

**St Kentigern’s Academy
Minute of Parent Council**

Date: 24th January 2024	Present: K Binnie (Chair), A Sharkey, S Young, C Gill, M Porch, S Cameron, B Melia, K McKeown, S Davidov, L Constanza, L Hammersly, E Seka, C Carbury, M O’Loughlin, S Ramsay, S Sprules, F Mitchel, L Gorman & J Henderson.
	Apologies: S Leek, C Horne & W Hearty

Welcome	<p>SY: Welcome to all.</p> <p>Unfortunately A Sharkey & K Binnie have been held up at a prior meeting but will join us ASAP.</p>	
Minute of the Previous Meeting.	<p>Proposed: K McKeown Seconded: L Hammersly</p>	
	KB & AS joined the meeting.	
Curriculum Review	<p>CG distributed a graphic based on ELT discussion around our curriculum provision.</p> <p>This was based on “what are we looking for from our curriculum”</p> <p>We are now seeking the views of the Parent Council.</p> <p>Members were asked to submit three examples of their wish-list.</p> <p>AS added to the discuss with the question “what is the purpose of school” and discussion followed.</p>	CG will collate the views and report back at a future meeting.
Matters arising from the Previous Minute	AS has met with HMIE officials regarding revised catchment areas.	

	<p>Transport will be provided for students travelling from West Calder.</p> <p>Study Support programme will be issued next week.</p> <p>There will be a mix of in school and on-line sessions.</p>	
<p>Correspondence</p>	<p>KB: No correspondence received.</p>	
<p>On-going Works</p>	<p>SC noted that the school continues to be fully operational in a safe and welcoming environment.</p> <p>Demolition work is on-going. We are in regular contact with the contractors.</p> <p>A new staff car park will be created on the site of the existing swimming pool.</p> <p>Formal exams will be held in both the school and the Blackburn Partnership Centre.</p> <p>All S4 students without additional exam arrangements will sit an exam at the BPC prior to the formal exams commencing.</p> <p>Next phase of the project is a new main entrance, moving the main office and SLT offices which will be open after February mid-term break.</p> <p>The current plan is that the new wing will be open August 2026.</p> <p>We continue to look at opportunities to improve social spaces for students.</p>	

	<p>As we start to discuss how the new wing will look, we are engaging with P7 students from our Cluster.</p> <p>There may be opportunities for students to gain work experience with contractors in due course.</p> <p>Regular communication to the school community will be issued.</p> <p>Question: There is concern regarding the teaching environment for students.</p> <p>AS: The main teaching block remains largely unaffected.</p> <p>KB: Is aware that students are regularly updated.</p> <p>Question: Will we have a swimming pool.</p> <p>AS: Currently there is no plan for a pool but space has been set aside to allow it if funding becomes available. Ongoing discussions involving senior Council Officials, Councillors, SG Officers, MSP and MP regarding funding of the project which will determine the final design.</p> <p>Members of Parent Council will approach their Elected Members.</p> <p>Question: Is this having an impact on current staffing provision.</p> <p>AS: We are managing current staff absences and staff turnover is on a par with previous years.</p> <p>For a recent advert we had</p>	
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	<p>fifteen applications for the post.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion around student experience.</p> <p>AS: Individual issues will be addressed, parents are welcome to contact the school.</p> <p>KB: The Parent Council is there to represent the whole school community.</p>	
HT Report	<p>AS: Provided a verbal report.</p> <p>Full report will be issued with minute.</p> <p>There followed a discussion around the distribution / method of communication to the school community.</p>	
Cost of the School day update	<p>MP distributed an update. This will be issued with the minute.</p> <p>Question: what can the Parent Council and wider school community do to support this initiative.</p> <p>MP acknowledged that this is a national issue but we will always accept donations of toiletries or school uniform.</p> <p>We discuss the ethical nature of fast fashion to raise awareness with students.</p>	
Toilets / vandalism	<p>AS: We continue to monitor the number of students leaving class during the school day but as previously discussed, this is an expensive use of ELT resources and is not sustainable.</p> <p>Question: has there been further consideration given to the appointment of an additional</p>	

