

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KELSO HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022 VIA ZOOM



**Attendance** - Harriet Campbell (Chair), Leri Payne (Vice Chair), Jill Lothian (Head Teacher), Nicola Robertson, Simon Mountford (Councillor), Euan Robson (Councillor), Ian Aitchison, Jen Redpath, Pam Guthrie, Sonya Nairn, Jennifer Middlemas, Kirsty Banks, Sarah and Gillian.

Apologies - Ginny Stewart (Treasurer), Adelle McElrath, Tom Weatherston (Councillor) and Gillian McFadyen.

Chairperson Harriet Campbell welcomed everyone to the meeting and made the introductions.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting** - Minutes read and approved by Pam Guthrie and Harriet Campbell.

**Matters Arising** - None

### Chairperson's Report

Harriet confirmed that 8 out of 9 Parent Council Chairs (not Jed GS) have formed a group to put questions to SBC. They have highlight the concerns to budgets / funding that is allocated to schools for staffing. SBC are taking the concerns seriously and whilst there are no confirmed budgets for next year as yet the group is cautiously optimistic.

Other points that had been highlighted and are being pushed forward:

1. Mental Health Support (Pupils & Staff)  
Quarriers service is great but can only do so much. Please share any thoughts around this topic.
2. Food Quality – Improvements?
3. School Reporting – this is agreed centrally and passed down to schools

Leri advised information regarding the census should have been shared with parents now. There are two parts with a new HWB part (alcohol, drugs, relationships and gambling etc.).

Pupils will be completing the census as part of PSE prior to Easter holiday.

There are some questions specifically for senior pupils, pupils have the option to skip questions, and this is completely anonymous. Pupils are identified with their SCN (Scottish Candidate Number) but this information is secure and only available to certain individuals.

## Head Teacher's Report with PowerPoint

### Whole School Matters

#### SQA Update

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has published revision support to help learners undertaking National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses as they prepare for this year's exams. The materials are part of a wide-ranging package of support to ease pressure on learners following disruption to learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Revision support is fully available on their website for all courses that have an exam and is tailored to each course, including:

- **Advance notice of content that will, or will not be in the exam**  
For some courses, SQA has published information on which broad topics, contexts or content will or will not be in this year's exam. This will help learners to plan their revision and focus more on the parts of the course that will be in the exam, though learners can still use their knowledge of other parts of the course when developing their answers to questions.
- **Study guides**  
For some courses, SQA has published study guides to help learners practice answering exam questions. These give hints and tips on how to approach different types of questions, including how to gain marks.
- **Study notes (learners' own)**  
In a small number of courses, learners will be allowed to create a short study note that they can take with them into the exam hall with them.

A [summary of the revision support for each course](#) is available.

Learners can access the revision support from [Ushare](#), SQA's online platform which hosts links to open-source revision materials and teaching resources that support SQA qualifications.

In mid-March, SQA will also publish its *Your Exams* booklet; a guide for learners about what they need to know about their exams. Copies will be available through schools, colleges, and training providers, or from the SQA website.

Learners are also recommended to download SQA's My Study Plan app (available through the App Store and Google Play) through which they can create their own personalised study plan based on their exam timetable.

#### Choice of Course Process

The choice of course process is now complete and this will allow us to begin the process of compiling our timetable for next session. We are aiming to move to our new timetable on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June.

#### Merit/Demerit Update

As a school, we continue to embed our system of merit and demerits. This data allows us to celebrate success or plan appropriate interventions. Although we are noticing an improvement in low level disruption we will continue to monitor. We plan to carry out an evaluation via surveys for staff, young people and parents. We will share the results at our next Parent Council Meeting.

#### Parents' Evening / Reporting

We continue to review our methods we use to communicate with parents. It is important to provide information on progress of learning for our young people.

Currently we use a tracking report, twice a year along with a parents' evening. We are launching a new app on the iPad - Showbie. This will allow our young people and staff to regularly showcase class work and the progress being made. With regards to the parents evening we are hopeful that our final engagement evening will be in-person.

We plan to set up a short-life working group to evaluate our tracking, monitoring and reporting process.

### **HMIE Inspection**

Schools are able to opt in for a visit from HMI, this is not a full inspection, there is no grading but would be similar to a normal audit. KHS staff are keen to take advantage of this and we are looking at this happening June. We will need a parental group to be involved in this process but more information to follow.

### **Staff Updates**

We continue to have a teacher vacancy within our English Faculty despite advertising three times.

### **Merits / De-merits**

Harriet indicated that there seems to be a discrepancy when staff are issuing merits, the middle of the road pupils that are well behaved seem to have been missed out.

Has behaviour / mood in school changed / improved in last 3/4 months?

Jill confirmed that this has been a challenging week with some challenging behaviour from our high tariff pupils. We need to look at how we support our young people to overcome the challenges to learning.

However on the whole the merits / de-merit system is working in the majority of pupils.

Nicola suggested that more help from SBC would be welcomed and Simon asked what type of support would we be looking for? It was agreed that further discussion around should take place separately.

Looking into possibility of alternatives to classes within the school day to alleviate disruption in classes and what teachers are having to deal with.

It is just felt that staffing is stretched so far and there is not enough alternative provision (currently provided by Pupil Care & Support team (PCS) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)).

### **Q&A**

Are there any plans for charging points within the carpark?

Jill confirmed we would look into this, it would need to go via Caroline Jackson (SBC) in the first instance. It was also suggested that it would be worth speaking with Alex Young / John Curry (Director of Assets & Infrastructure).

### **iPad / Phone misuse**

This is an ongoing issue, pupils use iPads as the main learning tool. Jill uses 'Apples Up' so when pupils are not using devices they are on the desks with the logo facing up.

Phones are meant to be switched off / on silent and in school bags during lessons, only to be used during break and lunch time.

The issue is not helped by parents messaging pupils throughout the school day. Suggestions made of time out or leaving devices at home.

As we are now able to hold whole year group assemblies Jill reiterates this message during assemblies and via weekly update home to parents.

Ian expressed his thanks to Jill and KHS for the effort, this is a cultural issue. We need to work with our young people.

### **Update on Showbie**

This is being piloted with a group of staff, looking to roll out in August. This is a great platform to showcase pupils work however it is not interactive.

Pam expressed her thanks to all staff following the Parents' Evening system crash at the Surgery Evening, staff went over and above with phone calls / emails home following up on missed appointments. This was greatly appreciated by parents.

Discussion took place around the engagement survey, this was very helpful/valuable but good to revisit in the future.

Harriet issued an appeal for parents willing to help / be sounding boards around reporting and bullying. This would not be a massive commitment. Kirsty Banks and Jennifer Redpath are happy to be involved. Harriet will follow this up on Facebook / message.

### **Treasurer's Report**

#### **Lottery Account**

There is **£1,542.69** in this account as at 2nd March 2022 (date of last statement).

There are currently 185 active lines and the prize fund of **£187.50** will be drawn at the end of March. We had our first winner since February 2021 with Fiona Fenwick winning **£985.00** in January's draw.

**TOTAL AVAILABLE TO SPEND    £1,355.19**

#### **Main Account**

There is currently **£834.45** in this account.

Discussion took place around bids received to the Thomas Maconochie Trust, Jill confirmed 6 bids were received at last meeting (e.g. Guides, Curling and Duke of Edinburgh)

Harriet thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

**Date of Next Meeting - Proposed next meeting is held end April / May, date will be advised in due course.**