



Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 4th November 2020 (via Zoom)

Present: Hilary Ramage - Chair, George Docherty – Head Teacher, Kate Dunn – Treasurer, Lindsay Campbell - Secretary & Katherine Woodhouse – Minute Secretary

Council Members: Clair Milne, Jackie Lennox, Katie Atkinson, Lindsey Connell, Susan Forsyth & Cllr Bob Pollock

Forum Members: Carolyn Adams, Caryn Mair, Judith McCaughey & Kirsty Broadfoot

Apologies: John Williamson & Cllr Craig Mackay

	Action
<p>1. <u>Welcome and Apologies</u> Hilary welcomed those in attendance. No apologies were noted but received later.</p>	
<p>2. <u>Captains Report</u> Kathryn and Jay provided an update from the Captains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the new Covid Tier system, Ayrshire falls into Tier 3 which means that all senior students (S4-6) and staff now must wear face coverings during lessons. • Priority 1 of the Student Improvement Plan is underway and the Eco school's flag application will be submitted in the next 2 weeks. • Prom committee is currently looking into booking entertainment for the night. • A dress down day took place on 30th October for Halloween and S1 and S6 took part in a murder mystery event. All donations will go towards school events and Christmas activities. • Active girls' week ran from 26th-30th October where some of the most successful girls in sport shared their stories/experiences to inspire more girls to get involved in sport. • A virtual study skills evening was held last Wednesday over Zoom run by Mr Moncrieff and Mr McLaughlin with help from S6. • Remembrance day – a Marr College wreath has been ordered to be placed at the cenotaph on 11th November. The leadership team are selling poppies this week to raise money for Poppy Scotland. Advanced Higher History students put together a PowerPoint about Remembrance Day and WW1. • Children in Need is on 13th November – leadership team are considering new fundraising activities for this in order to keep within the guidelines, e.g. holding dodgeball competition outside. • A 6-week challenge to reward positive behaviour starts on Monday. Everyone who has displayed positive behaviour over the 6 weeks will be able to take part in a Rewards afternoon with different activities. • Extra-curricular activities can continue in Tier 3 and the PE department has created a timetable for this. • An Art supported study session will be held on 12th November from 3.00-9.00 pm to allow senior students more time to work on their exam folios. • George added that Mr Moncrieff is putting together a timetable for supported study which will be a mix between online and in school. 	
<p>3. <u>Approval of Minutes</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2020 were approved by Lindsay Campbell and seconded by Hilary Ramage.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> George confirmed that maximum capacity limits in staff bases and offices had been introduced and signage put up reflecting this. In tier 3 staff are now taking more precautions, e.g. wearing face coverings in meetings and classrooms. Clr Mackay had forwarded a copy of his e-mail reply from Lynn Robertson, Glow Key Contact for South Ayrshire, about allowing parents' access to Glow through Teams. She reiterated that Glow is not a platform for communicating with parents and that usernames/passwords should not be shared with parents/carers. However, she appreciated the frustration parents may have in terms of the limitations this presents and agreed to contact her counterpart in Dundee City Council to see how they have managed to find a way round this issue. Cllr Mackay will advise further once he has a more conclusive response. 	CM
<p>4. <u>COVID-19 Update – George Docherty</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter was sent out last Friday afternoon regarding a member of staff who tested positive but there were no close contacts therefore no risk. Following the October holidays Public Health were overwhelmed with additional cases which caused delays in sending information out. The Local Authority now has permission to send these letters direct from schools which will ensure information is received in a timely manner. Interval times have been split to help increase space for students on wet weather days and to reduce mixing of junior and senior students. S1s will now have an early lunch on Thursdays and Fridays as it is quieter on those days so this will help to balance numbers. In order to reduce transition time in the morning consideration was given to asking period 1 teachers to be Personal Support teachers and increase period 1 by 10 minutes. However this would mean losing the regular daily contact, particularly important for S1-3, so it was decided not to implement this change at the moment. George confirmed that the school keeps abreast of the number of infections in local areas (Troon, Barassie and Dundonald). <p><u>Parents' Return to School Survey</u></p> <p>George provided feedback on the short parent survey sent out before the October holidays, to assess how people feel over the last few months. Unfortunately, there were only 32 responses which equates to 6.4%, however the feedback was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to school – guidance was well received, and the majority had no concerns. Social distancing was a concern as well as cleaning and hygiene. However, since school resumed the cleaning and hygiene issues have decreased but social distancing remains a concern. How did children feel about returning to school? Most felt it was different but OK and learning was generally OK. How appropriate are the measures? 93% of parents felt the measures were appropriate for each area. Social distancing – more than half found it was difficult to distance from peers but a bit easier to distance from staff. How confident in the steps taken? Positive response of 91%. Communication – positive response of 94%. General concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch time clubs – these have not yet resumed. Having to eat lunch outside - this has now changed so all young people can eat lunch inside. Keeping windows open during winter – heating will be switched on on Sundays so school is warmer. A letter is coming out about buying Marr PE sweatshirts/hoodies which can be delivered to school FOC. Concerns about masks on school transport – spot checks are carried out at night but not in the morning and this cannot be done by drivers. Young people need to be more responsible about this. Attendance levels – attendance has been high with only a small number of cases. To date there has been no spread within Marr. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Distancing in classrooms – desk space is tight in Digital Enterprise/Admin therefore desks have been moved into the open area and a rota system introduced. • This feedback was shared with the school Health & Safety review group. • George was keen to identify reasons for the low response rate and may do a follow up survey at the end of December for the whole school. Hilary confirmed that the survey had been shared on the Parent Council’s Facebook and Twitter pages. Some parents had missed seeing the survey and it may have been that there was too much information on the e-mail. It was suggested that a separate communication about surveys would be better in future. 	
<p>5. <u>SQA & Prelim Update – George Docherty</u> Since the last meeting George had not received much of an update from the SQA regarding courses for National 5s, Highers and Advanced Highers. He presented an overview of the current situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 7th October – announcement about National 5 exams not going ahead ➤ 2nd November – update on arrangements for National courses (no communication in between). Included guidance for Maths and English only. ➤ 19th November – all course assessment guidance should be published by this date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SQA have set up a National Qualifications Group for validation and are asking teachers to support that. Looking at contingency arrangements for Higher and Advanced Higher exams. Course changes have been confirmed and prelims will go ahead as planned but a little later than usual. Not much has changed for Higher/Advanced Higher courses - there will be assessments, prelim and an exam. Teachers need to identify 4 key pieces of evidence that would be used if future exams were to be cancelled due to Covid. • National 5 – no exam in May and no course work being assessed by SQA. Four key pieces of evidence should be used to form judgements. Some additional course changes have been made to support less teaching time. Identifying likely assessment dates for N5 so that school and local decisions can be made on prelim and assessment arrangements. • Since the announcement on 7th October George has met with all PTs to discuss and agree next steps. They will be pulling together 4 key pieces of evidence to decide what is going to be assessed. • All SQA co-ordinators met from each secondary school 2 weeks ago. Head Teachers met last week and will meet again on 9th November. • Subject PTs will meet on 11th November with their counterparts from other schools to take forward aspects of the recent guidance from the SQA and look at a consistent approach across all schools. • In the process of developing a whole school assessments calendar which will be shared with young people. This year they can plan ahead so that young people know what assessments are going to be used for their grades, which will help to ease the pressure on them. Awaiting further information from SQA before this can be finalised. • Plan to hold a virtual assembly for S4-6 learners to provide updates. • S5-6 were due another tracking report in November but George now wants this to be a written report. There will be another tracker and a post assessment tracker in February for senior phase. • S4 report is on 11th December, by which time there might be more information on N5 assessments. • Prelims will be held in class and may be split between periods as they cannot be held in the hall. The halls will be used for students who have additional support requirements. 	
<p>6. <u>Careers Event</u> The Parent Council usually helps to organise and run a Careers evening in February where various people from different professions/organisations and further education</p>	

