**BEARSDEN ACADEMY**

**PARENT COUNCIL**

This meeting took place at Bearsden Academy on 13 September 2022 at 7pm

**Attendees**

Chris Dorman (Chair)

George Cooper (Head Teacher)

Stuart Dickson (Secretary)

Michael Healy (Depute Head Teacher)

Andrea Glendinning

Jen McMartin

Debbie Monaghan

Rachel Huston

Andrew Cooper

January Morgan White

Wendy McLaren

**Welcome & Apologies**

Chris thanked everyone for their attendance – it is encouraging to see so many wishing to engage with the school. Wendy received an email from Katherine Sneddon who wishes to join but is unable to attend. Jen, Debbie and Martin also wish to join.

**Minutes**

The minutes to the last meeting were checked and approved.

**Matters arising**

We discussed several questions which had been raised by parent to members of the PC

S5 parent evening is scheduled for March which seems too late given exams – what was the reason? Mr Cooper replied that timings are set through the Working Time Agreement Group. Traditionally, these evenings are to provide feedback after pre-lims and ahead of reports. Based on our experiences, this has been the best way to do things. If anyone is concerned about the progress of their child, they should get int touch with guidance who can quickly bring parents up to speed with issues.

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If the school feels that your child is struggling, you get an early report in October the school will follow up if your child is not on track. Results of pre-lims will be known soon after the exams, at the start of February.

With a parents evening, you just get 3 minutes with each teacher so these are just one part of all the updates you receive.

Can you update on the situation with school bikes? Mr Cooper said that we have a fantastic partnership with Outdoor Education and Sustrans – 60 bikes, 60 helmets, 2 bike repair stands, and we are able to train children and provide them with qualifications on repair and maintenance if they would like. This will become part of PE; sixth years are training to be trainers and we will roll this programme out over the course of several nights.

Regarding The Merit System which is in place across the school - the youngsters work hard for these and it would be really nice for them to get a certificate at the end of the year, given youngsters don’t get exam results. Is there any interest in this? Yes, there is a 3 year plan at EDC to develop this, but BA are working to bring in a system through SatchelOne for badges or an online certificate.

Vaping – there was a survey a few weeks ago by NHS England showing a very high take up by school children. Is the school aware of any issues and do they try to educate pupils of the dangers? Yes absolutely. Where we see it, we contact parents to discourage it. Discouraging it is part of the PSE Programme for S1-S6.

**Head Teacher report**

Picking up on the question raised in an email about school trips – there are lots of trips, but capacity is limited so there is disappointment that many pupils who wish to, cannot take part. The numbers going are equal to the numbers who applied – with the exception is the trip to Manchester City – 40 are going but 100 applied. The other one of note was the Battlefield trip – 82 applied for 40 places so we have arranged a second one. The principle is that those who didn’t get to go will be preferred next time.

There is so much going on and many ideas for new trips, that we intend to come up with a prospectus so parents can see what is going on. There are football trips, bakeries, golf for example and some are free or very low cost with the exception of the foreign journeys. Some get blocked for being inequitable – in other words, too costly.

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Mr Cooper moved on to discuss the SQA results for 2022. This was the first external examination process in 3 years.

For S5 National Benchmarks,:

5 or more highers/Level 6 qualifications = 57% - best result in EDC history

3 or more highers/Level 6 = 82% best in EDC history

1 or more higher/level 6 = 91% Equal best BA result, consistent since 2019.

We did not drop as others did as we were very rigorous in self-assessment in recent years.

For S National Benchmarks,:

5+ NQ at Level 5 = 81%

5+ NQ at Level 4 = 82% (87%-91%)

5+ NQ at Level 3 = 82% (87%-91%)

‘Sustained at a very high level of performance’

Additionally,

* 50 pupils in S5 attained 5 awards at A grade – best in 15 years
* 71 pupils in S4 attained 7 awards at A grade
* 31 pupils achieved 3+ wards in Advanced Highers

The PC congratulated Mr Cooper on this achievement. Mr Cooper said it was testament to the teaching and support over many years, and to teachers and pupils working hard.

Mr Healy on Parental Engagement

After Covid, we were looking to work with parents outside of PC and PTA. We had an event and 32 attended. Staff willing to give up time to set up events based on ideas. We have 27 parents signed up to do independent study on courses from adverse childhood experience, effects of Covid on mental wellbeing and so on who will support staff and pupils.

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Stuart said that he and Jane Collins Whyte had spent time with Mr Liddle late last term on the way forward for parental engagement in the school improvement plan and he was now looking for volunteers for the next stage. Andrew, Stuart, Wendy and Chris agreed to put their names forward and Stuart will pass this on.

**Any other business**

Sushi lessons – Rachel has organised these at the Primary School, is there interest at BA? Mr Cooper asked her to put him in touch with Tesco who run these.

Duke of Edinburgh – the cohort is only 28, but demand is multiple times this. One of main supply chain issues is the excursions which are on fixed dates.

**Parent Council members**

We confirmed the following as members:

Chris Dorman

Stuart Dickson

Andrea Glendinning

Jen McMartin

Debbie Monaghan

Rachel Huston

Andrew Cooper

January Morgan White

Wendy McLaren

Karen Sneedon

Date of next meeting 1st November at 7pm in the school.