

ST NINIAN'S HIGH SCHOOL
MINUTES OF PARENT COUNCIL MEETING



MONDAY 8 JUNE 2020

PRESENT:

MR P McLAUGHLIN (HT)
MRS S BOYLE (DHT)
MRS M HERON (PT Guidance)
MS M McCARNEY (Chair)
MRS Y WEBB (Vice Chair)
MR T BRESLIN (Church Rep)
MR K McKENNA (Co-opted member)
MS S MacLEAN (Parent)
MS K McCARTHY (Parent)
MR D McCULLOCH (Parent)
MR D CHAPPELLE (Parent)
MRS V McRAE (Parent)
MRS M WILSON (Parent)
MRS E CAIRNEY (Parent & PTA Rep)
MRS A HENDERSON (Parent)
MS L FAIRBAIRN (Clerk)
Cllr S MURRAY
Cllr S MacDONALD

APOLOGIES:

MR J O'DOWD (Parent)
Cllr J JAMIESON

This meeting was held on-line due to the COVID19 lockdown

Mrs Webb welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending, then explained the format of the meeting.

Mrs McCarney asked that everyone take a moment for silent reflection for all those affected by the Coronavirus. She explained that she had attended the Parent Forum meeting earlier in the day.

Mr McLaughlin explained that all estimates for the SQA exams have now been sent to the SQA.

On what should have been an in-service day, we were invited to tune in to Mass with Fr Hannah and Fr Gallagher.

Mr McLaughlin emailed all parents on Friday.

All year groups have now had assemblies with S6s due to have another this week.

Another PT's meetings will be held on Thursday.

EDC have not been able to deliver IT equipment yet, so some parents have still been experiencing problems.

Guidance Teachers have still been keeping in touch with vulnerable pupils. We received Scottish Government papers on 21 May with plans on how to safely re-open the school. All schools will return on 11 August.

Last Friday we were given permission to enter the school building as all Health & Safety and cleaning have now been finalised. Staff should only attend if essential over the next couple of weeks. Otherwise attendance should be kept to a minimum. Some new S1 pupils who have not had the opportunity to visit the school previously may attend for a tour towards the end of next week, however some risk assessment issues have not yet been signed off by unions, so this has still to be confirmed.

Measurements of classrooms have been taken for the 2-metre distancing allowing a maximum of 9 pupils per classroom. This will cause big problems and will mean pupils will attend on a 3-weekly rotation. We are looking at possibly using alternative accommodation, including the Assembly Hall, Games Hall & Library to allow more pupils to attend per week, which could allow a 2-week rotation, however, this has not yet been approved and would require additional staffing. Different models are being considered across schools to maximise pupil attendance. As soon as we know what has been decided, we will inform parents.

Consultation has taken place between Teachers' Trade Unions regarding issues with PE changing rooms, responsibility of keyboard cleaning etc.

Mr McLaughlin explained some of the plans for reopening. Mrs Kerr is leading the group carrying out a risk assessment. Other groups are looking at the best ways for pupils to move around the school maintaining social distancing. We recognise that this may cause some problems for the ELR pupils. We are considering possible changes at lunchtime and intervals.

Mrs McCarney said that the Unions are hoping to host a parent forum with route map. She explained that parents are feeling there are many inconsistencies and the level of interaction is different for each pupil. It was felt that the parental letter from EDC had very little content, and parents felt frustrated at the lack of sharing information. However, parents do appreciate the school's weekly emails.

Mr McLaughlin appreciated this but explained that EDC do need to wait for the Scottish Government before making local agreement. He discussed teachers' frustration at not knowing what changes would be necessary to courses and resources, but that there is time to plan. Ideas from other schools and authorities were discussed. We are confident in the model that we can have 50% of pupils in school at the start of term.

If the 2 metre rule changes we can alter plans very quickly as we have flexibility built in. All schools have issued the rational intended. Mrs McLean asked if EDC know how long these rules will run. Mr McLaughlin is optimistic that things could improve by October. He suggested using the Games Hall for a limited time, but this would be unfair to the PE Department as PE classes would need to be held outside.

Mr McKenna asked if it would be feasible to seek volunteers over summer to get things up and running. Mr McLaughlin appreciated the offer and said the physical layout of the halls and library would be a possibility for volunteers to help with. Mrs Webb offered to take details of anyone interested in helping.

Mrs McRae asked about the provision of jotters as many pupils will now be needing replacements. Mr McLaughlin confirmed that this has been raised with EDC and should be easy to sort when we are able to get back into the school.

Mrs McRae also asked about transport. Mr McLaughlin had spoken to Mrs MacDonald who has been in discussions with the bus companies. Parents will be notified by EDC. We should be able to have approximately 50% of pupils on buses socially distancing.

Mrs Boyle discussed school uniforms supplied by Academy Uniforms who are taking orders online. Academy Uniforms already hold approximately 300 blazers with badges in stock. A decision has yet to be made regarding ties.

Mr McCulloch offered thanks on behalf of other parents to teaching and non-teaching staff. Some teachers offered face to face lessons online which was appreciated by parents and pupils and thanks were given for the attention to detail. Mrs Wilson added that pupils had been motivated by this. Teachers are currently planning how to consolidate learning during lockdown as pupils are at different stages.

A discussion regarding next year's SQA exams followed. Mr McLaughlin explained that we are waiting for an announcement from SQA.

The school are currently looking at Numeracy and Literacy and will do what we can to target pupils who are struggling and have fallen behind.

Mrs McCarthy asked what will happen in August when results are not as expected. Mr McLaughlin explained that this will be handled in the usual way, with pupils being able to come in to discuss this with Guidance Teachers with social distancing in place. Appeals will be reintroduced this year.

Ms McLean asked if face masks should be worn on return in August. Mr McLaughlin has not had official word on this yet.

Mr McLaughlin had passed on previous kind comments regarding the work and effort to all staff. This was greatly appreciated by staff as they have been working in difficult circumstances with no feedback.

Mr McLaughlin told the members that Mrs Heron has decided to step down from the Parent Council after many years of service due to her reducing her working hours. Mrs Heron was thanked for her involvement and will be sorely missed. There will now be a vacancy for a staff member.

Mrs McCarney thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was brought to a close.

Next meeting: (Date to be confirmed)