LHS Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday 10th December 2024

Present: Scott Steele (SS – Headteacher), Shona Fleming (SF - Chair), Ali Berardelli (AB - Vice Chair), Dee Collins (DC - Treasurer), Lisa Wharton (LW - Secretary), Jane Halewood (JH)

Apologies: Lorraine Servant (LS), Becky McCook, Yvonne Clark, Louise Pescod, Laura Kingswood, Rachel Tonks, Alison Stephen

Welcome: The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Previous Minutes: Proposed – SF Seconded – DC

Head Teacher's Report

Freya Fleming and Josh (S6) delivered an interesting presentation on the activities of the newly formed Pupil Voice. This council represents the views of pupils, with each house and year group being represented. There are several methods through which pupils can propose topics for discussion. They have made changes to café menus, and the PV led the recent Food Bank drive which provided over 1000 meals to Lochaber families.

The Pupil voice can also pass suggestions to the Parent Council for consideration.

The Parent Council has made two suggestions for the PV to action: updating the pupil photos in the sports display area and working with PV to provide support for learning equipment like colour overlays at an 'enable table,' which the Parent Council could fund.

It was suggested that the Pupil Voice could have a representative at the Parent Council.

Thanks to Freya, Josh and Mr Fairbairn for coming along to tell the PC about the work of the new Pupil Voice group.

Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting – presentation by Mr Groat

Mr Groat joined us to shed more light on the tracking reports as feedback from parents had highlighted that parents found them confusing and unclear.

- The aim of the tracking monitoring and reporting (TMR) system(s) is to support student progress, identify areas for intervention, and provide clear communication to students, parents, and staff.
- Lochaber High School uses the SEEMiS TMR system to complete tracking, monitoring and reporting for S4-6.
- This system has templates for reports and the school is unable to edit or change them in any way. These templates are what parents receive as the 'pupil report'.
- Class teachers access their class and fill in the relevant data for each pupil.
- Alongside this learner conversations happen, where teachers discuss progress directly with pupils.

- TMR data is analysed to find students that may be finding classes challenging across subject areas.
- This is sent back to class teachers to allow them to get an overview of pupils in their classes.
- We also target and focus on relevant pupils (those not meeting targets, or expected effort level for example)
- Headteacher awards are also sent out to those showing excellent effort and behaviour across their subjects.
- Target Grades: These are short term targets to encourage/motivate students towards achievable goals. Target grades are set when completing the previous report - for example, the target grade for December is set in September, and the target grade for February is set in December.
- Working Grades: An indication of current performance, based on recent classwork, assessments, and teacher judgement.
- We would encourage parents to view the reports as a point to start discussions with their children about progress and areas for improvement.
- Any concerns with a child's report can be highlighted to the school and we will take steps to deal with the concern - usually via Guidance or year head.
- The school has a strong understanding of pupil performance from our reports.

Concerns

- The main concerns we are aware of with senior reports is related to target grades and working grades. These work slightly differently in different subjects (and different levels).
- In some subject areas it can prove difficult to show skills early on and we have pupils who are working and targeted lower than they might expect as it takes time for the skills to build.
- Pupils can surpass their set targets which can be confusing as their working grade is greater than their target grade. This is actually very positive and highlights a pupil working at a higher level than previously expected.

After the presentation there was a general discussion about what was possible to do to improve the clarity and usefulness for parents, given that the format is mandated across Scottish schools.
Some suggestions were:

- to simplify the information from the tracking system given to parents – focusing on effort and grade
- rewrite the front cover page of the reports to make the aims of information clearer and make information more meaningful to parents and carers.

Thanks to Mr Groat for coming along and talking us through the tracking, monitoring and reporting system.

Sensory Garden project update – from Katie Russell, Glencoe House

There is £7,500 approximately for the project, and £2500 from Foundation Scotland is in school bank account. The funds are enough to go forward with the improvement project. There is a great space, but the equipment is showing signs of decay. The first step is to remove existing structures and clear ground.

Pupils have been asked to give their ideas for garden.
It is important that it is more wheelchair accessible and friendly, especially as there are more pupils coming up from primary who use wheelchairs.
The outdoor learning consultant advised the use of willow for noise dampening. National Trust for Scotland ranger programme helps with planting trees.
Estates Department needs to be kept updated with what is planned. There was some discussion about whether Estates could bring in a garden designer to advise.
It was suggested to approach the project in sections, to allow access for pupils as the project progresses.
Katie asked if any parents had landscaping skills. Jane Halewood advised that Scottish Water staff could help clear the space for new equipment as part of their annual community contribution days.

Thanks to Katie for coming along to share progress on the garden project.

Treasurer's Report – Dee Collins

Previous balance was £1,904.52
Highland Council allocation on 14/11/24= £672.08
New balance= £2,576.60

Fundraising
Parent Council will run a Bottle stall and sell teas and coffees at both nights of the Cannibals of Caol school show on the evenings of 11 & 12 December.

A.O.B

- Shona Fleming has drafted a letter to go out to local businesses asking for support. The businesses contacted will be listed in the Parent Council Google-drive. Thanks were given to Shona for this extra work.

- The Parent Council Constitution needs updating – to be looked at in next meeting.

- Mobile phones in school -carried forward to next meeting.

- Parent and carers' email addresses given on the data collection strips on school record update can be added to the Parent Council mailing list.

- Emma Pearce, DYW Education and Business Liaison Officer would like to present to Parent Council at meeting on 25 February. Agreed and add Emma to agenda for Feb meeting.

Date of next meeting and AGM: Tues 21 Jan, 7pm, LHS Library