

**Minutes of the Mearns Academy Parent Council meeting held in GP Room 3**  
**at Mearns Academy, Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 at 7pm**

**Present:**

Marieke Wood – Chairperson  
Katrina Suèr – Vice Chairperson  
Jim Hendry – Treasurer  
Rachel Smith – Assistant Treasurer  
Karen Ramsay – Secretary  
Pauline Logue – Deputy Headteacher  
Derek Atkinson – Cluster Business Manager  
Bev MacKinnon, Willie Brown, Derek Craig, Orla Hendry (Pupil Council) and Kyle Skeen (Pupil Council)

**Apologies:**

Nanette Cubitt Brown, Arlene Dickson, Suzanne MacDonald, Katrin Lewis, Nicola Campbell, Morag Williamson, Laura Baird, Heather Herd and Kim Tait

**1. Welcome**

Marieke Wood, Chairperson, opened by welcoming everyone, including some new faces, to the meeting. Anyone with questions should feel free to ask them during the meeting or can chat afterwards. We are looking for people to share ideas, thoughts and experiences at these meetings. All five office bearers were again introduced to those present so that they are recognisable.

Marieke explained that minutes of the last meeting were circulated via the school and on the website, rather than an opt-in distribution list. By sending minutes in this way they can potentially reach the whole school community, sharing what is discussed and future plans with a wider audience. In future it is hoped that a draft agenda for upcoming meetings will be circulated well ahead of the meeting date – technical issues prevented that from happening this time.

**Adoption of the minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021**

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 were an accurate record. Proposed by Katrina Suèr, seconded by Rachel Smith

**2. Head Teacher's Report – Presented by Pauline Logue**

Mr Campbell is currently absent from school having undergone a planned procedure and now recuperating for the remainder of November.

Covid 19 – latest guidance keeps the restrictions and mitigations in place for the meantime and strict social distancing, mask wearing, safety measures remain. There are a number of pupils and staff off for self isolating, awaiting test results, etc. but actual case numbers are low at the moment. Warn and Inform letters continue to only be sent to the year group affected.

Prelims – Mr Middleton has finalised the timetable and it has been distributed. From 1<sup>st</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December all S4 – S6 pupils will be off on study leave, only attending for their scheduled exams. AAA timetable sent out 23<sup>rd</sup> November individually.

Tracking Reports – For S1, S2 and S3 pupils will be issued on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November and sent via Groupcall email. Purpose of this tracking report is to give a snapshot of where the pupil is and will be followed with a progress update in February and another parents evening. Details of a new Google

site will be sent with the report, detailing subject curriculum, information on reporting format and information on the young person.

S3 Maths parents evening – 56% uptake

S2 parents evening for maths – will take place 1<sup>st</sup> December, appointments open 24<sup>th</sup> November.

S4 parents evening – 73% uptake, 606 conversations took place. There was a technical issue on the night with those trying to access meetings from some Apple devices. Unfortunately, the school was notified of the issue with the Apple devices by the software providers after the parents' evening. This matter has now been resolved. Further the non-consecutive booking system for meetings led to negative feedback so the school will now trial a 1 minute break between each 5 minute meeting and survey parents again on that.

Duke of Edinburgh – A number of staff have now applied for the Low Hills training course and another course so positive steps towards getting this started again.

PT Equity and Skills post – David Black takes up this post for 23 month contract. Involves working with pupils to ensure they can access a varied curriculum, small group or individual working to enable pupils to meet potential and raise attainment – this also includes working with more able pupils. Claire Leask has been appointed as a Pupil Support Worker and will take up her post before the holidays. Donna Porter has been appointed as an Admin Assistant and has already taken up her post.

Youth Philanthropy – Wood Group have donated £3000 and pupils have chosen 5 charities for which they will present their case as to why they should receive the money.

Mr Taylor Fundraiser – Pledged to do 3000 push ups over the month of November to raise funds for Teenage Cancer Trust. On Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November there will be house support to help him finish the challenge. So far he has raised £1300, link to donate will be put on the FB page and shared in the daily news.

### **3. Treasurers Report**

Jim Hendry updated those present on the current financial position.

Bank account balance - £6482

Petty cash - £59.65

The only outgoings at present are for 200 Club winners. Draws take place at the end of each month, drawn by Mr Campbell or senior staff members.

Assistant Treasurer – A call had previously gone out for someone to work alongside Jim and eventually take over the Treasurer position. We are delighted that Rachel Smith has agreed to take on this post. She will liaise with Jim in the new year.

### **4. Change to Charitable Trust**

Katrina Suèr, Vice Chair, updated on this. Currently MAPC is not a charitable trust and is therefore missing out on potential gift aid donations (25%). There were no objections to the proposed change from those present at the meeting, Katrina to progress. Change to charitable trust status would mean a change to bank account so hold off on Asst Treasurer changing bank details and do both together. Also the Constitution will need to be re-drafted, which will be done ready to be discussed and debated at the next meeting.

### **5. Cycle Fundraiser – update**

Derek Atkinson was present at the meeting to provide an update on how this event has progressed since Marieke suggested it at the last meeting. Two weeks ago Marieke and school staff had been

able to meet to discuss options. It was discovered that the 14 spin bikes belonging to the school campus do not measure distance but the 14 in the fitness suite do.

