

Hawick High School Parent Council

Minutes of meeting—Thursday 17th May 2018

Hawick High Lecture Theatre at 18:30

present Andy Maybury (Chair), Carna McDonald (Treasurer)

Michelle Mitchell, Sheila Clyne, Susan Darcy, Laura Melville (after PE),
Lisa Welsh (after PE)

Vicky Porteous (Head Teacher)

Duncan Taylor, Rory Bannerman

apologies Keith Morgan, Alison Haig, Fiona Carlile, Sean Page, Karen Copeland, Kerry Mitchell,
Scott Amos, Cllr Turnbull, Lisa Oliver, Graeme Cockburn, Eddie Brogan, Cllr McAteer,
(Cllr) Neil Richards, Sue Anderson

Welcome

Andy welcomed the members and apologised for the clash with the S1 Parents' Evening. (Some parents joined once they had finished their PE appointments.)

Headteacher's Report

Nine new probationers will be added to the staff next session and standard support for them will be in place. These will be in Art, Biology, Business Studies, English, French, Geography, Home Economics, Maths and Technical Education.

All of the Youth Workers are now in post and being trained. Three will be attached to the houses.

Pivotal training

The school has brought in behaviour specialist, *Pivotal Education*, to help assess the needs within the school and recommend solutions. They have carried out assessments and trained the staff in various techniques. Verbal feedback has already been given and a written report is due soon, detailing the assessor's analysis of the school.

Two initiatives were highlighted:

Meet and Greet

Teachers should be in their classrooms ahead of the incoming class and should greet the pupils by name, shaking their hands and asking about specific things that are particular to each individual. This conveys a sense of value to the youngsters, which will result in a reciprocal respect for the teacher.

The question was raised whether the requirement for teachers to not only learn the names of hundreds of pupils each year but keep up with their particular interests, achievements and situations as well as being able to instantly recall all this data is highly onerous. The question was pooh-poohed on the basis that parents would expect teachers to know the names of their children.

Fresh Start

This initiative embodies the principle of forgiveness; whatever happened last time, today is a clean start and no grudges are carried over from past wrong behaviour. This only applies to minor infractions and not major wrongdoing that needs ongoing vigilance.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

There have been great improvements in the DYW agenda and Bruce Aitchison is tasked with developing this area. He is organising a *Business Breakfast* with local employers to improve the dialogue between the school and businesses.

The *Careers Fare* was a great success & deemed to be the best in the Borders.

Innovation stimulation ...

Recent events

Visitors from Bailieul (the French town with which Hawick is twinned) were hosted at short notice and good

The 1514 concert went well with many performers from the High School. Discussion was had about whether the High School was able to field an explicit 'High School' contribution in the same way that the acts by primaries are named according to the school. It was agreed that this was possible and simply needed a suitable act to be organised and offered to the organisers.

Forthcoming events

SQA events

Exams are happening at the moment and all is going well with no disruption being caused by pupils.

Achievement trips

90 pupils from S1, a similar number from S2 & slightly fewer from S3 have achieved recognition for good behaviour and will be taken on reward trips to celebrate this.

Highland Show

There will be a trip in June for S1 & S2 to the Highland Show at Ingliston.

Building upgrades

Library refurbishment is well underway.

Cabling for additional phones being installed.

Asbestos found & dealt with.

Home Economics *will* be installed by the new session.

Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the April meeting have been circulated but will be further edited before being accepted. Anyone who was at the meeting is welcome to help edit sections!

Finances

The PC finances are healthy and the question was raised as to whether there were suitable items for the PC to fund that would help the school.

School planners are being discussed for the early years and it is acknowledged that they have not always been well used in previous years. If they are produced for next session, there will need to be a commitment from the staff that they will be used. On balance, it was decided that this would not be an appropriate item for the PC to fund.

Vicky will look for suitable suggestions.

Other matters

A concern was raised about the perception that pupils that misbehaved were being taken on 'trips' and other activities outwith school whereas well behaved children do not get such treats. Vicky pointed out that out-of-school activities are not treats but carefully chosen educational opportunities that are appropriate for the needs of the individuals concerned. The cohort of youngsters being referred to are excluded from standard activities like clubs, shows and societies and routine trips or excursions. The school has a duty to provide suitable education for *all* of the [appropriately-aged] children in the catchment and it is beneficial for the rest of the pupils for these disruptive youngsters to be catered for separately. It is unfortunate that this inaccurate perception has gained currency among the pupils and some parents.

Questions were raised about the official uniform, especially whether black shirts or brown ~~shirts~~ are acceptable. The answer is 'no' in both cases. Details of the official uniform list are on the website (<http://hawickhighschool.co.uk/uniform/>) and from the school office.

The SBC are currently consulting about the Licensing Policy. This is the document that guides decisions about who is authorised to sell alcohol in the area. All individual decisions refer back to the policy, which sets the principles for allowing or limiting such sales. One of the Licensing Objectives (set by Scottish Government) is "Protecting Children and Young Persons from Harm". Two of the questions refer specifically to youngsters. Anyone can respond to the consultation and you need only answer the questions that interest you; select "Don't know/no opinion" for those questions that you wish to pass over. The survey is available at:

<https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/regulatory-services/review-of-licensing-policy-statement>

There is a petition calling for a Public Inquiry into the human rights impact of GIRFEC policy and data processing behind the "named person" scheme that was deemed illegal by the Supreme Court. Individuals can sign the petition, which has already attracted more than a thousand signatures in a very short time. Visit:

<http://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01692>

for full details and to add your name to the petition.

Next Meeting(s)

The next PC meeting will be in the next academic session. Dates for meetings will be set once the main school dates are known. We will aim for two meetings per term and schedule different days of the week each time. It was agreed that focus groups could meet in addition to these six meetings and enable more detailed discussion of some topics.