

## **Minutes Parent Council Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

### **Present**

Campbell Wilson, Justin Noon, Vanessa Rice, Michael Pryor, Margaret Hogg, Glenda Barton, Vivienne Leckie, Kirsten Worsley, Eric Nightingale, Eleanor Fairbairn, Lorraine Sykes, Lisa Houston.

### **Apologies**

Laura Robertson, Tommy Davidson, Mirren McLeod, Gail Jackson

### **Minutes of last meeting**

Minutes accepted.

### **Chair's Report**

Having previously been a member of the PHS parent council for 7 years, I was honoured to be invited to become the Chair last year although I have to admit that I found the prospect rather daunting. However, with the support of a fantastic group of parents and school management team, I believe that we have achieved some great things over the year. In particular, I would like to thank Glenda for her amazing support and enthusiasm, Michael for his guidance and wisdom and Lisa for the huge amount of work she has put in behind the scenes on producing the bulletin and the new website.

When I took up the position of PC chair, I felt the most important objective of the PC was to represent the views and ideas of parents and to work together with the school to take these forward in partnership and I feel that this is something that we have successfully done over the year.

We started the year by looking at the priorities of the SIP and decided that we should channel our resources into supporting these. We therefore worked together with the school on delivering Tracking and Monitoring, DYW, Personal Support and Poverty Proofing. I believe that we have been able to add value at the same time as representing parents views in these areas and would like to propose that we do this again next year with the new SIP.

Our first meeting of the session took the form of an open meeting to which we invited all parents to come along and share with us their ideas and concerns. We had a very good turnout at this meeting and as a result ended up with the following list of topics to consider:

Curriculum structure  
Modern languages  
Young Engineers  
School Dinner Queues  
Study rooms  
Prefects Selection Process  
Uniform  
Homework  
Reward and Recognition  
and  
Communication

Over the year, we have focussed our attention on these areas and made good progress although work is still ongoing in some areas. However, one area that has been clearly addressed is Communication. We appointed Lisa as Communications Director and set to work on introducing a Parents eBulletin which has been very well received by both parents and the school. Parents are now kept up to date with what the PC is working on and also what the school is working on. Many thanks again to Lisa for her hard work on this and also to everyone else, including the SMT, for their contributions.

The other area that has been addressed regarding Communication is the school website and it has been a wonderful achievement to have such a fantastic new website up and running. Many thanks to Simon Fraser, Glenda, Lisa and Campbell for their work on this.

Finally, I would like to thank Mirren for her years of dedication as PC Clerk and her diligence in producing the minutes. We are sorry to see you go but wish you all the best in the future.

Thank you to everyone for your support over the year and I look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

### **Rector's Report**

Campbell began by giving thanks to the Parent Council for their support and challenge over the last 12 months. He continued that he is never failed to be amazed that when he asks for help it is always there from parents in support of the school.

When challenge comes from the Parent Council whether from Margaret as Chair or previously from Michael it is always in a mature way and aiming to make the school a better place.

### **The School Improvement Plan Review**

#### **Personal Support**

This is now embedded into the provision for young people and we have reviewed and evaluated the impact of this provision. We have gained a great deal of positive feedback as well as many challenges.

The challenges to the programme were in the main from the senior phase rather than year 1-3 but especially in 6<sup>th</sup> year. Overall 37% students didn't enjoy PS. Although in the minority, the school is keen to improve the provision for all.

Actions going forward:

- Classroom ethos- ensure that the students are able to have conversations with each other including peer support with S6 facilitating learning.
- Record the learning conversations students have with teachers and ensure this is linked to tracking and monitoring in order that this can be taken forward and shared with parents and staff.
- Students will develop the skill to set targets to lead their own learning so they can achieve better learning outcomes.
- Continue to allocate buddy time for Personal Support Tutoring partners within the working time agreement to discuss students in their cohort.

As this has been in the SIP for the last 3 SIP plans this will now go forward as normal practice within the school (as with other lessons) but of course will continue to be reviewed particularly within the tracking and monitoring area to ensure we understand the impact on attainment.

### **Developing Young Workforce**

As there was an additional extraordinary meeting on this subject it was felt that this would be covered in the minutes of the meeting which will be posted on the PC section of the website.

