

# Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Forum Meeting



## Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017

**Present** – Duncan Beckwith - Chair, Alan Blackwood - Vice Chair, Angela Malcolm - Treasurer, Elaine McGregor-Sloman - Head Teacher, Rae Anderson - DHT, Sally Law - PT English, Laura Cleland - PT RMPS, Fiona Young - PT Support & Development, Hilary Ramage - Secretary and Katherine Woodhouse - Minute Secretary

**Council Members** – Claire Milne, Julie Cotter, Katy Purdie, Lindsay Campbell, Lisa Anderson, Mark Fitzpatrick, Stuart Harris, Cllr Bob Pollock and Cllr Peter Convery

**Forum Members** – Jackie Harvey and Shona Elder

**Apologies** – Catriona MacGarvie, Karen Dunlop, Kate Dunn and Katie Atkinson

|  | <b>Action</b> |
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| <p>1. <b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b><br/>Duncan welcomed those in attendance and apologies were noted from those unable to attend.</p>  |               |
| <p>2. <b><u>Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising</u></b><br/>The minutes of the meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were approved. Proposed by Julie Cotter and seconded by Hilary Ramage.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duncan provided an update regarding Elaine's statement under AOB about letters that had allegedly been sent to the Head Teacher from Troon Community Council and not responded to. He and Elaine met with the Chair of TCC, Helen Duff and Don Barr on 2<sup>nd</sup> May at which it was highlighted that Elaine never received a letter otherwise it would have been attended to straight away. It was agreed, going forward, that Elaine would forward a copy of the Head Teacher's report each month to the TCC and students would try and attend when possible, maybe on a quarterly basis. Duncan sought the Parent Council's support to go to the next TCC meeting and ask for a public apology on Elaine's behalf.</li> </ul>   | DB            |
| <p>3. <b><u>Dates for Next Year's Meetings</u></b><br/>Proposed dates for future meetings as follows:</p> <p>6<sup>th</sup> September 2017<br/>4<sup>th</sup> October 2017<br/>1<sup>st</sup> November 2017 (incl. AGM)<br/>6<sup>th</sup> December 2017<br/>7<sup>th</sup> February 2018<br/>7<sup>th</sup> March 2018<br/>2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018 (provisional depending on date of Troon 10k)<br/>6<sup>th</sup> June 2018 (subject to dates of school show)</p> <p>Duncan asked if there was anything specific parents would like to discuss at future meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shona raised the topic of Dyslexia Friendly Schools as she had been asked to join a group at the S1 parents' night but has not heard anything further. She would also like a discussion on homework as she does not feel planners are being utilised and there has been limited homework in S1.</li> <li>Elaine suggested a tour of the other part of the new building at the next meeting. She also felt it important to go through the exam results as this has a big impact on how the school moves forward.</li> <li>Lisa stated she is happy for the school and management team to drive the agenda with regard to how parents can help the school rather than it being a forum to help parents.</li> </ul> | DB<br><br>EMS |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hilary felt there should perhaps be less time spent listening and more participation from the parent group. Elaine agreed that there should be more interactive sessions.</li> <li>• Claire raised the point that many parents are unaware of the purpose of the Parent Council. Currently the Head Teacher's report is issued to the website but there should perhaps be more information added to the Parent Council page. Mark felt there should be a provision where other parents could channel any issues they wish to be raised anonymously through Parent Council members. Lisa agreed that Parent Council members should be prepared to act as a sounding board for other parents' problems and suggested adding an item on the agenda to raise such issues. Suggestions about how to publicise details of the Parent Council committee were provided and this is something that can be discussed further at the next session.</li> <li>• Katy felt that the Head Teacher's report goes into enough detail and is available to everyone but it would be an idea to promote the fact that this is available after each meeting perhaps through a link on Twitter. Hilary agreed to create a Twitter account for the Parent Council and also an e-mail address, i.e. suggestions@marrcollege.</li> <li>• Katy felt it was important to engage parents as early as possible – the Parent Council should have a voice at the transition stage to advise what they do and where to find information. Elaine advised that the last transition days are 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> June and asked Katy to create a newsletter about the Parent Council for this. Hilary suggested going along to the primary Parent Council meetings to catch those parents who are likely to be interested in joining Marr Parent Council. She will enquire as to the dates of the final primary school parent council meetings and send these out so that volunteers from the Parent Council can attend each school.</li> </ul>   | <p>HR</p> <p>KP</p> <p>HR/ALL</p> |
| <p>4. <b><u>Head Teacher's Report – Elaine McGregor-Sloman</u></b><br/> Elaine provided an update to her written report.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently the senior management team is reduced by 2.4 so Elaine has appointed acting DHTs who will be in place until 28<sup>th</sup> June. They introduced themselves – Laura Cleland, PT of RMPS; Sally Law, PT of English and Fiona Young, PT of School Support &amp; Development team.</li> <li>• Interviews for John Allison's DHT position will be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June, for which there are 12 applicants. Duncan and Hilary will be part of the selection procedure.</li> <li>• Interviews for other teaching staff will be held in June.</li> <li>• Elaine expects the school to be fully staffed for the start of the new term.</li> </ul> <p><u>Building Works</u></p> <p>Rae gave an overview of the planning for the decant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School finishes on 28<sup>th</sup> June. Elaine and Rae will be in on 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> as the temporary accommodation will be dismantled and they want to make sure everything goes to the right places. They will do at least two walk rounds prior to taking possession of the new building to make sure they are happy with everything.</li> <li>• Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August will remain an in-service day. Elaine felt it important that core business is done on that day and all staff will be in. It has been decided that only S4/5/6 will return on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August with the rest of the school returning on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August. Rae will be advising staff of this change this week and Elaine will issue a letter informing parents.</li> <li>• There have been some issues – following a particularly heavy rainfall one morning there were severe leaks in the building; one in the library which also transferred to the canteen. This has now been fixed. There were another 3 leaks to temporary roofs which occurred due to the contractor working in this area.</li> <li>• Contractor car parking has been an issue as the contractor does not currently have much space for parking. SAC has agreed that the area next to the cemetery can be taken over by Kier and used for parking. Cllr Convery confirmed that the cemetery will delay preparations for an extension whilst this area is being used as a car park. All Kier's sub-contractors are being told to use this area for parking and a red/yellow card system has been introduced for anyone who violates this.</li> <li>• The school will take possession of the PE building on 5<sup>th</sup> October. The current staff car park will become outdoor PE facilities and the grass areas and cycle path will be reinstated.</li> <li>• Alan asked about accommodation for lunchtime. This area will be available in August when</li> </ul> | <p>EMS</p>                        |

