

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KELSO HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 25th FEBRUARY 2021 VIA ZOOM



Attendance - Gemma Douglas (Chair), Jill Lothian (Head Teacher), Michelle Matthews (Treasurer), Gillian McFadyen, Gill Petty, Lee Armitage, Gillian White, Nicola Robertson, Allan Connell, Euan Robson, Leri Payne, Maru Gomez, James Thom, John Borthwick, Irene McKenzie, Pam Guthrie and Dougal Coates.

Apologies - Kirsty Wichary, Tom Weatherston, Simon Mountford and Aily Brown

Minutes of Previous Meeting - Approved

Matters Arising

SBC funding for outdoor shelters - Gemma expressed thanks to Euan Robson for helping to push through request. Two spaces in the back playgroup have been identified and funding secured. Thank you to SBC for the funding, this will be useful for our pupils.

Study Guides are still available to purchase, contact the School.

Chairperson's Report

We are nearing the end of February and it's been busy the past few months, keeping up with all the changes and trying to support my children with their Remote Learning. It's not been an easy time for us. This lockdown seems to have been so much harder on us as a family than the last. But brighter days are coming and spring is just round this corner. Thank goodness!

So over the past couple of months since New Year I have been part of a few SBC Chairs Forum meetings:

First one in January was all to do with mental wellbeing in schools. I have asked if the slides and resources can be shared on the weekly update from the school.

Second one in February, this was really just for SBC to give us an update on the reopening of schools and to answer our concerns. I collated a large amount of concerns from all parent councils in the Borders and passed these onto SBC. This is what they used to frame our meeting and also used in the communication coming out to parents.

I held a get together for all Chairs in the Borders on 4th February and we discussed how we can change our forum meetings with SBC to make them more useful for us.

We suggested that I start to help make up the agenda items, we split up the meetings half way through into Primary / Secondary and someone takes a few notes for anyone who cannot make it.

Unfortunately I ended up missing the meeting after this due to family issues. But the feedback I received was fantastic. SBC listened to what we had suggested and made the changes.

The next scheduled meetings are Chairs Get Together on 9th March and Chairs Forum Meeting on 11th March. I have already started to collate concerns from other PC's to send into SBC. If anyone would like to send me anything they want me to add on please use the Kelso High School Parent Council email address.

I have attended the following Connect Training Sessions:

Role of the Chair

Money Matters

Communications and Social Media for Parent Groups

Social and Fundraising Events

Building school and Community Partnerships

If anyone would like a copy of the training slides just let me know I am happy to email them onto you who ever has an interest.

NPFS Update:

Since starting back in January I have attended several meetings involving Education Scotland, SQA and Public Health Scotland.

I am part of a working group to review Co-ordinated Support Plans, the next meeting is 11th March.

I have been chosen to represent NPFS in a GIRFEC Stakeholder Engagement Meeting on 23rd March.

I regularly feed concerns from the Borders to our Chair Margaret Wilson, she then feeds these into her weekly meetings with the CERG Covid-19 Education Recovery Group.

We held our NPFS Forum Meeting last night, Wednesday 24th February.

I am currently attending as many PC meetings all around the Borders to give an introduction to the NPFS, if you would like me to do one for our PC please let me know.

NPFS are currently holding webinars co-hosted with Public Health Scotland.

We have already had Early Years, P1 - P3 return plus one on S4 -S6 return these can be found on our NPFS YouTube Channel.

We are holding one on 4th March regarding P4 – P7 return,

We have confirmed with SQA they will co-host a webinar with us, just waiting on a confirmed date.

So my final topic I would like you all to have a think about is:

What is it you want from our PC?

What is it you need from us?

We are nearly at the end of my second year as Chairperson and I really feel the lack of parental engagement is bothering me so much. I'm not sure I am going in the direction you need or want.

Please can you all over the next few weeks have a little think about what it is you want to see happening with your Parent Council.

If anyone feels they want us to be moving in a different direction then please come forward and tell me. I don't for one second want to be doing all that I and doing, attending all the meetings that I am attending if none of it is making a difference to our families.

Thank you all again for coming along to our meeting. I am always available to help or point you in the right direction of someone who can help.

Please stay safe. Take care

Gemma Douglas

Chair Person Kelso High School Parent Council

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Scottish Borders Rep for National Parent Forum Scotland

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Update from Inspire Parent Ambassador Meeting 19th February

Joanne Gilfillan, PT Art at Jedburgh Campus talked to us about Pro Create and Sketches school apps on iPads. Joanne co-ordinates the work with the Pro Create education team including staff training sessions and workshops. She is starting to make links with local design businesses who also use Pro Create and is looking forward to bringing students closer to real like use of these creativity tools.

Inspire Learning and DYW project - DYW is Developing the young Workforce and is part of supporting young people in education to better prepare them for the world of work. In the Borders, education work in partnership with DYW Borders and Borders College and we now have a new DYW Co-ordinations working in each of our 9 high schools. They will help to bridge the link between the classroom and businesses.

Inspire are creating a virtual work experience DYW project with Galashiels Academy and Jedburgh Campus and a local architecture business, linked to a new school build using the creativity tools on the iPad. This will commence in May.

We are hoping this project can be developed for the primary schools and further into senior phase years with work based learning opportunities. Also developing a similar project with Scottish Pensions Agency.

Parental agreement forms for Showbie are being finalised and should be with schools next week. This process will need to be done before the app is deployed to students. There will be training.

Minecraft EDU app is currently being tested, ready for deployment onto the iPad. This will support work in STEM and AR and is available through GLOW.

Inspire are working with strategic partner Sphero to develop lessons with schools.

