

Harlaw Academy

Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020

4.30pm on Google Meet

<b><u>Agenda Item</u></b>	
<b>1.</b> <b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b>	A welcome from Catriona and introductions from all SLT and HT and Parent Council members.
<b>2.</b> <b><u>Action points/ approve previous minutes</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not everything is currently relevant at the moment due to COVID</li><li>• Fundraising activities at the school – school shuts at 10pm so any activity needs to be finished by 9.30pm to ensure tidy up. We could schedule them earlier if required for a longer time</li><li>• S1 water bottles – to be counted in June</li><li>• Pupil Feedback on prelims – nothing has been formalised but informal feedback was given about study leave. This will be looked at when planning the next year calendar with all feedback from all partners taken into account. Prelims will be looked at going forward</li><li>• Asda Tokens – Lyndsay to follow up</li><li>• Crowd Funding – Ruth sent information to Angie and it is something we could look at to do as long as its for a specific reason</li><li>• International fayre. To be researched more.</li><li>• Ruth and Catriona attended the Grammar careers fayre – positive things taken away from this. Really good event and would like to see it for Harlaw pupils. There were also leaflets and handouts on exam information etc. that will be shared with the school once back</li><li>• Check with APCF with poverty proofing</li><li>• Previous minutes and actions were approved by Angie and seconded by Tara</li></ul>
<b>3.</b> <b><u>Parent Council Update</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not much happening at the moment due to the current COVID pandemic. Information is being shared from the emails onto the Parent Council Facebook page. Posts also put up to let parents know if they have concerns/ to get in touch with the school</li><li>• Treasurer Report – balance sheet has been emailed out please can this be approved and seconded. There have been no new transitions in the new financial year and the current balance is £1286. We are to receive a donation from parent Douglas Lumsden. He kindly offered around £400 and we have asked if he wants this to be spent on anything specific– waiting to hear back from him</li><li>• Fundraising – all on hold due to COVID at the moment but thinking of ideas going forward. Looking at a calendar of events to be made for when things do get back to normal. Mr McLaren to help Parent Council get goals to aim for and attach events to this</li></ul>

**4.**  
**School Update**

Mr McLaren asked if the parent council would be happy for him to prepare a standing set of update items for each meeting's update. There will also be opportunity for bespoke items to be added.

**School Security** – There has been really good communication with Aberdeen City Council and discussions have been had about the front of the school. Original options included installing a fence or a hedge. The Planning Team have come back and suggested that a hedge would be the best option. They have reassured it will be in keeping designs visible elsewhere in the locality. There will also be barriers at the entrance and exit of the car park to restrict car access. Mr McLaren has raised concerns that these solutions will not stop the young people walking through the car park. Aberdeen City Council are designing and costing installing a new footpath in a 'horseshoe' shape to gain access into school and a zebra crossing at the doors. Car park will be for staff only during the school day. The disabled parking will require to be moved. Visitor parking will also need be considered. Our priority is to ensure that children are safe and secure.

Catriona raised a point about maintenance of the hedge – who would this fall on - school or council? Mr McLaren is not sure but can find out. School budgets are being reviewed at present, but Mr McLaren feels this is likely to become a school cost.

**SQA** – There are a number of deadlines coming up in next few weeks. Teachers are submitting entries and results for units and courses at National 1-4 - deadline is Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>. They are also busy finalising estimates for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. These will be submitted to the SQA before the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020 deadline. Results will be issued to pupils in August. Over the past 5 weeks SQA, have been drip feeding information about what schools should be doing. Mr McLaren wants to reassure parents that all Head Teachers in the city are working together to make sure it is a fair and consistent process. Staff training opportunities have been offered to Principal Teachers to assist with new processes. Action plans have been produced by each faculty for quality assuring the process of producing estimates. There will be a level of appeal available but unsure how this will work at present.

**Staffing & Timetable** – There have been questions from a small number of parents regarding why the Harlaw timetable didn't change on 11<sup>th</sup> May like some other city schools. Mr McLaren commented that there are many reasons why he felt the decision was right for our school context. Maintaining our scheduled timetable change date meant;

- Staff would have the maximum opportunity to work with current pupils, who they knew, in the current pandemic, especially those in S4-S6 to ensure they are given the estimate they deserve

- To create time to look at structure, staffing and the curriculum offer for next session, there is likely to be a lot of re-coursing required.

The timetable will change on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. All pupils will be emailed their timetable next week to their Google account. NESCOL classes will not start until after Summer break. City Campus classes started on the 11<sup>th</sup> May, but affect a very small number of pupils and staff in Harlaw this year.

