

Glen Urquhart High School

Parent Council Meeting

27th April 2022, 7pm

Present: Joan Nelson JN Head Teacher

Alan Hood AH Chairperson

Karen Simpson KS Secretary

Lorraine Young LY

Katie Ashton

Deirdre Hart

Debbie MacKinnon

Amanda Luscombe-Smith

Suzanna Edwards

Apologies: Jill Hodge Treasurer

Brad Garrison

Amanda Graham AG

Paula Cooper

Anne Dyce

Wendy Urwin

Ashleigh Woodhouse

1. Welcome and Apologies

AH welcomed those present to the first live meeting since the covid 19 lockdown.
Apologies as above.

2. Approval of the Minutes from the 19th January 2022 meeting

Approved by JN, seconded by LY.

3. Matters Arising

(3.1) Scotmid Fund. Ongoing storage issues for storing drama equipment partly resolved. Fabric Room is to be shared with newly formed drama base. School show

production in progress. Drama subjects now offered for N5- Higher. Funding to be spent on course requirements for the subject, rather than benches.

(4) GUHS Parents information and events Facebook page to be advertised in the P7 Transition paperwork.

(5.2) Soirbheas report to be completed by AH.

(7.1) Smart TV's are to replace whiteboards. Mighty the facilities managers have agreed to Bobo carrying out the required work.

(7.3) John Naples-Campbell is collating feedback from parents as to whether they prefer Parents Afternoons online or in person. Staff will try to accommodate everyone by using a blend of online and face to face. Parents are encouraged to contact the staff at any point in the term, and are now able to come in for discussions if wished.

() Cheque signatories to be Jill Hodge, Karen Simpson, Katie Ashton

4. Correspondence

Nil

5. Treasurer's Report

Opening balance (January 2022) £3070.56

Receipts

Seniors Fundraising £131.45

Inverness Half Marathon Donation £25.00

Payments Made

TO Lidl (KS) – Eggs for School Easter Egg Run £83.58

Payments Due

Less monies being held from 2020 leavers fundraising £771.29

Less monies being held for 2022 leavers from current fundraising £395.90

Less monies due for Benches for school £490.00

Account balance available to Parent Council £1486.24

JH having problems establishing internet banking due to poor internet access where she resides. JN has suggested that a school computer could be used for Treasurer purposes.

6. Head Teacher's Report

Covid restrictions

The legal requirement to wear a face covering in most indoor places is replaced with general safety guidance for people who are managing a workplace or organisation. The wearing of face coverings will not be mandatory, but it will remain encouraged in indoor communal areas in line with the workplace guidance. Any individual who wishes to wear a

face covering in a school setting should continue to be supported to do so. In practice most young people are slowly giving face masks up. We have never wanted to create a discipline issue or make pupils feel uncomfortable, so we have encouraged facemasks by sharing the information.

Pupils are now allowed in the school during breaks. This is restricted to the canteen area where there is seating. Pupils try to congregate elsewhere but are impossible to supervise. We still encourage pupils to go outside during breaks. Many have developed the habit of getting some fresh air and being active and we see this as positive. Some pupils continue to try to congregate in toilets. This has led to behaviour issues in some cases. Also pupils have expressed a discomfort about using the toilets when there is an accumulated group. We do check toilets as frequently as possible and as pupils to use an alternative space to accumulate, socialised and eat. Before school pupils are asked to stay outside until the bell provided the weather is not adverse. This continues to be the case because pupils can not be supervised in school. Outside the tend to disperse to social areas and are more easily monitored by SLT and the office. Our most vulnerable pupils are supervised inside. Of course, pupils have access to the toilets if required.

Pupil Parliament

As you can see from the visual the parliament has achieved quite a lot in a short time; debating issues that concern them and knowing that they have a true voice for change in the school. The two motions still ongoing involve School Dress and After School activities - both of which need further development, discussion, and debate. We will be asking parliament members to seek re-election for next academic year at change of timetable along with new members at the same time as elections for pupil leadership team. The raised £536.75 for the Disaster Emergency Committee Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal; all clothes donated were sent to the Blythwood Care Highland, Deephaven in Evanton and sent to refugees. All medication, baby items, sleeping bags, food etc was sent to the frontline via Touch of Poland in Inverness.

Pupils have proposed we review dress code to increase personalisation and choice. A dubiously democratic poll was taken by some seniors which suggested a number of pupils wanted a stricter uniform. We have since explained the correct way to review policy to pupils is through a carefully planned review that includes all stakeholders – particularly. As Covid restrictions are lifting and pupils don't need to dress for open windows and doors we do have an opportunity to review our dress code with a view to updating and implementing its use. Our time scale will not be before August because pupils are on study leave. We do plan to begin a review which takes in everyone views and results in school dress that everyone is prepared to wear, is practical and contributes to the whole school values and aims. We plan to implement the current code in August and expect to remain lenient about grey, leggings and joggers, which are favoured by pupils. We do want to ensure pupils wear school dress that is safe for practical subjects and meets a level of modesty and body coverage, short shorts, very short skirts and tops remain problematic.

School improvement

This time of year is a an opportunity to reflect more carefully on the impacts of changes and developments we have put in place.

