

# NOTE OF PARENT COUNCIL MEETING

**MEETING OF:** Portobello High School Parent Council

**HELD AT:** Portobello High School – Library

**DATE:** 30 November 2015

**TIME:** 7:00 pm

**PRESENT:** Tom Ballantine (Chair), Ruth McKay (Head Teacher), Sue Davidson, Emma Wood, Michael McTernan, Donald McGregor, Jacquie Robertson, Diane Drummond, Isabelle McGeehan, Katherine Taylor **Apologies:** Carole Tracey, Charles Marriott, Hazel Bett, Gica Loening

## Action:

### 1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of meeting held on 14 October 2015 were approved as correct.

### 2. Report from Ruth McKay

- Nigel Cotter, new Deputy Head Teacher, commenced in post today. Luke McAllister took up post as Support for Learning Leader in mid-November.
- There are several staff absences at present but specialist cover is in place for all.
- RM to introduce a monthly Head Teacher ‘drop-in surgery’ for parents/carers to discuss relevant school issues on a one-to-one basis.
- At the recent incoming S1 parent/carer evening, parents were consulted about their use of social media. Facebook was overwhelmingly the most used, with some use of Twitter also. A short working life group is being set up to examine the flow of news to parents and the wider community using these media. MM to attend as parent council representative.
- The recent school show ‘Jesus Christ Superstar’ was a huge success. Thanks expressed to all involved.
- The recent Gallipoli trip was well received and pupil conduct commended. Students shared their experiences at the Remembrance Evening.
- The school hosted the launch of a new Education Scotland teaching resource ‘Remembering Srebrenica’, designed to enable young people to understand why genocide happens and how it can be prevented and was reported on BBC Scotland news. It links in to citizenship lessons and MVP.

### 3. Update on new school plans

RM reported that she had recently toured the new school which was progressing well.

- Date to showcase new school to parents/carers: RM to look at opportunities to combine this with another event in the next school term. **RM**
- Plans to mark move to new school: SD outlined ideas to commemorate the old school and is keen to involve as many past pupils as possible. A Facebook page is to be set up to help link with ex-pupils far and wide. **SD**

- Travel to new school: DM reported that a recent meeting set up between representatives from Sustrans, PHS Parent Council and City of Edinburgh council was relatively unproductive as the city of Edinburgh Council representative did not attend. It was acknowledged that the focus should be on walking and/or cycling to school and that the key issues for this are the Milton Road crossing, the links across Duddingston Park and the Baileyfield under- and over-pass. DM to produce a map of key routes to school and indicate issues of concern. RM to organise a questionnaire for pupils to complete in Key Adult time to solicit views on how they will travel to school and what they perceive to be the issues of concern.

DM

#### 4. Fundraising for 2015-2016

- Fundraising group chair – position needs to be filled as a priority. The ideal model is to have one large fundraising event per term, with smaller/individual events inbetween. It is recognised that we need to engage the wider parent community to attract volunteers. EW to ask people for fundraising ideas on PHS Fundraising Facebook site.
- School cabaret – EW reported that due to lack of availability of pupils, staff, and facilities, this will take place in the Autumn term at the new school.
- Fashion show – organising committee needed.
- School Lottery needs to be discussed at a future meeting.
- JR to examine records to quantify amounts that each fundraising event has raised.

JR

#### 5. Finances

£4,367.79 current balance. Wishlist approved and agreed to transfer £4,000 to this.

#### 6. Update on review of website

MM to look at website traffic and to discuss this, plus review of social media at future meeting.

MM

#### 7. Possible 'Housekeeping' topics

Website; Engaging wider parent community; School lottery

#### 8. AOB

- KT raised the issue of the proposed City of Edinburgh Council cuts to musical instrument teachers. This would cut 75% of the budget for these teachers and propose to make them self funding/social enterprise. RM agreed to investigate the steps of the consultation process and further details of proposals and to send parents a link to this information, on behalf of the Parent Council.
- MM recommended a 'Mindfulness in Schools' event and is to forward details to AF.

RM

MM

#### 9. Dates of next meetings

11 January 2016; 7 March 2016; 16 May 2016