	<p>member of staff to monitor the toilets.</p> <p>AS: No final decision has been made on this to date.</p> <p>SC: The Authority have agreed to fund and look to re-design student toilets next summer.</p> <p>The hoped for plan is to have individual cubicles with wash-hand basins situated behind a glass panel which will greatly reduce opportunity for vandalism.</p> <p>As noted that we have been subject to vandalism in the TU huts, school sanctions have been applied to identified students.</p>	<p>The Parent Council will issue a statement to the wider school community about ongoing vandalism.</p>
<p>Parent Raised Issues</p>	<p>Concern that at lunchtime “there is nothing left” in the canteen.</p> <p>AS: Students will always have the opportunity of hot food available throughout all three lunch breaks and we haven’t had this concern raised by any students or the canteen staff.</p> <p>Parents can use Parentportal to check what their child has bought.</p> <p>Feedback on Prelims and how parents can support their child.</p> <p>AS: We will look at how we provide feedback and look to re-frame it to both students and parents.</p> <p>Concern around lack of homework issued.</p> <p>AS: It is acknowledged that this will vary across subject’s / year groups. We do have a small</p>	

	issue on return rates of homework.	
Date of Next meeting	KB: 21 st March 2024. This meeting will be held online.	



St Kentigern's Academy Parent Council Wednesday, 24th January 2024 Head Teacher's Report

The information in this report is in addition to the information shared via school emails, our twitter feed and website.

School Update

Since our last meeting, our school has been a hive of activity and a hub of events, both educational and enriching. The next few pages are designed to give you a snapshot of the vibrant and dynamic life of our school, offering a first-hand glimpse into some of the many experiences that have taken place in our community.

- Christmas Concert
- Feast Day Mass with the Archbishop
- Our amazing S2 students winning the UK Cyberfirst Girls Competition – Award ceremony in Oxford in February
- Zachary in S5 being a finalist in the British Education Awards
- School trips to see Ralph Fiennes in Macbeth, today a visit to see the RSNO in Edinburgh
- Football Teams competing in the Scottish Cup and Shield
- Our fantastic School Christmas Card competition
- School Christmas Secret Santa and distribution of gifts
- Student V Staff Football Game – raised £700
- First ever Prom Fashion Show
- The return of STARs Variety Show at the end of term
- Parliamentary launch of our involvement in the Rock Trust Upstream programme
- Physics students participated in British Physics Olympiad – results awaited
- CPAG Group – more to follow from Mhairi Porch in main meeting
- Our ongoing life drawing classes in partnership with West Lothian College
- Christmas Caritas Foodbank Collection
- Larder- 6 young people have completed the craft bakery award at Christmas. We have one group on the 2nd block of the Larder Craft Bakery Course and another group that started the first block of 12 weeks to complete the award
- Beechbrae- we continue to target young people who would benefit from this provision to help improve overall wellbeing and attendance. We have a group of six young people accessing this provision
- Larder Cash Back Communities- we have a number of S3 students accessing this provision. All St Kent's students who have been referred to this provision are thriving in this environment. We continue weekly with visiting the students accessing this on Wednesday's to ensure a link between the Larder and school remains for these students

- SFA Cashback communities- We have established a partnership with the SFA in targeting S3 students to gain a qualification. Students from SIMD 1,2 along with students targeted through our Family Link Worker will be accessing this on Tuesday mornings.
- CLD West Lothian- We had a girls group running prior to Christmas with Brendan from CLD where 6 young people achieved the Dynamic Youth Award. After the February holidays we will have a group running looking at managing exam stress.

Going forward – Scottish Young Musicians Competition – STK Heat, Mitsubishi Heat up Challenge, and Work experience

People

New PSWs Sarah Ali & Michaela McLachlan

Teachers –

- New HFT Teacher appointed, starting ASAP – Laura Anderson
- Tristian Cumming, PE, left us to go to Royal High. Replacement PE teacher appointed Josh McGonagall joining us in the coming weeks.
- Anne Marie Shields – Ill Health retirement – been covered by Morgan Taylor since Summer
- Michael Donnelly appointed as acting PTC Social Subjects.