Additional literacy and numeracy were a focus for our recovery of learning. Pupils in S1-3 had additional maths and English classes and those at risk of not achieving their best had additional targeted numeracy lessons. Our data for literacy and numeracy puts us well ahead of the Highland average. We can track the increased progress of individuals and are confident we have made significant recovery that will underpin the following years.

The development of a more inclusive and equitable ethos has been successful in that we have reinforced the school values, worked to change pupils perceptions and the use of 'casual' or 'banter' language around protected characteristics through assemblies and raising awareness in staff. We have shifted policy on tackling the use of social media as a tool to abuse or discriminate and work more closely with ICT experts in the council and the police. We have launched the safer schools app. We have developed courses to include a wider variety of interests and skills, this continues next session with the introduction of SQA furniture making, practical music performance and drama at SQCF levels 4-6 (N4-H). The new additions sports science, outdoor education and business with enterprise that ran this session have been enjoyed and developed transferable skills in young people. Building on this we hope to work in partnership with HLH to offer DOF awards.

Our Pupil Equity Fund was spent on developing oracy and confidence in targeted pupils through the development of a Connecting Classrooms link. This involve group work and outdoor skill builder activities. We are beginning to evaluate the impact of this, and first indications are positive. If we can demonstrate success, we plan to use our funding next year in a similar way.

Staffing

Following 3 staffing meetings we were able to agree a staffing allocation of 23.5 FTE staff. This is broadly the same as what we have had this year and we continue to sit just under that. The number of PT's however is higher than recommended, and we are asked to reduce that over time by natural wastage. As Rosemary Woodhouse is leaving, and she a guidance teacher we had to make the case for not reducing PT's by natural wastage this year. The compromise reached is we have been allowed to advertise a year's Guidance post internally provided we manage our budget and cover the cost from our own devolved budget. We can do this by sitting just under our staff allocation and will need to show we can do it each year. Halina Rees will take over the caseload until we have appointed Rosemary's replacement. Longer term we will look at combining faculties as PT's retire unless the staffing formulae changes again. We have asked for a PE probationer to take over Rosemary's PE teaching. Rachel Weir has decided to take a career break and we have advertised for a replacement business studies teacher. Initially this was

advertised over Easter, so it has gone out again this week. We have asked our local community to contribute to Rosemary's leaving if they wish to do so.

This term

Study leave has started, and pupils can either study at home or come in for supervised study. Several pupils who have limited exams are following planned work experience. Next week our week is disjointed with a Monday holiday and Inservice day. This Inservice will be spent looking back at what has gone well and how we can improve next year. Staff will have the opportunity to plan and attend working group meetings. Working groups drive much of the improvement we deliver. S1-3 can take part in a 3 day 'activities week' this year (25th June-27th June) which includes a residential trip to Laggan. Next year we plan to run the full week and include a Spanish water Sports trip. S1 reports and parents' surgery (1st June) take place this term along with transition (21st June- 24th June) events where P7 pupils will visit us and we will visit each of the schools. There will be a P7 to S1 parents' night as part of that. Our closing ceremony is planned in the Church of Scotland on 29th June. Parents will be most welcome to attend. The leavers dance will follow that evening. We have booked the band 'Inverness Fiddlers' who are delighted to be back. Can we ask PC provide both the Juice and crisps for pupils and a 'tea and cake' for staff and the band members – we thought it would be nice if staff were able to meet the band and parent council during the interval. The only concern we have is getting pupils home afterwards. Ross's no longer have a large minibus and the small bus is too small. We wondered if parent council might have some ideas, otherwise pupils would need picked up.

7. Developing the Young Workforce

Postponed until next session due to illness.

8. Dress code review

Addressed in Head Teacher's report.

9. Leaver's Dance

To be held on Wednesday 29/06/2022. Inverness Fiddlers delighted to be asked back to deliver the musical entertainment. Parent Council to provide the refreshments for the band, teachers and pupils on the evening. KS to organise. JN to determine if it will be possible to hire a bus for the evening transport of the outlying pupils from Glen Urquhart and Strathglass.

AG sent update re the school leavers evening meal. Numbers determined, Loch Ness Inn to be the hosts of the 2 course meal. Attending teachers happy to pay for their meals. Pupils organising their own hoodies. Leavers medals to be presented. PC aware the balance in the bank will be negligible after this years event.

10. Pupil Parliament

See Head Teachers Report.

11. AOB

1. Transport issues in winter concerning Highland Council/ the Education Authority/Stagecoach. Whilst some progress has been made it has been decided this will be returned to the agenda in September. Local Councillors will be invited to this meeting. The improvements noted were the local gritters in Cannich extended the road's that they were previously tackling and the bus company phones JN with any relevant issues so emails/fb alerts can be made to those affected by the service that day. However it does leave lots of room overall for improvement. Timing of gritters tackling roads before the bus uses it has reduced. Drivers experiences. Impact on pupils education, parents abilities to step in or not at last minute, to provide transport very variable. Remains a hot topic.
2. Transport – SE/AH will attend the next GURCA Meeting concerning the public/school transport section noted in the Community Action Plan, to better understand the context.
3. Youth Issues. SN informed those present that the GURCA Meeting's have a dedicated Youth Issues agenda item. JN to determine if the Senior Phase pupils could regularly update or provide views.