

James Gillespie's High School
Parent Council Meeting
Tuesday 22nd January 2019
Draft minutes

Present:

Donald Macdonald – DM (HT), Ailsa Macintosh – AM (Chair),
Ian Porter – IP (DHT), Graeme Davis - GD (Communications),
Julie-Ann Sime - JAS (Treasurer), Charles Warlow, Cynthia Berry,
Mary Ross, Cath Downie, Rachel Giles, Jennie Fraser, Arvind Veiraiah,
Beena Veiraiah, Alastair Philp, Ros Ingle, Karen Burke,
Anna Christal – AC (Secretary)

Apologies:

Shelagh Shields

1. Welcome, apologies and minutes of last meeting (27th Nov 2018)

AM welcomed everyone.

The minutes of the last meeting on 27th November 2018 were approved.

1.1 (1.5) DM to check whether gift aid can be claimed on donations through ParentPay.

DM reported that ParentPay can be used for Gift Aid but that school cannot apply for Gift Aid. It may be possible to pass funds onto the JGHS Trust to claim Gift Aid. This will not be retrospective and will need additional permissions added to donations through Parent Pay.

Action: DM to explore this with the JGHS Trust.

1.2 (1.6) Raising funds through donations added to tickets for Christmas Concert.

GD reported that sum is still to be finalised. Ongoing.

1.3 (1.9) Production of JGHS Parent Council banners

Ongoing.

1.4 (1.10) Re-registration for JGHS Parent Council Mailing List.

GD reported that details for re-registration are on the JGHS Parent Council website: <http://jghscouncil.btck.co.uk/>

1.5 (1.12) Issuing of school questionnaire for parental feedback about JGHS vision and values

DM noted that questionnaire has been issued and results will be shared at a later JGHS Parent Council meeting.

1.7 (2) Continuity of Office 365 access at end of S6

DM noted that to avoid any subsequent access issues, pupils will be advised to relocate their files prior to going on exam leave.

1.8 (2) School to add key dates to school calendar

Completed.

1.9 (3) AM to respond on behalf of JGHS Parent Council that the budget consultation does not contain enough detail to act as proper consultation on proposals

Completed.

1.10 (4) Invitation to new Chair of JGHS Trust to JGHS Parent Council meeting

Completed.

1.11 (5) JGHS Parent Council to organise festive digital fund-raising campaign

Completed and £1930 raised (without gift aid).

1.12 (6) DM to promote JGHS Parent Council easy fundraising page through weekly newsletter

Completed.

1.13 (8) School to arrange for repairs pupil toilets

Completed.

2. Chair update (Ailsa Macintosh)

No South East Locality meeting has been held since last JGHS Parent Council meeting. However discussion amongst Parent Council Chairs has raised a concern about the lack of consultation on forthcoming published term dates. AM reported that parents have previously been consulted. It was noted that there are issues with especially with breaking up for Christmas on Wednesday 23rd December 2020, returning on the Wednesday 6th January 2021, with similar dates proposed for 2021/22.

Action: AM to raise JGHS Parent Council concerns at SEL and query lack of consultation.

The extraordinary budget meeting of the City of Edinburgh (CEC) Education, Children and Families Committee planned for 17th January 2018 has been postponed to 4th February. AM is planning to attend. Please contact AM to raise any issues.

AM noted that the next Engage event to support pupils in career choices will be held on 26th February 2019. These events are organised by Boroughmuir Parent Council and JGHS pupils and families are welcome to attend. Further information is available at <http://jghscouncil.btck.co.uk/News>

AM noted that the Chair of Balerno High School Parent Council has been in touch to find out about WiFi pilot.

CEC Education, Children and Families Meeting on 11th December 2018 confirmed plans to develop temporary accommodation at JGHS for August 2019 and redevelopment of Darroch for 2021/22, acting possibly as a nucleus for Gaelic Medium Education. The papers for this meeting also confirmed development of additional accommodation at Boroughmuir High School, but also discussed possible catchment review for Boroughmuir HS in future.

