

Minutes of Meeting Tuesday 7 November 2023

Attendees: Ed Jupp (Co-Chair), Joanne Arneil (Secretary), Julia Critchly (Treasurer), Laura Sanders, Laura Diamond, Valerie Macfonlad, Sara Scott, Lucy Napier, Aiobhe O'Callaghan, Emma Ormerod (Headteacher), Julie Bones (DHT)

1. Apologies: Zoe Orr, Karlyn Durrant, Hannah Clark, Debbie Lawson, Emma Diffley.
2. Approval of previous minutes: These have not yet been received from Midlothian Council despite several emails requesting them.
3. Headteacher update
 - DHT with SQA responsibilities Craig Knight has written the prelim timetable.
 - 5 a day topic this week is to speak to S1 pupils about their transition experience from P7-S1.
 - Curriculum evening to be held on 21 November, joint venture with St David's. This is to provide opportunity for parents/carers and pupils to browse over 40 stalls set up by employers, apprenticeship providers, universities and further education providers and local organisations offering post school support. This is open to all year groups. Teachers on hand to provide information on pathways through subjects and the experiences they offer in departments. Discussion on whether or not the PP would be able to have a stall selling teas and coffees. This will be considered if we can get volunteers and resources.
 - Staffing - two members of staff will be leaving to take up DHT posts elsewhere. Maths vacancy closes 12/11/23. The Friday PT post will be appointed internally. Difficulty filling Spanish maternity cover as post has been advertised several times but candidates have been unsuitable.
 - Note on slides 2a) - 50% of the school roll has ASN and previously not been enough staff in this area. Now there is a nurture post and intervention post working well. Teacher of inclusion to be advertised to support behaviour needs and also outreach teaching pupils at home with chronic anxiety. Homelink post being advertised for 27.5 hours per week for 41 weeks of the year. Homelink person will work with pupils two weeks before the return to school in August to support getting the young people back in to school. Enhanced Complex Needs provision post being advertised "The Hive", which is now just for DHS pupils as moving to a locality model. Currently it provides provision for all pupils in Midlothian with ASD and Autism. Now, anyone in the DHS catchment area can go to The Hive therefore needs will be varied. 1 child to 2.5 adults required and 16 pupils currently attend.
 - Improvement Plan - The self evaluation process will be looked at - part of Craig Knight's remit. In January the visions, values and aims will be refreshed.

Attendance is now sitting at over 90%. There have been some comments made on social media about bullying in the school being ignored. EO assured attendees that all bullying cases that are reported are dealt with. ANYone wishing to report bullying should use the school email address and EO will action it and pass it to the appropriate guidance member. Pupils are going to be involved in developing a bullying reporting process.

- EO has chosen 6 areas for the improvement plan on top of the councils compulsory four - curriculum and self evaluation are the two other areas. MACO - Midlothian Aligned Curriculum Offering. All 6 secondary schools in Midlothian will look to align their teaching day which will mean DHS would move to 32 period week and finish at 12.15 on a Friday. Mon-Thurs will stay the same time and keep split break and lunchtimes due to the size of the school. All 6 schools will share aspects of their curriculum. Inequity across the council with regards to subjects e.g. lack of language teachers in one school, DHS has been unable to fill a Computing Science post for the last five years therefore at present there isn't a qualified CS teacher in the school. A BGE digital literacy course has been designed and will be taught by all teachers for S1-3. A consultation on this will go out in January and is being led by Campbell Hornell HT from Lasswade HS. Other Local Authorities are also looking at an aligned curriculum model.
 - New raising attainment strategy is going well. QA visit last week from the QI Manager and QI Officer who spoke to pupils and staff. Focus was on leadership of change and self evaluation process.
 - SQA results were positive, using Insight (attainment analysis tool). Allows SCQF qualifications to be looked at e.g. Skills for Work courses and NPAs, as awarded the same UCAS points awarded as NQs at the same level. School will look at the courses and levels senior pupils are being coursed at as this is a reason for being below virtual comparator schools.
4. Name change from PTC to Parent Partnership - this was discussed at the AGM. Midlothian Council would like to move away from PTC to a more inclusive and welcoming name. It was agreed to change to Parent Partnership.
 5. Change timing of AGM - agreed to change to end of the school year i.e. May/June time. This would help move things forward quicker in terms of supporting the school and its aims. Suggested that this date goes out to P7 parents and those who would like to attend can do so.
 6. Google Classroom - it was asked if course notes/activity booklets and teaching powerpoints could be put on to Google Classroom (GC) for S1 for subject areas. This would help those who were absent catch up and also those who may be struggling to understand something in class look over it at home and in the long run help raise attainment. This will be raised at the extended leadership team meeting and Sean Gordon, as lead on the Learning, Teaching and Assessment working group has been asked to look at this with the group. EO said that the Unions have not issued clear guidance on expectations of staff to post resources on GC. It was also raised that there is a lack of visibility on what is posted on GC and guardian summaries have not been

implemented due to IT procedures from MC. EO said all BGE curricular phase resources are on the school website.

7. Communication - it was raised that parents/carers receive texts notifying them that their child has an upcoming test but it doesn't say which child. Frustrating if you have multiple children at the school. It was suggested and agreed that the year can go on the text. EO is working to develop a better school website as it's not user friendly and can't be viewed on a phone.
8. S6 Common Room - currently the school does not have any spare areas/classrooms to give over to an S6 common room. There isn't a spare meeting room. EO meeting with Fiona Robertson about the toilet provision as EO does not think they are fit for purpose. Questions will be raised as to how safe pupils feel using the toilets, especially the boys. Issue with vaping in the toilets especially the girls.
9. Whole school activities - question was raised about the trips on offer for pupils. There are trips on offer to Iceland, Canada (Gold DofE), Berlin so there are foreign trips on offer. Suspended timetable is being planned for this year similar to last year. School calendar on the school website has details of the trips. House captains are keen to get school events back up and running e.g. band night and more whole school activities. Planning a Burns ceilidh for S5&6 and a valentines event. EO feels a policy is needed on equity for these trips and the hardship fund.
10. AOCB

- EO raised the issue that the football and athletics team need strips and fees for matches paid and has requested funding for this. The school has had sponsorship before for strips. EO will put something out asking for help in sponsoring again.
- The Government consultation on Relationship, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education programme in schools ends on 23th November. Link to the survey has been posted on the PTC Facebook page.
- It was asked if members of the PP could have a tea/coffee stall at the Careers event on the 21st. This will be looked into and LS and LD could try and get tea/coffee donated from local supermarkets if this went ahead.
- Whatsapp group and a mailing list to be set up for those members who wish to be on it to share info/ask for help etc.

Date and time of next meeting - 7th February, 7.30pm via Teams.