

**Madras College Parent Council**  
**Minute**  
**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019, 19:00**  
**Kilrymont Road**

**1. Apologies received**

Susan Simpson, Taciana Kasciukovic, Barry Millar, Leanne Hulse, Vicky Hobba, Cllr Dominic Nolan, Cllr Bill Porteous, Cllr Jane Ann Liston

**2. Minutes of previous meeting held 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

The minutes were proposed by Marie-Noël Earley and seconded by Irene McMenamin. The minutes were approved.

**3. Matters arising from previous minutes**

Regarding note 7d), Brian Thomson contacted Mr McClure to report that the school were quoted in Colin McCredie's note as not needing access to Station Park for sports activities. Mr McClure contacted Sheila and passed on Brian's email. Sheila has confirmed that Mr McClure can redraft the section for Colin McCredie, which had not accurately described the requirements.

The amended statement will say that Station Park is not needed to deliver the school's core PE curriculum, but that it will be very beneficial for the delivery of the schools' extensive extra-curricular provision.

Mr McClure clarified that the school will have 2 pitches in the new school and will also have access to University facilities. The University will have first call on their facilities, but a conversation will be taking place between the University and Fife Council to agree the wider access. At present, there is an unwritten agreement that this will be the case, but the Council is looking to have this formalised.

**4. Service children**

Mr Wishart and Mr McClure attended a recent conference on this subject and updated on the general support available for children of service personnel. These cover general support, guidance, support for learning and targeted support. They confirmed that there is a very good model in place, but that there are not additional resources available for this. Extra staff are needed to provide the support for learning and targeted support. Additional PSA support is required, and time is needed for the recognised Depute contact, Mr Wishart, to develop and maintain the links with Leuchars.

There are approximately 100-120 service children at Madras, 80 of whom are currently on the system with at least 20 not yet officially recognised. The school needs an additional £20-£30K to provide the appropriate level of support for this cohort of pupils, but no additional long-term funding is available.

Councillor Ann Verner reported that the service children covenant, provides some funding on a one-off basis, however only 1 in 5 applications are successful due to the level of funding available.

## **5. School nurse presentation**

Fiona Crook and Jennifer Grant from the Fife Council School Nurse team presented to the committee. They reported that at present there are 3 bases in Fife - Dunfermline, Glenrothes and Kirkcaldy - and that the service was redesigned last year to ensure that each secondary school has a health zone. Across the health zones currently set up in Fife, there are 12 staff and 4 support workers. They are now looking to establish a health zone in Madras from August 2019.

This will give young people in the school access to confidential nurse support, covering self-identified health needs. They will provide advice and sign-posting, and referral to other agencies or their own school nurse service where appropriate.

They will provide the zone over one lunchtime each week at either South Street or Kilrymont, so each site will have one session per fortnight. There are already community education workers at South Street, and they plan to link up with this service. The Kilrymont service will probably be in the Janitor's House.

Currently Guidance staff can refer young people to the school nursing service, but there can be a 4-week waiting period for this, so the young people can come to the health zone to have a discussion and agree if further intervention or referral is required. It will be tailored to young people, offering advocacy where needed.

Across the existing 11 health zones in Fife, 48 young people attended over the last three months of the school year. The service provided is an holistic, confidential service, and parents wouldn't necessarily be aware of their child attending, as young people from the age of 12 can make independent decisions on their health.

Cllr Bett asked about the Scottish Government promise to put a mental health worker in every school, but at present there is no movement on that initiative. The school works within the Minds Matter framework, where a counsellor is available once a week and works with pupils to normalise their experiences and feeling, such as anxiety, to reduce the potential need for medication.

The committee thanked Fiona and Jennifer for their very interesting presentation.

## **6. Office holder reports**

### **a) Chair's report**

With the chair unable to attend, there was no report, and Susan will update on anything necessary later.

### **b) Treasurer's report**

The treasurer reported that the current balance is £3,858.74, and that they received £1413.60 from the Morrison's bag packing activity. The committee thanked Irene McMenamin for organising this, and the pipe band for playing and taking part. The money will be banked next week, and cheques given to the pipe band and school fund.

The auditors will be inspecting the accounts and will highlight the significant amount of money held in the account. The treasurer suggested that £1000 should immediately be made available to the school to spend and asked that Mr McClure and his team identify where this could be used.

The treasurer also reported that a new application form will be used for request for the new year, to enable all areas of the school to apply for funding, and to ensure that all requests are considered equally.

The treasurer also highlighted the use of easyfundraising and suggested sending out a mail to all parents to encourage them to sign up.

- c) Secretary's report  
We are still without a secretary, and volunteers would be welcome from August for this role.

## 7. Rector's report

### 8.

- a) BBC Any Questions was held at the school, which was a very enjoyable event and a huge success. The school received thanks from Callum Hobbs from Any Questions, highlighting how well organised the event was, how lively the programme was, and how excellent the hospitality was. The school will also receive a £200 venue fee.
- b) Easter School was very successful again this year, with over 100 pupils attending each day. The full range of subjects was offered, costing the school about £7000. There was an excellent ethos in the school, with many pupils staying for the full day each time.
- c) Study leave for the South Street pupils was successful, although the pupils keep coming in. The school took part in SQA days offering professional learning, Principal Teachers were able to have team meetings and time was made available for professional development and upgrades.