**S1 transition** – Mrs Rennie has been working really hard with the ASG’s and staff for the S1 transition. It is a different process this year due to COVID and emotions are running high. Transition is an emotional time for children and their families anyway, without the current COVID pandemic.

Curriculum visits weren’t able to finish, so the transition group are looking at solutions to this. The Transition group includes - Mrs Rennie, Transition Teachers, P7 Teachers and Secondary staff.

Correspondence has continued from Mrs Rennie to parents as well as 1-1 calls with teachers to establish the children’s academic abilities, friendship groups and any support they may need in Harlaw.

A PowerPoint presentation is being put together on google slides which will include:

- Introduction from Mr McLaren
- Introduction to other staff within the school including what their role is
- Photographic tour of the school
- Information on the subjects they will study
- A guide to a day in the life of an S1 pupil
- Clubs/ Activities on offer
- Uniform & homework information

A Survey Monkey went to all P7 pupils to find out what they wanted to ask/ any concerns they may be feeling so that this can be included in the slideshow. It will be available in June.

Class lists were shared with pupils last week and if you have any concerns please contact Mrs Rennie.

There are 50 children coming from 26 other schools out with the ASG schools for S1.

**Questions from Parent Council -**

- Would these new resources possibly change the way S1 induction is done in the future – yes! This whole situation is allowing the school to look at how they work. Using technology for teacher meetings will also be used as it is really useful tool
- Will the slideshow be available all year round? – Yes.
- Role of the new S1 – there is a waiting list as at capacity - 180 pupils

	<p><b>Curriculum Review</b> – when Mr McLaren first started, he had a range of things he wanted to find out about the school. At the heart of everything, he really wants to look at where Harlaw can be in 1, 2 or 3 years’ time. He understands the anxiety and uncertainty about post COVID schooling, but also understand the importance of moving the school forward. It would be easy to put things on hold but HMIE have not told us they are going to delay coming back. Mr McLaren thinks it could still be in around a years’ time. He wants the school to be ambitious and to improve.</p> <p>Curriculum development is important and an area in which Mr McLaren has experience in. He wants to review the curriculum model next year and this will include consulting with all stakeholders and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partners. He will look at what works well and what can be improved. Some of this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking at S4 qualification and how many they sit</li> <li>• Look at when qualifications are started</li> <li>• Look at what the curriculum could look like in Harlaw and opportunities we could offer in different subject areas not currently on offer</li> </ul> <p>Mr McLaren is keen to work closely with the Parent Council going forward to understand more fully what makes Harlaw great and what more we can do to support our youngsters and develop the school.</p> <p><b>Parent Council Comment</b>– The key thing to work on would be how to get engagement from parents and carers within the school as this has been a struggle previously. People engage in different ways so what can we do to get the best of this.</p> <p>Sarah Souter, Angie Nicol and Lyndsay Hay are to meet as a sub-committee to take this forward and investigate parental involvement and engagement</p>
<p><b><u>5.</u></b> <b><u>AOB</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scholar</b> – Tara asked if the children could move on a level and the and the answer is yes. The data comes from SEEMIS and there is a usually 2-week delay, however, but they have added a special button which then means children can access it due to COVID.</li> <li>• <b>Schooling from home</b> – The school understand the balance is hard. The key message is do what you can. Promoting Flexible working is how we are doing this.</li> <li>• On behalf of the Parent Council we would like to thank all the staff for keeping our children engaged, carrying on with work and trying out new skills – we really appreciate it.</li> <li>• <b>S6 leavers</b> – They have not had the normal leaving events they would have had. There was a conversation with S6 before closure and they were reassured that the school will do something to mark them leaving. Mailing list has been created to keep in touch with them for when restrictions have been removed. It is important their achievements are celebrated! The Parent Council have said to ask for help/ financial assistance in the planning of this.</li> </ul>

- **Fire alarms** – problems with this before, especially just before we shut. The School identified 2 pupils who kept setting them off. Police have been informed and charges will be brought as it is a criminal offence. Harlaw will not stand for this behaviour.
- **Prefects** - How they will be chosen? – At this time the school are not sure but this is on the to do list. Very early stages of this process.
- **Re-opening of school** – we await further information from Nicola Sturgeon who will deliver this in due course.
- **Estimates** – will the current work that is being completed at home be considered in the estimate grade? – No, as there is no way of authenticating who completed the work.
- **Could there be a welcome class in the new timetable to introduce staff to pupils?** – Staff are looking at assemblies – can host up to 100 people on google classroom. Staff have been upskilling in digital skills to look at different ways of reaching out to kids. Aberdeen City Council is working with staff to get them upskilled digitally also.

Date of the next meeting is June 25<sup>th</sup> at 4.30pm. This will be part AGM and part Parent Council meeting.