the centre of the school will become an internal social space for the young people to sit and eat.

### Trips

Rae has taken over responsibility for trips and excursions and there are lots of day trips planned. She is also trying to increase residential trips although paperwork can be quite problematic and it is a big responsibility to take people out of school. Elaine only allows 2 days out of learning time and staffing cover has to be taken into consideration. Some of the trips arranged are:

- DoE Bronze expedition in May.
- DoE Silver expeditions in June – in excess of 110 young people involved and there are always 3 members of staff from the school.
- Stratford-upon-Avon – Marianne Gunn is running this trip for current S4 for workshops in Shakespeare. Mrs Dawson is attending this.
- Iceland trip in the process of being approved for S3.
- Battlefields trip for S2 run by Mr Moncrieff in May 2018. This will be a coach trip at the cost of approximately £500.
- Barcelona trip for S3 in September 2018, flights cost around £500.

Clr Convery did not realise that teachers had to pay to go on school trips. Rae pointed out that some companies offer free places for teachers but this is not always the case. Sometimes these costs are hidden in the price of the trip which can make it less inclusive for all children.

### CAMHS/NHS

The action plan for the pilot scheme should hopefully be in place for August and staff are now working out of the Marr building. Elaine pointed out that this does not mean that Marr children will get priority or greater benefits with CAMHS.

### Community Learning Development

This is part of the school's PEF funding. A cluster school bid was submitted on 31<sup>st</sup> May to enable all primary schools and Marr to work together on the Food for Thought programme.

### DYW

- This is going well and the school is now in a position to move forward with the smoothie/barista bar.
- An application will be submitted to take part in the National Apprenticeship scheme in order to take on a young apprentice to set up and maintain a greenhouse at the school.
- DYW is being introduced into the P7 programme for 2017/18. Marr will take the lead on this to help the implementation at primary schools. The following year it will be introduced in P5-P7.

### Patron Scheme

Mr Martin Stewart, local author, is to be the school's patron. He has done the S4 induction and will be doing S5 induction on Monday. He has also offered to work with some classes.

### School Show

The Wizard of Oz will take place on 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> June. Parental support would be welcome and anyone who would like to volunteer should contact mail@marr.

### Space Hub

Marr is one of two schools invited to take part in this programme and partner with schools in Houston. The first face to face meeting will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> June with Professor David Alexander (RICE Institute) in attendance from Houston. Mike Stewart will lead from the UK side and staff and students will be involved.

Jackie advised that there is an astronaut visit at Ayrshire College in Kilmarnock on 21<sup>st</sup> June. Free tickets are available for this.

### SQA

Examinations have gone very well and Elaine is awaiting a report from the invigilators. Results will be released on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> August.

### Student Activities

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S6 Young Enterprise Ayrshire winners will attend National finals at Hampden Park on 6<sup>th</sup> June. Elaine can no longer attend this but wishes the group well.</li> <li>• Senior captains interviews to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> June. Junior captains and prefects have now been selected from S2.</li> <li>• Alan advised that last year there had been an initiative by the health board to allow some senior pupils to attend hospitals. This did not happen due to the absence of the co-ordinator, however it has now been revived and by September everything should be in place. Alan will act as the co-ordinator between the health board and the school and keep the committee informed.</li> <li>• The hockey tournament to mark Mrs Dawson's retirement was a great success. A Babs Dawson shield has been introduced for player of the year. New PE teacher Scott McElnea is very keen to take over the hockey.</li> </ul> <p>Elaine expressed her thanks to the Parent Council for their help and support in making this another successful school year. She welcomes constructive criticism as this will help to move the school forward.</p> | AB  |
| <p>5. <b><u>AOCB</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The settling in evening for S1 is in early September. Hilary suggested going through Elaine's calendar of events so that the Parent Council knows about events in advance. This will be issued before school finishes at the end of June.</li> </ul>   | EMS |
| <p><b><u>Next Meeting</u></b><br/>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30 pm.</p>  |     |