

Douglas Academy Parent Council Session 2020/2021

Minutes of Meeting, 9th September 2020 (Remote via Teams)

1. Welcome & Apologies

Attendance

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

Due to technical difficulties with remote access some further attendees arrived late, including Tracy Christie, Cllr Jim Gibbons. Some invited guests were unable to access the Teams meeting, and Michael Lodhi unfortunately lost access partway through the meeting.

Apologies: Jacqueline Paterson

New members: Andrew Mc Clean, John Jeffers, Caroline McCorkindale, Lisa McIntosh

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

not discussed

3. Parent Council retirements / nomination

Two members, Tracy Christie and Jill Campbell, no longer have children in the school. There is one ongoing vacancy. One member has not confirmed a desire to continue. Five parents have offered to become members (see above).

The PC welcomes John Jeffers, Caroline McCorkindale, and Andrew MacLean, in attendance, as new members. Jacqueline Paterson and Lisa McIntosh both requested to join representing S1 but were unable to attend the first meeting. Jacqueline Paterson is on a waiting list, since we now have 10 members.

4. Election of office bearers / Vice Chair / Constitution

It was recognised that a Vice Chair was required to assist the Chair. It was agreed that Rachel Lowther would fill this role.

5. Dates / Timings of Meetings

Timing of next meeting to be agreed by email

6. Councillors entitled to attend Parent Council

Jim Gibbons, Jim Goodall, Graeme McGinnigle

7. PC Forum

Deferred for 2020

8. Parent Council representation on EDC groups (remote)

The EDC is requesting representation from PCs on the following two groups:

- a. EDC Parental reporting SLWG, Tues 15 Sep 2020, 9.30-11.30am (discussing ways of reporting to parents, since parents' evenings are unlikely to take place)
- b. Reopening of schools: Digital Learning, Mon 5 Oct 2020, 7pm

Michelle Stewart offered to attend these meetings and report back.

9. Head Teacher's Update

insert / attach

10. Parent Council correspondence, standing and raised items

(items not covered in HT report)

10.1 Covid-19 pupil absences – options for backup of missed teaching

EDC has started planning a “virtual school” with asynchronous learning (teachers pre-record videos/ teaching content and post it on Teams.) Rather than each school having to do this in every class The West Partnership has been formed. This includes East and West Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow and beyond. It is the largest collaborative in the country and will create a virtual school together, resulting in more content.

Everything that was uploaded to GLOW previously will remain there, but now everything covered in class will appear on Teams. Teams also has the advantage of tracking pupil engagement, and parents will be taught (remotely) how to navigate and use it, to support their children.

10.2 Additional support for Covid-inflicted knowledge gaps

Difficulties are presented here, since how will the school know where the knowledge gaps are? / it will differ for every child.

Currently all classes missed last session and placed on GLOW are being recapped.

All departments will identify pupils for whom they are concerned and who need additional teaching support. EDC is looking for additional funds for students who are behind to offer them “supported study”. This will involve a mix of in-school support as well as online support. Some teachers will give online support in the evenings (possibly 8-9pm). PC expressed gratitude to these teachers.

DA has tried to identify all children struggling to get online access (devices and broadband) and they are being supplied what they need. It's not possible to be 100% certain that no child has slipped through the gaps, but the school has asked all families.

10.3 Timing of Prelims – plans to move /delay

This may be necessary, but as yet no decision has been made. No more than 50 pupils are allowed in hall currently, resulting in issues accommodating prelims. Prelims may take place in classes in double periods. Invigilators will be required, but visitors are not permitted to schools and staff are busy teaching. SQA has not yet supplied the information on this year's curricula, exam requirements and assessment requirements, which makes planning very difficult. A consultation was recently put out on this matter, to which SQA and SG received a huge number of responses. As a result, the decision has been delayed while the responses are considered.

Action: PC will follow up the issue of how teachers can gather evidence of pupil attainment in the event of exam cancellation, since teachers need to know this now.

10.4 Completion of course assessed work – opportunities to use school facilities

These tend to be practical subjects: art etc. Previously pupils could stay after school to do this work, but lunchtimes are being considered. The school is confident it will find a solution to this.

10.5 SQA exams in 2021 – timetable / curricula / backup / evidence

(see also 10.3) School is currently working to existing timetable, but exams may be delayed. Real concern for S4 – 6 pupils. There is a lack of contingency planning for these pupils should schools lock down again. Teachers have not been informed what they should be gathering in terms of evidence.

10.6 Tracking of pupil engagement with Glow

As mentioned, this will occur through Teams which is the platform all pupils are now using and being trained in.

11. Discussion agenda items for future meetings

lack of time to discuss

12. AOCB

RL asked BS to explain the protocol in the event of a positive Covid case in the school. BS explained there is no intention to shut the school down. The focus is on remaining open and managing any risk. Large numbers of pupils have already been off school with suspected Covid. Not a single one has tested positive. All have coughs and colds. If a child displays symptoms the school has a strict plan in place to isolate the child (staff engaging with child have PPE). Teachers have the seating plan for every class so all those children who have come within a certain distance of the child will be identified and the same approach will be used as is in place nationally – quarantining, test and trace etc.

***Update BS:** Since we returned we have had 247 children off categorised as 'suspected COVID'. On one day we had approximately 180 children off in total but not all of these were 'suspected COVID' so apologies for any confusion. I was highlighting the increased absence.*

We have had one positive case but there was no impact on the school as the pupil was not attending at that time. They developed symptoms on Saturday and hadn't been in school since Wednesday as a member of their family had tested positive so they were already self-isolating. There was no action required and Public Health didn't issue any letter to parents as there was no risk to anyone in school community.