

Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 4th September 2019



Present: Hilary Ramage - Chair, Rae Anderson – DHT, Gillian McCallum – DHT, Lindsay Campbell – Secretary & Katherine Woodhouse – Minute Secretary

In Attendance: Ian Ross & Steven Manning

Council Members: Angela Malcolm, Clair Milne, Julie Cotter, Katie Atkinson, Kaye Matthews, Laura McGarrity, Lindsey Connell & Cllr Peter Convery

Forum Members: Frances Carson

Apologies: George Docherty, Ady Allan, Kate Dunn & Cllr Pollock

	Action
1. <u>Welcome and Apologies</u> Hilary welcomed those in attendance and apologies were noted from those unable to attend.	
2. <u>Captains</u> The new captains introduced themselves – Callum, Olivia, Logan and Rosie. They gave an overview of what has been happening since the start of the new term. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• House assemblies have been held for celebrating success;• Senior prize giving was held last week;• House captains have been appointed and junior captains will be appointed within the next 2 weeks.• Despite Mr Docherty's absence, new S1s are settling in well with the help of S6 buddies.• Lunch and interval rotas have been set up for S6 prefects.• Sponsored 'colour' walk planned for 19th September to raise money for Crosshouse Children's fund.• Planning has started for Halloween disco, Christmas dances and Prom. Prom is booked for 10th June and deposits have been paid. This is going to be a school function and has been booked by Rae. Rae advised that on George's return he will meet up with the captains once a fortnight. Although he returned to work last Friday he is still immobile. He has sent apologies to Troon community council and told them the school will be represented by the captains at their meeting.	
3. <u>Approval of Minutes</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 1 st May 2019 were approved by Kaye Matthews and seconded by Julie Cotter. <u>Matters Arising</u> Communication to first year parents – Rae confirmed that letters, etc went out as planned to new S1 parents and no problems were reported.	
4. <u>Overseas Trips</u> There are 2 prospective overseas trips planned this year which need Parent Council approval before being submitted to the Director of Education. <u>Iceland – Ian Ross</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This will be the same trip as the one in 2018 and will run in June from Wednesday 10th to Sunday 14th June. This is open to all students from S3-4 and is better suited to those studying Geography or Environmental Science due to the nature of the trip.• The travel company is IBT based in Prestwick, a reputable school trip travel company.	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The itinerary involves a day trip to the Golden Circle, South Shore and Puffin Island and there will be one free day at the end with various activity options. • Accommodation is at the Hotel Cabin and the cost includes all food. • The cost is £1100 with payment being made by March (final cost and dates depend on flights). <p><u>Ski Trip – Pila, Italy – Steven Manning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This trip also ran last year. Over 80 students applied to go but there are only 48 places. This is open to S2-3 students of all abilities and priority will be given to any students who applied last year but did not get a place. If there are too many applications places will be allocated by ballot, however students who have applied for both trips will only be given a place on one. • The dates are from Saturday 14th December to Friday 20th December. • There will be 5 staff members attending. • The trip was put out to tender and Ski Supreme offered the best deal which is £825 including flights rather than coach travel. The cost includes 5 days tuition with lunch on the slopes and there are planned activities every night. The cost of ski/boarding equipment is also included. Due to the timing of the trip payment will need to be made quite soon. Deposits can be paid then parents can use iPay to pay the balance when convenient. • Spending money is held by staff and allocated on a daily basis. <p>If anyone has any objections to either trip, Rae asked them to stay behind and speak to her.</p> <p>Lindsay reminded the meeting that Thomas Cook in Troon had previously offered preferential rates on currency for school trips, as long as they have notification from the school.</p> <p>As yet there are no other trips arranged, however the Battlefields trip may go ahead but this is dependent on individual teachers. The Euro Disney trip will run bi-annually.</p>	
<p>5. <u>Finance Update – Hilary Ramage</u></p> <p>In Kate’s absence Hilary provided a financial update. The current bank balance is £1510.10. There had been a few payments to the school totalling £1770 which relate to the school show and include £1500 for microphones. The Parent Council also made a good profit on refreshments, tuck shop and raffle at the show and would plan to run it the same way next year.</p>	
<p>6. <u>Communications Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hilary met with office staff to discuss communication between parents and the school and is currently pulling a document together for parents. • Some parents are still having issues with Groupcall and are unable to receive attachments, however all communication is still being sent out by e-mail and Gillian confirmed there are not many families who have not provided an e-mail address. There are also some parents who are not receiving push notifications from the app. Gillian will ask Lynn in the office to log a call to Groupcall to try and address these issues and Lindsay will provide names of those parents who are having issues. 	<p>HR</p> <p>GM</p>
<p>7. <u>Mental Health & Wellbeing – Gillian McCallum</u></p> <p>The school is working with a company called Tree of Knowledge who have given students different strategies for coping with exam pressure, etc. They have created a Health & Wellbeing survey through Survey Monkey for students and this will be opened up to parents and staff. The purpose of this is to measure how people are feeling now and what additional support needs are required at school. This can be uploaded to Show my Homework so that students can complete it at home. It is entirely anonymous and there is also an opt out form. Surveys will go out next week with overall results being fed back to school in 2 weeks and shared as a general overview.</p>	
<p>8. <u>Meeting Dates</u></p> <p>The following meeting dates were agreed: 2nd October 2019 6th November 2019 (including AGM)</p>	

