

## Meldrum Academy Parent Council Meeting Session 2018/19 - 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

Parent Members – Simon Wain (C), Louise Will (VC), Jennifer Morrison, Saratha Kandassany, Heather Mullan, Patrina Bain, Dawn Florence, Stuart Shaw, Bryan Dickson, Elizabeth Cragie, Julie Chessor, Alistair Reid

Teacher Reps – Kathryn Michie

Pupil Reps – Hannah Michie (CL)

In attendance – Head Teacher Ian Jackson, Cllr Andrew Hassan

Item	Minute	Action
1. Welcome	Simon welcomed all present to the meeting. Ian Jackson was welcomed to his first Parent Council meeting as Head Teacher.	
2. Apologies	Jon Edwards, Von Webster (Rotary Representative), Kurt Prendergast (T), Steve Pryor, André Klopper	
3. Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising	<p>Proposed by HM Seconded by LW (VC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All previous minutes of meetings from this session have been distributed to those on the Parent Council email list and uploaded onto the blog</li> <li>• Behaviour management information yet to be added to the school website</li> <li>• Driving Ambition 2019/20 - Alison Fitzgerald to organise the same services for the next coming session. SW to apply for funding as and when it is needed</li> <li>• Education Skills Committee email sent out to those on the PC email list by SW.</li> </ul>	<p>IJ</p> <p>SW</p>
4. 2019-2020 Improvement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more additional comments to be made following last meeting's discussions</li> <li>• The focus remains on Showmyhomework alternatives and increasing parental engagement</li> </ul> <p>The main points of interest for the coming year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Nation-wide changes being made to the Advanced Higher courses</li> <li>→ Senior pathways</li> <li>→ The mental health of young people</li> <li>→ The distribution of confidential information and strategies to support staff to help children with additional support needs</li> <li>→ Climate for learning (Restorative practice, recognising positive achievement)</li> <li>→ Literacy and Numeracy</li> <li>→ Changes to the Broad General Education (BGE = Years 1-3)</li> <li>→ Digital learning</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's website and blog are to be updated and the possibility of introducing new social media platforms was raised to compliment the school's existing Twitter account</li> </ul>	Info

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's own focuses are based on those of the local authority and the Scottish Government, namely four main Aberdeenshire priorities as any more than this make the process unmanageable</li> <li>• The school will move to a 3-year improvement plan rather than 1-year (e.g. session 2019-2022 instead of session 2019-2020) in line with changes within the local authority</li> <li>• IJ to push for more fluid improvement plan also, which has been discussed with faculty heads and they have shown a keen interest in this style being introduced in August (session 2019/20)</li> </ul>	IJ
5. Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW emailed those on the PC email list to gauge interest in further mental health support but there have been no responses as of yet</li> <li>• It was agreed that the cornerstone of this issue is parental involvement and to focus on supporting parents and staff as well as young people</li> <li>• The immediate plan is to target Primary 7 parents with an 'introduction to mental health' presentation from Emma Cameron of SPARK</li> <li>• It has become clear that the issues of mental health are affecting children younger and younger, with children as young as Primaries 2 and 3 presenting symptoms of mild anxiety therefore a main focus has been pushing resilience at younger children before they enter secondary school</li> <li>• SPARK have funding to deliver another presentation before the Summer holidays (date yet to be confirmed)</li> <li>• The NHS Camhs service is changing to city and shire teams to focus on the early intervention of poor mental health in young people</li> <li>• LW is to take over the responsibility of this matter from HM</li> <li>• IJ apologised for the lack of progress thus far of the schools Mental health working group.</li> <li>• The group agreed that labelling anxiety too rashly is a large problem, which the SPARK group has a focus on (separating everyday worry with severe anxiety)</li> <li>• It was also recognised that the taboo and stigma must be removed from mental health before any progress can be made</li> <li>• The consensus was that the increase of social media usage will have an impact on mental health and proper usage must be taught to prevent low self-esteem and body confidence, as well as cyberbully</li> <li>• However, the big issue is the lack of openness and understanding from parents, perhaps due to the</li> </ul>	IJ

