

Minutes of Wallace Hall 2-18 Parent Council Meeting Monday 10th September 2018

Present: Louise Cochran, Caroline O'Hara, Sharon Young, Sarah Hannah, Claire Wilson, Linda Hamilton, Ann Anderson, Nicola Robertson, Kerry Fry, Kirsty Colchester, Barry Graham, Christine Carson, Jillian Maxwell, Ray Fulton, Mark Blount, Grahame Arrowsmith, Audrey Murry, Natalie Hare (Clerk).

Item		Action
1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Lynn Ross, Pam Fergusson, Jaqueline Kennedy, Dawn Stirk, Marissa Larisma, Darren Burns and David Dillon.</p>	
2	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Mark Blount welcomed everyone to the meeting. As it was the first PTC meeting of the year everyone attending introduced themselves.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the last meet on 5th June 2018 were approved without amendments.</p>	
4	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Photographs of PTC members for the school website will be scheduled for a later date.</p> <p>The poor condition of the two pitches on the school grounds is currently being looked into by LC.</p> <p>All other matters were covered in the agenda.</p>	LC

5 Presentation by Grahame Arrowsmith – Employability at WHA

An Employability policy is in place this year written with the aim to ensure that pupils are ready for work and supported to make an effective transition. This support will be given to pupils in a range of activities throughout their time at the Academy.

Within the Curriculum. Staff will relate the curriculum to its relevance to employment. When a new unit is introduced it will be explained to the pupils how that unit will impact on the world of work and what kind of careers will use the skills and knowledge gained.

Business Mentoring and Support is available within the school. Local business people are invited into the school to support pupils with their application forms, personal statements, CV's and advice on career direction.

UCAS applications are currently being completed and pupils are being supported in this, to give them the best possible chance of gaining a place on their chosen course. Ensuring the course being applied for is suited to the pupil and giving support in writing their application.

Employer engagement. Employers are invited into school on a regular basis to talk to pupils about emerging technologies and future career opportunities. These employers will just present to pupils who have expressed an interest in their field, e.g. representatives from Windfarm Engineering will be visiting the Academy this week to talk to 25 pupils looking into this field.

An S2 regular Work Fair event is held to support pupil's 1st subject options. Pupils are asked to choose three or four different career paths they may be interested in following and then relevant employers from those areas are invited into school. There will be a formal presentation and then a question and answer session where pupils will have the opportunity to talk to employers individually. This may include a primary event in the future.

Pupils work experience. Working on real life projects with industry has been a very positive experience for pupils and this will be continued. Last year pupils were given the opportunity to work with Gates Engineering & Services on a live project. The physics pupils worked over several months to find solutions, combining physics with biology and chemistry. For the conclusion of the project pupils gave a presentation on their findings to Gates, which was well received.

Work Placements are a vital experience for pupils and finding the right role for each pupil is key. Pupils complete an application form including a personal statement, any qualifications already gained/currently studying and their strengths and weaknesses. By working through this pupils and staff can gain an understanding of what type of career the pupil would be suited to. Simultaneously, discussions are held with employers to find out the skills and strengths they look for in an employee to ensure a good match. The majority of S5 went out on placements in June this year and all were successful. Placements this year included DGRI medical placements and Midwifery. The pupils who didn't have a placement are still to define the career path that is right for them and placement will be arranged further in the year for these pupils.

Pupils take a daily work diary and a placement diary with them. The placement diary will have a list of personal development and skills the pupil would like to achieve during their time with the employer. At the end of the placement employers are asked to complete employability a skills assessment. The Academy focus on 11 main employability skills for the pupils to work on e.g. problem solving, organisational skills, meeting deadlines, numeracy and literacy. Any of the skills that are identified as a weak area for the pupil, will be worked on individually and as part of events.

