

# Minutes of Wallace Hall 2-18 Parent Council meeting 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**Present:** Donna Maxwell, Sarah Gemmell, Suzanne Renwick, Carol Hamilton, Melane Halliday, Lynne Maxwell, Anne Anderson, Audrey Murray, Kerry Fry, Sharon Young, Caroline O'Hara, John Blair, Louise Cochran, Mark Blount, Darren Burns, Jillian Maxwell, Finlay Park, Katie Brown, Ray Fulton, Christine Carson

**Apologies:** Pam Ferguson, Claire Wilson, MARRISA Larisma, Dawn Stirk, Natalie Hare

Item		Action
1	<p><b>Welcome</b> MB welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>	
2	<p><b>Approval of minutes of 14.01.2019</b> The minutes were approved without amendments.</p>	
3	<p><b>Matters Arising</b> Due to work commitments NH has requested if there is a volunteer to take on the role as PC Secretary.</p>	
4	<p><b>Probationary Teachers Report by Sarah Gemmel (Primary 5), Katy Brown (English Academy) and Finlay Park (IT Academy)</b> SG, KB and Finlay Park gave a presentation to members on their experiences as probationary Teachers with WH so far. They explained the different entry routes that they took, the support that they receive and the opportunities they have been given.  See appendix A for the power point presentation given to members.</p>	

<p>5</p>	<p><b>Learning Conversations</b></p> <p>WH Primary is introducing Learning Conversations with Parents to replace the traditional end of year Parents Evening. The change is in response to feedback from Parents and colleagues within the WH Cluster group. SR explained to members that the Learning conversations will be used to report to Parent's/carers. An appointment will be made for parents/carers and pupils to discuss targets (next step), successes and achievements with their teacher. The pupil will be part of the conversation instead of the previous formal Teacher and Parent meeting. A trial is due to start next term and targets to be implemented in the next session 2019/20. There will be no reports sent home, although targets agreed at the meeting will be recorded. An information evening is to be held next Wednesday to explain in more detail and to answer any questions or concerns; a letter giving details of the meeting will be given out on Tuesday 12/3/19. This will run alongside the open door policy, parents will still be welcome to make an appointment with their child's teacher.</p> <p>A discussion took place on other formats that teachers can report pupil's progress.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p><b><u>Head Teachers Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Staffing:</b> D Dillon has left Wallace Hall to take up his post as DHT at Dumfries Academy. E Mack is currently Acting DHT until later in the session when we will be reducing to two DHTs – currently R Fulton and G Arrowsmith. L Belford will be starting on maternity leave later this week. B Dickson is currently absent. Dickie Fusco is covering both of their classes. L Robertson will be going on maternity leave in May. An Acting PT Pupil Support post has been advertised and interviews will take place on Friday. Two other teaching posts for Wallace Hall Academy have been advertised: Teacher of English and Teacher of PE. D Johnston has reduced her days in the primary to 2. Emily Jack and Aileen Merideth will be providing cover for P7 on a Friday until the summer. Staffing for next year has been submitted – I will confirm this at the next meeting.</p> <p>At the Trophy d'Ecosse, which was held at Dumfries Ice Rink, Lily Simpson, Mikayla Larisma, Paige Guest, Ruth Little, Heather Gibson, Charlotte Guest, Abby Little and Aidan Kennedy with their various teams won both the International Championship and the Scottish Championship titles. Mikayla, Paige and Ruth's team also took the award for the most entertaining team on the day.</p> <p><b><u>WH ELC News</u></b></p> <p>Pupils at WH ELC have been busy celebrating Chinese New Year as part of their studies about China during February. 2019 is the year of the pig. Children created hand print pigs in the craft area, experimented with Chinese calligraphy techniques on the painting easel and tasted a variety of Chinese foods including spring rolls and noodles at snack time. We then enjoyed a Mini Topic on "Things that Go!" to cover new technology outcomes and learn about all the everyday technology that is made and invented in modern day China.</p> <p>They have now moved onto learning about Springtime. We are busy creating our own life sized Cherry blossom tree and are continuing in the technologies vein by learning about Farm Machinery.</p>	

### **Primary News**

Primary 1 pupils have been learning about China and have participated in a wide range of activities from making Spring Rolls in the H.E department to participating in a Chinese dragon movement session with the ELC .

P4 and P5 pupils have been participating in playleader sessions which are taking place in WHA. These have been organised by Mr Mack and senior academy pupils.

