

**Madras College Parent Council – Draft Minutes**  
**6<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

**Present-** Phill Williams(Chair) , Mary Scott, Heather Marriage, Jackie Himpson , Bruce Sinclair, Alex Slawin, Robin Dewar, Eric Bowman, Andy Herd, Sheena Watson, Ian Jones ( Rector), Andy Primmer, Geraldine Wooley, Cllr Ron Caird, Cllr Waterson ,Cllr Morrison , Marjory Finlay and Sheena Watson (Minute)

**Apologies** – Muriel Grey ,Linda Walton ,Adam Alexander, Henry Paul, Alison Scott

Apologies also from Alastair Black who is resigning from the Parent Council as his wife is seriously unwell . The parent council expressed their gratitude for his commitment to the work of the group and wished him and his wife well for the future.

**Matters Arising**

**Eco Funds**

These funds amounting to £5000 have been received and have been spent on the sensory garden. It was noted that the development of the sensory garden was reported in the local newspaper.

**Awards Ceremony**

Bruce Sinclair kindly agreed to attend the School Awards Ceremony on the evening of the 10<sup>th</sup> June to represent the Parent Council

**Communication**

*Standards and Quality Report* – Ian Jones to provide summary of this for website

*Parent Council Reps from Feeder Schools* - It was agreed that representatives from the Parent Council's of feeder schools be invited to attend the end of the Madras Parent Council meetings to keep abreast of new school developments. This means that reports on the new school will be taken at the end of Madras Parent Council meetings. It is planned that Madras Parent Council Meeting s will be held after each stakeholder's meeting.

*Curriculum for Excellence Events* - Mr Jones asked that feeder school parent council member's be also invited to future Curriculum for Excellence meetings and events and this was agreed.

*Parent / School Communication* - Mr Jones, in response to queries about parent school communication, explained the current system .Guidance staff should be the normal first point of contact . The system of alerting Guidance staff of calls coming into the school office from parent's is that an e mail is sent to staff if they are teaching and not immediately able to take the call. Mr Jones supported the expectation of the Parent Council that parents should ,under normal circumstances ,be responded to within two days. He went on to explain that matters could also be be conveyed through e mail or telephone to himself as headteacher .

*Pupil Representation* - Pupil representation was discussed and representation on the Council was to be pursued . There are two spaces available for pupils. Mr Jones explained that the pupil councils will be re established now a house system has been set up .

*Parent Council Support and Skills* - It was agreed that the considerable support and various skills of those involved in the Parent Council should be used to support the school and pupils as should any funding the Parent Council had or could draw down .

*Website* - It was noted under the discussion about communication and ways to improve it , that there was still a long way to go in terms of involving more parents. The parent council website was seen as a valuable vehicle to get information out to parents. The meeting asked that improved ways of signposting information and the links to the Parent Council website be looked in to. Mr Latona has taken over the voluntary commitment of the school website and Bruce Sinclair is to liaise with him over these developments.

It was also noted how helpful Parentmail had been in strengthening the communication between school and parents.

### **Bike Racks**

The application to Big Shout for funding was unsuccessful and it was agreed to look at this again once a routes to school document had been developed by the school as this would strengthen the case.

### **Curriculum Support Meeting**

Date will be set for September 2009 when the school calendar is set up for the new academic year. The previous minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009 were agreed.

### **1. Treasurer's Report**

It was reported that the books for the Parent' Council had now been audited and that there was an outstanding balance of £1885 .

There was discussion on spending the funding to benefit the school and staff and pupil council are to be consulted to gain suggestions .

### **2. Rector's Report**

#### **Staff Update**

The position of Principal Teacher of Maths has twice been advertised and is now advertised again . Mr Jones is optimistic that an appointment will be made as this is a more likely time in the school year to appoint.

- a. Mr McNish – Business Manager has taken up a new appointment at a school down South and the position is being interviewed for next week . There had been a good response to the advert .
- b. Principal teacher of Business and Enterprise Education post has been advertised.
- c. Principal Teacher physics post has been advertised

#### **Building Fabric**

The lino in the foyer has been replaced in South Street and the dangerous lockers removed.

