

Minutes of Wallace Hall 2-18 Parent Council meeting 4th June 2019

Present: Suzanne Renwick, Donna Maxwell, Ann Anderson, Sharon Young, Euan Mack, Mark Blount, Louise Cochran, Ray Fulton, Darren Burns, Audrey Murray, Kerry Fry, Melanie Halliday, Lynne Maxwell and Natalie Hare.

Item		Action
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Jillian Maxwell, Pam Fergusson, Dawn Stirk, Christine Carson, Caroline O'Hara, John Blair and Carol Hamilton.</p>	
2	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Mark Blount welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Louise Cochran for Chairing the previous meeting in May.</p>	
3	<p>Approval of the Minutes from last meeting 07.05.2019 and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were approved without amendments.</p> <p>Christine Carson will update members on her initiative to introduce a bidding system for the Primary to access Parent Council funds at the next PC meeting. The aim is to start the new system in the Autumn term.</p> <p>All other matters arising have been included on the Agenda.</p>	CC
4	<p>Playing fields update</p> <p>MB has been in correspondence with the council and is currently waiting for a response from Paul McCulloch and Carol McLachlan. MB will continue to follow up on this to organise a meeting between members of the Local Council and Parent Council members. Andrew Wood and Jim Dempster have confirmed that they are happy to lend their support.</p>	MB

<p>5</p>	<p>Road safety update</p> <p>The matter of a Parental complaint regarding road safety outside the School was raised at the last PC meeting. Euan Mack followed up on this by contacting both the local Council Transport Department and Houston’s bus company and is currently awaiting feedback.</p> <p>The Community Police Officer was also informed of the complaint. The Officer assessed the road during the busiest times throughout the School day and has decided to use a speed gun at various points along the road leading to the School. This will be to raise awareness and act as a deterrent and no fines or points will be issued.</p> <p>It was agreed in the last meeting that a letter raising awareness of the road safety issues outside the school will be sent out to all parents. MB will confirm with Alice Bainbridge if this has been drafted.</p> <p>.</p>	<p>MB</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Head boy and Head Girl welcome</p> <p>Finlay Bainbridge and Josie Blount introduced themselves and set out their main aims for the year.</p> <p>They will look at ways to create an effective cycle of communication between the Pupils, Pupil Council, Pupil Committee’s and the Parent Council and offered their support to any upcoming Parent Council events.</p> <p>JB and FB asked members if there was anything they would like to see them to take forward. Members can use the PC email address wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com to contact JB and FB.</p> <p>Members welcomed the support for events especially with the potential this may have for encouraging more parents to engage with the PC.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Head Teachers Report</p> <p><u>Parent Council Report – June 2019</u> <u>2 - 18 News</u></p> <p>Six accordionists from Wallace Hall [Darroch Wood (S3), Kyle Anderson (S2), Daisy Arnold (S1), Kirsten Fergusson (P7), Euan Wilson (P7) and Aine O’Hara (P6)] represented Scotland recently at the NAO UK Accordion Championships held in Liverpool. This was Darroch and Kyle’s fourth visit to a UK Accordion Championships and they were delighted this year to be awarded first place in the Higher Intermediate Duet (Grade 6) section. The boys received 89.5% for their rendition of a lively piece called Heiber Draht. Darroch then went on to win the 15 Years & Under Frosini Solo category playing a polka called Bel Viso.</p> <p>Our Wallace Hall Junior Accordion Group, consisting of Aine, Daisy, Euan and Kirsten made their first appearance at the UK Championships and were awarded first place in the Preparatory Group category receiving 91% from the judges. Aine proceeded to win the Preparatory Solo (Grade 1) category, with Kirsten placed second and Euan third. Euan & Kirsten won the Preparatory Duet section and, not to be outdone, Daisy with her duet partner Charlotte Hamlet (from Castle Douglas High School) won the Higher Preparatory Duet (Grade 2) category.</p>	

WH ELC News

Nursery pupils have been very busy taking part in Big Choosing sessions with P6 pupils as part of the ELC to P1 transition programme. They have visited Thornhill Fire Station as part of Health week activities and contributed over £400 of funds towards the school sponsored Dance a thon.

We used the funds from this to take the Pre School children to the CocoBean Chocolate Factory at Twynholm on their annual trip. The Ante Pre School children enjoyed entertainment from Aiken Drum, make and do sessions in the Nursery followed by a picnic lunch and ice cream at Fusi's as part of their annual Activity Day.

We have also enjoyed Tennis sessions from Tennis Scotland over the last month and are practising hard for our Sports day, Potted Sports and graduation service which takes place on Thursday 6th June.

Primary News

P3 had a fantastic trip to Tongland Power Station and Dam, followed by lunch and a play at Dhoon Beach, Kirkcudbright. The visit supported the children's work on renewable energy. The children had a guided tour around the Hydroelectric Power Station, understood more about the process of electricity generation and learned about how some of the environmental effects are mitigated, for example returning Atlantic Salmon using the fish ladder to move upstream. All of our P3 pupils were engaged and enthusiastic throughout the day and should be very proud of themselves. The children are following up the trip by looking at the recent 'Energise' Upland Project, currently on display at the Gracefield Arts Centre. They are creating a piece of artwork based on the river system and the power it can generate.

Primary 5 pupils have participated in Golf Sessions during this term and enjoyed taking part in a Golf Competition at Thornhill Golf club yesterday.

All Primary classes enjoyed a visit to the H.E dept in WHA to make Sausage Pasta with Miss Barrick. This gave the children an opportunity to prepare a range of foods and then cook them to create Sausage Pasta. Everyone then got to take their pasta dish home to taste.

