

# Douglas Academy Parent Council Session 2017/2018

## Minute of Meeting 20th March 2018

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### Attendance

Neil Miller (Chair), Lisa Cameron, Barry Smedley (Head Teacher), Lisa Armstrong, Tracy Christie, Lisa Cameron, Cathy Macallum, Caryn McDade.

Apologies: Scott Taylor, Susan Ballantyne, Jill Campbell, Councillor Jim Goodall.

### Minutes of Previous Meeting

These were agreed to be correct.

### Matters Arising

NM : Provided short update on school website update , this was confirmed by BS who added a comprehensive update was due to be implemented soon on whole website to provide a much clearer and better school web experience. School app now designed and finished and will be launched in tandem with website in very near future.

NM: Provided and update on parent forum he attended and in particular on parental engagement strategy and some discussion took place on this. Any feedback from PC has already been sent to BS.

Discussion took place on moving meeting place of PC to accommodate all and NM look into use of such as Waitrose shared community room.

Discussion took place on school alcohol and drug policy and surrounding issues of school behaviour. BS confirmed all matters are addressed promptly and firmly with full inter agency co-operation and parental involvement. Incidents thankfully are rare however can cause reputational damage to school unjustly.

NM: Issue raised re placing requests for 2018 from parental enquiry and BS confirmed we at present have for 1<sup>st</sup> year 152 in catchment and would likely take 28 placing requests.

BS : Informed PC the school had some £29,000 of PEF money and he proposed to continue to utilise this as per last year to get a more long term benefit to cost spend. PC members all agreed best use.

BS : Informed PC that pupil council had met and there was felt to b support from the pupil body for the introduction of blazers to all years. BS stated he would look deeper into this , although some members of PC were not in favour it was notable the instigation had come from the pupils.

## **Head Teachers Report**

As Follows:

### **Head Teacher's Report- Parent Council Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the first Parent Council meeting of 2018. There are a number highlights I will share with you this evening including changes to staffing, Senior Phase pupils progress towards their SQA examinations and, as ever, a wide range of outstanding pupil achievements.

#### **Staffing**

- Mr Robert Dunsmuir and Mrs Joan Docherty have been appointed to permanent DHT posts.
- Miss Leah McGrotty was appointed to a permanent Biology post at Hermitage Academy and will be leaving us in May.
- Mr Anlon Gracie was appointed to a permanent French post at Clydebank HS and will be leaving us in June.
- Our school staffing for next session is 71.81 FTE. I have requested NQTs in Biology, Business, Design & Technology, Computing, History, Modern Languages, Physics and RMPS.
- We have a permanent Physical Education post that is due to be advertised within the next week. I do not anticipate any other teacher vacancies.
- We still have Acting Principal Teacher vacancies in History/Modern Studies, Biology and Computing. Mrs Ralston in Business has demitted her post and is moving to 0.6FTE. Her Principal Teacher post will be advertised in August.

#### **Attainment**

- Insight was updated on 27<sup>th</sup> February. Percentage of School Leavers in a Positive Destination was the highest ever at Douglas Academy. 97.21% of leavers went to a Positive Destination this session with the highest figure previously being 96% in 2014/15. This equates to 5 pupils not in a Positive Destination and we are working closely with SDS to address this.
- S4-S6 prelim results were collated in January and targeted interventions put in place to support pupils who required it the most. We had our most extensive supported study programme ever with pupils carefully targeted and directed to specific subjects. DHTs worked tirelessly to speak with all pupils and their parents who were underperforming and we launched our first Academic Coaching Programme for 58 S5 pupils who were allocated between 22 staff mentors. This involves pupils meeting with a mentor fortnightly to discuss targets and next steps in the run up to their SQA exams. We also launched our Masterclasses twice per week to provide pupils with additional time and exam support within the school day. Finally, we introduced a Study Skills package into our Senior Phase PSE programme to ensure pupils had a variety of different study strategies and techniques that would help them with their preparations for exams in May.
- All S3 pupils completed their SNSA throughout February. They completed two online assessments in Literacy (Reading & Writing) and one in Numeracy. Diagnostic Reports were produced for individual pupils highlighting areas of strength and next steps. This information will be used internally as part of our overall assessment data to identify pupils who require

additional support. It will also help to support teacher judgements around National 4 and National 5 presentation levels. Pupils are categorised into High, Medium and Low. Next session this will be more specific with a scale introduced as National data should be more accurate.

