

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE PARENT COUNCIL OF THE JAMES YOUNG HIGH
SCHOOL ON 11 APRIL 2018**

In Attendance: Eric Lumsden, Claire Kerr, Lynn Taylor, Gillian Adens, Mike Paterson, Vicky Walker, Donald Morrison, James Lumsden, Patricia Gallagher, Pamela Lundberg, Susi Davidson

Apologies had been received from: Elaine Ballantyne, Sarah Henley, Louise Elder

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Gillian welcomed everyone to the Meeting and everyone was introduced. Pamela Lundberg, who is the new Acting Deputy Head introduced herself and Susi Davidson, who is well known to the Parent Council was also introduced.

The previous Minutes were proposed and seconded by Vicky Walker and seconded by Donald Morrison.

CHANGES TO PRIZE GIVING

Susi Davidson handed out proposed changes to the Prize Giving Ceremony with the senior Prize Giving being held in September. This is being implemented for this academic year and certificates will now be issued instead of prize books due, in part, to budgetary considerations. There will be nothing radically different about the Senior Phase Awards and the National 4s will also be recognised. Staff had experience in other schools where this had been the Prize Ceremony timescale and many of the S6 pupils who had left came back for the award ceremony. This new approach was met with general approval.

NEXT YEAR HIGHERS

The staff are well advanced in their preparations for the changes to the structure of the SQA Awards in the Higher year. It was explained that, in English, there was very little change and that, prior to the exam, there will be a speaking and listening assessment which is on a pass or fail basis, which is similar to the units at the moment. There are no major changes in Maths, which will still be 100% exam based although many of the exam paper lengths will be extended and some will be in two parts.

ACTING HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Miss Gallagher reported that the Science Fair had been very well attended with the cluster primaries as had the brass concert before Easter. There is a cluster learning festival focused on developing young workforce as the theme. Various pupils had entered the Schuh competition but, for the first time in many years, that had not been won. The school's implementation of the period poverty policy is being fully supported and the school counsellor has been appointed. His background is from the Smile charity and he will be supporting pupils and staff and, in particular, working with vulnerable children and families.

Staffing arrangements: A third advert has just closed for Modern Languages and it is hoped to appoint one or two of the applicants. It was also noted that the Languages Department were celebrated by CILT and the school's one plus two language development was put forward as one to inspire others for its sector-leading work. The Parent Council passed on their congratulations for that.

Miss Gallagher again introduced the new Acting Deputy Head Teacher, Pamela, who was warmly welcome by the Parent Council.

It was explained that the Study for Success sessions were working well with large turnouts and it was very much appreciated by the supporting staff and the pupils that the pizzas were paid by the Parent Council.

Timetabling for next year's curriculum was well under way and the sixth year leaving lunch is only two weeks away. Duke of Edinburgh expeditions are going out soon and the Senior Phase Induction Days are coming up shortly.

It was noted that the P7 transition was ongoing and being developed for the future so that the transitions will start in P4, for example in reading. The Acting Head Teacher also passed on her thanks to the pupils who had completed the school survey. This had produced some very positive feedback that will be used as a basis for going forward.

In respect to a question from a member of the Parent Council, it was noted that effectively all of the senior management team were in acting posts and this was of concern and it would be preferable for permanent positions to be appointed for staff certainty and the school, going forward. This was no reflection on the acting staff who are well appreciated by the Parent Council.

In response to another question, Miss Gallagher explained that in relation to the rather severe winter weather recently, lots of work was carried out by staff over Twitter. It was explained the lengths that the Head Teacher had gone to on the Sunday before the school reopened to ensure that it could reopen.

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS

The School Captains gave a considerable list of school outings, for example, to Edinburgh Zoo to celebrate the pandas and Chinese New Year, competition success, for example, the wind band receiving Gold Plus Award at Perth and various sporting achievements. It was noted that various pupils are in regional and national teams for various sports.

WEBSITE

It was explained that the main website is still the one set up by the Parent Council and that is working fine. The new website is taking longer to transition than had been expected and the next stage is a meeting of the web team and any other interested parties where a few issues will be raised with West Lothian Council so that they can be appraised of certain issues, for example, the school calendar being available on the new website.

FUNDRAISING

Vicky again emphasised she was looking to step back and, as a result had not organised any large scale events. It is imperative that someone else takes over the fundraising role. There is still a representation of the Parent Council at Parents Evenings and this is raising some funds. An email will be sent out to encourage involvement.

TREASURER'S REPORTU

We still need to appoint a Treasurer and there have been no changes since the last Meeting. The next Meeting is on 9 May.