	<p>generational gap and supporting parents to support their children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The suggestion was made that Andy Carder could present his talk on social media as the last presentation was very well received by parents, potentially at parents evenings</li> <li>• IJ working with the feeder schools to link online safety to mental health later in life</li> <li>• Cllr Hassan intimated that the Formartine Inspector, Andy Scott, has newly appointed a Community Police Officer who shows a great deal of interest in involving himself in the school community</li> <li>• Suggestion to include these focused sessions during parent's evenings to compliment the leaflets and information booklets given out, courtesy of Tracey Christie from CLD.</li> <li>• IJ highlighted that Meldrum Academy currently has a number of young people suffering from eating disorders and self-harm is proving more prevalent than parents realise</li> <li>• Support for LGBTQ+ young people goes on mainly behind the scenes with Tracey Christie of CLD and the school maintains its commitment to diversity and respect agenda within the school community.</li> <li>• Respect in school was also discussed, particularly relating to litter and how pupils address each other and staff. Suggestions were made/discussed regarding ways to address these issues (eg showing evidence at parents evenings)</li> </ul>	IJ
6. Reading Enhancement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 1<sup>st</sup> year pupils participating in the Reading Enhancement program were reassessed before the Spring break and the remainder of the year group have since received the same testing</li> <li>• So far, the majority have improved their reading age by a few months up to a few years</li> <li>• All pupils felt they had benefitted from the program in various ways, including gaining confidence in speaking up when struggling in class and communicating with older pupils</li> <li>• The group agreed it would be interesting to see how RE participation impacted the MIDYIS projections</li> <li>• Primary head teachers have shown an interest in the results to see if they can learn from the process.</li> <li>• Next year the focus will be implementing the program sooner in the year.</li> <li>• A number of parents were involved in the program with the pupils and felt they benefitted from seeing the progress and work being done also.</li> </ul>	Info

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using senior pupils (16) has proved to be very positive rather than teachers due to the more relaxed, informal nature.</li> <li>The parent council recognised the value this program has given and the efforts by all involved</li> </ul>	
7. Phil and Aly 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft of ticket designs have been completed but not delivered to the PC yet</li> <li>DF has chased up the contract from the organisers but hasn't received a response (post meeting note, now confirmed)</li> <li>Some raffle prizes need to be organised now in time for the concert</li> <li>SW to produce last year's raffle spreadsheet to be up and running before the Summer break</li> <li>HM to order the same amount of ice cream from Mackie's for this year</li> <li>Advertising to be discussed at the AGM as well as finding a different source of revenue.</li> </ul>	SW HM
8. Head Teacher's Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is proud to be at full staffing capacity, with the exception of 1 BEIT teacher, for which the role is being advertised to both probation and qualified teachers. Recent appointments have been made in Physics, maths, music, PE, D&amp;T</li> <li>Money accrued from savings made in staffing has been used to fund additional equipment/resources within the school eg. A laser cutter for the Design and Technology department worth £8,000</li> <li>2 additional in-service days which are part of the teacher pay settlement will be added to the school calendar for the coming year, dates to be confirmed.</li> <li>School roll is increasing and in August will see 1000+ pupils at Meldrum Academy</li> <li>Extension plans are being looked at to accommodate this increase and the predicted year group of over 225 pupils in 2 years</li> <li>Will be trying to avoid temporary accommodation.</li> <li>Changes are being made to the current S3 timetables, who will now receive both a double and single period of subjects, and S5/6 pupils will now receive 6 periods of higher subjects, meaning a reduction in study periods from 5 to 2/3 per week, meaning members of SMT will be able to work more flexibly</li> <li>The ceremony for the Professional Recognition Awards for middle level teachers was the same evening as the PC meeting, with Rebecca Jackson, Emily Catton, John Glendinning and Kathryn Michie receiving awards for their contributions to education</li> </ul>	Info