- Initial data has been very positive. In Reading 69% of pupils were categorised as High, 22% Medium and 9% Low. In Writing 84% were categorised as High, 12% Medium and 3% Low. In Numeracy 61% were categorised as High, 35% Medium and 4% Low.
- Finally, we were recently ranked the 10<sup>th</sup> school in Scotland from 279 in 'The Times' How well is your school performing? Table. Although this is not a Scottish Government or Local Authority produced table it was extremely pleasing to be recognised so high, particularly when we know there is still significant improvements to be made with regards to exam results.

### **School Business**

1. We have continued to have a number of Family Learning evenings throughout January and February. Our Curriculum Evenings for S2 and S4/5 were very well attended. Over 800 option choices are now almost complete with S2 into S3 due to be finalised at the end of this week. We are currently looking at Senior Phase options and prelim results to identify pupils who have not selected their best subjects and we will discuss this with pupils when they return in June. Further discussion will take place in August when SQA results are released.
2. Our pupils attended the first Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution event at the Science Centre on 17<sup>th</sup> January. This was a National event attended by Scottish Government Ministers and we were the only Scottish Secondary School represented.
3. Our S1 pupils participated in Holocaust memorial day on 26<sup>th</sup> January. This involved various activities throughout the day including participation in a live broadcast from the Holocaust Educational Trust, which featured a live testimony from Janine Webber, a Holocaust survivor.
4. Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Burns Supper celebration was held on the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup> in the school. Guests from Contact the Elderly, Carers' Link, Oakburn Daycare Centre and Abbotsford House enjoyed a traditional Burns' Supper in our Assembly Hall. The meal was cooked on the premises by our S4 Hospitality Group and our S5/6 Skills for Learning, Life and work Group. There were speeches, musical interludes, recitations from Burns' work and the evening was rounded off with some demonstration dancing that had participants and guests joining in.
5. We held our annual EDC Dance Festival on 6<sup>th</sup> March for our Cluster Primary schools. The event was led by our Sports Council pupils and our Dance Leaders worked with our cluster primary schools over a number of weeks to choreograph the dances that were performed on the evening.
6. We were visited on 19<sup>th</sup> March by UNICEF UK as we are looking to achieve our Level 2 RRSA Gold Award. The visit included a number of meetings with staff, pupils and parents and focused on how Douglas Academy is addressing Children's Rights through 3 key strands. The strands are teaching and learning about rights, teaching and learning through rights- ethos and relationships and teaching and learning for rights- participation, empowerment and action. We are very proud of our work around Children's Rights and, as a school, we place

great importance on relationships and ethos. This was noticed by the RRSA assessors and their feedback was extremely positive. We will discover over the next 2 months if we have successfully achieved the award.