	<p>Parental engagement. At the start of the year BG sends out a letter requesting support from Parent's either to offer a placement opportunity through their own business (or if they have connections that would provide a placement) and to come into the school to talk about their own careers. Parents are also encouraged to talk to their children about career paths early on so the pupils may already have some ideas before they come to writing their formal plans and making choices with subjects. A second letter will be sent out regarding placements detailing the ways the parents can support pupils with employability this year. Ann Marie Wood, Kerry Fraser and Grahame Arrowsmith will all be available to discuss any questions.</p> <p>The aim is to provide a diverse range of placements for pupils to choose from and support from local business is welcomed. Although, if a pupil does have a definite career choice every effort will be made to give them that experience.</p> <p>MB reiterated how important the range of placements on offer is to pupils and asked those attending to think of any possible opportunities they may know of.</p> <p>A discussion took place on how to support children who are still undecided on their future career. GA advised to keep their options open by choosing broad subjects as they can specialise later. Parents and pupils are also encouraged to see the careers adviser Peggy Brough, in school three days a week.</p>																			
<p>6</p>	<p>Exam results</p> <p>BG gave a report highlighting some of the exam results for this year. The school has attained higher than the regional average and is very proud of the results. BG gave details of some of the results.</p> <table data-bbox="177 1108 861 1310"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>WHA%</th> <th>Regional average %</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>National 5's</td> <td>53</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Highers</td> <td>52</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 Highers</td> <td>24</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advanced 1</td> <td>27</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advanced 2</td> <td>17</td> <td>7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>BG advised parents to encourage children to revise little and often and to take advantage of the study group in school as it has proven to be very effective. A letter detailing the study classes will be sent out.</p> <p>A discussion took place on the results and how to measure WHA success with other schools in the region.</p>		WHA%	Regional average %	National 5's	53	38	3 Highers	52	34	5 Highers	24	15	Advanced 1	27	17	Advanced 2	17	7	
	WHA%	Regional average %																		
National 5's	53	38																		
3 Highers	52	34																		
5 Highers	24	15																		
Advanced 1	27	17																		
Advanced 2	17	7																		
<p>7</p>	<p>WHA Alumni and Friends</p> <p>The presentation will be given in the next meeting on the 8th October.</p>																			

<p>8</p>	<p>Diary dates – Summary of Events – Communication – Promotion, Quiz update</p> <p>PTC representation at parents evening was requested by RF. Having a presence at these events will give PTC members an opportunity promote the PTC, to talk to parents and encourage new members.</p> <p>All meetings 17:00 – 19:00 S1 – Tuesday 13th November S2 – Thursday 10th January S3 – Tuesday 5th February</p> <p>KC volunteered for S2 and CC for all three. RF will send out a further request with more details closer to the time.</p> <p>A discussion took place on the best ways to promote events and contact parents. PTC events are now on the school web site and in the school calendar, emails and posters/flyers are sent out closer to the time. The school will also send out a text message to parents/carers on behalf of the PTC. It was agreed that this is effective and should continue.</p> <p>CC gave out a update from the Communications Subgroup, see Appendix C</p> <p>Quiz night update. The date of the Quiz will be 16th November. The hall has been booked and the poster has been produced, see Appendix A. Alice Bainbridge has agreed to help write the quiz. It was suggested that GA and Keith Walker both have previous Quiz experience and could be persuaded to be involved.</p> <p>How the event would run on the night was discussed and it was agreed that participants would book as a team table in advance. Further details such as the number of players per team and if an alcohol licence is needed will be decided at a later date.</p> <p>Volunteers for the event was requested, GM, KF, AM, SH, KC, CC, NH, CW are available to help.</p>	<p>RF</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Craft Fair update</p> <p>The date for the craft Fair has been set for the 8th December and a poster has been produced; see Appendix B. Trader Tables are currently being booked.</p> <p>A request for those attending to think about items to be donated for the Raffle, Tombola and bottle stall.</p> <p>Volunteers were again requested to help on the day. KF, AM, AA, SH, CW, BG, NH, RF offered.</p>	

<p>10</p>	<p>Art Exhibition Feedback</p> <p>The Exhibition was a successful first fundraising event for the Academy this year and the first Art Exhibition since the move to the new building. There was a good attendance on the night and the evening was enjoyed by all. BG thanked all involved in the organising and everyone who supported the event.</p> <p>Money was raised through ticket sales and 25% commission on the sale of Art work on the night, the total amount raised will be given in an update.</p> <p>It was agreed that the event should be held again in the future.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>School Funding</p> <p>Concern was raised from parents after budget cuts last term led to the loss of Spanish being taught in the Academy. It was suggested that the PTC could be informed as soon as figures on savings/cuts are known to give members the opportunity to apply pressure to the council to protect against any future losses.</p> <p>BG explained that the Council make their budget decisions in February although the process of looking at savings has already underway. Although the Education budget is protected to some degree as it makes up around 50% of the total budget it is already known that there are more savings/cuts to come this year. Once definite figures and areas are known these will be passed on to parents.</p> <p>A discussion took place on the reduction of languages being taught both in WHA and Nationally.</p> <p>SH noted that parent helps in school would be a great asset and BG agreed to send out a letter to try to encourage volunteers.</p>	<p>BG</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Use of Social Media</p> <p>The use of Social Media by the school was raised as a concern. The Face Book and Twitter groups used are currently open, allowing anyone to see and comment on the images. It was acknowledged that only images of pupils the have parental consent used, although closing these groups should be looked into. Also the use of Twitter on school trips to keep parents updated was questioned, as not all parents have accounts on these platforms. It was suggested that the school might consider using group text messages or a closed What's App group instead. BG has agreed to look into the security aspect of these groups, possibly with a consultation with parents to discuss options to change the communication.</p>	<p>BG</p>