All Primary classes and the ELC visited the local fire station. They had the opportunity to look around the station and the fire engine in detail. To finish the visit everyone got to use the hose to knock down targets.

Every class also had a yoga session with Jane Bailey in the dance studio.

Primary 5, 6 and 7 pupils also had a visit from Lisa from the NHS to talk about Smoking. The visit including a range of activities associated with smoking.

	<p><u>Academy News</u></p> <p>Our cricket team has been doing well recently. They put in a plucky performance against a very accomplished team from Glasgow High School and, although the Wallace Hall team didn't win, they played really well. Our cricketers enjoyed further success the following week, finishing up as the winning team overall at the West of Scotland Big Blast final which was held in Glasgow. The team will go forward to represent the West District at the National Finals which is being held in Perth next month.</p> <p>The Calcutta Cup, the trophy presented to the winner of the annual Scotland/England rugby match, paid a visit to the school recently. This was thanks to members of Dumfries Saints Rugby Club who brought the cup into school, giving our keen rugby players the chance to see and admire this magnificent trophy.</p> <p>Our junior Netball squad participated in the regional competition held at Wallace Hall recently. Their hard work in training paid off as they had some superb team play which resulted in them winning the Plate competition.</p> <p>Miss Barrick organised a 'Masterchef' competition for S3 pupils last week. Pupils cooked in teams to create a 2-course menu which they presented to the judges. Winning pupils were: Ellie Hyslop, Jay Murphy, Charlotte Colley, Faith Wilson and Holly Fisher.</p> <p>S1, S2 and S3 pupils were all out on Activities Week last week. S2 pupils took part in a 3 day residential visit to Liverpool and S1 and S3 pupils enjoyed a wide variety of activities such as Clay Pigeon Shooting, Rock Climbing, Sailing, Treasure Hunt, Claymaking, Bake-off, Photography, Lego, Pony Day as well as trips to attractions such as Blair Drummond and M & Ds. All had a great time.</p>	
8	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>Dawn Stirk provided a financial update. Balance stands at £6,749. Primary £5,249 Academy £1,500</p>	
9	<p>Removal of funding for the School</p> <p>On behalf of JB, EM gave members a brief on the upcoming cuts and how they will directly affect the School.</p> <p>ELC The ELC have been able to meet their financial needs through their own fundraising activities and a small allocated granted by the council.</p> <p>Primary The Primary also receives a small allocation, however are running over budget and have been subsidised by approx. £20,000 from the Academy budget.</p>	

	<p>Secondary</p> <p>Already this year the Secondary has seen a 2 ½ Teacher staffing cut. For the last 3 years there has been funding available through the Governments anti-poverty scheme. The departments that have benefited from this have been the Home Economics (approx. £5,000/6,000) and Design and Technology Departments (approx. £2,000) this funding has now come to an end. Prior to the funding the School had asked parents to contribute, however, this is no longer allowed. These departments may need to look to the PC to meet the cost's to enable the courses to continue.</p> <p>A discussion took place amongst members regarding parent's being asked to donate the money needed rather than being charged. A request for this to be allowed has been made to the local Council and WH is awaiting feedback. Parental awareness of the cost's involved in the school day and throughout the year would be beneficial to enable parents to budget for any additional costs.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Activities Week</p> <p>Staff members have held a discussion on whether to continue with the activities week and it was decided that this year will be the last one.</p> <p>The main reasons for their decision were identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expense. The cost of the activities may be prohibitive for some parent's. This especially effect's parents with multiple children in the school with other trips and activities going on throughout the year. • Attendance rates have fallen due to parents keeping their child off. <p>EM asked members for their feedback on the decision and it was agreed that the cost is quite significant throughout the week and it was suggested that perhaps that it could be reduced to 1 day. JB added that she had enjoyed the week in S1 and S2 although hadn't really felt any benefit beyond that.</p> <p>If the Activities week is cancelled the new timetable will potentially start a week earlier which will give an extra week to the courses.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>School Uniform</p> <p>It has been noted that there is an increasing amount of pupils wearing black jeans instead of black trousers (currently the school uniform). It has been proposed that the uniform policy be changed to include smart black jeans. RF asked members for their opinion.</p> <p>There was a discussion on how it is often difficult to discern the difference between smart jeans and trousers, and the wide range of styles and shades of 'black' jeans. HB Finlay Bainbridge explained to members his preference for smart trousers over jeans.</p> <p>The question had also been given to the Pupil Council and they were happy for the policy to remain black trousers and not jeans.</p> <p>A trial for a year had been proposed, however, as the PC members present and Pupils are both happy for the policy to remain black trousers and no jeans, it was decided that this would not go ahead.</p>	

12	<p>Dates for next year's meeting</p> <p>Dates are to be confirmed in the new term. It was agreed that alternating between a Monday evening and a Tuesday evening would suit the majority of members attending.</p>	
13	<p>Academy Friends and Former Pupils Association</p> <p>All members were keen that this should continue and it was agreed that a Sub Group is needed to move this forward. It was proposed that members should include 6th year Pupils as members. Any volunteers can contact MB on the PC email address: wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com</p>	
14	<p>A.O.B</p> <p>The Nithsdale Life Savers are keen to come into the school to talk to pupils about water safety ahead of the summer holidays. EM will contact them to arrange dates.</p> <p>A member raised an issue that has been causing confusion with the local Co-op and their period poverty initiative. The local council are now providing sanitary products to the School, perhaps the arrangement with the Co op should either come to an end or products passed on to the Primary.</p> <p>JB suggested that raising awareness with the female pupils of where these products can be accessed as she was unaware that they were available.</p>	EM
	<p>The next meeting is to be confirmed</p>	