



Harlaw Academy Parent Council

Minutes

Thursday 14th March 2019

Present

Catriona Allan (Chair), Ruth Adair (Vice Chair), Graham Blance (Acting Head Teacher), Fiona Lawrence (Deputy Head), Tara Todd (Treasurer), Lynne Gowans (Secretary), Mary Michie (FP), Cllr Douglas Lumsden, Cllr Henrickson, Nictor Igave, Thiago Fernandes, Timi Ejiofoh

Apologies

Sarah Souter, Jacqui Lang

01. Welcome

Catriona Allan welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies, see above.

02. Points from Last Minutes on Thursday 24th Jan 2019

Informal PTA Fundraising meeting taking place 18/4 at Inn at the Park. This meeting is to discuss moving forward with the new fundraising part of Parent Council now that Harlaw PTA has disbanded. There has been some interest from Harlaw/Broomhill parents and we are keen to recruit some Kaimhill and Hanover parents, along with new parents from P7's too.

Feedback forms from recent parents night have been received and will be reviewed and a report given at next meeting. Ruth Adair asked if we can reach out to more parents for feedback, Fiona Lawrence advised that forms will be available at all parent evenings and at P7 induction meetings. (FL)

Recycled Harlaw uniform stalls have been a great success and we will display at next parents evening and P7 induction, stock permitting. We have currently run out of most items and will hopefully receive more from pupils leaving school and moving up years. A request will go out via bulletin, Groupcall and Facebook for uniform donation. This information can also be included in pupils leaver slips.

Water bottles, the Parent Council has funded bottles for all pupils in P7 who will be joining the school after summer. Surplus stock will be available for any pupil to purchase, price will be advised at next meeting. The will be available to purchase during form time or from school office at break times.

A Parent Council training evening will take place on 9th May, Catriona Allan and Ruth Adair will attend this event at Mile-End School.

03. Parent Council Chair Report

Fiona Lawrence and Catriona Allan attended Parental Engagement event at Marischal College, interesting event with a few ideas discussed, some which Harlaw already have in place.

Meeting to take place on 25th March with councillors regarding safety issues at Harlaw academy, update at next meeting will be provided. (CA)

Ruth Adair and Catriona Allan attended FP buffet and quiz, a great time was had and they were part of the winning quiz team along with Mr Innes.

Catriona attended Aberdeen Parent Council forum meeting with lots of discussion regarding changing rolls in primary schools, there is a link of the FB page. This is as per Scottish Government guidance 2014, this is for all schools in Scotland.

A flyer regarding PC/PTA fundraising for poverty proofing, by Aberdeen Council will be produced shortly, Caroline Johnstone has been appointed this task and it will be circulated as soon as it is available.

At last forum meeting lack of teaching staff was discussed, the council subsequently reached out to Canada to see if they could recruit any interested parties and 15 candidates have been interviewed so far, any updates to this will be advised at future meetings.

On 22nd March Catriona, Ruth and Fiona Lawrence will be meeting with a representative from Scotplay to discuss what could be done to enhance the school playground. It is envisaged that funds received from the PTA will be used for these works with further fundraising carried out for any further funds that may be required.

04. Treasurers Report

Harlaw PTA now disbanded and funds transferred to Parent Council, see below. Accounts due with Aberdeen City Council by end of May 2019.

DATE	Money Received	Description of Money received	Description of money spent	Transaction Amount £	Newsletter Printing Costs	Scottish Parent Councils Association	Clerks Fees	Harlaw Academy Website Development	Contribution to school prizes	Miscellaneous	Current AC Balance
01/04/2018	£ 446.90	Balance b/f									£446.90
28/06/2018			Sarah Souter	£ 60.00			£ 60.00				£386.90
19/09/2018			Lynne Gowans	£120.00			£120.00		£100.00		£266.90
01/10/2018			Health/Wellbeing event donation	£100.00							£166.90
28/11/2018			Lynne Gowans	£ 60.00							£106.90
22/01/2019	£5,000.00	PTA Donation									
23/01/2019	£5,000.00	PTA Donation									
24/01/2019	£3,129.09	PTA Donation									
28/02/2019	£ 417.47	CCA Payment									
Total	£13,993.46			£340.00	£0.00	£0.00	£180.00	£0.00	£100.00	£0.00	
									Balance to be c/fwd		£13,653.46

05. Parental Engagement

Fiona Lawrence advised that a survey was emailed out to 1st Year and 4th Year parents to complete and 2nd year parents were also approached by pupils with clipboards at recent parents meeting. All comments will be reviewed but headline messages are generally encouraging with parents seeing staff as friendly and pupils being respected. It was also reported how well the cleaning staff were looking after the school. There were some comments regarding the condition of the school building but this is to be expected.

