator see if she can help. Also, will consider sending the message by email. Mr Hay has put the dates for this years meetings on the webpage. Could the annual update form mention to parents that our fb page exists and for them to join it. We have had little reason to use the page since covid so may improve once used more regularly.

5. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Update 10th November 2021

Opening balance £3857.11

Receipts

Strathglass Community Fund - £3900.00 – Study Bus Funding

Etape Loch Ness - £320.00 – Parent volunteering at event

Loch Ness Marathon - £55.00 – Parent volunteering at event

Payments Made

TO GUHS - Autoclave £1118.50

TO GUSH – Study Bus £3900.00

Payments Due

Less monies due to previous leavers £1078.79 – we have agreed to hold this until December 2021

Less monies due for Benches for school £490.00

Account balance available to Parent Council £1544.82

Parents who helped at the etape event were thanked and letter to be sent to Debbie McWhirr.

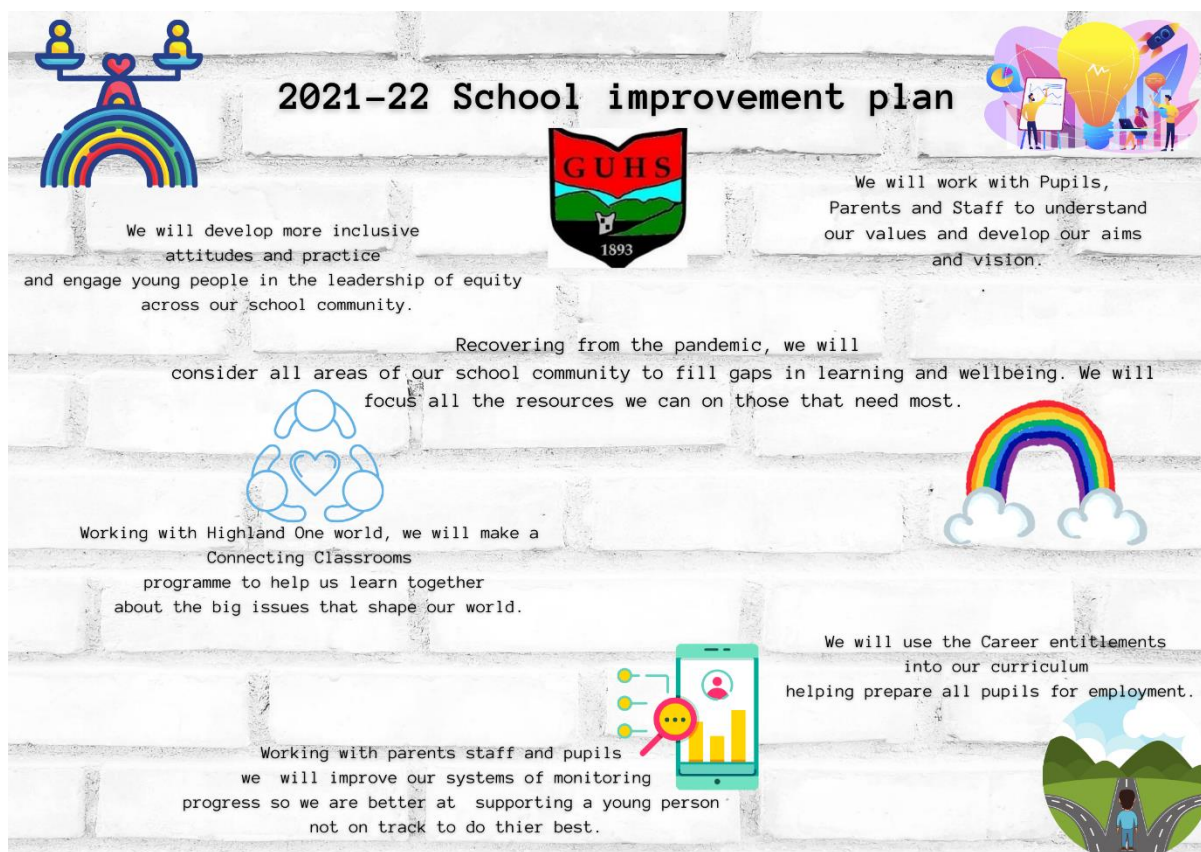
AH wondered if school funding gained for PSA cover.