<p>4th December 2019 22nd January 2020 4th March 2020 1st April 2020 6th May 2020 (TBC) 3rd June 2020</p>	
<p>9. <u>Exam Results – Gillian McCallum</u> Gillian gave an overview of this year’s exam results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results were 1% better than predicted. In S4 47% achieved 5 or more at N5; 91% achieved 5 or more at N4 and 92% achieved 4 or more at N3. It was noted that 12 students achieved straight A grades in S4. • In S5 national results measure Highers only – 62% achieved at least one Higher; 37% achieved 3 or more Highers; 30% achieved 4 or more Highers and 18% achieved 5 or more Highers. It should be noted that 4 Highers is the entry requirement for most universities. • By the end of S6 15% achieved at least one Advanced Higher and 5 students achieved 3 AHs. <p>Kaye asked if the authority planned to continue only offering 6 subjects at N5 as she felt this wasn’t enough compared with other areas and makes it difficult choosing Highers. As a result students often get pushed into doing crash Highers. Gillian confirmed this was currently under review.</p>	GM
<p>10. <u>AOCB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laura asked about supervision at the snack bar. Rae confirmed that there are usually 4 DHTs and school assistants present, but it can become very busy and chaotic. She suggested the vending machines or the canteen may be quieter if students feel overwhelmed. • Frances asked when S1 students can go home for lunch. Rae advised they can have a home lunch any time, however they are encouraged to stay at school to take part in lunchtime clubs, to keep safe and to have a healthy meal (i.e. avoid going off school premises to the van, etc). It also helps with making new friends if they stay at school. • Staffing was outlined in George’s introductory letter, but Gillian gave a summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New PT PE – Kevin Brydon ○ Neil Sinclair, PT Music is retiring, and his job should be advertised on Friday. Also recruiting a temporary music teacher. ○ Mr McIntyre is now Acting PT at Prestwick Academy so recruited new Biology teacher, Kirsty Ireland. • Frances, who is also on Troon Community Council, was speaking to Cllr Saxton recently about blazers and asked whether they can be made from re-cyclable material. This re-opened a discussion on the cost and history of blazers and it was pointed out that the blazers are made of wool (which in itself is re-cyclable) but are quite expensive, however parents should be encouraged to re-cycle used or unwanted blazers by donating them to the school. Rae confirmed the school currently has around 20 blazers which can be borrowed by students if they are representing the school at an event. Hilary would be happy to discuss this further at the next meeting if Cllr Saxton is planning to attend. • Rae issued an appeal to parents about dropping children off in the car park. There have been several near misses and staff have been on the receiving end of verbal abuse when they have tried to intervene. Children should be dropped off in the drop off zone only and not in the car park. Additionally it has been noted that parents are sometimes parking in disabled spaces. Rae asked if the Parent Council could spread the word about this via their Twitter/Facebook pages. Frances also agreed to put this on the Community Council’s page. • Lindsay had received a request from the Physics department who are looking for 4 or 5 parents of children who are taking Physics to consult on a pilot project. 	HR HR/LC ALL
<p>8. <u>Next Meeting</u> The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 2nd October 2019 at 7pm.</p>	