

Dalkeith High School Parent Council meeting

Tuesday 27 September 2016

7pm DHS Art Department

Present: Nicola Johnson, Morag Ryan, Gail Preston, Anne Murray, Chantal Bruce, Marianne Flockhart, Julie Darling, Pauline Dickson, Diane Hedlund, Allyson Dobson (AD), Caroline Pearson (CP)

1. Welcome

Chair welcomed everyone

2. Apologies

From Stephanie Heasman, Phil Bowen, Deborah Slater

3. Approval of minutes

Approved by Mariane Flockhart, seconded by Caroline Pearson

4. Notification of AOCB

Drinking water – Chantal Bruce

Ongoing issue of vacant secretary post. Possibility of Stephanie Heasman /

Stephanie and Deborah sharing. (These minutes by Caroline Pearson)

5. Presentation by Gail Preston

Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting 2016-17: Summary Paper

TMR across all year groups

- **S1:** Two tracking reports and two Parents'/ Carers' Meetings (pastoral November, subject specialists May)
- **S2:** Two tracking reports, one Parents'/ Carers' Meeting (including info on personalisation and choice for S3)
- **S3:** Two tracking reports, one Parents'/ Carers' Meeting (including info on coursing for S4), one Coursing Letter with recommendations regarding courses and anticipated levels
- **S4-S6:** Two tracking reports, one Parents'/Carers' Meeting, two targeted Concerns Letters, targeted change of level/ course/ exam withdrawal letter as required (DHT with SQA responsibility), involvement of mentors for key groups (e.g. those undertaking 5 Highers)

Rationale for review

The key amendments are in the S4-S6 TMR schedule, for the following reasons:

- Session 2015-16 was the first in which all pupils at all levels were undertaking the new National Qualifications and these are now embedded

- Session 2016-17 is the first in which we have a genuine S4-6 Senior Phase
- Session 2016-17 has also seen a further increase in the number of vocational qualifications including those delivered through partnership working
- We are working collegiately across Midlothian to deliver Visible Learning schools where the focus is on the learner at the centre of TMR processes

Learner conversations

This is the engagement of young people and their teachers in the same 'feedback loop.' As well as ongoing dialogue, there should be an opportunity for young people undertaking qualifications to have regular conversations about their learning both informally and in a more structured way. These key opportunities for more developed dialogue will take place in October and February for S4-S6 and flexibly twice a session in the BGE.

This takes cognisance of Scottish Government advice as follows:

- *"Involve children and young people in leading their own learning"*
- *"Reporting to parents should highlight the latest progress [and] identify next steps in learning"*

This also builds on Education Scotland advice as follows:

- *"Reporting has two main purposes. Firstly, it provides clear, positive and constructive feedback about children's and young people's learning and progress, looking back on what has been achieved against standards and expectations. Secondly, it creates an agenda for discussions between learners and those teaching and supporting them about their next steps in learning"*
- *"Reporting comprises a range of activities including, for instance, written reports, children presenting their learning to parents, parents' consultation meetings and on-going oral discussions. Staff should ensure that learners are involved in reporting activities in order to promote learners' ownership of their learning. These on-going reporting activities are closely linked to learners' reflection and dialogue about progress."*

Guidance staff will be working, through PSE, on supporting learners in identifying their targets and next steps effectively prior to learner conversations taking place. The House Teams will also maintain an overall view of the progress of young people in their House.

Working grades and target grades

- The focus on internal assessment in the new National Qualifications means that numerical data does not necessarily represent the full picture of a course
- These internal assessments are generally skills based and assessed on a pass/fail basis, not awarded a mark or percentage
- In order to sit the external exam, learners must complete and pass all internal assessment activities
- Whilst teachers exercise professional judgement in ascertaining the likely level of award for the candidates, these judgements become more reliable as the year progresses
- Allowing candidates time to 'settle in' to a course also enables them to be better informed as to their realistic chances of attainment

- These grades will continue to provide the clearest picture after the prelims in January, the results of which will continue to be shared in the relevant Tracking Report

Concerns Letters

- These have been developed as targeted interventions in September/ March
- Information is sent home if there are concerns about a candidate's work ethic, progress, homework, attendance or behaviour in one or more subjects
- This information is then collated and shared with the House Teams for further discussion and action
- If these are then followed up with information on course or exam withdrawal, this should not be the first indication of an issue

Several parents highlighted that their children didn't know a context for letter of concern, and that parents were not given clear info when contacting the school / guidance staff. AD agreed that this was an issue to be picked up with staff, in terms of talking with learners before letters go home and better response from guidance staff to parental phone calls and etc. **ACTION AD**

Learning visits

These are being offered to parents in the week starting 3rd October and onwards.

Nicola Johnston and Ann Murray noted interest.

6. Re-evaluating PTA

New attendees of PC Nicola Johnson, Pauline Dickson and Diane Hedland stated an interest in taking on the PTA. Discussion around a 100 club similar to King's Park, inter-house quiz night, DHS Got Talent, Xmas raffle, second hand uniforms.

Ad will take this to next Pupil Voice re co-working, CP will speak to Linda Hamilton re talking with Nicola. **ACTION CP, AD**

Brief discussion on what fundraising is for. Revisited benches. CP updated that

Dobbies unable to help this year but community programme reopens in January. AD

updated that some benches had been purchased from Forest Craft and are being 'test driven.'

Nicola will look at charitable status which would make fund raising easier.

7. Uniform – feedback

AD gave background to new S1 parents about new 'push' on uniforms.

Feedback from S6s fed back from Deborah Slater via CP. AD responded to these.

Blazer sourced from Winterbottoms. Cost as advertised, query re delivery costs making them seem more expensive? Two learners had been wrongly supplied but had been rejected. School not aware of any other issues.

Contract didn't go out to S6 learners before summer so not able to refer back to it re agreement about wearing blazers. This will change in 2016-17 session. Also guidance re black shoes only. Letter will go out about this after Xmas. **Action AD**

8. Vision statement – break out groups

This was put onto agenda for November meeting and will be put on website by AD.

Responses will be collated in January.

9. AOCB

Chantal had left the meeting so drinking water item will go onto November agenda.

ACTION DS

Dates of Parent Council meetings 2016/17

15 Nov 2016
17 Jan 2017
28 Feb 2017
18 April 2017
23 May 2017