

Harlaw Academy

Parent Council Meeting

Thursday 3rd September 2020

4.30pm on Google Meet



<u>Agenda Item</u>	
<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	Apologies from Graham Blanche, Sarah Souter, Tara Todd, Lyndsay Hay, Lorraine McCoig Welcome and thank you from Catriona (Chair)
<u>Action points/ approval previous minutes</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water bottles handed to new S1's. Add to Actions a stock take will be required for the 2021/2022 academic year.• CA been in discussion with Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) about a virtual careers fair.• PPE – Harlaw logo face masks are being looked into. Hand Sanitiser not required at present but Ross McLaren (RMc) will contact the Parent Council (PC) if stocks are running low.• Fundraising for chrome books – no longer required – see School Update• International Festival – will keep on Actions until we reach that point in Scotland's Route Map.• Parental Engagement & Involvement Sub Committee – no action.• Poverty Proofing Guidelines for fundraising – CA did not mention it at the recent Aberdeen Parent Council Forum (APC meeting as that meeting was around the recovery plan for schools.• Previous meeting minutes approved by Ruth Adair and seconded by Timi Ejiofoh
<u>Election of New Members</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kevin Rinchey – has a son in S1 and a daughter at Broomhill. He is Head of Faculty of Humanities at Portlethen Academy and a former Harlaw pupil. Approved by Ruth Adair and seconded by Sarah Dingwall• Veronica Strachan – has 2 daughters at Harlaw and is Assistant Chief Academic Officer at RGU. Approved by Ruth Adair and seconded by Rachael Price• Angela Joss – mother of 4 with youngest at Harlaw. Currently works for Aberdeen Inspired and has had experience of PC and PTAs. Approved by Sarah Dingwall and seconded by Timi Ejiofoh• We welcome Emma Williams on as a friend of the Parent Council. Emma has very kindly offered to help with grant applications for the new project that Angie Nicol (AN) will talk about in the Fundraising Update. Emma has a lot of experience as she successfully won grants for the playground project at Broomhill Primary.
<u>Parent Council Update</u>	<p>A reminder that the position of Treasurer is still vacant. The previous Treasurer is still on the PC as an elected member and can give support and mentoring to any new Treasurer for the year. Tara plans to step down at the next AGM.</p> <p>The Parent Council are always on the lookout for new Elected Members. Please let us know if you are interested in joining as an elected member or Treasurer via Facebook or email.</p> <p>The PC are currently looking at different options for the School Uniform recycling donation station and are exploring a date before the October break. A call will go out to ask for any outgrown uniform or for any leaver's uniforms. We would ask for study books at this point also.</p>

	<p><u>Treasurer's Report</u></p> <p>£2208 in the account, which includes the ACC payment that is made to all PCs at the start of the academic year. This money is to be used for the running and admin of the PC.</p> <p><u>Fundraising Update</u></p> <p>AN announced our HOP project – Harlaw Outdoor Project. There are 3 outside areas on the school grounds that we plan to turn into 2 outside classrooms and a 6th Year Common area. 2 spaces need to be looked at by ACC staff but we have the go ahead to start clearing the area ear marked for the 6th Years, once the paperwork is complete. We plan to raise funds by crowdfunding on the Just Giving platform and send letters to local businesses to ask for their help – whether that be money, time or materials. If you have any contacts please email the PC or send a message via Facebook. Several grants are being investigated and possibly signing up for Amazon Smile.</p>
<p><u>Former Pupils Update</u></p>	<p>Mary Michie (MM) provided the Parent Council with an update on the FP's events. Their last meeting was held in March and due to the current COVID restrictions they have not had any further meetings, though the walking group have met twice for socially distanced walks. The Memorabilia Group meetings have also been cancelled for this session, along with the Coffee Mornings. CA and AN will get in touch with MM and the FP's to discuss how they can help with the HOP project.</p>
<p><u>School Update</u></p>	<p>First few weeks back have been positive despite a few setbacks – storm damage and a small electrical fire. Special thanks to the janitors and cleaning staff who have been very impressive with their efforts considering the challenges that the school has faced. Pupils and staff seem happy to be back and pupil attendance has gone up from 91% to 94.7%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PE <p>PE provision is an area of concern as inside gym halls are currently out of use. Pupils are bused to outside field and they can get wet if the weather turns. There is currently no facility for them to change should this happen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet weather plan <p>Wet weather plan is currently being compiled and will be shared with the wider community when ready.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature in the building <p>There have been some concerns regarding the temperature of the school as windows need to be open for ventilation. The heating is on but pupils who are cold should work with their teacher to ensure they sit away from an open window. This will be looked at as winter approaches but will be dependent on Scottish Government guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chrome Books <p>ACC have pledged 750 chrome books to the school which will be shared amongst the Senior phase. Ideally all pupils should have a Chromebook and RMc is looking to make up the shortfall from school funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Repairs <p>The toilets were due to be upgraded over the summer but due to COVID this was put on hold. The lead time for the work is 14-15 weeks so this will be undertaken summer 2021 to cause the least amount of disruption.</p>

