

**DEHS Parent Council Meeting**  
**13<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Present: K Higginson, K McCormick, R Christie, F McElrea, E Bishop, C Adams, H Smith, not sure on the rest?

Apologies:

J McCamon, K Hyslop, A Robbins, K Hagmann.

Minutes from 12<sup>th</sup> December was approved by Edward Bishop and seconded Hazel Smith.

Treasurer Report:

The balance at the time of the meeting was £385.90. Karen will submit the audited accounts to the education department prior to me leaving the treasurer post at the end of term.

Headteachers Report:

No update for acting head teacher post. There are applicants and the first round of interviews will be held on the 21<sup>st</sup> March. Members of the parent councils will be informed if they are required to take part in the process.

Staffing: Modern languages teacher role filled, should take up post in late May 2023.

There will be an advertisement for a Drama teacher shared with Stranraer academy posted soon.

Chemistry and Biology classes will be covered by supply staff due to absence. Senior classes will be prioritised. Acting PT ensures there are plenty of resources for all supply staff to ensure the content is still being delivered.

Easter school will be held to prepare those sitting exams in May across a range of subjects. Also virtual study support is offered via e-Sgoil.

There is currently an advert out for a permanent depute head post. This is the temporary post Mrs T Trayner has been doing for the past 18 months.

Mr Webb is meeting with Sharon McLean at HR to discuss staffing and recruitment.

Options and Timetable:

S2 parent option evening was previously held, and the response to the proposed curriculum was very positive and was to align the S3 curriculum with the pathway into the senior phase. The feedback from Pupils was they liked the fact they could spend more time on a certain subject moving through towards their nationals in S4.

All year groups have been given career guidance from my world of work and showing the options in the senior phase regarding remote learning. The careers Officer aims to interview all S2-S4 pupils this session. Subject leaflets have been posted via glow and digital option forms are now available too. PT support is as always available for pupils. They can access support via the QR code and booking an appointment.

Mrs Lamaont presented the options process and new forms, She has worked with Lockerbie Academy on the new forms and processes. Pupils are being encouraged to take a variety of subjects this year.

S5 and S6 curriculum have college academy courses (Stranraer campus) are available. Foundation apprentices will be available through Glasgow Caledonian university and south west connects are offering many advanced higher subjects. The Barony college is also offering veterinary nursing and agriculture.

The school Seemis systems uses a feature called auto swapping tool which maximise pupil choice and allows any overlaps to be resolved without having to change the pupils options. Parents asked for a rough timescale for option choices to ensure pupils get most of their choices for study in the year 2023-2023. Mrs F Lamont fed back that within the next few weeks pupils will find out if the subjects they will be studying. Mrs Lamont will issue a draft timetable to PTs before Easter.

Careers officers will be holding meetings alongside Mrs C Garrity to work with targeted groups of pupils to discuss their options prior to submitting option choices. This means pupils will also be given the benefits of studying this subject and the different career paths that are available.

#### Relationships policy:

Mr Webb has sent a link via the school app for MS Forms regarding the relationships policy. It would be greatly appreciated if parents could fill this in.

#### Toilets and vaping:

A letter was released last week regarding vaping and damage to the main toilet blocks during the school day. A small number of pupils were not attending class and spending time in the toilets vaping. Mr Webb explains that information is being shared amongst schools as this is a national problem in schools. The sensors in the toilets may be changed to detect the vapes in the toilet blocks. However, the equipment is around £80,000. Mr Webb will raise this with D&G. Up until the Easter break, the main toilet blocks will be closed during class time however all pupils will have access throughout the day to the accessible toilets.

Mr Webb also explained there has been a huge decrease in pupils asking to go to the toilet during class since Thursday because they are being monitored when they leave the class and then this will be followed up if there is an ongoing concern. The community police officers and HNS staff are also working to come up with new resources to inform pupils of the dangers and consequences that can come with vaping. Mr Webb feels it is important to help parents understand how to stop their pupils from vaping, it can be difficult to identify a vape due to their design and style – many look like highlighter pens for example.

As DEHS is a rights respecting school, which links to the UN convention on rights of the child- linking to the right to feel comfortable in the toilets, a number of pupils said they were not comfortable when going to the toilet during breaks at school. It is now being looked into with how this can be resolved and how pupils can be made to feel more comfortable when going to the toilet.

Parent suggested a wider way of communicating to parent (via social media) as to why the toilets are closed during certain times and this may encourage them to become involved in stopping this issue of vaping.

#### S6 study space:

S6 pupils have been using the canteen to study, however Mr Webb is making use of another space in the school and converting it for the pupils to study.

#### Headteacher drop in:

This will be advertised via the school app and email this will be the last head teacher drop in and will be held from 15:30- 17:30.

#### Easter school:

DEHS will be running easter school during study leave. The Scottish government have not released money to fund it this year however the school is still going ahead to ensure pupils are prepared for their exams.

#### AOB:

Mr Webb has spoken with all the PT's and everyone is on track with coursework and there are no concerns due to being off for strike days. All Pts have created an action plan for their classes to make sure that all course work and topics are completed and pupils will be ready for the SQA exams in term 4.

Education Scotland have said they would stop doing inspections until after the exam diet.

There will not be an appeals process this year, the system reverts back to the pre-covid markers review process.

The consultation process on school model (see in previous email) is for primary and secondary schools and the meeting will be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. There will be one response from each parent council submitted.

The meeting was closed at 8.20pm.

The next meeting will be held 15<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm.

