

Firrhill High School
Parent Council Meeting
Draft Minutes 24th April 2017

Present: Fred Bell (chair) & Catriona Luff, Margaret Hampton, Magz Smith, Susan Bailey, Ian Gebbie, Stephen Preston, Julie Darling, Alison Brookes, Lucie St. John, Jane Williams, Ruth Gebbie, Richard Imlach, Anne McTiernan,

Staff: Ros Ranger, Julie Statham

Secretary: Julie Darling

Distribution: All Above plus Cllr R Lewis, Cllr G Corbett, Cllr A Burns, Cllr D Key, Cllr J Rust.

Apologises: Graham Hamilton, Carolyn Hargest, Romy Ritchie, Gordon Jardine

Councillor Elaine Aitken, Gordon Jardine, Jen Ambrose, Ruth McQuillan

Welcome and Chairman's Report

Fred welcomed all attendees and talked through chairman's report. Copy attached.

Minutes of previous Meeting 23/01/17

The Minutes were accepted.

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Chairman's Report

Fred summarised his attendance at the recent meeting hosted by Daniel Johnson (MSP Edinburgh Southern), subjects raised there had included Edinburgh teacher recruitment & budget pressures, ParentPay and school capacity.

He also raised the issue of parental engagement and how we might start to build this up; ideas might include further communication with parents via PC, engaging feeder schools and harnessing resource from the community. There was an agenda item for this subject – see later.

HT Report (Julie Stratham)

School Meals – Half of pupils stay on the premises with half eating school meals and half eating their own. Everyone exception of 1st years allowed out during lunchtimes. Fred suggested that this topic could be revisited for a future discussion.

Staffing & Recruitment – 3 posts filled for Maths, Biology and Modern Studies.

Curriculum Review – Vertical registration not carried through. Timetables altered to 4 periods in morning and 3 afternoons. The school day will start at 8.35am and finish at 3.35pm (Friday 12.20). There will be four Houses - with the addition of Darroch. A letter to parents / carers will be distributed explaining the new arrangements such as class sizes, key people and definitions of their roles.

Ties – Four options available. Pupil vote to be taken to decide.

Website – Gary Sullivan is working on this: launch is scheduled for June.

Parent Pay – going live 2/5/2017. It will include a Transaction fee of around 15p per £10.00. This is a standard cost and would, for example, be added to the cost of school trips. No fees would apply for school meals. Parent pay is a private company and they received the fees.

Reception Redecoration – to be carried out middle four weeks of summer holidays.

Parental Engagement

The PC held a wide ranging discussion on the subject focussing on how we can help get parents more involved and engaged. It was accepted that parents have a major impact on their children's learning although it could be challenging to reach out and engage everyone.

The school website was recognised as a key tool and it was noted that the enhanced site was scheduled to be available in June.

As a first step it was accepted that a survey might be a useful way of gathering information on how parents / carers prefer to communicate with the school. This could also capture views on the Newsletter. Further use of Facebook or Twitter was discussed.

It was agreed that engaging parents directly at Transition night and social events was important.

Action – Comms group to discuss; first step is to consider a survey to gather parents/ carers input communications preferences. A PC Twitter account would also be considered.

Working Group Updates

The Business & Enterprise WG had registered with EventBright and the Interview Skills event was scheduled for 12/5/2017.

PTA – Thrift shop to be available at transition night.

Fred thanked all who attended and looked forward to seeing them at the next meeting

Next meeting:

Parent Council meeting: 5 June at 7pm