30 day Creative Activities for Kids started Monday 22nd March, you can find these on their YouTube channel.

Next Inspire Skills Café will be held on Friday 5th March at 2pm Live on their YouTube Channel.

Next Inspire Parent Ambassador Session Tuesday 16th March.

We still do not have a representative from KHS, it would be great if someone would be willing to take this on?

Head Teacher's Report

Updates

From the beginning of this term we have been delivering learning online via the ipads. The school building remained open and we have some number of young people within our Hub.

At the beginning there were some issues with the technology, all the Secondary school across SBC agreed to follow the same three principals when supporting learning:

- New Learning would be delivered using a variety of approaches
- Support Sessions would provide 'live' opportunities to engage with teachers, opportunity to answer questions and provide general feedback
- Independent time to complete the set assignments

Throughout this lockdown we have monitored engagement via the Satchel One app. Ability to run weekly reports and offer planned targeted support.

From the 22nd February, we have been able to bring in a limited number of senior young people into school to allow them to complete practical elements of their courses. Enhanced procedures are now in place to ensure we keep young people and staff safe. These include – face masks at all times, 2m distancing and Test & Protect (home test kits). Subjects are Art, F & T, Music Tech, Drama, Woodwork and Admin & IT – approx. 30 young people each day.

From 15th March – still awaiting further details from the Scottish Government.

SQA Update – We continue to plan to ensure the successful implementation of the Alternative Certification Model for National Qualifications in 2021 Alternative certification model. SQA have been clear that this year we are looking at demonstrated attainment and not inferred attainment as in session 2019/20. We will ensure that we have assessment evidence that meets the national standard to substantiate the provisional result for each subject.

Course Choice Process – we will be offering parental information sessions, year group assemblies and where required individual meetings to support our course choice process this year. To allow us to expand our curricular some of our courses will be linked with other schools and we will be utilising the remote/blended delivery

Staffing Updates – Within Modern Studies we have welcomed Mr T McColm, Modern Languages post will be filled by May and due to COVID, Miss Armstrong (HE) is being asked to work from home until she begins her maternity leave.

Apple Schools Application – At KHS we have now been using our iPads for 1½ years. Although it has been a steep learning curve we continue to build the use of technology into our learning. As a result, we have been asked to make an application to become an Apple Distinguished School.

Treasurers Report

3 Ball Lottery Draw

January 2021 - The numbers drawn were 3, 8 and 18 – no winner

There are currently 187 active lines and the February prize fund is sitting at £185.

Lottery Account

There is currently £1853.57 in this account available to spend.

Funds have been set aside for the lottery prize fund, annual gambling licence and recent successful bids for finance.

Main Account

There is currently £898.45 in this account.

There is a total of £2,752.02 available to send.

John Borthwick (Music Teacher) submitted a bid for Parent Council to assist with funding to replace some of the very old keyboards within the department. John discussed the bid and advised that funding has been secured from both the Music Dept budget but also the KHS Finance Committee however would be grateful if the Parent Council could assist as well. They are requesting £308. Bid agreed by members, Mr Borthwick expressed his thanks.

Discussion

What is the rationale when pupils are in school and other subjects/classes setting work? Regular updates of pupils in school are sent out to staff to notify them when pupils are expected in.

SQA - There is huge concern for senior pupils on assessments. Pupils will not be expected to sit assessments as soon as they return. Assessment window will be identified and teachers will ascertain where pupils are with their learning. SQA have modified subjects accordingly to accommodate the current situation. Work before the Xmas break and when back in school will count for SQA.

Discussion took place around the importance of the Parent Council voice, using it to make things the best that they can be for our YP. It is important to encourage parents to use their voices especially with SQA as this can make a huge difference.

Parent felt there has been a lack of communication and checking in with individual pupils and parents. Another parent wanted to express their thanks to all the teachers and staff, everyone has been so very supportive and working so hard for our YP.

Discussion around Pro Create and concerns with standard of work not being good, having to use finger rather than Apple Pencil.

Discussion around SatchelOne and concerns that not all staff are utilising this platform or that are unable to see work submitted and then it shows as a late submission. Are we monitoring staff on SatchelOne for late/unmarked work and lack of feedback which is vital for pupils?

Staff, the same as other working parents, are trying to juggle working from home and 25% of KHS staff have young children. PT's are quality assuring work however marking is a huge job alongside all the other tasks currently required of them. JL will feedback points to PT's for feedback.

We are doing our best however it is a big ask for teachers, pupils and parents. We need to take the best bits of the situation and move forward.

Another Planning Meeting is to be organised, date to be confirmed however will be March / April time. Information will follow in due course.

Quiz Night – it was suggested to host a virtual event however without parent help it will not be possible to host this. Update - It was decided that the quiz / social night on the 25th should be cancelled due to lack of interest.

Newsletters – help is required to put together these updates, it is too much work for one person. If anyone interested please come forward or moving forward information will be shared via the Weekly Update.

Parent Council Constitution – this needs reviewed and updated. Discuss at next meeting.

Members List – we need an active list of members. Discuss at next meeting.

Parent Council Subgroups

- New - Additional Support Needs Discussion Group
- New - LGBTQ+ Discussion Group
If anyone wants to get involved with the above new subgroups please get in touch.
- Anti Bullying Discussion Group - Lee Armitage
Parents have a lot going on at the moment
Advice provided in Newsletter
Links to helpful sites
Cheviot Youth running courses in the summer
- Parental Engagement Discussion Group - Aliy Brown
Update delayed to next meeting

**Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 13th May 2021 at 7.30pm
(rescheduled from Thursday 6th May due to Election)**