



# Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Meeting

## Wednesday 2 November 2022 (in person and via Zoom)

**Present:** Marie Anne Jackson - Chair, Joanne Christopher – Vice Chair, George Docherty – Head Teacher, Margaret Maciver – Secretary, Jackie Lennox – Treasurer, Kirsty Broadfoot – Minute Secretary.

**In attendance:** Dr Gillian Sargent, Robert McLaughlin.

**Council Members:** Susan Forsyth, Lindsay Campbell, Judith McCaughey, Carolyn Adams, Katherine Woodhouse, Emma Inglis, Cllr Bob Pollock, Fiona Stanbridge, Nigel Fullard.

**Forum Members:** Gail Whyte, Caryn Mair.

**Apologies:** Alison Braddock, Kerry Walker, Cllr Craig Mackay, Cllr Kenneth Bell.

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

Marie Anne welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

### **2. Captain's report**

No report was given this month.

### **3. Approval of October Parent Council Minutes**

Minutes of the AGM were approved by Judith and seconded by Susan.  
Minutes of the October parent council meeting were approved by Carolyn and seconded by Judith.

Outstanding matters from last meeting:

- Cllr Pollock advised that the Marr Trust application form has been amended. He confirmed that funding is available for other types of further education as well as university. Currently, around £280K of funding is provided for university applications versus £9.5K for other scholarships. Cllr Pollock has discussed the divergence with the Director of Education with a view to balancing out the funding levels. Lindsay asked about funding for Dundonald residents. George confirmed the amount for these applicants is £150. Cllr Pollock declared a conflict of interest as he is a Director of the Marr Trust.
- School playing fields – it was confirmed that Marr have exclusive use of the pitches up to 12pm. The school are looking at reclaiming this. Cllr Pollock and George are speaking with the rugby team and other lets as there is a need for fairer allocation of bookings. Transport plan has been sent to George.

#### **5. Christmas Concert (this item was discussed prior to item 4)**

George confirmed the Christmas concert will take place on 14 December. Discussions took place around possible raffle/shopping evening to raise funds for the PC. Carolyn has had lots of interest from various people about tables. It was decided that a raffle may be better in the spring and that a money or hamper prize/lucky seat might be a better option for the concert. George suggested donations could be brought to the next PC meeting. It was agreed to discuss this topic further at the next meeting.

#### **4. Careers and Options evening**

Robert McLaughlin confirmed that an in-person event is being held on 16 February for S3-S6. Over 60% of parents had indicated that they would prefer a face to face event rather than another virtual one. Previously, Hilary (former PC Chair) had been involved in identifying and inviting local businesses to attend. Robert asked for thoughts on what the best format would be for the event. Points put forward:

- Subject/options stalls (popular with S3 pupils),
- Workshops giving more specific info on topics, i.e., teaching, law, medicine,
- Guest speakers,
- Individuals discussing their career choice/path,
- Have a focus on jobs/apprenticeships.

Lindsay noted from previous events that appointments weren't successful and sometimes businesses don't get much footfall. It was agreed to set up a parent working group to take this forward. Margaret, Lindsay and Marie Anne volunteered to assist. George will pass their emails to Robert. He may also get the DYW skills group involved. Cllr Pollock noted that he would speak with the Economic Development team. Refreshments and food will be provided for the partners attending the event.

#### **6. National Discussion Scottish Education**

George advised that Education Scotland and HMIE are carrying out a major review of Scottish education, the last one took place in the early 2000's. A survey has been made available to all schools and parents to complete regarding the future of education in this country. George noted that four Marr pupils will take part in a focus group in South Ayrshire Council. George then asked the parent council to split into groups and cover a selection of the questions each. Group discussions followed. George confirmed that he will collate the responses and input these into the questionnaire.

George then went on to provide a presentation on curriculum focus. He advised that the school are looking at additional courses available via the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and parity between these and traditional National 5 or Higher subjects. George showed the group a table which summarises where Marr are placed in comparison with the other local authority and comparator schools. There was a discussion around subject options in S4 and opportunities to widen this and better prepare pupils in S3 for the move to S4. George advised that S2 and S3 will carry out mock options at the end of November. It was agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting and George asked parents to give the topic some thought.

#### **7. Fundraising**

It was agreed to discuss this in more detail at the next meeting. Lindsay suggested that a mix of fundraising and community engagement could be worthwhile. She mentioned the guided tours/open doors events that took place to celebrate the completion of the building's refurbishment. Perhaps this could be looked at again as this was extremely popular with parents. George suggested a possible alumni project to develop greater links with the community and potential funding sources.

#### **8. Next Month's agenda items**

- Senior phase curriculum
- Fundraising
- Christmas concert update
- George mentioned that Ian Ward of DYW would be happy to come along and do a presentation to the members.

#### **9. AOCB**

Cost of bus transport for trips was briefly discussed as costs had increased by around 100% in some cases. Cllr Pollock mentioned that the Marr Trust have increased the Travel Grant to £6 per pupil. George noted that this was greatly appreciated by the school.

#### **Next meeting**

The next meeting takes place on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm in school with the option to attend via Zoom.