Primary 6 pupils are participating in Fishing for the Future Project which focuses on the lifecycle of the Atlantic Salmon. The children have participated in a field trip to Nith Catchment Fishery Trust Hatchery at Auldgirth and other field trips are planned around our local area for the rest of this session. The children have also taken part in classroom based sessions and are enjoying these experiences.

### **Academy News**

The Head Boy/Head Girl election process is now well underway. This year, the successful candidates will campaign on the morning of Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March with elections taking place at lunchtime that day. The top 3 candidates will go forward to the final interview on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March which will be with a panel comprising of staff, pupils and parents. Could I ask for a volunteer from the Parent Council to be on this panel please?

Team Glic were narrowly beaten for UK First LEGO League Robotics crown this time by a well-established team from Bath but they were delighted to be announced as Scotland's top team. They will now be flying the flag for Scotland at this year's World Championships in Detroit, USA, from 24th to 27th April 2019 for an unprecedented second year in succession.

Wallace Hall pupils have been doing really well in both music and speech festivals recently. At the regional Burns competition, Emily Kennedy was chosen as the winner of the S5/S6 recitation class (with a mark of 99%) for her performance of "The Rights of Women" with Ailsa Black (recitation), Lois Geddes (vocal) and Priya Rome (clarsach) all achieving a silver medal in their respective classes. At the end of the competition, Emily was announced as the best overall recitation student , primary and secondary, for Dumfries and Galloway and Emily, along with Ailsa, Lois and Priya, will go forward to represent the region at the national finals later this month. Wallace Hall also had eight pupils competing in the speech section of the Dumfries and District Music Festival at the weekend. They were: Angus MacCormick, Luke McKay, John McKay, Bailie Paterson, Ailsa Black, Emily Kennedy, Muirinn White and Hannah Kate Fisher. All of the pupils with the exception of Hannah Kate won at least one class and a trophy. However, Hannah Kate was a very close runner up in both her sections.

Jo Hunter took almost all of S1 pupils up to a Career Hive event held in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh last week. The pupils did really well and asked some excellent questions.

Aaron Greenland represented his country in the sport of Karate recently. Aaron is now ranked 35th in the world.

Iona Menzies was chosen as the Intermediate Rotary Young Photographer for Thornhill and District and Gregor Black's photographs was selected as the winner of the Senior section. Iona and Gregor's photographs will now go on to represent Thornhill and District Rotary Club at regional level.

	<p>Thornhill Train Station Action Group (TTSAG), who are lobbying for Thornhill Station to be reopened after 50 years of being closed, sent a very nice thank you letter to the school following an open meeting held in the school. Two pupils, Finlay Bainbridge and Holly Dobie, took part in the meeting and the letter commented on the excellent job they did by presenting a robust case as to why the station should be re-opened. Following the meeting the group received in 328 questionnaires which had been completed in a very detailed manner supporting the re-opening of the station. This is the second last stage of consultation and it is hoped that the TTSAG had enough evidence to take the case for re-opening the station to the final stage.</p> <p><u>Other areas.</u> Proposed changes to the school day: shorten the lunchtime by five minutes to give a 3.45pm finish to the school day.</p> <p>I met with representatives from the Princes Trust today and have been promised funding to set up a Barista in the school. This will initially involve a group of 12 S4 pupils who will be trained to City and Guilds Level 2 in Barista skills, they will be helped to create a brand which they can market and will get associated work wear with their branding on it. A group second group of S3 pupils will start working on their SQA Customer Service award and will then follow on from the S4 group. The Barista will be mainly based in Pegasys but the school will fund a trolley so that they can be part of events such as parent's night, school show, etc. We are the first school in D&amp;G to take forward such an initiative.</p>	
7	<p><b>Secondary Fundraising – Quiz Feedback</b></p> <p>Christine Carson thanked all who attended and those involved in the organisation. The total amount raised was £176. This could be built upon when the event is hopefully run again next year.</p> <p>CC made a request for a Secondary Sub group to be formed. CC also raised concern about what the fundraising is for and how the requests for funds are made to the PC.</p> <p>As a through school, JB expressed his wish to see fundraising as one group and not separated into Primary and Secondary. Concern was raised as the majority of funds have previously been raised through the support of Primary parents who would be reluctant to financially support the secondary. This may adversely affect both the Primary and Secondary. It was agreed that there should continue to be separate fundraising groups, as not all events are suitable for all ages, however, more through school fundraising events would be a very positive move. It was agreed that efforts should be made to ensure that the workload of the through school events is balanced, as the previous through school events have relied on parent volunteers from the Primary.</p> <p>The Nursery currently do much of the fundraising that they need themselves, although they have recently joined in some of the Primary events.</p> <p>Small fund requests from the Primary are currently approved by the Fundraising Subgroup as funds are often needed before the next PC meeting. Some members were concerned that the PC as a whole are not consulted on these amounts in the same way as the Secondary bidding system.</p> <p>A discussion took place on how the school has been merged to form a through school. It was agreed that this could be discussed further at the next PC meeting in May.</p>	