Overall it has been viewed as a very positive initiative and can change the scope of many students especially S3 students who are undertaking work experience for the first time.

The school is very grateful for the support of parents in finding work experience and supporting students in the programme. In particular the school would like to thank Vanessa Rice and Lloyds Group for their help in organising opportunities for our young people.

There has been a real appetite in the community for this programme which we are extremely pleased with and as we have only had this on the SIP for one year and it continues as a priority it will continue in the SIP next session.

### **Tracking Reporting and Monitoring**

The surveys at parents' nights have produced more positive responses to how parents feel about what they know about their child's performance. Eg 96% parents in S6 agree/strongly agree that they have enough information. In all years there has been improvement 91% in S1 and 86% in years 3 and 4. (S2 not recorded.)

Very positive feedback from the literacy and numeracy evening for S1 parents and this will be repeated this year.

Staff also positive that they have more time to have learning conversations as a result of the new system.

Next steps: Staff and parents would welcome the opportunity to comment on occasion rather than just tracking reports. This needs to be balanced with the need to avoid too much additional bureaucracy.

As previously reported with personal support the next steps of this work programme will be integrated into new methods to capture learning conversations with teachers.

This will require developing young people's ability to record their own next steps and this will require coaching to do so.

More evidence is needed as to be certain as to what impact this has had on attainment and so data collection will continue and be reviewed.

### Poverty Proofing

A staff working group was set up and met 5 times this year. In addition Parent Council members attended in order to seek views and develop initiatives throughout the session.

With the goal of reducing costs as far as possible for all students and maintaining the quality of provision and opportunities for all.

This year data has been collected to be able to understand the cost to attend PHS and also identify those who are entitled to support.

A letter was written and given in assembly to ensure everyone understood free school meals and clothing grants to increase awareness. A letter was also included in the S1 pack to new parents at the school.

We are almost a cash free school which removes the stigma from pupils needing financial support. Families in need of financial support will simply have zero cost in parent pay for items they are entitled to receive support in. In addition Uniform vouchers/free ties are given to families in need.

### Courses and Resources

There has been a major reduction in the costs for new S1 students eg no cost for technical, health and wellbeing only £5 etc. In addition there are free lockers, Art materials, sports buses for families in need. New work has been done to manage costs in the senior phase and a new free reading/print room with stocks of pencils etc.

### Trips and Visits

The hardship fund (Opportunity Pot) continues to support students for trips mainly S1 residential and the S3 Duke of Edinburgh. Parents were more likely to comment that the senior phase was expensive due to expensive foreign trips.

### Pupil Equity Fund

The money allocated to PHS (£50,000) for 4 years intended to support closing the attainment gap could allow the proposal that the school appoints a family liaison post with 3 new PT posts with a literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing focus but this model is being reviewed in light of staff consultation. In addition the supply of IT hardware and online expenses may be possible.

### Next steps:

Finalise a cash free school, support for families that just miss the criteria for free school meals, further support for school trips. Complete the P7 into S1 transitions support plan, and the new provisional places scheme. Introduce a tracking and monitoring scheme to track financial support offered to students throughout their time at the school.

### SIP next steps

Survey to go to parents to ask their views on the school priorities. Number 1 for staff and students in their respective surveys was "Learning and Teaching". Mr Noon will be the senior member of staff aligned to this.

A further survey next session will be modelled on the HMI parental survey to ensure the school gets a baseline of views on the overall school performance to inform further improvements and changes in the months that follow.

### Staffing

This is an uncertain time of year with changes happening at short notice as opportunities arise for staff .

Latest changes: Mrs Cruickshank is retiring and parents commented on her tremendous support to students especially in UCAS/college applications. There has been a great deal of interest in the post and 11 people will be interviewed.

This new post will have a focus on DYW.

Mrs Jan Sheridan was appointed Principle Teacher for Maths and that has resulted in a vacancy for a maths teacher.

Mrs Samantha McHenry ( Maths) has been appointed to a Principle Teacher in Selkirk

Mr Mark Freeman ( Maths) has secured a post closer to his home location of Glasgow.

So in total there are three maths posts vacant with a national shortage of Maths teachers and this has been a very challenging year for maths.

