

# Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018



**Present:** Hilary Ramage - Chair/Secretary, Kate Dunn - Treasurer, George Docherty - Acting Head Teacher, Rae Anderson - DHT & Katherine Woodhouse - Minute Secretary

**Council Members:** Ady Allan, Alan Blackwood, Clair Milne, Julie Cotter, Katie Atkinson, Kaye Matthews, Lindsay Campbell, Mark Fitzpatrick, Lindsey Connell, Timothy Wight & Cllr Peter Convery

**Forum Members:** Alison Braddock & Laura McGarrity

**Apologies** – Angela Malcolm, Duncan Beckwith, Karen Dunlop, Kate Dunn, Lisa Rossi, Esther Blair & Cllr Bob Pollock

	Action
1. <b>Welcome and Apologies</b> Hilary welcomed those in attendance and apologies were noted from those unable to attend.	
2. <b>Captains Report</b> Charlie, Rosie, Sam and Caitlin provided an update on their recent activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• House captains have now been appointed – 2 per house and 3 for Fullarton. They are taking part in a competition to design a crest for their respective houses and Mr Docherty has been in touch with a local historian to help with this.</li><li>• Prefects have been given their duties.</li><li>• Sponsored walk for Malawi took place – students were asked to walk 3 miles with the school and a further 4 miles in their own time.</li><li>• The S6 Young Enterprise group is up and running and they have now started manufacturing their product. Finished goods will be ready to sell at parents' nights, Primary fairs and Wintertainment. This is being marketed via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Hilary advised that she has a meeting next Wednesday with all the Troon fundraising groups and could take details to pass on so that the Young Enterprise group is invited to attend their events.</li><li>• Communication about upcoming school events is posted on notice boards around the school and on the Marr Captains Twitter page with the aim of encouraging younger students to get involved.</li><li>• Prom booking is now secured with the deposit paid and this year it is hoped to reduce the ticket price to £40 per student. A seating plan has been organised and the committee is in the process of making a menu card.</li><li>• S6 Leadership class are organising Halloween disco on 30<sup>th</sup> October and S1 Business classes are making posters for it.</li><li>• Captains attended Troon Community Council which went well; they were given a slot before the open forum. Will not always be possible for all captains to attend every meeting as this usually falls during the same week as the Parent Council meeting.</li><li>• Mr Docherty had a meeting last week with all captains, house captains and prefects where everyone was invited to submit their suggestions for new ideas, how to improve communication and give prefects their duties. House captains were unsure about their role therefore he is trying to promote it a bit more. Putting together a calendar of events which the houses will take responsibility for. Also discussed an end of year celebration with the 6<sup>th</sup> year cohort and how to involve parents in that. This will be rolled out to the rest of the year to take forward and decide. Once this has been agreed it would be a good idea to organise fundraising to try and bring the cost down.</li></ul>	
3. <b>Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising</b> The minutes of the meeting held on September 2018 were approved by Lindsay Campbell and seconded by Julie Cotter and the outstanding actions reviewed as follows:	

<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malawi – Alan has had no contact yet from Stuart Harris but will pursue this.</li> <li>• A meeting on Communication with parents took place at 6pm today an example of another school’s communication plan was reviewed. George will create a survey using Survey Monkey and the group will meet again before the next meeting by which time the results of the survey will be available and hopefully a draft strategy.</li> <li>• Finances – an EGM was held last week and changes to constitution were approved. The new constitution is currently with the bank and in the process of getting the account set up.</li> <li>• PALM project – George is awaiting information from another school but has appointed a PT- Raising Attainment today and one of their roles would be to have a mentoring programme with parents and business partners.</li> <li>• Young Singer of the Year competition – Katie and Hilary met with Kirsty Walker to discuss helping at this event and all that’s required now is a couple more raffle prizes. Hockey girls are coming in to do a tuck shop as well as house captains. Also need to try and promote ticket sales by sharing information about this event.</li> <li>• SIP visit has been put back to November.</li> <li>• Careers and options evening – Hilary contacted Stuart McNeill and will get a meeting after the October holiday.</li> <li>• Music lessons – Tim gave an update on the music situation and advised that approximately 1250 students took music tuition last year in South Ayrshire and 276 have dropped out. A petition from parents with 3700 signatures has failed to make an impact. This has now been submitted to the National body for them to review.</li> <li>• George confirmed that the school calendar has been issued.</li> </ul>	<p>AB</p> <p>GD</p> <p>KD</p> <p>GD</p> <p>HR</p> <p>GD</p> <p>HR</p> <p>TW</p>
<p>4. <b><u>Exam Results – George Docherty</u></b></p> <p>George provided an overview of attainment levels using national measures and Insight data which was released last week by the local authority for A-C passes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attainment at National 5 was 46% (for 5 N5s) compared with 52% last year therefore there is work to be done.</li> <li>• There was a 6% increase for achieving 1 Higher, 3% increase for 3 Highers and 1% increase for 5 Highers.</li> <li>• In terms of South Ayrshire, Marr is very strong. The leavers data shows that Marr is above the comparator schools for literacy at level 4 and broadly in line with comparator schools for numeracy (slight increase in level 5).</li> <li>• With regard to the total number of tariff points as young people leave school, Marr came out strongly being above South Ayrshire and national levels in all areas. It sits above the virtual comparator for the highest attaining group of learners - middle group is also strong but improvements could be made in the lowest attaining level.</li> <li>• Staying on rates for S6 are very high at Marr.</li> <li>• Attainment vs deprivation is a huge focus for the Scottish Government (closing the attainment gap). As a comprehensive school Marr needs to have a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.</li> <li>• Positive destinations data based on 2017 leavers who go on to higher education, employment or training and is above all benchmark measures. Skills Development Scotland can provide reports about where young people are in 2 years’ time i.e. what industry they have gone into. This will help when looking at the curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Initial next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early S5 parent information evening</li> <li>• Appointed PT - Raising Attainment focusing on S4-5 attainment</li> <li>• Raising attainment improvement team started already</li> <li>• Senior phase reporting</li> <li>• Parental encouragement</li> <li>• Staff and peer monitoring</li> <li>• Weekly assemblies (S6 attendance rate currently 86% - S5/6 have been spoken to about this and the fact that universities ask for 2 years’ worth of attendance data)</li> <li>• Personal support</li> <li>• Consultation on prelims with PTs so that they can decide the best time to have their prelims</li> </ul>	