Temporary –

- Jim Wynn covering PE on a temporary basis.

Deaths -

Number of deaths of relations of students and colleagues in our school community!! Catherine McDonald's father, Pauline McGowan's father, Aline Gonzalez-Hynd's husband. We have also had the death of two parents of students. Our thoughts and prayers go to these families.

Marriages –

In addition, since our last meeting the following teachers got married:

- Miss Collings, (HFT)
- Miss Martin, (Science)

Maternity Leave -

Finally, we have four numbers of staff who will be taking maternity leave towards the end of this academic year. I'll update you on this at our next meeting.

Building Works

Miss Cameron will give a full update on our current situation as part of the main agenda so I won't say anything further in this report.

Curriculum Review

Mrs Gill will update you on this later in the agenda.

Partnerships – Over the next few Head Teacher updates we will be bringing you news on some of our partnership work. The first is about our newly established partnerships with Heron Bros and BDP Architects, aiming to provide students with valuable educational opportunities in the workplace. Collaborating with Heron Bros, students will contribute to creating environmentally friendly products that enhance aesthetics during our construction as well as being involved in Eco activities helping to promote wildlife benefits. Staff representatives from Heron Bros will also engage with students, offering insights into the construction industry, fostering awareness of potential employment and training opportunities.

At the same time, discussions are underway with BDP Architects, who have been awarded the contract for the new building's design. Two S6 students with a passion for architecture will have the chance to visit the BDP Architects studio in Glasgow, gaining first-hand experience, learning from the team, visiting completed projects and possibly completing a work placement with them.

These partnerships aim to enrich our students' understanding of the Construction and Built Environment industry, opening doors to practical learning experiences and potential career paths.

Future Dates

- Parent Council 24 January 2024
- Booster Inoculations 30 January 2024
- S4 / 5 Online Options Evening 31 January 2024
- S2 Online Options Evening 7 February 2024
- S5 Learner Review 26 - 28 February 2024
- Mock Interviews 29 February 2024
- S4 Learner Review 1 - 3 March 2024
- S2 Learner Review 4 - 5 March 2024
- S3 Learner Review 6 - 8 March 2024
- Parent Council 21 March 2024

Cost of the School Day Group

We are the St Kentigern's Academy Cost of the School Day group. We are a group made up of young people from across our community, from all walks of life and backgrounds, reflecting the diverse nature of our school.

As a group within our school we've undertaken various initiatives to address the challenges associated with the cost of the school day and to help make our school as inclusive as possible for all pupils.



We held a very successful winter coat drive, where we collected scarves, coats, hats, and gloves for those in our community who might need them. We involved not just our pupils within our school but also through communication via school assemblies and social media we managed to involve the wider community. The result was a substantial boost in donations, making a meaningful impact on those in need.

We have established 'help yourself' trollies with toiletries, in four locations across the school, and our approach to these trollies means no one needs to do without the basics. And we have done this in a way where there is no stigma attached with using the trollies.

We have worked with the school catering staff to look at the menu options and prices in our canteen. Following this we have been involved in directly contributing to the changing menus across all the schools in West Lothian, helping increase variety and value.

Our group has presented to parents and our peers about the issues surrounding the cost of

living crisis and the supports available, including promoting our school Financial Inclusion Officer. We have engaged with S1 to S3 classes during Poverty Action week, creating lessons where all groups looked at the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis, and have visited registration groups to remind them about the services available to them in the wider community.

As part of our school environmental activities we helped support the school Sustainable Prom Fashion Show and we now just completed a survey of pupil about what our group could do next to support the school community.

Now, we are going to examine the language we use to discuss poverty in our school and community, while working with staff to make sustainable policies and practises around the cost of the school day. We are proud of what we have achieved in partnership with the staff in St Kentigern's Academy, and we intend to keep doing what we do as a group - making a positive difference to our community.