The works to the front of the school (hedge, barriers, path and zebra crossing) have been approved and RMc is waiting to hear when this will commence having received final planning permissions.

The back gate that is currently being used by the S1's for access to their playground needs to be upgraded and a dedicated path marked out. Typically, all teachers are in before pupils start arriving.

RMc is working on covered areas for the playgrounds – a structure or canopies/sails are currently being investigated

- Staffing

A new Maths teacher has been appointed and will start middle of September.

A new Chemistry teacher has been appointed and a start date is to be arranged.

A new SFL teacher has been appointed and a start date is to be arranged.

Ashleigh Wilson was appointed Guidance for S3's

There are 3 posts outstanding: PT Literacy, Numeracy and final PTG

Questions from Parents

Currently there is no homework being issued. Is this a citywide policy based on national guidance?

The school wanted to ease all pupils back into the way of full-time education and also let the teachers have time to see where pupils were with their learning. Homework will be issued later into the first term.

Will there be parents evening and if so what will they look like?

All Head Teachers will be discussing this issue to ensure that there is a consistent approach across this city. Deputy Head Angela McLellan (AMc) has this issue on her remit. Google Meets will be investigated as there is a “waiting room” functionality.

Will parents be advised if, during lockdown, their child is falling behind in some areas of the curriculum?

There have been many lessons learned from the last lockdown and improvements will be made should we find ourselves in another lockdown situation.

John Swinney pledged for a national equality audit to identify gaps resulting in school closures. Is the school aware of any concrete plans for this to be undertaken and if so, by what means and what is the likely timeline?

RMc is aware but has no communication about how or when this will be undertaken beyond that already available in the public domain.

What are the contingencies for going back on-line in the event of a second lockdown?

All information on contingencies can be found on the website or via the Groupcall/Xpressions notifications that came before the school broke up for summer. These contingencies will continue to be reviewed and tweaked as necessary.

There will be more live-streaming of classes if we were to have a second lockdown. RMc could not mandate all teachers to participate due trade union guidance, but this situation has changed since then.

Will on-line learning be available to children who are self-isolating?

If a child has been instructed by the NHS to self-isolate then the school is duty bound to provide at home learning.

Where do 6th Years go for study periods in the middle of the day?

Unfortunately, an area has not been identified as yet and pupils are encouraged to go home, if they can. The HOP project will help this situation and Sixth Year Guidance will be speaking to all pupils in the coming weeks to devise personalised plans, such as an area in the classroom, etc.

When will the Senior pupils be advised of the plan for the Prefect structure?

	<p>This is in discussion at the moment as the prefects will be limited to what they are allowed to do. Clear roles and responsibilities need to be identified.</p> <p>The new S1's have not yet received their new Accord cards and are working with temporary cards which cannot be topped up online. Also, Aberdeenshire schools work a different system where parents can access balances and check and see what their child/ren has had to eat that day. Can ACC look into this system?</p> <p>This is a citywide problem and the department involved with the Accord cards is looking to ensure that all pupils will get their new cards as soon as possible.</p> <p>RMc has worked with the system that Shire has in place and is also looking at a refresh of the catering EPOS services. We will be updated.</p> <p>Will there be provision for practising for those pupils studying music – vocals, woodwind and brass are currently not allowed.</p> <p>Currently there is no provision – Veronica Strachan (VC) suggested a small classroom could be made available, with laptops. All options will be explored and discussed.</p> <p>When will extra curriculum activities and clubs resume?</p> <p>We will need to wait for national guidance on further updates for this.</p> <p>The S1 playground is daunting for some pupils – can the library be used instead?</p> <p>Parents should get in touch with RMc/Jenny Rennie (JM)/Erin Kermath (EK) if their children are finding areas of the school intimidating.</p>
<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p>	<p>12th November at 4.30pm via Google Meets</p>