The average class is 28 pupils so the plan is to have them working in pairs completing a distance challenge. S1- S3 pupils will take part on week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> December, Senior pupils will do their part in the new year. It is not possible to have parents involved at the moment due to continuing restrictions on visitors. All arrangements are subject to change if necessary.

It has been difficult to timetable this event and it will mean that pupils are taken out of classes to complete their time in the challenge. The fitness suite is a public used space so the school are mindful of that.

For the 1 hour time slot, it is envisaged they will have 40 minutes of activity, the remaining 20 minutes will be changing and the cleaning/ sanitising of equipment. This will not be a compulsory activity so children that do not want to take part will not be made to. Pupils will likely be in PE kit all day to avoid having to use/ clean changing rooms continually.

House points will be allocated, 25 points for winning house, 15 for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 10 for 3<sup>rd</sup> place and 5 points for 4<sup>th</sup> placed house.

Sponsorship will be via a Just Giving page that MAPC will organise. Buckets to collect coins the pupils want to give will be set out on the day.

Marieke expressed the appreciation from all MAPC to staff for the work they had done to facilitate this event, it sounds fantastic and will hopefully be a boost to have a competitive house competition. Shame MAPC not able to organise and run the event instead of staff but we understand restrictions necessary.

## **6. Pupil Council Report**

We welcomed Orla Hendry and Kyle Skeen, School Captains, to the meeting to give an update on what the pupil council have been doing.

Orla advised that the council comprised two groups, Junior pupils S1-3 and Senior pupils S4-6. They hold 2-3 meetings per term and include students from every tutor group to ensure all are represented and gave an example of some recent issues they had discussed and solutions put in place.

Kyle took us through some examples of what is discussed at Senior Pupil Leadership Meetings, showing us a mind map that had been left on the white board from a recent meeting. The seniors are keen to focus on life-relevant skills such as UCAS forms, Personal Statement writing, practical finance knowledge, and think that earlier discussion/ exposure to these would be useful rather than leaving till S6. The school guidance staff do offer some practical sessions in S6 such as cooking, sewing, banking, application form completion.

The school plan to send out a questionnaire asking parents opinions on what types of topics should be taught/discussed in PSE.

The Prefects have taken part in a training day to help them understand what is expected of them in that role. There has also been a team building day with Fifth Dimension, which was a great success and relaxed everyone in to working together and noticeably built confidence.

The recent inter-house event was football and was won by Johnston – well done to them! The next house event is netball, which is taking place this week – good luck to all.

Every few weeks there is an online quiz for students during tutor time. These are fun and keep morale up as well as house competition alive.

Future activities that have been discussed are outdoor type events such as raft building, team building days. Would also be good to have Fifth Dimension back for the younger pupils.

In preparation for senior pupils being off on study leave, S3 pupils will be shadowing prefects this week onwards and will then take over their duties for the duration of study leave.

Thank you to Orla and Kyle for the very thorough update.

## 7. Update on Digital Platform Consolidation

Katrina Suèr updated on her recent, interesting meeting with Mr Middleton, where it was agreed that all communication platforms the school currently operates are necessary. The school will produce a prep sheet for parents on each platform, giving a brief explanation on what each one is for and how the school use it. This document is at approval stage and will be out soon. Links to the Facebook and Twitter pages on the website are being looked at so everything can be accessed from one place. Groupcall/ Expression is used for everything that goes out. Thanks was given to, Mr Middleton and the SLT for taking time to prepare the document.

## 8. AOCB

Q. An email query had been received asking why only the affected year group received the Warn and Inform letter when pupils were all regularly mixing, especially senior phase pupils?

A. The school have looked at all elements of this, the notifications of outbreak letters are difficult to manage to reach those necessary without disclosing identities of those involved, the whole school potentially mix at lunch times so they had to take a decision on where to stop. This is regularly being discussed and reviewed.

Q. Pupils slightly later to lunch are faced with long queues and struggle to be served and eat before time is up?

A. Queue does quieten down fairly quickly, certainly by 20 past, half past 1, often no queue. Pupils can also pre-order lunch at break time and speak to canteen staff if they want something different.

Q. Recent clarification on school uniform expectations was welcome, wondering if similar policy on mobile phone useage in school could be clarified so parents and school sending same message to children?

A. There are rules in place within school. Mobile phones should be in bags for classes unless asked to take out to scan homework etc. Teachers are not encouraged to make pupils hand phones in as they are often valuable so better in pupils possession in case something happens to it. Handy to have in some classes to note down homework, dates cooking, etc.

As per Constitution we need at least 8 committee members, including office bearers. Running through the committee list, we have more than the required 8 members but always good to have more than minimum. In order for things to be voted through at meetings there needs to be at least 5 committee members at the meeting. Joining the committee does not mean any work, no pressure to take on an office bearer position or attend every meeting. **Please let us know if you would be interested in joining the committee.**

S4 will have next parents' evening on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022. It is possible, but not definite, that prelim results will be known by then.

Derek Atkinson advised that tightening restrictions for the school may mean that the MAPC meetings will need to revert to virtual in the new year.

## 9. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7pm**. The venue/format for this meeting will be confirmed ahead of the meeting date.

Meeting ended at 8pm