



# Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Meeting

## Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023

**Present:** Judith McCaughey (Chair)      George Docherty (HT)      Councillor Bob Pollock  
Susan Forsyth (Treasurer)      Margaret Maciver (Secretary)      Councillor Craig McKay

**PC Members:** Jackie Lennox      Carolyn Jamieson      Amy Griffiths  
Lindsay Campbell      Gail Whyte      Margaret Anne Arnott  
Caryn Mair      Katherine Self

**Forum Members:** Lorena Trejo

**Apologies:** Joanne Christopher (Vice Chair)      Marie-Anne Jackson  
Kirsty Broadfoot (Minutes)      Fiona Stanbridge  
Katherine Woodhouse      Alison Braddock

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Judith opened the meeting in her new role as Chair and welcomed everyone, followed by an introduction around the room. Apologies were noted.

### **2. Action Review**

- Lockable cupboards within the Pavilion; George had spoken with Billy Copeland but no more update on this matter.
- The recent dress down day on the 13 October 2023 generated £90 which was paid in via the Parent Pay. Discussions took place around the communication for such days and highlighting the £1 donation; including whether the Young Enterprise Team could use their card reader. Going forward it was suggested that perhaps a Group call text would be the best form of communication to inform Parents/Carers of the Event.

### **3. Captains Report**

- No Captains update

### **4. Head Teachers Report**

This Report was distributed and the following highlighted: -

- A few new temporary members of staff have joined Marr College and settled in, now fully staffed; Mr MacAdie (Mathematics) Miss Lennie (Geography) and Mr Welsh (Physics)
- The Nat5 Prelim timetable and supported study schedule has been published and shared with Students, Parents and Carers.
- A successful S1/S6 Halloween disco was held on 27 October 2023; this was lead and organised by the Senior Leadership class.
- S6 Students participated in a conference style assembly, creating ideas for S1/S6 Team-building activities with a S6 'Legacy Day' to be held in March 2024
- George informed the Parent Council that there is a planned by South Ayrshire Education staff on 2/3 November focussing on Learning and Teaching, working on the Improvement Plan for this year and observing lessons. Any additional Parent Council members for the Focus Group would be welcomed.

- PC Harrower and Mr Docherty continue to undertake community walks at lunchtime to monitor Pupil conduct and litter issues in the community. Councillor McKay highlighted that he had read on social media about bullying at Marr; a short discussion surrounded this, and Mr Docherty re-iterated that his door is always open for anyone who has any concerns.

## **5. Approval of Minutes**

A couple of changes highlighted within the 'Present and Council members'; Margaret to update. The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2023 were approved by Carolyn Jamieson and seconded by Gail Whyte.

## **6. Events (inc. Christmas Concert)**

- The Christmas Concert was confirmed as Wednesday 14 December 2023
  - Mr Docherty will confirm with Liam (Music Dept.) if it is 7pm start.
  - Stalls will be £20/table with a time of 6:15pm opening
  - Teas/Coffees available to purchase
  - Raffle: Parent call to be issued requesting raffle prizes
  - Lucky Seat number
- Careers Evening (Feb'24); Lucy Campbell picking this up. George will discuss with Lucy and invite to the next Parent Council meeting.
- S1 Christmas Trip booked to the Odeon cinema to see Hunger Games; Lindsay asked if the school had a budget to which George confirmed only a small budget available to subsidise this Event.

## **7. Presentation (Educational Reform)**

George shared a presentation on current progress in Education Reform. This split into two sections 'The National Discussion on Education and The Review of Qualifications'. George initially shared a slide highlighting all the various policies that schools are currently working under.

Education reform – following the national discussion, the first debate on Scottish Education for 20 years, the values of the future Scottish education system. agrees as: Ambitious, Inclusive and Supportive. This already ties in well with our Marr values. The review group have set out a list of recommendations, which they have named 'calls to action'.

In recent weeks, the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Ms Gilruth, announced that there will be a new 'Centre for Teaching Excellence' set up to support teachers through high quality professional learning. It has already been announced that the current SQA and Education Scotland will be disbanded and reformed. This was initially due to be in place for August 2024, but will be moved back at least one year.

Senior Phase Qualifications – the aim of this review, led by Professor Hayward, was to respond to concerns highlighted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) who reported on Scotland's 'high stakes' exam system and over reliance on exams. A vision and principles have now been agreed. There is a recommendation for a Scottish Diploma of Achievement, which would capture the totality of a learners' achievements. The three areas of achievement are: Progress in learning (subjects and qualifications). Personal Pathway (not graded and would reflect the interest of the learner) and Project Learning (graded and using subject knowledge to undertake a themed project). It is important to note that Highers may remain as they are, but module based and possibly with a greater percentage of in school coursework. There is a recommendation that external assessments should be removed in S4 and all qualifications should be branded under SCQF levels.

Parent Council members discussed how they felt about the introduction of the Scottish Diploma of Achievement and reducing the number of exams in the Senior Phase (S4 upwards). There was a consensus that reform should move at an appropriate pace and concerns that there will be no significant changes within the SQA.

#### **8. Next Month's Agenda**

- Christmas Concert (inc. teas/coffees)
- Careers/Options (Lucy Campbell)
- Events
- School Uniform

#### **9. A.O.C.B.**

- Councillor Pollock informed the Parent Council that there is concern over the possibility of significantly reducing the Police school budget; after a discussion surrounding the positive impact that PC Harrower has within the school community, it was decided that he would be invited to the Parent Council to submit a monthly Report.
- Councillor McKay told the Parent Council that there is now a budget available for the Marr Education Resource Centre, this is due to a lot of the previous activities now being conducted in the Library; a few ideas were discussed.

#### **10. Date of next meeting**

The next Parent Council meeting will take place on Wednesday 6 November 2023 at 6:30pm in Marr College.