

James Gillespie's High School, Parent Council

First Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 27th November 2007

Minutes of Meeting

Present:

Marie Chetty, Pat Brechin, Sue Clark, Beth Cross, Karen Docwra, Dora Georgieve, Nigel Goddard, Kim Hamilton, Ann Henderson, Marian Hernot, Carina Hibbert, Robert Inder, Kate Katagiri, Marilyn Jackson, Karina Kodymowska, Marc Lambert, Penny Long, Chris McInnellMcKinnell, Tom Macilntyre, Derek Mills, Johanna Moore, Shiraz Newall-Watson, Sheena Purdom, Helga Rhein, Gail Robertson, Lois Rollings, Jim Rodger, Kim Russell, Claire Soper, Vivienne Swan, Alex Wallace, Carolyn Wilson

Derek ? Claire ?

Staff: David Anderson, Marie Chetty, Alex Wallace

School Students: Anna Darling, Sian Dawson, Liam Tate

Apologies:

John Forsyth, Nick Hughes, Alpana Mair

1. Announcements:

- 1.1. Marie Chetty, Depute Head, JGHS introduced three senior students who will be attending JGHS Council Meetings. The three 6th Year Students, Anna Darling, Sian Dawson and Liam Tate were welcomed by the "council" and we look forward to their participation in future meetings. MC confirmed that 5th Year Students would also be invited to nominate representatives to also join the "council". School Council.
- 1.2. The 6th Year Play, performed on the 30th November, was promoted by the students, with tickets available on the door. The aim is that this annual performance involving staff and students continues in its annual tradition.
- 1.3. JGHS Business Manager, David Anderson announced a proposal to launch a fundraising scheme before the end of term with the distribution of "Spree Money-Off Vouchers". The scheme operates on a charging basis of £22.00 for access to money off vouchers and discounts. The school would receive a proportion of the sales value of the booklets, dependent on the volume sold.

2. Report by Interim Chair, JGHS School Council

Nigel Goddard, Interim Chair reported on the activities of the Interim Council in the period since taking up posts in August 2007. (Written reports had been submitted to the meeting) The focus in the 3 preceding months has been on developing communications between the school and parents, introducing a bulletin, establishing a Communications Group, new S1, S2 parent

groups, maintaining Events and Building Sub-Groups and meeting the challenges of seeking to engage with parents more actively within the new ethos of the "council". School Council.

The Events Sub-Group will be providing refreshments at the School Carol Concerts on the 12th, 13th December and have scheduled a Burns Supper and Ceilidh for Friday 25th January. For tickets and further information, contact Carol Farrell on 620 3509. If you are able to help on the evening, please send an email to: ebomberg@staffmail.ed.ac.uk. Entry is via pre-booked tickets only and following on the success of this event last year, it is advised to book early. Further details were given regarding arrangements

The Buildings Sub-Group has re-engaged in the campaign to improve the school estate for staff and pupils. The Wave 3 Schools (Boroughmuir High School, Portobello High School, JGHS, St Crispin's Special School, St John's Primary School)) have not been approved for a re-build by the Scottish Government and will instead be subject to a feasibility study to establish the case for the level of funding required by them to upgrade the facilities to an acceptable standard. There are proposals to consider an art competition to involve feeder primaries to help re-dress the negative perceptions of the school as represented by the physical space/buildings.

Both groups are keen to involve new parents and aim to plan their meetings on different evenings from the "council" School Council with dates announced via the website, emails and bulletins.

The "council" School Council has also contributed to the recent School Review conducted last week by the authority, distributed information on the Parental Involvement Strategy and on the Health Promoting Schools initiative. It was noted that majority of discussions and work is likely to take place within "sub-groups" with the "council" School Council providing cohesion and an overview. The "council" School Council will take the opportunity to focus on and report back on specific issues at "council" School Council meetings and not aim to cover all the work of sub-groups in each meeting.

Finally, the "council" School Council has a bank account, web pages and a developing contacts database. Thanks were recorded to Nigel and interim office bearers on behalf of parents and staff for the report; acknowledging the achievements to date.

3. Election of Officers

Nigel handed over the "chair of the meeting" to Ann Henderson to conduct this part of the meeting. It was noted that two interim committee members, Nick Hughes, Treasurer and Karina Kodymowska, Secretary did not want to continue in posts. It was also noted that the "council" School Council actively supported the sharing of posts to encourage the involvement of parents in the "executive" of the "council". School Council. The following were nominated and appointed to posts:

Chair: Nigel Goddard
Proposed by Sue Clark and supported by Ann Henderson

Vice-Chair: Alpanna Mair and Vivienne Swan

Proposed by Ann Henderson and supported by xxxKate Katagiri

Secretary: Post still vacant – key tasks are to respond to incoming mail, collect mail from school weekly and arrange meetings, record minutes of meetings. Members of the Communications Group will manage this work temporarily.