Interviews will be held on Tuesday with the hope of replacing these staff.

### Sports Day

The Rector concluded that today had been Sports Day and thanks to a new system designed by Mr Lee this was a much more effective day for all concerned especially spectators. This resulted in a much better experience for all. Congratulations to Ailsa Innes who broke a school record which is rare. It was noticeable that there were more girl athletes than boys in the Senior School at the races for the first time

The Rector commented on the tremendous results for our athletes this year with Gold, Silver and Bronze awards at the Scottish championships. In particular Michael Girdler (S2) broke a record for the under 15s that had been held for 35 years.

Overall Peebles High school came third in the medal tally behind Edinburgh Academy and Heriots so a very pleasing end to the sporting year and congratulations to all students and staff involved.

### PTA Report

Michael Pryor reported on the progress for this year and complimented Lisa Houston who has led the PTA fundraising activities this year with great energy and commitment and thanks were given to Lisa for all she has done.

PHS PTA undertake two main fundraisers a year, The Christmas Concert and the Spring Concert, selling both refreshments and raffle tickets to the audience and providing refreshments to the performers. The PTA also provide volunteers to assist at any events, as requested by the school.

#### **Christmas Market 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Through sales of donated goods and home baking the PTA raised £151.30 at the Christmas Market, held in the Burgh Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **Christmas Concert 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

Through sales of refreshments and raffle tickets the PTA raised £611.80. Thanks to the generous support of Sainsburys in Peebles, who provided a gift card of £100 our costs were kept to a minimum (£5.60 for 4 raffle books). We served warm mulled wine and mince pies, in addition to the usual tea and coffee and provided refreshments for the performers. Raffle prizes were provided by Michael Pryor, Francos Italian Restaurant, Whities Books and Crafts, Weatherspoons, Castle Warehouse, The Eastgate Theatre, and a generous parent contribution. The Poldark Calendar, donated by Parent Council Chair Margaret Hogg, proved extremely popular!

#### **School Show 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016**

PTA volunteers served refreshments at the school show.

### **Spring Concert 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017**

Through sales of refreshments and raffle tickets the PTA raised £516. Thanks again for local support from the Eastgate Theatre, Barony Castle, Cringletie, Miss Captain, Red House Design, Scott Brothers, Carols Candles and Sew Shed for their donations of raffle prizes and to a parent, who wishes to remain anonymous, for their donation of the required Costco supplies. Home baking was provided by parents (and a granny).

### **Advanced Higher Art & Design Exhibition 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017**

PTA volunteers served refreshments.

### **Lessons learned & feedback received**

At future fundraising events the PTA will provide a greater number of bottled juice/cans/snacks for sale, in addition to purchasing large cakes from Costco that can be sold per slice at a profit of approximately £10 per cake.

It would be helpful to discuss with other groups any planned approaches to local businesses, as many had already been spoken to / donated when contacted about potential raffle prizes.

### **Effective communication**

The PTA contribute to the Parents e-bulletin highlighting any volunteer requests or updates on events, in addition to emails out to the PTA mailing list and posts on social media.

### **Thanks**

Thanks must go to all the volunteers who give their energy and time to the fundraising efforts of the PTA and to the local businesses who kindly donate to our raffles.

### **Total raised this year £1279.10**

Lorraine Sykes reported as treasurer that the accounts stand as follows:

Bank balance: at 1/4/16	£1774.06
Income	+ £2961.85
Expenditure	- £980.10

**Bank balance at 31/5 17 £ 3,755.81**

### **PHS200**

The key theme this session has been collaboration between parents and staff from the beginning of this session with the joint planning and support of the school SIP. PHS200 being focussed mainly on supporting the DYW and Tracking, reporting and monitoring sections of the plan. Thanks to Mr Wilson, Mr Fagan and Mr Noon for their openness to collaborating with us on the plans at an early stage. We hope that we can build on this again this year.

Collaborating continued with, what felt like a new partnership, between parent groups with many changes in roles –it has been a real pleasure working with Margaret as chair and with all the parent group leaders. From first of all the increase in communication of our activities eg with the new e-bulletin. Thanks to Lisa for collating everything. Parents tell us it is a great way of finding out what is going on in school particularly for parents who don't have the time to regularly look for information from the website or potentially not being signed up to social media.