<p>institutions talk to young people about their careers. It won't be possible for this to go ahead in the usual format next year and Hilary welcomed any suggestions as to how the Parent Council could help support the school in a remote way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of further education providers, most universities had been holding virtual open days but these had now come to an end, however it may still be possible to provide links to some of the information, virtual tours, etc. that are still available. • Lindsay suggested that interview practice through Zoom to help with interview techniques could be something that some parents are able to help with. Also providing contacts of people who can help give advice about different careers. • Katie suggested having a portal where people could upload pre-recorded videos or podcasts talking about their careers which could be shared by the school and marketed as the Careers event. Other links to universities, contacts, etc. could be included so that everything is in one place. • George suggested running a webinar session where one person is talking and up to 10 others can tune in. <p>It was decided that initially the school would issue an e-mail asking whether there were any parents available to support a careers event. This could then be discussed by a smaller subgroup. Lindsay, Carolyn and Katie volunteered to help and anyone else who wishes to join later can let Hilary know.</p> <p>George will be hosting a get together on Zoom with partners to the school as there has been little contact with them this year, so he can also speak to them about participating in the careers event.</p>	<p>GD HR</p>
<p>7. <u>Items for Parent Council Chairs Meeting</u> Hilary will be attending this meeting on 11th November at which Douglas Hutchison will be present. She asked whether there was anything specific that parents would like her to bring up at the meeting. The main concern currently was the apparent lack of input from the SQA regarding the publication of key dates for National qualifications. George advised that the Head of SQA would be attending the Head Teachers meeting in December.</p>	
<p>8. <u>Next Month's Agenda Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BGE Reporting – George would like to follow up on this item which had been discussed at a previous meeting to get feedback from parents. • Sally Law, PT of English and Catherine Owens, Librarian would like to attend to discuss different approaches in English and the Accelerated Reader project. 	<p>GD</p>
<p>9. <u>AOCB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clair asked how she could share information on the Parent Council's Facebook page about a forthcoming Pathology event. Lindsay suggested sending it to her on Facebook and she will share it on the PC page as well as on Twitter. • Lindsay asked whether anyone would like to help with the Facebook page or had any ideas about what could be posted on it. There are quite a lot of new followers but she felt more material was required. Kate suggested some kind of Covid support message to find out how parents and children are feeling and how they have coped through this period, perhaps by sharing a poem or letter about their own experience. • George advised that S1s would obviously not be able to go to the cinema this year. Instead there will be a reward afternoon and he thought it would be nice to deliver treat bags to first year classes. He asked if this would be something the Parent Council could help with. Carolyn advised that Troon Primary approached the Cookie Jar in Troon for Halloween treats for the children and they gave them a 50% discount. She would be happy to ask them about providing Christmas treats for S1s. George confirmed they would need 220 bags. • Lindsay asked if there were any charities or foodbanks that the school will be supporting in the run up to Christmas. George advised that Mrs Clelland is organizing local foodbank donations and they are also just about to start a 'Give a dog a bone' competition. One of the Leadership teams is also looking at supporting a Glasgow 	<p>LC CA</p>

<p>based charity for the homeless. The Saturday car park foodbank drop off organised by a former pupil is also starting up again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• George advised that the Leadership group will be co-ordinating the Santa letters for all the Primary schools.	
<p>11. Next Meeting The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 2nd December 2020 at 7pm via Teams.</p>	