

Douglas Academy Parent Council Session 2020/21

Minutes of Meeting, 4 November 2020

1. Welcome and Apologies

Attendance

Scott Taylor (Chair), Barry Smedley (Head Teacher), Cllr Jim Goodall, Cllr Jim Gibbons, Caryn McDade (Secretary), Rachel Lowther, Mascha Rietdijk, Michelle Stewart, Andrew McLean, John Jeffers, Caroline McCorkindale, Martin Lynch

Apologies

None

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Not discussed, held over for approval at first meeting of 2021.

3. Parent Council Dates

Wednesday ???? 2021
Wednesday 17 March 2021
Wednesday 19 May 2021

4. PC Forums Updates

SLWG – Reporting to Parents

MS updates on the meeting she attended. Focus was on development of technology to support learning including distribution of IT equipment where needed, blended learning and Digital In Service Day for staff in October. Good suggestions from parents about how feedback on pupil performance can be achieved which ED will consider and report back on.

BS confirmed the Reporting Timetable will be issued by the school w/c 9.11.20.

5. Parent Council correspondence, standing and raised items

Learning during Isolation

Q. What measures are in place for pupils and teachers being off school self-isolating but still able to study or teach remotely? i.e. Are pupils able to follow lessons live through a camera feed / can teachers teach remotely through live camera feeds?

A. BS outlined the procedures in place to ensure minimum disruption and continuity of learning when a pupil has to self-isolate. A key element of this is 3 PT's of Learning Recovery each with responsibility for 2 year groups. The PT's are regularly

updated on pupils self-isolating and are responsible for checking in with pupils to ensure they have access to online learning. PT is a link to the isolating pupil and checks in with them weekly. This is important both to ensure learning can continue and also for the health and mental well-being of pupils.

There is a consistent approach across all subjects in DA for files on Teams including how assignments are uploaded. The school have produced 4 short films for young people on how to operate Teams. Additional online learning opportunities will be available in November/December.

There is capacity for isolating staff to teach remotely and teachers are collating intelligence on how live lessons are working in practice.

BS emphasised that despite the challenges DA is in a strong position to ensure pupils who are self-isolating experience minimum disruption to learning.

Q. MS asked what flexibility is in place to ensure pupils returning from self-isolation are not overwhelmed with workload to catch up?

A. BS improved systems have been put in place since October when there was a large number of pupils in one year group forced to isolate. This includes a denotation on the register when a pupil is isolating to ensure staff know who is off. The expectation is that pupils will have a week's grace when returning to school to submit work

Q. ST asked for an update on the cluster learning hubs?

A. BS advised the Regional Improvement Collaborative is developing West OS (West Partnership Online School) in partnership with "Click View" which will have a range of lessons available supplied by different schools. This is expected to be launched within 2 weeks.

N5 Examinations

Q. When are the prelims for the N5 pupils planned? Will the prelims form the main part of the determination of the N5 awards?

A. BS confirmed he had spoken with S4's to reassure them regarding the process. Prelims will run from 11 February 2021 over a 12 day period to give pupils as much time as possible to prepare. Due to issues with invigilators staff will manage prelims in classrooms over a double period timeslot.

Further information is awaited from the SQA (expected 19 November) however a holistic approach will be taken to making a grading assessment. Prelims could be one piece of evidence that may be used but other work undertaken during the year would also form part of the evidence. No dates have been provided yet on when grading's will be expected to be submitted.

JG (Goodall) highlighted Maths and English provisions have been released already and it seemed clear the SQA were endeavouring to provide as much support as possible for schools on the grading of Nat 5's.

S4 attendance in school during Higher Exams

Q. If the Higher and Advanced Higher exams are planned from the 13th of May will that mean that S4 pupils will have continued lessons or will they be off school during the exam period as well to allow space in the school for the exams to be organised?

A. BS advised S4 pupils will continue to be in school during May when Higher and Advanced Higher exams are expected to take place. This will provide an earlier than usual opportunity for them to commence S5 course work.

Interim Reports

Q. Is there is a plan for interim reports from the school as it is unlikely there will be parents evenings this year.

A. BS advised that no parent meetings can be run in school at present however there will still be adequate opportunity to get feedback on pupil's performance. Interim reports will be issued in writing for S1, S3 and S4 in late November/early December. S5/6 interim reports will be issued in mid-February 2021 and for S2 in late May. Full reports will be issued for S2 and S5/6 in mid-December, for S4 in late January and for S1 and S3 in May/June.

Parents will have the opportunity to discuss any issues with teachers and equally if any teacher has a particular concern with a pupil's progression they will get in touch with parents and potentially invite them to a meeting in school.

Schedule of Assessments

Q. Is there is a schedule with rough dates for classroom assessments for year 3. With class work and continued assessments possibly playing a larger role in grades it would allow children to prepare for these assessment, as they would for final exams.

A. BS indicated it is planned to issue a Schedule of Assessments for S3, S4, S5 and S6 but this has been held up while further information is awaited from the SQA.

6. Head Teacher's Update

School Recovery Plan

BS advised the SRP is complete and will be circulated to the PC members. Good feedback and suggestions were received from parents during the drafting of the Plan and these have been incorporated.

Action: BS requested feedback on the Plan from members.

7. Agenda items for future meetings

Parent Council Constitution

Agreed to defer discussion on this until time permitted a fuller discussion.

Action: Post meeting – AMcL has circulated proposed revisions to the Constitution and is seeking feedback from members.

8. AOB

Ventilation

AMcL asked for clarification on whether pupils could continue to wear their outdoor jacket in class as with the drop in temperature having windows open is making classrooms cold. BS confirmed pupils could keep their jackets on and that he would ensure all staff are aware of this. He further indicated EDC will be issuing guidance shortly on ventilation during colder months which is likely to involve a timetable for window opening, this should assist in indoor temperature together with boosting the heating.

School's Active Day

MS highlighted how positively the recent School's Active Day had been received and passed on thanks to the staff involved for their hard work in putting it together.

DHT Interviews

BS requested support from 2 PC members to assist with interviews on 16 November for a permanent DHT and 20 November for an Acting DHT post. Michelle and Caryn volunteered for this.

Thanks

The PC thanked BS and all staff for all their extremely hard work, in very difficult and challenging circumstances, in achieving an excellent balance in DA between safety and continuity of learning which is appreciated by parents.