

Madras College Parents' Forum

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 5th September 2012

Apologies – Cllr Frances Melville, Andy Herd, Cllr Keith McCartney

Rebecca Trengove, Florence Tanniou, Jackie Himpson (willing to stand for re-election), Scott Wilson, Jane Fraser

Present – Cllr Tim Brett, Cllr Dorothea Morrison, Cllr Brian Thomson, Ian Jones, Barry Millar, Paul Brown, Sam Byers, Debbie Cumming, Emma Henderson, Charlotte Kirby, Rory MacLeod, Callum MacLeod, Rachel Naismith, Jane Pettegree, Andy Primmer, David Rickman, Bruce Sinclair, Dawn Waddell, Phil Williams, Fi Tough, Sally Walker, J Zomerdijk, Liza Scott, Shoona Watson, Susan Simpson

1. Welcome

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of Parent Forum AGM 14 September 2011

These were accepted. Proposed by Sam Byers, seconded by Charlotte Kirby

3. Parent Council Chair's Report

The Chairman thanked the office bearers and convenors of the sub-groups. He made special mention of Debbie for her organisation of summer fete. Debbie thanked everyone for their support.

Two issues dominate the horizon – Curriculum for Excellence and the New Madras.

Rory wishes to continue constructive engagement between the Parent Council and the Rector, the School, and Fife Council. He values his relationship with the Rector in his role as minister and St Andrews Festival trustee. He wishes to have the Parent Council attainment sub-group and school staff talk with each other. He wishes to see the current Madras buildings sensibly maintained. He spoke of the need to find a replacement/shadow for the Parent Council secretary.

4. Treasurer's Report

A healthy bank balance of £5793 in the bank is shown on the sheet, mainly due to profit from the grand fete and "easy fundraising". Also the 50/50 club is ticking

over. The PC has awarded money to the School – Duke of Edinburgh Award support, Art and Design books, Trophies and medals refurbishment fund, and ParentMail. We have committed to support Dyslexia software and are waiting for details. Ewan Sparkes kindly audited the books free of charge. The School has been asked where they would most appreciate money from the Grand Fete spent.

5. Rector's Report

The development priorities for last session were to Review Attainment and set measures in place, Curriculum for Excellence to be embedded into S2, Improvement through self-evaluation – see what information can be captured and what best to use as evidence base. Good progress was made, and all these development priorities continue.

Improvements in Performance – the school wishes to continue to develop and/or refresh. Evaluate SQA results and set targets, results coming soon. Develop target setting – currently do, but Fife Council MIS E1 system did not have what had been promised. Education Service has now commissioned a bespoke system to be seen on 3 October. This has set the school back. The School has put in its own simpler system in meantime.

Meeting learner needs – inclusion policy has been beneficial, wish to develop more. Need to work for all levels of learners.

Home study – the Rector agreed to review the homework policy last session and put it out – this has been done. A fuller review is to happen in the coming session.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

Working on several things. Now in S3 implementation and developing senior course structures. There is a requirement need to integrate literacy, numeracy etc into all courses through School. Now auditing Health and Wellbeing and how it fits in all subjects. Final strand is developing assessment and reporting, integral part of what has to happen, and links to target setting. By end of October new systems should help.

Improvement through self-evaluation

Some of the work has been done, some needs to be developed. Have structures to get qualitative and quantitative data. Had look at it, but need to find good time to evaluate and act on results. Want this decision making process to have an impact on learners. Plan also to develop leadership by PTC staff, who have been offered targeted in-service training.

Attainment 2012

Some attainment data are in, but not full analysis for another ten days. There are nine measures. Two have a slight drop, one is level, and six show improvements. Noteworthy is the performance by the end of S6, where Madras has the highest performance of in any school in Fife. The two areas of drop will be the subject of conversations with PTCs. It is noteworthy that pupils in the lowest attainment group have shown significant improvement – testament to inclusion policy.