An online safety survey is next to be sent out.

Jenny Rennie applied for a health improvement fund bid and won therefore Paul Hay will be visiting the school to speak with parents about online safety. Information will be sent via Groupcall.

School surveys will now be available to all parent/carers who sign into school at the office.

Would the Parent Council be willing to commission someone to help with updating the school website. This was agreed in principal and the school has someone in mind for this and more information will be given when available.

06. School Report

People:

Staffing – two currently on maternity leave, two new staff arriving after Easter holidays in Social Subjects and English. Mrs Taylor is retiring as Social Subjects faculty head and recruitment process is currently underway for this post. In Maths/Computing/D&T/Business Education we are currently recruiting for these posts but with difficulty. Harlaw interviewed a maths teacher along with two other schools but the council agreed there was a more immediate requirement at another school for this post. There is also long term absence of two teachers but the school is currently consulting for a temporary french teacher who will hopefully be with us until Christmas.

Learning:

Prelims for 4/5/6th years taken place and now preparing for exams.

Course choice evening took place 30th January which had a large turn out and much interest in pupil pathways. Course choice information currently being processed and timetables will be produced in time for the start of the new term on 20th May.

Validated Self Evaluation: senior management team went to 3rd year classes and looked at what it was like to be a 3rd year pupil at Harlaw with the majority of classes visited are providing good quality teaching with positive pupil engagement. A 3rd focus group reported decor in classrooms were requiring updating and that some classes required decluttering! A very good response to Google Classroom was noted, allowing pupils to access education elsewhere.

In service days, what do teachers do? These sessions allow teachers to discuss ways to improve learning in teaching in the school, in the classroom and in their own faculty. We think we are good, we think we can be better, that is the message coming from all staff.

Community:

Security has been a concern and during one of the in service days a member of Police Scotland came to visit the school site and gave some functional recommendations to make Harlaw more safe and secure for the young pupils attending.

Duke of Edinburgh: 77 awards handed out to school this year, by far the most given out in the city.

Ballot announcement for lunchtime has taken place and a shorter lunchtime has been agreed. This means a 8.30am start, lunch 12.20, and day end time of 3.05pm. This will also mean that hours will not change in winter time and school will close at same time all year round. Club arrangements are currently being looked into.

School has capped roll of 180 pupils, Harlaw is the second most requested school in Aberdeen City for children outwith catchment area. We have a good reputation for delivery education in the city and lots of parents and pupils have requested to come here rather than their zoned school. There will be an element of disappointment as we don't have enough spaces to cover all requests. The roll would only change if school zone area had sufficient growth.

Question: Can parents access Google Classroom?

Answer: If your child has added an additional parent email address they will get notifications otherwise these will go directly to pupils. Aberdeen City is making a guide for Google Classroom, we will hopefully be able to share this with parents when available.

Question: Can school fundraiser take place to raise money for internal decoration?

Answer: School landlord would have to be consulted first, this will be checked and advised at next meeting. (GB) Possible parent involent could take place if this was authorised.

Question: Should we encourage senior pupils to become teachers?

Answer: If a pupil shows interest yes of course, there have been many pupils who have gone onto study teaching over the years. Catriona Allan suggested ask member of Aberdeen University who may come in to speak with pupils about a career in teaching. Mr Blance advised a former pupil who runs his own I.T. company is planning to come into school and speak with senior pupils.

Question: When pupils leave school do we keep a log of where they have gone, whether to study or otherwise?

Answer: Yes we do initially but pathways change and the school would not be provided with this information.

07. Former Pupils Report

Former pupils are encouraged to join the Harlaw FP group, it doesn't have too many young members and would be very pleased for some to join.

Updates on Harlaw website are required for FP section, this will be checked for next meeting (FL)

Facebook/ Twitter could be used to promote the group and ask people to share their stories from Harlaw days.

Fiona Lawrence commented on the cabinet display in school which has been a great talking point amongst pupils and staff. Thanks to be passed onto the group.

08. A.O.B.

Parent Council received message from 1st year student RGU preparing a project on Queens Cross / Harlaw community council area and issues regarding this area, they were asking if anyone was willing to respond to them, staff are not allowed to reply but if any residents want to reply this would be great. (CA)

Question: During Parents evening why can we not see all teachers on the night?

Answer: This is not always possible due to time restraints but the guidance teacher can give you any information you are not able to obtain on the night.

08. Date of next meeting

AGM 30/05/19 @ 6.30pm