

Douglas Academy Parent Council Session 2017/18

Minute of Meeting 13 June 2018

Attendance

Scott Taylor, Caryn McDade, Mascha Rietdijk, Lisa Cameron, Cathy McCallum, Barry Smedley (Head Teacher), Cllr Jim Goodall

Apologies

Neil Miller, Tracy Christie, Jill Campbell, Cllr Jim Gibbons

Minutes of Previous Meeting

These were agreed to be correct.

School Industrial Action

Barry confirmed that Unison have voted in favour of strike action on Thursday 21 to Tuesday 26 June inclusive. An emergency meeting of all Head Teachers has been called for 14 June and thereafter communication will be issued to parents advising of any impact on school opening,

PC Forum Meeting/Engagement Strategy

Mascha attended the PC Forum meeting recently where the principle agenda item was EDC's recently approved policy on parental engagement. It was highlighted that representatives from all PC's expressed difficulties in engaging effectively with the wider parent community. Jim outlined that the Scottish Government has recently consulted on parental engagement and a legislative framework will follow. It is anticipated that a requirement for much broader engagement will be part of the guidelines. The SG's guidelines will determine the route EDC goes in terms of parental engagement.

Matters Arising

School Uniform Policy

The background to the consultation in 2014 on blazers being part of the DA uniform was outlined and it was confirmed that at that time a majority of parents were in favour of it. Barry reiterated the rationale for introducing blazers for all school years and that the impetus for this had come from pupils. He clarified that blazers, like any part of the uniform, are not compulsory and it is for individual pupils and their families to decide whether to purchase a blazer. There was confusion over the gym kit and Barry agreed to write a further letter to all parents that all items which have been added to the uniform are optional. Finally, Barry confirmed that as with all elements of the school uniform financial support exists to help families who cannot provide these items.

PEF Money

Barry provided a breakdown of how the £29,000 PEF money was spent in 2017/18. It was agreed details of the expenditure would not need to be circulated more widely.

School Improvement Plan

Progress on the SIP will be communicated to all parents. Barry highlighted that he did not expect to make any changes to it and that it would 2020 before he would expect to see significant progress on outcomes. Examples of some of the small group interventions around numeracy, literacy and health/wellbeing were provided. Barry confirmed that in 2018/19 pupils would lead a consultation in conjunction with staff and parents on the merit and demerit system. A curriculum consultation will also be held during 2018/19.

Head Teachers Report

Head Teacher's Report- Parent Council Meeting 13th June 2018

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the last Parent Council meeting of session 2017-18. There are a number highlights I will share with you this evening including changes to staffing, attainment information from the Broad general Education and, as ever, a wide range of outstanding pupil achievements.

Staffing

- Mrs Sonia Forsyth was appointed to Principal Teacher of History and Modern Studies
- Mr Kevin Stepney was appointed to Teacher of Physical Education
- Mr Scott Johnson was appointed to Teacher of Physical Education at Bishopbriggs Academy
- Mr Michael Wiggins was appointed to a Teacher of Chemistry post at St Ninian's HS in East Renfrewshire
- Mrs Clare Tayler was appointed to Teacher of Biology post at Harlaw Academy
- Mrs Kennedy will be interviewed tomorrow for the Acting Principal Teacher of Business Education post. If successful, this will create a Principal Teacher of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce vacancy
- We have NQTs in Art & Design, Biology, Business Education, Chemistry, Computing, Geography/Modern Studies, History/Modern Studies, Physics and Religious Education next session. We were allocated a NQT in French/Spanish who has deferred for the year. We also asked for a NQT in Design & Technology but were unsuccessful. As a result of this, a 1 year temporary post has been advertised and will be interviewed next week. There are 5 applicants in total.
- We still have Acting Principal Teacher vacancies in Biology, Computing, Raising Attainment & Achievement and two in Guidance. East Dunbartonshire Council have recently revised Procedure Manual 2/06: Structure of Promoted Posts in Secondary Schools. Schools are required to operate within their promoted post points allocation and have 3 years to achieve this. We are currently 30 points over our allocation and we will be working closely with