AM noted that the CEC Culture and Communities Committee has issued a consultation on a physical activity and sports strategy. Details are at: <https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/cf/physical-activity-and-sport-strategy-2019-23/>

3. Key Adult Time update - Ian Porter (DHT)

IP outlined his remit and responsibilities with a focus on Pupil Support.

This includes:

- Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion across the school
- Line management for Pupil support and Support for Learning
- Line management for Health and Wellbeing Faculty (PE and HE)
- Year Head S1 and S6

He identified the Key Adult role as being part of Pupil Support and contributing to:

- Quality of learning and teaching
- Positive relationships
- Sense of belonging

He shared the context of the National Vision for Pupil Support, describing universal and targeted support.

He identified that between 20-30% of young people need additional targeted support, but universal support is available for all pupils through their Key Adult, Pupil Support Leader, Support for Learning and Year Head (DHT). Pupil Support Leaders identify pupils in need of additional targeted support.

For parents he noted that the Pupil Support Leader is the key contact. Details of the Pupil Support Leaders in each of the 5 communities are available on the JGHS website at: <http://jamesgillespies.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Parents-Pupil-Support-Structure-January-2019-IPorter-converted.pdf>

IP noted that within the Curriculum for Excellence, all pupils have an entitlement to personal support. The role of Key Adult developed following issues identified in the 2016 Learning and Teacher Survey/Parent Survey to enable all pupils to have personal support.

Previously registration was 10 minutes daily (50 minutes weekly). The Key Adult system has 10 minute sessions twice per week and the remaining 30 minutes allows for individual 15 minute meetings with two young people per week. This allows termly individual meetings with each

young person, with these conversations taking place in relation to key reporting times in the school year. Key Adult classes are made up of pupils from each year group.

Staff feedback has been positive about the meetings with individual pupils as it is felt that it 'opens up information about silent middle' and has allowed pupils to gain confidence in target-setting. However there is a sense that the 10 minutes sessions are not being well used.

Following this 2017/18 staff evaluation of the Key Adult system, IP plans to hold an evaluation for learners and parents.

In response to questions, IP noted that there are between 20-27 pupils per Key Adult class. Some parents noted that there was value in having pupils from each year group in the Key Adult class and that this had led to opportunities for conversations and support between year groups.

IP noted that the function of the 10 minute sessions is to allow registration to be reviewed and individual appointments to be made. A parent commented that sharing whole school information is more difficult without daily registration.

Several parents noted that they were unaware that meetings were being held termly and some parents reported that meetings did not appear to be happening termly and that notification about meetings and subsequent paperwork was not always received.

IP noted that Key Adults only meet with pupils in S1 to S4. He will look at increased quality assurance from Pupil Support Leaders/DHTs to address the concern that meetings are not happening or paperwork is not being received.

A parent asked about the impact of rising rolls on the Key Adult system. IP noted that there are recurrently 60 Key Adults and more staff will need to be recruited.

A parent asked when meetings were scheduled. IP stated that pupils have appointment slip that allows them out of class for this meeting.

IP noted that Key Adults have protected time for these meetings to take place.

4. JGHS Trust update (Robbie McVeigh/Fiona Denvir)

Robbie is parent trustee on the JGHS Trust, alongside Fiona Denvir. Robbie reported that a new Chair (Ann Henderson) and Vice Chair (Melanie Main) were appointed at the AGM on 4th December 2018. The Treasurer is Jean Knox.

Robbie noted the need for guidance in role as JGHS Parent Council representative and trustee. He also noted the need to stand down from this role when parental involvement with JGHS finishes.

Details about the JGHS Trust are available online at:

<https://www.jamesgillespiestrust.com/>

5. Fundraising and Events

Christmas/Festive Fundraiser

GD noted that the online Festive Fundraiser had raised more than last year and allowed parents to enjoy the Christmas concert without fundraising. However it was noted that future online fundraising needs more publicity to increase the number of people contributing.

Usher Hall ticket sale donations are still to be added to the £1930 raised.