<p>Hilary asked on behalf of another parent whether there was going to be National 5 prelims this year. George confirmed that there would be.</p> <p>Hilary asked about appealing an exam mark based on prelim results. George advised that marker reviews are all looked at and are also based on tracking and class assessments, not just prelims. He plans to be able to share an analysis of this with parents for next year.</p>	
<p>5. <b><u>Colours – Rae Anderson</u></b>  Rae has resumed control of the colours system recently and wanted to share with parents her intention to change the current system as she does not feel it is manageable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current system is dependent on staff putting names forward, however Rae’s proposal is for the young people to put themselves forward. This will all be done online and once nominations are received they will be reviewed by the colours group consisting of staff, parents, captains, business partners, etc.</li> <li>• Other activities outside school can now be included (with the relevant evidence) and not just those activities where young people are representing the school. It was strongly recommended that academic success be kept in for those who don’t take part in any other activities.</li> <li>• This will all be re-launched at Personal Support where the colours scheme will be clarified to young people. Assistance will be provided starting at S1, but Rae would like to get S6 started straight away, therefore if the Parent Council agrees in principle, she would like to go ahead as it has already been discussed with staff.</li> <li>• Lindsay mentioned the cost of getting the blazers embroidered which is quite expensive (approximately £47 for full colours). Hilary suggested fundraising towards this if we knew the numbers involved. Mark suggested asking for a price without the intricate embroidery on the badge instead. Rae will give this some consideration and revert.</li> <li>• Tim was concerned about moving to a system which involved the young people self-promoting. Rae assured him of the need to make sure the guidance teacher or PS tutor keeps an eye on this.</li> <li>• Rae requested feedback on the proposal by the end of the week.</li> </ul>	<p>RA</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>6. <b><u>Senior Phase Reporting – George Docherty</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior phase reporting (S4/5/6) currently takes the form of a tracking report, parents’ night and a full report. George has looked at improving the full report as it needs to focus on what a young person needs to do to improve. He proposes increasing the number of reports to 2 tracking reports and one full report and gave an example of how that might look. The comments section is very succinct and advises what the young person needs to work on. Any additional comments about behaviour, effort, etc can be made at parents’ night. The example given was a post prelim report and it was unanimous across PTs that they wished to move to this format.</li> <li>• Hilary advised that the working grade is not consistent amongst teaching staff which is difficult for parents and demotivating for students. George agreed that a lot of quality assurance will be involved to ensure consistency across subjects and teaching staff. This was all discussed at a previous Parent Council meeting with Neil McLean and he probably has all the feedback on it.</li> <li>• Tim attended a Parent Council Chair meeting last night where a presentation was given about reporting to parents which replaces Developing, Consolidating and Secure. The school also has this presentation and George will talk about BGE reporting at the next meeting.</li> </ul>	
<p>7. <b><u>Next Month’s Agenda Items</u></b>  Items for discussion at next month’s meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November were decided as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AGM</li> <li>• BGE Reporting</li> <li>• Careers Evening</li> <li>• Homework</li> </ul>	

<p>8. <b><u>AOCB</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Budget cuts</b> – Tim advised that the Authority has been given its budget targets for next year and will be looking at saving around £8m, which is slightly more than they had to save this year.</li> <li>• <b>Work experience</b> – a parent had asked about the costs involved with providing clothing and equipment for their child to enable them to do work experience and whether equipment was available from school. Stuart McNeill had an assembly about this advising that equipment is available at school. Unfortunately, there is no set up in terms of transport for work experience. George agreed to issue a letter via e-mail to parents.</li> <li>• <b>Sports pitches</b> – Rae advised that the school is under scrutiny for its use of the pitches. Currently they have full use until 6pm every weekday and on a Saturday morning but unfortunately, they are not always being used. She has told the coaches to make use of the pitches to ensure that we retain these facilities. If they think they are not going to be used, they will e-mail the Lets department to let them know.</li> <li>• <b>Christmas concert</b> – date for the Christmas concert is yet to be confirmed but it was agreed to invite the craft stall holders who attended the school open day to take a table FOC.</li> </ul>	HR/CM
<p>11. <b><u>Next Meeting</u></b> The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 7pm.</p>	