Curriculum for Excellence

Two engagement sessions last year on senior phase. Some concerns expressed about only 5 subjects in S4 and S5. Rector can sympathise. The five or six debate is affected by the split site (1000 travels between buildings per week currently). If did 6 subjects in S4 would need same in S5 – would need more periods in the week. That might add 200 travels to staff in the School. Would a 35 period week allow 6 subjects in 4th and 5th year? Timetable would need to minimise impact of additional travels. Wish to maintain start and finish times and restructure between. Consultation with staff at the moment on 35 period week. Ends end Sept. Early indications that staff favourably disposed towards this move.

How would this affect S1-3? Adding in time for broad education generally straightforward. 85% of pupils in the School stay on to end 5th year, so good to have 2 year curriculum for them, so keep same structure in S4 and S5. S5 health and wellbeing to be split over various parts. Could have 6 subjects at S6 AH.

In S4 how do choices get made with teachers? Will have info session, pupil meets with guidance teacher to discuss where they wish to get to. Info goes home with pupil. Parent evening available for discussions. Possible for parent to come in to talk with guidance team.

In S5 in new scheme could do 6 of the new qualifications that will be equivalent to Highers. Currently period average length is 53 minutes. New model has larger range of period lengths, average 46 minutes. Rector thinks good to have multiple opportunities to meet with pupils in the week for any one subject.

Practical subjects can have two shorter periods put together to give a double. This proposed arrangement sits within CfE guidelines for time for each subject. 5th year pace and complexity currently goes up lots – but if new system is a two year continuum and school plans to pace work over two years instead.

Parent commented 6 subject model looks much better than previous model. S1 and S2 modern language time to be increased in the future. Plan to have five teaching periods in every subject in new system.

Should Fife Council have a minibus to take teachers between the sites? Councillor asks if that would be helpful. Rector thinks might lead to some efficiencies, but might tie staff down.

S2 meetings – can parents be at the guidance meeting with pupil – on request yes.

In October plan to do trial run of what curriculum might look like. Commits no one to anything, but could provide useful data.

5. New Madras Update

A letter from two councillors went out to parents yesterday giving an update. By mid September Fife Council will have had discussions with land owners of possible sites. Fife Council then will narrow down options. Expect by then to rule out some sites and say why, by end September. Once options narrowed

down plan to share with others, and invite comments. Target date to complete 9 November. Rector has no further information beyond what was emailed to parents.

The Chair thanked the Rector for detailed replies.

7. Nominations for new Parent Council members

Less than 30 nominations were made, so all were elected.

Councillors and School staff are on the Parent Council by virtue of their roles.

Parent members:-

Paul Brown

Sam Byers

Debbie Cumming

Jaqueline Himpson

Charlotte Kirby

Rory MacLeod

Callum McLeod

Rachel Naismith

Jane Pettegree

Andy Primmer

David Rickman

Florence Tanniou

Rebecca Trengove

Dawn Waddell

Phill Williams

Sally Walker

Susan Simpson

Following the meeting Jayne Fraser expressed her willingness to continue in this role.

Following the AGM the Parent Council held its first meeting

Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 5th September 2012

Rector in the Chair

Rory MacLeod nominated by the Rector, seconded by Bruce, no other nominations.

Rory returned to the chair.

Deputy Chair – Calum McLeod proposed by Rory, Sam Byers seconded

Treasurer – Dawn Wadell proposed by Andy, Rory seconded

Secretary – Sam Byers willing, voted in by popular acclamation

Sub-groups – continue seamlessly. Andy happy to pass Local Development Group rep duties to someone else. Rector not sure if the local development group will still exist. Brian to ask Cllr Poole what is to happen to the LDV, and will report back.

Madras College Trust – does not include PC membership, but Rory on as Minister. Trust awards some bursaries of order £100 every year to pupils going to University, travel grants for voluntary work abroad, some money to the school. Independent Trust registered as a charity. First meeting early October. There is a link on the School website to this body.

The contribution from Fife Council to the running costs of the Parent Council goes straight to pay for most of the Parent Mail service.

Fife Council is looking to put in something similar to ParentMail to all schools, and to alert parents to absences. Going out to tender. Should come in during course of session. Could discontinue ParentMail but would leave a gap. PC happy to continue to fund ParentMail this year. Meeting happy to cover the full cost of ParentMail.

Should senior pupils be at the PC meetings. Meeting thinks yes.

DONM 31 October. Then 23 Jan, 6 March, 22 May.