Trade Unions and Staff to plan how we can reduce by 30 points through vacancies that have arisen. (Points are allocated to promoted posts on the basis of their Salary Scale Point e.g. PT 1 = 10 points, PT 4 = 22 points)

Attainment

- SQA exam diet is now complete with no major issues or concerns. Results will be issued to pupils on 7th August 2018. Members of the Senior Leadership Team will be available on Thursday, 9th and Friday, 10th August to support pupils with option choice changes
- Staff are currently gathering information for the National Achievement of a Level survey. This is requested by the Scottish Government. It details the number of pupils in S3 who have achieved 3rd and 4th Level in Literacy (Reading, Writing, Talking & Listening) and Numeracy. There is also an opportunity for staff to highlight pupils not currently assessed and also those who are working at their 'individual milestones'. This information will be passed to EDC on Friday, 15th June.

School Business

1. I mentioned at the last Parent Council meeting we were visited by UNICEF UK on 19th March as we attempted to achieve our Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award. I am delighted to announce that we are the first secondary school in East Dunbartonshire to achieve this prestigious award. Gold is the highest accolade given by UNICEF UK and shows a deep and thorough commitment to children's rights at all levels of school life.
2. Since 2015, staff and pupils of Douglas Academy have supported East Dunbartonshire FoodBank. This year collections took place during September and March and we are delighted to announce that we are well on our way to achieving our targets.
3. The Higher Modern Studies class of Douglas Academy welcomed Jo Swinson to speak with them about her role as an MP to further enhance their understanding of aspects of the parliamentary process and life at the Houses of Parliament generally. The pupils engaged in a question and answer session which ranged from the current political situation in Syria to Jo's involvement in select committees. Following from this, Jo took part in a debate on the gender pay gap with the school's debating society. The motion for debate during Jo's visit was, *This House would make CEOs criminally responsible for the gender pay gap in their companies*. The debate proved to be highly informative and entertaining. Jo then donated a signed copy of her book *Equal Power and How You can Make it Happen* to the library of Douglas Academy
4. Douglas Academy hosted a talk from a member of the House of Lords on Friday 20th April to encourage students to become more engaged with the political and parliamentary process. Lord Purvis met the Higher Modern Studies students to talk about the work and role of the House of Lords, followed by a question and answer session on various aspects of the parliamentary process and life at the Houses of Parliament. The discussion ranged from reform of the House of Lords to government scrutiny and the role of the UK Parliament in Iraq. The visit was arranged through the Lord Speaker's "Peers in Schools" outreach programme, which was established across the UK in 2007 and has so far involved around 90,000 young people. Members of the House of Lords visit schools, academies and colleges to give talks in support of the citizenship curriculum.

5. *We recently launched Shelf Help* which is a new initiative from East Dunbartonshire Secondary School Libraries. School Librarians from across the Council have been working together to develop the idea to show pupils - through fiction and shared reading/writing – that they are not alone when dealing with challenges in their lives. The Shelf Help book collection contains non-fiction books on a range of topics, including how to maintain good mental health and how to cope with stress and fiction books about characters who may be going through similar experiences and challenges. Pupils have the opportunity to write about a book which has helped them through a difficult time or has made an impact on them. Their contributions will be compiled in a booklet *'The Book that saved my Life'* which will be launched during Book Week Scotland in November. Also as part of the initiative, librarians and pupils will work together to produce online fiction reading lists that feature characters dealing with mental health and wellbeing issues. This project is supported by the Scottish School Library Improvement Fund which is administered by the Scottish Library and Information Council.
6. Douglas Academy took part in this year's Sustrans Big Pedal. This event saw schools from across the U.K. compete to log the most journeys made to school by bike or scooter. The event ran from April 23rd – May 4th and the launch was marked by a Bike Breakfast for participants on Monday 23rd April. Pupils simply cycled or scooted to school and enjoyed a free breakfast in the Health & Food Technology department from 8.30am.
7. On Friday 9th March 2018, Douglas Academy Fairtrade Committee hosted a staff coffee morning. Fairtrade tea and coffee was served along with fairtrade baked goods. The morning was very successful and £150 was raised for charity.
8. Our Primary 7 pupils attended Douglas Academy on Tuesday, 5th and Wednesday, 6th June as part of their transition programme from primary to secondary. A number of events were arranged throughout the year but this was the first opportunity for pupils to follow their school timetable for August and attend classes. Our Parents' Information Evening on Monday, 4th June was very well attended with over 200 parents arriving on the evening.