Wine-tasting Social Event – Friday April 26th 2019

Cynthia Berry noted that the JGHS Parent Council Wine-tasting social event will be held on Friday 26 April 2018. The plan is to use the Forum, the break-out area behind the Forum and the garden. The plan is to make this event less formal than previous wine-tasting events, with people circulating between tables where the wine merchant will serve drinks and answer questions. Food will be available in the break-out area. Tickets are planned to be £10 to include wine and food. There will be 120 tickets available and Eventbrite will be used for ticketing. An additional pop-up prosecco bar is planned (these drinks at additional cost); a BBQ planned for the garden and there is the possibility of running a silent auction. A sign-up sheet for volunteers was circulated at this meeting and CB will email all those who have previously offered help with events.

Action: CB to email a request for volunteers

It was noted that parents could also be approached for offers of donations for a silent auction.

AM noted that as agreed the event will be open to the whole school community including staff and prospective P7 parents.

Action: AM to promote to feeder primary schools.

Permission for £200 float was granted by JAS.

Fundraising & Volunteer Engagement Survey

Gail Edwards had approached the JGHS Parent Council with proposal to organise a Fundraising & Volunteer Engagement Survey. This will be discussed at a later meeting when Gail can attend and link with Fiona Denvir.

GD suggested that it may be useful to have specific items identified for fund-raising. It was agreed that having a major fund-raising project could be useful to focus efforts, but it was also noted that some projects rely on our small sums funding and it is important to ensure that funds continue to be available for these smaller projects.

AM noted that it would be useful to link with the JGHS Trust for a major fund-raising project and perhaps Fiona Denvir could help liaise with this as both a JGHS Trustee and PC lead on fundraising group.

6. Finance update (Julie-Ann Sime)

JAS noted that finances are currently £2000.33, not including the Christmas Fundraising. Funds raised through ParentPay have not been added to accounts. DM noted that JAS needs to contact the JGHS Business Manager to arrange transfer of ParentPay funds.

Action: JAS to contact JGHS Business Manager

JAS noted that EasyFundraising sums continue to be added each quarter but there has been no funding received since last meeting.

7. Head teacher's report incl. WiFi & capacity (Donald Macdonald)

DM noted several instances where senior pupils are benefitting from access to WiFi in school. Pupils and staff shared disappointment when CEC switched off access without notice in the last week of term.

Although access has now been restored, confusion arose around access resulting in pupils being unable or unaware of being able to use school WiFi during Prelim revision. There is a meeting in 10 days to assess progress. DM expressed his hope that the pilot will continue until the end of June for a proper evaluation and that it will continue thereafter. Parents suggested that the pilot should continue through the May exams and into the new June timetable, with the hope that this leads to long-term secure access. No WiFi capacity issues have been noted since senior pupils have had access.

DM noted the continued challenge from rising rolls and the need to recruit additional teachers. The school was built for 1150 pupils, though the capacity, with some reconfiguration to internal spaces, has increased to 1300. The current forecast for 2028 is approaching 1900 pupils, with a projection for 1400-1500 pupils if GME relocates.. The school roll is rising faster than anticipated. DM estimates that 1300 pupils is manageable on the JGHS site. He noted that CEC plans to establish a GME secondary school by 2024, subject to finance being agreed this term. For August 2019, six additional temporary classrooms will be installed in the back car park. Then from August 2021, CEC proposals are that Darroch will be refurbished and reinstated as an Annex.

Several parents have written to IP to look at options for an S6 common room. IP said that he had shared these emails with the JGHS Trust. It was noted that there had been an S6 common room at Darroch during the decant.

DM noted that the online booking system for parent consultations was proving efficient and had been generally welcomed. However he noted that there are some issues, especially with the number of appointments available in the lower school.

DM noted that ParentPay has made payments easier for the school.

DM noted that the school is working to ensure certification for the current S3 with the removal of N4 awards for pupils who fail N5 assessments

8. AOCB

9. Date of next PC meeting – Tuesday 19th March 2019