Another example of trying to improve information flow is the developing of the new website. It has been a super collaboration with all of us playing our part in delivering a new, modern, simpler site which we hope is useful to everyone. It has been a huge effort including staff who have tried very hard to facilitate everything from photographs from students, or information for our new alumni, etc. Thanks to Mr Wilson for facilitating everything we needed from school but a huge thank you to Simon Fraser in the design of the site and for Simon and Lisa Houston for the work of writing sections of the site.

Returning to our role with the SIP. We hope that PHS Developing Young Workforce support from parents has continued to help build up career partners for the school- such that the school have a large resource of people to call on eg who can offer work experience to students but also adding to the school's resources of people from the community to help inform and shape the curriculum. We have also supported the school with the DYW Twitter account to build followers to us and create information to students about what opportunities are out there in the run up to the career fair.

Then the planning and running of the career event itself with Mr Fagan who was new to the event. It is several months of work ,starting with trying to motivate people to come on the night, speakers preparing communication materials, newspaper articles, posters, student materials etc. We are eternally grateful to the parents and partners in the community who give up their time and many who have done this for many years. In particular thanks to Marie McQuade, Martin Krabbendam, Karen Mclachlan and the other parents who give their time up on the night.

It was a very positive collaboration with Mr Fagan and the school but we found ourselves very short of parent help in the planning stage unexpectedly so it was very tight this year so hopefully we can avoid that this year. It was also unfortunate that there were three primary school parents evenings called on the night plus a substantial snow warning from police and yet a very good turnout even in spite of that.

#### Tracking Monitoring and Reporting/Flexible Curriculum

This has been a passionate subject raised regularly by parents who have been looking for more information on the progress of their child and many parents have been pleased to see an increase in communication and the changes in parents' nights. Mr Noon has led many changes this year and we hope that he is keen to continue to work with parents on the planning and implementation stages again and the feedback received from the various surveys. Especially important that we continue to try to get an online parent portal where we have a one stop shop to access student progress.

#### Ad Hoc.

As ever phs200 continues to respond to requests for support from the school. Examples would be for the School show which involved clearing out and reorganising all the stock of costumes, new clothes rails, supporting the PTA fundraising at the Christmas and Spring concerts and latterly supporting the drive to hopefully win some extra funding for hard of hearing students through the Tesco competition in order that we can provide new curtains and soundproofing equipment in the dinning hall.

#### **PHS 200 CLUB**

Laura was not able to attend this meeting but as of the last minutes we recorded £7000 raised.

#### **PHS Learning Support Group**

This has been our second year in existence –  
Our key events this year include:

The Duck race  
Christmas Concert in Peebles  
Back packing at Sainsburys  
Cakes at Tweed Green

Total raised £1564.30

We are ensuring we spend more time than we have in the past in providing a support network for parents of children with additional needs, and that we feedback to the school on specifics. So we expect the fundraising activity to take a bit of a back step.

However we also are finding it difficult to collate an email database of the relevant parents population and would welcome all a parents of children with additional needs to get in touch directly with us.

#### **Appointment of Post Holders**

Chair- Margaret Hogg

Vice Chair- TBC

PTA- Michael Pryor to Chair with Lisa Houston Fundraising Coordinator- Lorraine Sykes Secretary

PHS 200 - TBC

PHS LS- Vanessa Rice

Communications Officer- Lisa Houston

Clerk - TBC

### **Next Year's dates**

AGM was agreed to be held in June.

Agreed principle of dates to be on a rotational basis (minimising Wednesdays)

Aim to have our first meeting first week in September to follow on from the S1 Numeracy and Literacy meeting where parent groups would have a presence.

Thereafter:

End of October, Beginning of December, End of January/early Feb/End of March/Middle of May/AGM middle of June.

### **Next Year's fundraising**

It was agreed that the parent groups would like to run a joint initiative to raise funds for laptop computers. This was in addition to a bidding process for the £10,000 raised over the last year which will include a contribution to French books, a contribution to some laptops and bids from PTs,

Meeting finished : 9.00pm