<p>13</p>	<p>Road Safety</p> <p>With winter approaching concern was raised regarding the gritting of roads around the school. It was suggested that requests for gritting can be made by community councils to the Community Resilience committee, as they hold funding for this. It was agreed that a request from the Parent Council would be more effective than from the school.</p> <p>The narrow foot paths leading to the school were also discussed. Pupils are stepping off without being aware of traffic. It was agreed that a request should be made to the council to trim back hedging to widen the path, as this has been done in previous years. The pupils may also benefit from a brief Road Safety reminder.</p>	
<p>14</p>	<p>Drama</p> <p>Vicky Simpson, the Academy Art teacher, has recently been appointed the new Head of Expressive Art's; this covers Music, Drama, Photography and Art.</p> <p>The position of Drama teacher has now been advertised with interviews to take place as soon as possible. Measures have been put into place to continue the course until a suitable candidate can be appointed, although the Advanced Higher will have to be put on hold this year.</p>	
<p>15</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>A survey monkey is due to be sent out looking for feedback on sharing pupil's achievement. It was requested that all those attending have a look at this.</p>	

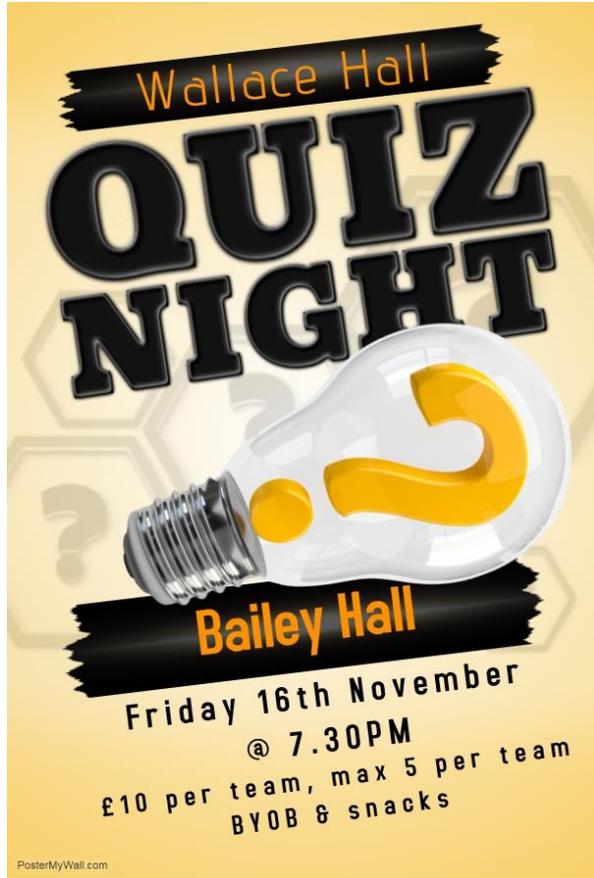
The next meeting will be the AGM

8th October 2018

19:00 In the Library

Appendix

Appendix A, Quiz night poster



Appendix B, Christmas Craft Fair poster



WHA-Parent Council Website Pages

....going forward

The school website is one of the best ways that the Parent Council can keep in touch with and provide useful information for parents.

We (the Communications subgroup) are beginning to create the pages and content for the PC section on the new website.

Current PC pages

Who's who in the PC-photos

Agendas and Minutes

Events (include sign up sheets for volunteering)

Important Documents (suggest we change to **Dates for your Diary**)

Other ideas and suggestions from Q16 of the survey

Parenting & Education (advice and information on various topics/formats, e.g., books, documentaries, talks . For example, Nicola Morgan, The Teenage Brain) and links, e.g., to Parentzone

Fundraising – how much money is raised and how is it spent

Sub-group news

Question and Answer

Contact us (e-mail link to Chairperson) if you have any items for the agenda or issues of concern

.....

If you have any ideas or suggestions about pages or content, e.g, for the Parenting & Education page, please e-mail me....

c.carson@hotmail.co.uk 10/9/18

DRAFT