

Newbattle Community High School - Friends of Newbattle Meeting
22nd January 2020

Present

C Park	Parent
K Maynard	Parent
A Donaldson	Parent
A Westaby	Parent
S Fairley	Parent
S A Taylor	Parent
C Park	Parent
G McMillan	Head Teacher
L MacLeod	Clerk

Apologies

J McGhie
P McIntosh
M Leslie

Minute of previous meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Treasury Update

Statement was produced and discussed. Two funding requests from the school which have been agreed as follows:

N Kelly – Request to pay the travel for the cheer competition at the end of February. It was agreed that the group would fund the travel cost of £180. *£180 has been moved over to the Cheer Account.*

K McLeod – Request towards staff attending the Music awards in London – any donation would be greatly appreciated. The group agreed to fund the cost of two tickets totalling to £288. *£288 has been moved to the Music Account.*

Matters Arising

Communication from those within the group prior to previous Christmas Concert event wasn't good. People who were due to attend, didn't. Please make the group aware if you are able/unable to attend.

AOCB

Newbattle Community High School - Parent Council Meeting
22nd January 2020

Present

C Park	Parent
K Maynard	Parent
A Donaldson	Parent
A Westaby	Parent
S Fairley	Parent
S A Taylor	Parent
C Park	Parent
C Beattie	Counsellor
G McMillan	Head Teacher
L MacLeod	Clerk

Apologies

J McGhie
P McIntosh
M Leslie

Minute of previous meeting

Minutes of previous meeting were agreed.

Matters Arising

More masterclasses have been added to study sessions following the previous meeting. A list has been sent out to Parents.

Budget

Gib gave an update of the budgets around staffing. Cuts for staffing across all Midlothian Schools. We are a school with over 1000 pupils and will be working on staff ratios from 2007-08. The Head Teachers from Midlothian met today to look at how they can improve attainment. There is a proposal for shared teachers across Midlothian, so some teachers may not be permanent in one building. We are being encouraged to look at it creatively, however Gib is still fighting the case we need more staff.

Staffing

Gib talked through all new staff to join Newbattle recently and what their roles will be. This has been widely shared with all Parents/Carers also.

Newbattle's New Values and Vision

The launch of our new values will be seen in assembly during February – AIMhighR.

Gib talked through the thinking behind the logo and how he consulted all stakeholders before a decision was made. 97% of young people wanted respect in our values, so we have delivered on this.

House points will be awarded to pupils who have contributed towards one of the values.

There is a proposal for new ties which incorporates the new values. The proposed image was shown and all agreed it looked smart.

Questions were asked about blazers, possibly looking at rolling out blazers to all S6's. It may be looked at going forward. The uniform is a lot better and pupils feel safer because of this.

Catherine brought up that there was no sense of the houses in the building. *Gib spoke to the house teams about this, they are looking at ways this can be more visible within the school.*

Prelims

Concerns from many parents regarding the prelim timetable. This didn't get shared until after Christmas which was not enough notice for pupils or parents. Thoughts are that the timetable was not well managed as lots were within days of each other and others were more spread out. Gib apologised as this has not worked out the way it should have. Gib explained that homework/course will count largely towards back up if required. Concerns were raised back to Principal Teachers prior to the concerns coming in from parents. Better use of the hall was encouraged so pupils could get a feel for how the real exam is set up. Conversations will be had with the Extended Leadership Team.

Some other concerns were raised on the back of this point:

- Website unhelpful – no information about Prelims.
- Prelim in hall – not enough seats in the hall so some pupils were asked to go back to classes.
- Some feelings of that when the prelims are within the 2 weeks that it is preparing pupils for the actual exams in May.
- Pupils not getting hand-outs relating to the subject, they are told to go home and write notes up then.
- LEAPs meetings planned to happen in the middle of the prelims also – can this be changed? Would be better suited once they have completed prelims.

Actions on the back of the points listed above:-

Gib will take this forward – a survey will be put out to parent/carers to gather feedback regarding prelims for next session. Gib confirmed that he will deal with the staff side of things.

Parent/Carers to make contact with house heads if they have any further concerns.
Going forward, a meeting will be held with departments when plotting prelim dates into the school calendar.
School Communication will be discussed on next parent council agenda.
Louise will take forward the point around the school website for future years.

Research Project

Colin wanted feedback on approval for lots of new fast food restaurants in Dalkeith. He feels this is encouraging the public to eat unhealthy, however more applications are being passed. He feels that planning should be harder on these things. Colin has asked for thoughts on what we think about it - does the community want this? Some thoughts from around the table;
We should put tax on fast food.
If healthy options were cheaper more people would be able to afford it.
Colin will take these comments back to the cabinet.

Feedback from Parents Survey

Carried forward – ML unable to attend.

AOCB

Primaries to come to Parent Council meetings in future – possibly March – Louise to liase with feeder primaries.

Primary camps are not happening this year. Primary transition days are up to 3 rather than 2 in previous years. They have also had 2 transition days so far.

Thanks is to be passed onto senior pupils who assisted at the Christmas Concert.