Treasurer: Tom McIntyre
Appointment arranged following the AGM

Communications: Ann Henderson
Proposed by Nigel Goddard and supported by Sue Clark

It was also proposed to seek volunteers to take on responsibilities as "Database Co-ordinator" and "Webmaster". Carina Hibberdt agreed to lead on the "database" and Penny Long to take on the role of "webmaster". Robert Inder confirmed that he would be willing to help with technical back up and support for the website.

The other key new officer post identified is that of fundraising and Karen Docwra confirmed her interest in supporting this work but not necessarily taking on the role at present. It has been proposed that there may could be a meeting convened of interested parents and that Francis Benton, Trust Fundraiser may be able to offer some guidance to help start off discussions. This was agreed.

Events – Mies Knottenbelt is keen to continue as the key contact for events but would like to see this moving forward as a shared role. Sheena Purdom agreed to act as the "link officer" between "council" the School Council and the events sub-group. for events.

Finally, the meeting discussed the need for administrative support for the "council" School Council and Ann confirmed that there was an it was the intention to advertise for a "Council Clerk" to be appointed to take the minutes for the February/March meetings.

Thanks were recorded by the meeting to all outgoing post holders.

AP – all vacant posts/roles will be advertised and if anyone wants to discuss informally, please call xxxx on xxx or send an email to xxxx.

4. **Financial Report**

A financial report and balance sheet were presented. Projecting ahead, it is anticipated that there will be an allocation from the Council of £500 in April for the year 08/09. The former PTA account has been wound up and £1000 will be transferred to the "School Council".

In terms of expenditure, the key expense to date is on the production and distribution of bulletins, approx. £80 per bulletin. The aim is to collate school mailing items where possible and to ensure that non resident parents receive communication on "council" all School Council business. There is a plan to do a further 2 bulletins next term, prior to April 08; this estimated expenditure of £160 was approved by the meeting. In terms of running costs, it was proposed that a

minimum of £500 be held by the "council". School Council. It was noted that the funds allocated by the City Council would be insufficient to allow the School Council to function, and a submission to the City Council will be made accordingly.

Ann thanked volunteers who had given up time to help with collating information and envelopes for a recent mailing.

5. Constitutional Amendments

- a) The amendment to the constitution moved by Marilyn Jackson, and seconded by Nigel Goddard, related to section 7 and to , as a proposal to remove the provisions for proxy voting at School Council meetings. The motion to make this amendment was passed by a 2/3 majority vote of attendees at the meeting.
- b) The amendment to the constitution of the JGHS Trust , moved by Su Clark related to terms of office, proposing to increase terms of office for trustees from one to two years, consistent with Trust practice. This amendment was passed by a 2/3 majority vote of attendees at the meeting.

6. Headteachers Report

- From Aug – Nov, school refurbishment has been ongoing with a focus on security features on doors and flooring.
- Attainment, Learning and Teaching. – the school is maintaining its position in the top band in Scotland for most results with the only reduction in banding in psychology. The Duffield Trust has awarded 3 gold crest science awards to the school. The Edinburgh City Council managed School Review has just been conducted with thanks and thanks were expressed to parents who responded to requests for interviews with Review staff. The indications are that the school has achieved the 2 set quality indicators in "teaching and learning" and "leadership for learning" with banding of very good to excellent. The school has also been acknowledged for its lead in diversity with a sector leading award.
- Communication remains an important issue and the newly formed group have has passed on feedback. It was noted that it may more realistically focus on "what parents need" rather than "what they want" as there are resource implications. In responding to feedback, a positive step was recently taken forward by Mr Rae to publish guidelines on home work and home study which parents have found helpful. Reference was made to the support given by the School Council in ensuring distribution of the Home study guidelines (S1 – S4), and this example of working together was welcomed.
- Staffing – new PTs in Science, Support for Pupils, and Modern Studies have all been welcomed.
- Fundraising – Alex mentioned the St Andrews Day Walk and the School's aim to raise up to £10,000 to support covers for the bike sheds, wind turbines for 3 classrooms and smart boards.

7. Trustees for the School Trust

Chris McKinnell and Su Clark were both appointed by the meeting for a 2-year term of office as trustees for the JGHS Trust.

8. Issues that parents/carers wish to raise

- A group is being set up to discuss home study and volunteers, particularly parents with children in the upper school are needed to join in this working group, convened by Tom Rae, Deputy Head. .Names should be passed to the School Council.
- It was noted that the Headteacher's Report needs to be positioned at an earlier point in the agenda. It was also suggested that rather than cover a wide range of business in each School Council Ccouncil meeting, that future meetings may focus on a topic or theme to enable this to be reported on and explored in some detail.
- Events members reminded the meeting about the Burns Supper on the 25th January.
- Parents expressed their condolences to Lorna Greenham, wife of Colin who had sadly died on the 27th, following a period of illness. Alex Wallace mentioned that the students would be distressed at the news of the loss of one of their janitorsindicated the great loss to the school community, saying that Colin would be greatly missed by all . It was noted that the "council"School Council would send flowers and a card to the family on behalf of parents.

Kate Hibbert Katagiri proposed a vote of thanks to the interim office bearers and staff attending the meeting.

9. **AOB/Date of next meeting**

5th February – 7.30

11th March – 7.30