6.Head Teacher's Report (received after the meeting)

Covid is hitting all Highland schools. You will see in the news several are sending pupils home in large numbers. Both Mr Campbell and I are recovering from Covid and were both quite ill. I have been mixing working at home and being in school for two weeks. We both plan being back in school next week. Whilst the senior leadership team have been not been in the building, our Faculty Principal Teachers have shared duties and worked together to keep our school running. We are so very fortunate to have committed staff in our school. This week we have had two pupils and a canteen staff member test positive for Covid. Once again, we are being restricted in the 'gatherings' we can have. Unfortunately, the Christmas dance and whole school assembly are not permitted and parents' afternoons remain online. The prelims however can go ahead as planned.

Following on from our last meeting when we discussed the UHI provision I can feedback that all schools have had a similar experience with courses not running or communication being poor. Head Teachers have made it clear that this provision, whilst useful, has room for improvement before we can be confident pupils needs will be met. As a school, we will be better prepared next session in discussing pupils' options with them so that there is a plan B in place. The appointment of Fiona Purvis and Mrs Alice Brown (one day each week) to the office, Ms Angus to Faculty PT of Science, and Mr Iain Embrey to Faculty PT of Maths and Business (starting 29th November) means we are fully staffed. A new PSA to work with a targeted group of pupils under the pupil equity scheme also starts in November. This year's allocation of PSA has remained the same, although the need has increased. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Parents and Carers Evening Class has started and is receiving a lot of positive feedback. The school transport difficulties seem to be improving slowly. Stagecoach has had inspectors going onto buses and there is an ongoing dialogue between ourselves, HC and Stagecoach.

Our improvement plan is available and will be on the website for parents. I have made a parent/pupil friendly poster to give a flavour of our improvement planning, this will also be on the website.



As part of our improvement Senior and middle leaders have been comparing the inspection reports of schools rated excellent. Whilst we are a very good school, we believe there are always things to improve. Our initial conclusions have directed us to review and update many of our policies to ensure they are in line with best practice. We have reviewed our behaviour policy with pupils and staff. A slightly updated policy will be available on our website. Pupils and staff agreed that a behaviour poster in each room would help with consistently high standards. Broadly speaking this would mean a set of achievable standards to be adhered to. If pupils were not behaving in a way that best supported learning, then staff should give two warnings before transferring the pupil to a different room. Mr Campbell consulted with staff and pupils and is completing the design of the poster. Arriving in class on time is one of the expectations. The Senior Leadership team will be monitoring late coming and issuing detentions for persistent lateness. Prior to the detention parents should be notified by email. The detention will be 15 minute during lunchtime.

The pupil senate met for the first time, the discussions were productive, well lead and give pupils the opportunity to have a voice. We will share the minutes in due course. One of the topics discussed was school dress. There were mixed ideas and views. Before completing any review of school dress, we would take the view of parents into account, so in the near future we will survey parents on what is appropriate and desirable clothing for school. In the meantime, we would like to be able to recycle school dress and build a culture where it is appropriate to reuse items of clothing, particularly hoodies and sweat shirts. We are looking for ways of doing this so anyone can make use of the recycled school clothing.

In spite of the challenges of Covid, we are managing successes within and out with school. Our literacy and numeracy attainment is well above other schools locally, attainment in subjects remains comparatively high and almost every pupil last year went on to either employment, training or further education. We have managed football matches with other schools and a theatre trip. Our big

proud moment is winning the Scottish Schools' Hydrogen Challenge on the eve of COP26. Our students competed to build the most efficient green hydrogen Lego vehicle at Scottish Power's headquarters in Glasgow. Over 4,000 pupils took part in the challenge competition since it was launched at the end of August and a team of four Glen Urquhart High School girls made the winning vehicle.

Parents attending meeting wondered if the covid letters sent home could be more specific as to which year is affected. Can be confusing if families have children in a number of years, and unsure who potentially is at risk at that time.

7.AOB

WU raised the point that the whiteboard in the music department is faulty. Is it possible to have it fixed.

The after school bus timetable does not appear to tie in with some of the clubs. Some of the younger pupils are too shy to ask to leave and parents still having to sort transport. Could the after school teachers/trainers co-ordinate the club times with the bus drivers to ensure the bus departure time from the school is known to all.

KA and others had problems with the online teacher/parent sessions. Initially there was no connection at the allotted time with the teacher, especially those with an earlier time slot. Later on there was connections to rooms but no teacher present. Teachers were then going to get back in touch with the people affected but no follow up as yet.

Other year groups (think it was year 3) feel that they have had little contact with the school and out of touch with how the school year is going for their child. It was mentioned they could talk to the Guidance staff but this was not what they wanted.(my note taking is quite poor at this point, Alan do you have anything to add)