Achievements and Additional Opportunities

1. Douglas Academy's Debating and Public Speaking Society continues to be successful in local and national competitions. In the current school year teams from Douglas Academy have been ESU Scotland Mace Finalists; International Competition for Young Debaters finalists in the Oxford Union and the S6 European Youth Parliament Team will represent the UK at the 87th International Session of the European Youth Parliament in Lithuania in July.
2. Elliot Anderson represented Scotland U18s football team this year. Elliot played in the home countries international tournament this year. Scotland experienced varying degrees of success most notably defeating England along the way. A huge congratulations to Elliott.
3. This year as part of the Mark Scott Leadership for Life Award a group of students from Douglas Academy, Bearsden Academy and Boclair Academy redecorated the living room of the local women's refuge. The residential project took place in the Lake District with pupils from all the areas of Glasgow coming together to develop team-building and leadership skills. This involved activities such as raft building, rock scrambling and an overnight camping expedition. After this, the next stage was planning, organising and carrying out a community project. This was done in association with East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid. Douglas

Academy was able to raise a fantastic £340 towards the project from a car wash and additional donations. Over 3 days the living room of the refuge was redecorated into a more welcoming and comforting place for the women. This has been a great experience for all of the pupils involved and the work done will remain for years to come.

4. During Enterprise month all S2 pupils in Business Education volunteered for four hours to gain a Saltire Challenge Award. They had a task of planning and creating an Activity Book to be sent to the Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity, formally known as Yorkhill Children's Charity. S2 took four periods out of class time in Enterprise to prepare the Activity Book - offering a variety of activities such as wordsearches, mazes, colouring in, quizzes and many more for the children at the hospital to enjoy!

As part of the Activity Book project, S2 received a talk at assembly from Lara MacDonald, Community Campaigns Fundraiser from Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity. Lara spoke about Medicinema and how the Medicinema screens recent films for the children and their families. As part of the project a Front Cover Competition was held and the following pupils were successful: Abigail Carrick, James Cowan, Tegan Pittard, Morven MacDonald, Angus Maciver, Katie Pirie, Anna Brownlie and Niamh Stevenson. The winning pupils attended the Royal Hospital for Children to deliver the Activity Books, and as part of the visit they received a tour of the hospital – including Teddy Bear Hospital and the Medicinema. Well done to all of our pupils in S2 for their hard work and commitment while completing the Saltire Challenge Award.

5. On Saturday 10th March, Colin Hood in S5 represented the school and Glasgow & East Dunbartonshire region at this year's National Final of the Poetry by Heart Competition. Colin and five other finalists each recited two poems in the Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh. The competition was judged by three renowned Scottish poets and the standard of the recitals was very high. Colin's chosen poems were "This is It" by William Letford and "The Season of Youth" by William Knox. The afternoon ended on a high with Colin being declared the Runner Up (2nd place). This is a personal best for Douglas Academy in this competition and we are very proud of Colin for representing the school so well. A short video of the event, including extracts from Colin's performance, is available on the Scottish Poetry Library's website.
6. Some of our Higher and Advanced Higher work from last year was exhibited at the Lillie Art Gallery in Milngavie this month as part of their annual Class Acts Exhibition. This is a public exhibition showcasing the Art and Design work of pupils from across all EDC schools.
7. Congratulations to all of our pupils who participated in the Glasgow Music Festival and well done to those who placed in the top three of their category. Douglas Academy had 15 pupils in 1st place, 13 in 2nd place and 11 in 3rd place. Full details of results are on the next page.

AOCB

None

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting and AGM will be held in September 2018.