The leaking roof in the music room has been looked at and there are rotting timbers as well as slates to be replaced and so the work has been halted until SQA exams have taken place. It is planned the work will be completed over the summer.

It was noted that any pupils noticing damage to any part of the school should inform the janitors and / or the school office .

#### **Accommodation**

IT Rooms are going to be moved to 3<sup>rd</sup> floor over the summer allowing for the remaining support services to be located alongside Guidance in Kilrymount . The Guidance service will benefit from a much larger room and there will be additionality from having all support for learning in one section of the school.

#### **First Year Intake 2009**

The intake for August 2009 is 260 which is slightly less than in previous years but on track with what was predicted.

#### **Curriculum for Excellence**

Request from Primary Head teachers that Information Events be held to look at Curriculum for Excellence . These dates will go into school diary .

### **Revised Bullying Policy**

The revised pamphlet setting out the policy was circulated to the group. At the end of the meeting it was agreed that a special meeting should be set up to allow the Parent Council and pupil council reps, if they wish, to feed back comments on the policy. This was set up for 7pm 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

### **Support for Learning**

Mr Jones informed the group that a more integrated way of working was developing between Behaviour Support, Learning Support and Department of Additional Support within the school which he saw as very positive.

### **3. Report on Schools Directorate Event – Aberdeen 21<sup>st</sup> March 2009**

Sheena Watson and Linda Walton attended this event. Around 150 people attended and the report on the event can be found on <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/>. Linda and Sheena attended different workshops on issues -

Key points

- i. Workshop given by Headteacher Denny High School which has recently gone through a new build process gave information on how parent focus groups supported the communication on the new build and gave useful feedback to the staff.
- ii. Curriculum for Excellence – Showing how involved pupils were in rich tasks – clear that many of the activities at Madras currently can be built on and that Curriculum for Excellence is about building on existing practice.
- iii. Working with your Teenager – Examples from Knightswood High School Glasgow of using parent's nights to offer opportunities for parental involvement through information on homework given as a workshop at a parent's night.

### **4. New Madras**

Phill gave a report on the meeting held in Tayport on the issue of a new Taybridgehead School. Phill put across the information on what the limitations can be on curriculum in a smaller school of 800-1000 pupils. He explained that a lot of information was shared at the meeting from both sides of the debate.

### **Strategic Design Document**

Mr Jones is leading on this document which will be used to influence the design of the new school. He has drawn on examples seen on visits to Corby Business Academy and Thomas Deacon Academy London. One feature being looked at is this use of glass to increase the light and openness of any building. Innovative use of glass in classroom walls which look onto corridors was given as one example. It aids the idea of openness and using areas for more than one subject which supports curriculum for excellence principles. Class rooms could be grouped according to areas of the curriculum resulting in many benefits in the teaching. Work from the classroom could spill out into the corridor area with supervision still possible by a teacher because of the glass wall. The toilet areas were discussed as important to everyone using the school and again innovative ideas were shared. The next step is for Mr Jones to continue discussions with curriculum Leaders and Principal Teachers.

### **Local Development Group**

This group had its first meeting this evening. It is a key vehicle in the communication between all interested parties involved in the new school. Mr Jones was voted in as Chair of this group.

There is work still to be done on the various options for the new school – i.e. location. The work for this will be presented in the form of a Cost Benefit Analysis. Cllr Waterson explained that the lowest cost option needn't be deciding factor and that all feedback from the various stakeholders will be taken into consideration. The two schools in the local area who have most recently gone through this process – Bell Baxter and Greyfriars have had Post Occupancy Evaluations completed and these are to be shared with the Stakeholders Group.

It was noted there the cost of a swimming pool is estimated at 8 million pounds and it is not planned for in the new

school proposals.

Andy Primmer represents the Parent Council on this group . The next meeting will be 28<sup>th</sup> May 2009. All minutes will be put up on the Parent Council website and Parentmail is to be used to highlight this to all parents.

**AOCB**

Information was given on Parent Council National Event at Hampden 13<sup>th</sup> June 2009

Phill explained that he was not going to be able to take part in Parent Council until November and that there maybe a gap between him going and Henry Paul returning . Andy Primmer was voted in as Depute Chair in case needed .

The date of the next meeting will be circulated with this minute .