

# Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Forum Meeting



## Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016

**Present** - Duncan Beckwith - Chair, Alan Blackwood - Vice Chair, Angela Malcolm - Treasurer, Elaine McGregor-Sloman - Head Teacher, Graeme Hobson - DHT, Gillian McTaggart - DHT, Hilary Ramage - Secretary and Katherine Woodhouse - Minute Secretary

**Council Members** – Ady Allan, Julie Cotter, Karen Dunlop, Kate Dunn, Katy Purdie, Kaye Matthews, Lindsay Campbell, Lisa Rossi, Mark Fitzpatrick and Stuart Harris

**In attendance** - Tommy Stevenson, CAMHS

**Forum Members** - Catherine McWhirter, Ian Smith, Jennifer Cron, Karen Kelly, Shona Elder, Stephanie Criaud and Tracy Martin

**Apologies** - Catriona MacGarvie, Claire Milne, James Morgan, Timothy Wight, Cllr Bill McIntosh, Cllr Nan McFarlane, Jackie Harvey, Katie Atkinson and Nicola McClure

	<b>Action</b>
<p>1. <b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b> 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> Following a few amendments from Elaine, the minutes of the meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016 were approved. Proposed by Alan Blackwood and seconded by Julie Cotter.</p>	
<p>3. <b><u>Captains' Report</u></b> Ella and Lorrie provided an update on behalf of the captains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated display boards in the school for DoE, prize giving, etc. Have also showcased some of the letters received from the children in Malawi.</li> <li>• The Provost visited the school on 25<sup>th</sup> October and 20 students across all year groups were in attendance to find out more about what is involved in her role. She was also given a tour of the school by the captains.</li> <li>• Planning has started for the next fundraising event, Children in Need on 18<sup>th</sup> November, with activities organised over two lunchtimes. The target is to raise £2,000. The sponsored walk raised a total of £2,500 with an amazing £542 raised by one S1 student.</li> <li>• Working now on how to improve the merit system and have set up focus groups to canvass opinion from all year groups.</li> </ul>	
<p>4. <b><u>CAMHS Presentation – Graeme Hobson &amp; Tommy Stevenson</u></b> Graeme introduced Tommy Stevenson, Director of Child &amp; Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for NHS Ayrshire &amp; Arran. Graeme gave a presentation which highlighted mental health problems amongst young people in the UK and Ayrshire. A copy of his presentation will be sent to Hilary for inclusion with the minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graeme outlined the various levels of support that can be offered through education and GPs (universal services). Any serious mental health diagnoses are referred to CAMHS who have an in-patient facility in Glasgow. Statistics showed slightly more female referrals than male, particularly from the age of 12-15, with South Ayrshire accounting for the second highest number of referrals.</li> <li>• Referrals are usually made by GPs but there are an increasing number now made by schools (via school nurse, educational psychologists, etc). The type of complaints presenting in Marr include self-harm, depression and anxiety, with a spiked increase in S3.</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing is the responsibility of all stakeholders and not just the NHS. Schools teach pupils about health and wellbeing and mental health issues are discussed</li> </ul>	

as part of the PSE curriculum. From next August schools will have a local accountability to ensure the wellbeing of all students and share information. Elaine added that this is part of the national improvement framework and is firmly embedded in the SIP.

Tommy outlined the role of CAMHS:

- There are 3 specialised teams across Ayrshire made up of nurses, occupational therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists etc, who offer assessment and psychological intervention for mental health problems from ages 0-18.
- Most referrals are through GPs but also come from a variety of different groups in the community and are usually made with the agreement of the parent/guardian. The timescale for a routine referral is 18 weeks with urgent referrals within 5 days and sometimes the same day. These waiting times however are unacceptable and if the current situation prevails CAMHS cannot prioritise their service and the situation will get worse.
- In order to improve the service they are looking at new ways of working, which includes consulting with parents to solicit their views and to dispel myths surrounding mental health issues. As such they would like representatives from the Parent Council to be involved in a pilot project commencing on 7<sup>th</sup> December which consists of strategic meetings called 'Team around the Child' (TAC).
- Consideration is also being given as to whether CAMHS could be re-designed around the Marr school cluster to allow early detection of any issues and provide a more targeted approach. The ultimate aim is that when a child is unwell they get seen without having to join a waiting list.

5. **Broad General Education – Gillian McTaggart**

Gillian presented the plans for 2017/18 timetable and curriculum.

- New initiative is the introduction of a STEM period for S1-2 which is accredited through the CREST award scheme. As part of this they will be working to design and build a rollercoaster. Also introducing STEM ambassadors who will come in and talk to the students.
- S1 will be getting the chance this year to take sign language lessons.
- Expressive arts – S1 are taking part in drama and dance with S2 doing art, music, drama and dance. These groups will be performing at the Christmas concert on 13<sup>th</sup> December.
- Environmental science, a mixture of biology and geography, was piloted successfully last year at National 5 and it is hoped to roll this out further.
- Looking at running a Marr travel company in S1/2 next year.
- A re-design of 3<sup>rd</sup> year curriculum is being proposed and a process of consultation with all stakeholders is planned. The new proposal is that students will continue with maths, English and their core curriculum but instead have 6 free options over 3 periods a week each as well as their skills option (DoE, John Muir award).  
Kate was concerned that students will be asked to make choices a year earlier and could make mistakes which rule out their chances of being able to pick up a certain subject later. Angela has experienced both types of S3 options and feels that only doing 8 subjects in S3 allows students to study those subjects in greater depth. As long as they have the right support and guidance when making their choices she felt it would be a much preferred option.
- There are no plans to change the current 6-6-6 model for S4/5/6.

6. **Head Teacher's Report – Elaine McGregor-Sloman**

Elaine provided a further update to her monthly report:

Building

Only 36 working days until the move into the new building. Further information about this will be issued in due course but permission has been granted for the additional days of closure.

Authority Visit

This took place on 21<sup>st</sup> October and the feedback was very positive. The school's performance is improving across the board. Elaine was pleased that self-evaluation is leading to improvement.

<p><u>Marr Cluster</u> Neil McLean is going to train some of the primary schools on the tracking system for BGE so that there is a more consistency and continuity when the students come to Marr.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u> English – maternity leave post has been filled. Only one candidate for full time position due to shortage of English teachers. Biology – interviews not yet taken place as this has not yet closed. Principal Teacher post requires 2 months’ notice and Elaine will not allow the teacher to leave early.</p>	
<p>7. <b>Malawi Update – Stuart Harris</b> Letters have been brought back from Malawi which will be shared with the students in tutor time. The Marr/Malawi link can be found on the website and this will be put onto the main page. Would like to have a Malawi focus at the next meeting in December.</p>	
<p>8. <b>AOCB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas dance dates: Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December – S5/6 Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December – S3/4 Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December – S1/2 All at the Walker Hall.</li> <li>• Hilary asked if tickets will be required for the Christmas concert and any parental help. Elaine will get back to her on this.</li> <li>• Christmas music concert to be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at Portland Church.</li> <li>• Shona asked about the procedure for putting forward an agenda item and was advised to e-mail Hilary.</li> </ul>	EMS
<p>9. <b>Next Meeting</b> The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at 7.30 pm.</p>	