

Forrester High School Parent Council

Meeting Tuesday 16th January 2018, 7pm

Minutes

Present: Andrew Lamont (Chair), Carol Swan (Secretary), Douglas Tully, Jackie Barn, Stephen Rafferty (Head Teacher), Hugh Brown (Vice-Chair), Marianne Sandison, Cllr Mark Brown

1. **Welcome:** Meeting commenced at 19:00. Andrew welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from; Gill Napier, Emma Spence, Bill Buchanan, Lorraine Sutherland, Cllr Robert Aldridge.
3. **Minutes of previous meeting.** Proposed by Andrew Lamont, Seconded by Jackie Barn. Marianne Sandison noted correction stating that she could invite MSP's. This was factually incorrect and the amendment was noted.
4. **Matters arising:** CCWP – Andrew informed committee that there seemed to be no way back from the decision to remove the parental vote from the Children and Families Education committee. Andrew said that after discussions with Cllr Perry he was informed that the Councillor would continue to lobby for improved communication between committee and parents.

Mrs MacPhie had contacted Andrew to thank him for the £500 we donated to the E Praise point's recognition project. The children had enjoyed out of school activities before Christmas.

School App – Proving popular and a useful tool for cascading information to parents. Has been downloaded approximately 250 times.

5. **Correspondence/Activity** – Andrew and Head Teacher had attended a meeting regarding the school estates review. Consultation with parents was discussed various events are being planned for engagement with parents will be announced in due course. It was also noted that a planning application had been submitted for an extension to FHS with the planning department of City of Edinburgh Council and this matter was discussed.

6. Transition – Jackie Barn

Jackie has taken on the task of improving communication with parents with regard to transition from primary to FHS. Having met with Mrs Scott it was agreed that Mrs Scott would;

- Add transition tab to school website to make it easier to access information
- Upload pupil information leaflet
- Create a list of dates with transition events for display

As parents it was agreed that we would produce a parent's information booklet from a parent's perspective and distribute to feeder primary schools and have on our website.

We have liaised with feeder primary parent council chairs.

7. Head Teacher's Report

Mr Rafferty gave the committee a report on current staffing levels and vacancies. He confirmed that 2 x part time teachers had been employed for the long standing Biology vacancy. English department is stable as is Maths. There is currently 2 part time cover resource in ML and are currently seeking a permanent appointment for a teacher of French and German.

Mr Rafferty also introduced Sarah Ross who successfully secured the post of Pupil Support Officer and will be working with Mr MacPhie in the PEF funded posts. Sarah told the committee about her background and plans and thoughts for the post and we will look forward to seeing the outcomes from the post in due course.

Mr Rafferty also reported on the on-going work with the inclusive practice review and reported on support and feedback he had been receiving from the 10 other teachers/council staff that made up the committee.

Mr Rafferty referred the committee to the Christmas Head Teacher's report that reported on many pieces of good news and great work by the pupils that was being done. He highlighted the success and quality of the recent YPI presentations and the work of the pupils on the RUTS boxing programme.

On the horizon is the potential school review, school estates review and the education consultation that includes the presumption to mainstream.

8. AOCB

Andrew asked the committee to consider a request he had had from Mr MacPhie for a cash donation to support a specific family he was working with. After careful consideration it was deemed not appropriate for the committee to support the request despite the desire to help.

Douglas Tully asked Head Teacher for an update on Duke of Edinburgh programme but unfortunately there is no member of staff willing to take this on which is disappointing.

Douglas also raised concerns regarding the safety of the footbridge and was going to make enquiries with the Council to gather information.

Councillor Brown asked the Head Teacher if he could list 3 positives and negatives about the school and the response was:

Challenges

- Ineffective IT structure
- Presumption to mainstream
- Teaching Shortages

Positives

- Good children – but under achieving, we need to raise their aspirations and help them believe in themselves.
- Relationship with Parents- a parent body that cares about the school and wants to make it better for everyone.

Andrew closed the meeting by announcing that this would be his last meeting due to relocation. We thanked Andrew for his service and will address the appointment of the current Vice Chair at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting is 6th March 2018 at 7pm.