8	<p><b>Pitch Update</b></p> <p>LC gave members an update on the progress on getting the pitches rectified. The condition of the pitches has deteriorated; the pitch closest to the school is unfit for pupils to use, raising H &amp; S issues. Pressure will be maintained on Amey, the Council and Paul McCulloch the Property Architecture Manager to resolve the issue. It was agreed that it may be worthwhile considering a different approach, perhaps outside funding such as Community funding groups. An update will be given at the next PC meeting in May.</p>	
9	<p><b>Duke of Edinburgh</b></p> <p>Concern was raised that not all of the pupils who applied to take part in the scheme are able to participate. JB explained that numbers are restricted to the available manpower within the school. Logistically it is not practical to take more than we already take. There is a cut off of 30 pupils that can participate via WHA. Pupils can re-apply next year or go through an external provider.</p>	
10	<p><b>Council Budget cuts and effect on WH</b></p> <p>The budget cuts will effect staffing at WH. The secondary will have 20 period cut equating to just over one full time member of staff. Temporary contracts will not be renewed to retain the permanent full time staff members. There are savings to fund extra hours for things such as the Duke of Edinburgh and small support groups, however, if funding continues to be cut in future years these initiatives will be lost. The Primary teaching hours will not be affected this year, although the cap on class sizes (set by the local government) has been lifted to the national guidelines which could potentially see larger classes for WH Primary in the future. JB added that the intake so far for next session will mean that class sizes should remain at the current level.</p> <p>A member asked JB if Nursery teachers at WH nursery will be replaced with Nursery managers. JB explained that Nurseries providing care for 1140 hours Nursery will be effected. This is 52 weeks a year and as a teaching contract is 39 weeks a year there will be a need to look at different ways to deliver that in the future.</p>	
11	<p><b>Lollypop Lady</b></p> <p>LC raised concern of the potential loss of the Crossing guards that patrol the two main roads on route to WH. It was agreed that parents should be made aware of this as it will have a huge impact for our students, especially as the local authority are encouraging them to walk to school. There has been no official announcement or consultation therefor it was agreed that a letter of clarification should be written to the appropriate Director on behalf of the PC.</p>	
12	<p><b>Treasurer Report</b></p> <p>The funds requested by the Secondary have been paid, £750 in total. £400 for the display boards and £350 for the Students room.</p>	
13	<p><b>A.O.B</b> No other business was raised.</p>	

**The next meeting will be**

7<sup>th</sup> May 2019, 19:00 in the Library

# Appendix

## Appendix A. Presentation by Katy Brown and Finlay Park.

1. 

### Katy Brown and Finlay Park

## OUR PROBATION EXPERIENCE SO FAR...

2. 

### Difference Between Routes

Teacher Induction Scheme	Flexible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Full time</li><li>No choice of school</li><li>Guaranteed job for a year</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Part-time, contracts vary</li><li>Find your own job</li><li>No guarantees of a job or support</li><li>Interviews straight from university</li><li>No support out with school</li></ul>

3. 

### Benefits

Teacher Induction Scheme	Flexible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Guaranteed job for a year</li><li>Probation is over quicker (pay increases)</li><li>Support out with school</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Home life</li><li>Once successful guaranteed work for a length of time</li><li>Manageable</li><li>No out of school CPDs</li><li>Choice of school</li><li>Plenty of support within the school</li></ul>

4. 

### School Support

- Departments (English and Business Education)
- Out with departments
- Observations
- Various meetings
- Learning Support – “Purple Polos”

5. 

### School Opportunities

- School dances (S1 – S6)
- Primary 7 Transition (open day)
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Trips (S1 Science)
- Mentoring (S4)
- Activities Week
- Links with other departments (IDL)
- Easter School and Study Support (S4 – S6)

6. 

### Hopes for the Future

Miss Brown	Miss Park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To be successful in my application this year and return to Wallace Hall Academy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Permanent contract at Wallace Hall after finally completing probation in 2020/21</li></ul>