### **Achievements and Additional Opportunities**

- Congratulations to Raj Bhaumik and Eoghan Connolly who qualified for the UK Finals Day of the International Competition for Young Debaters (ICYD) at the Scottish qualifier in the High School of Dundee on Saturday 24 Feb. Raj and Eoghan will now debate in the famous Oxford Union on Saturday 28 April against some of the UK's best junior debaters. Raj and Eoghan argued the following motions: This House would ban all drugs; This House would stop space exploration; and This House would let democratic countries assassinate dictators. Congratulations also to the all Douglas teams who debated with considerable skill and insight: Orla Johnson, Imogen Milling, Tom Milling and Kiron Dutton.
- Congratulations to Kerr McQuillan in S2 who won first place in the North American Solo Drumming Championships. Kerr qualified for the event following success at the World Solo Drumming Championships held at Glasgow Caledonian in October 2017. Accompanied by his dad, who is also a drummer, Kerr travelled to Kansas for a week long stay.
- A number of our pupils participated in the 'UK Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge' in November. Some of our pupils showed fantastic computational thinking to record scores that were in the top 10% of all pupils in their age group in the UK. The pupils were Alfie Smith, Finn Eker and Nathan Smith from S1. Kiron Dutton from S2 and Cameron Johnston, Orla Johnston, Robert Molloy, Rico D'Agostino and Marnie Anderson from S3. Over 70,000 S1-S2 pupils took part, and over 14,000 S3-S4 pupils. Those pupils who were in the top 10% will be invited to join a further competition run by Oxford University in March.
- Our new Intergenerational project is going well as we continue to establish links with Abbotsford House. Pupils are involved in a number of activities such as, reading to residents, playing scrabble and dominos. Some of the residents joined us for the 'Douglas Academy' Burns supper on 25th January and all thoroughly enjoyed the meal, the entertainment and the visit to the school. Many of our Dementia Friends Group were in the kitchen preparing food and some were front of house serving our guests. Pupils have also visited the cafe in Abbotsford House for a lunch with the residents.
- Pupils from the S1 Local History Elective have been learning about education in Milngavie. On 6th February they visited the local archives at Bearsden Hub and met Janice Miller who is the Information and Archives Officer for EDLC. Pupils enjoyed working as 'history detectives' finding evidence from old school log books, photographs, maps and newspapers. It was a fascinating visit with pupils having the opportunity to see around the new hub building.
- On Wednesday 31st January Colin Hood (S5) and Calum Silcock (S6) represented the school at the Glasgow & East Dunbartonshire heat of this year's Poetry by Heart Competition. The event was held in Glasgow University with both boys reciting two poems to a very high standard, along with competitors from eight other schools. The night ended on a high with Colin being declared the regional winner. Colin then represented Douglas Academy at the national final of the competition in Edinburgh on Saturday 10th March and came second, which is another fantastic achievement.

- Congratulations are extended to Matthew and Joseph McIlree, both Music School pupils, who performed brilliantly at the recent Inverclyde Music Festival. Matthew: 1st in Vocal (Self Accompanied); 1st in Instrumental Recital & 1st in Piano Open, winning the James Sandison Memorial Quaich. Joseph: 1st in Grade 7/8 Piano, winning the Gwendolyn Lithgow Trophy. He was also awarded the George Parkhill Memorial Trophy for the best Piano Performance in piano classes up to Grade 8 level (for the second year). Both boys were invited to play at the final concert in Greenock Town Hall where Joseph also competed for the Andrew B Cockle Award (the highest award in the Festival) and came second.
- Our Senior Boys Hockey Team won the Aspire Cup Final at the Glasgow National Hockey Centre on 16<sup>th</sup> March. The boys defeated Renfrew Schools 4-1 in the final.
- Jonathan Douglas in S6 was amongst the finalists at the Big Bang UK Young Scientists and Engineers Competition, in Birmingham from 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> March. The Big Bang is the largest celebration event of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects for young people in the UK, and around 80,000 visitors were expected to attend this year's four day event. Jonathan was awarded a Crest Gold award from the British Science Association for the engineering research project he completed with Nuffield Research Placements (Scotland) at Rolls-Royce (Inchinnan). The research project was focused on optimising the method of manufacture of aero engine compressor blades.
- This year, Douglas Academy's Young Enterprise Scotland Company (Wood'n Stock) participated in the Young Enterprise Dunbartonshire Final Night. During the year the Company worked extremely hard to produce hand finished placements, which went on sale at the Annual Young Enterprise Trade Fair in Clydebank Shopping Centre. Five company members (Craig Kidd, Francesca Nicholson, Jennifer Cockburn, Mia Evans and Scott Brown) went to represent Wood'n Stock at The University of Strathclyde Business School for the Young Enterprise Dunbartonshire Finals. At the event all members of the company were interviewed by the Dunbartonshire Area Board which asked pressing questions about their experience and their report. Furthermore, pupils had to present in front of an audience with over 80 people about their company and overall learning journey during the process of running their Company. From this event Wood'n Stock have won 2 awards: **The Best Trade Fair Stand and the main prize of Best Overall Company.** As they have won the Best Overall Company the 5 company members will now represent Young Enterprise Dunbartonshire by participating in the Young Enterprise Scottish Finals to compete with many other companies from different Young Enterprise Areas in Scotland. The final Young Enterprise Scotland event will be held at Hampden Park on 6 June 2018 where the 5 company members will be resubmitting their Business Report, showcasing their products with their winning Trade Fair Stand and presenting to an audience of 250 guests.

**AOCB: None**

**Date of Next Meeting :**

TBC June 2018