The transition period has now been organised, with each year moving up.

The Unit assessments for Nat 4 have also been completed, allowing pupils who hadn't managed to complete all the assessments to finish and submit these.

The timetable for the new year was also completed during the study leave period.

A very small number of issues took place with the SQA exam diet, but it was very successfully managed overall.

- d) New timetable - the new timetable had been written by the end of study leave and was with PTs to allocate staff. However, the school experienced a significant challenge in getting the timetable into the CMIS timetable system. The member of administrative staff who had been responsible for the timetable system was lost last year due to the budget cuts. This meant there was no expertise left in the school. Staff in South Street took on the challenge of entering the timetable but weren't aware of the limitation of the system with respect to the number of subjects it can manage. As a result, all the data was lost! The school contacted

CMIS who eventually confirmed the issue, but neither Fife Council nor CMIS are prepared to address the issue as the CMIS contract only has 2 years left to run.

The system also throws up conflicts such as pupils in a wrong column, or new starts who hadn't been registered - there were 29 pages of conflicts for the team to work through on the Monday.

However, due to the hard work of the team, the full timetable was available for almost all pupils by Wednesday. Any final details were provided to the pupils on Wednesday and the P7 timetable will be available as soon as possible.

The school noted that the office team worked incredibly hard and deserved a massive thank you for getting the timetables out in time for the return of the pupils

- e) Assessment working group. Mr McClure highlighted the standards and quality report and that the School Improvement Plan needs to be ready in June rather than September as was previously the case. This will be very difficult to manage at the same time as also producing the budget, the timetables, the staffing rotas, etc.

The 48-page report will be on the school website in August. This will cover the rationale for changes, what the school wants to do across the 4 priorities within the national improvement framework and Fife priorities. Mr McClure will circulate the entire table to the parent forum for comment, before producing an outline draft.

The Standards and Quality Report will be a separate document and will also be available on the website. The Standards and Quality Report is a reflective, backwards looking document, whilst the School Improvement Plan is forward looking.

The Regional Improvement Collaborative plan covers Fife, Borders, Edinburgh and the Lothians. This is a new grouping that will need to identify what each school needs and identify those with similar issues across Scotland.

Mr McClure reported on some of the benchmark measures included, such as tariff points measured only on leavers across S4/S5/S6. The numbers are aggregated as otherwise some cohorts would be too small. The measures cover the highest 20%, the middle 60% and the lowest 20%. It is a complementary measure of quality rather than quantity and removes the extra bits of units that some pupils also achieve. The school is doing well in this measure.

The school is convening a working group on reviewing arrangements for internal assessments. This will be led by Mr Watson, and they will start by mapping assessment frameworks onto a single calendar, to identify scheduling and capacity problems. This will provide the start of a 5-point framework of activities demanded by the national qualifications.

There are currently 116 assessable subjects in the Senior phase, covering Nat 4 assessable elements plus Nat 5 exams and assessable elements.

The group will identify areas of priority across the 5 points:

- Those with absolute priority, where the timetable cannot be moved, such as where visiting assessors are planned on a fixed date to assess drama or music.
- The next group of activities will cover those where a week is identified during which the assessable elements are tested under exam conditions.
- The next group will cover those activities with a small amount of leeway, such as write-ups demanded by SQA portfolios, presentations or practical assessments.
- The next area covers lead ups and hand-in dates in the week before the deadline for important materials
- Finally, prelims are the 5<sup>th</sup> priority

During Term 1, there are not many SQA driven deadlines, but a lot of unit assessment takes place and some internal assessments. During Term 2, AB tests take place in December. Term 3 is very congested with prelims and all the necessary write ups.

Principal Teachers have been asked to provide dates for the calendar, and once these have been mapped on to the calendar, Mr Watson will go back to the PTs to ask what they can trim or give up, as this level of activity is not sustainable for the school. They will be asked to consider what is the assessment for, what format does it need to take, when should it take place?

There will be 612 pupils in the Senior Phase next year, and there are 484 unique combinations of 2 subjects. 80% of pupils will do a unique combination of 2 subjects. We offer too much!! There are too many pathways available to be manageable, but this is all very much in line with the Curriculum for Excellence framework where schools are encouraged to offer more subjects. It is very much the assessment patterns that are causing problems.

#### f) Education and Skills Committee

A questionnaire was distributed in February on the Senior Phase, and an aggregated set of Fife Headteacher responses was shared with the committee.

#### **School successes**

- 132 out of 400 pupils gained an award in Scottish Studies, and pupils are working towards a Scottish Studies Group Award, based on relevant chunks of Scottish material.
- 41 pupils were presented with the Saltire Award
- 49 pupils achieved a Duke of Edinburgh Award
- 42 pupils achieved their First Aid qualification
- 105 first year pupils completed the Heart Start course
- 17 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year pupils were peer tutors
- 51 pupils experienced Mandarin speaking opportunities provided by an S6 pupil, and which will be supported next year by a parent volunteer
- 137 certificates of excellence were awarded in the UK Maths Challenge

A report will go to the Education and Skills Committee identifying the incredibly wide curriculum offering in the school. This will outline pathways for next session

covering 29 Nat 3s, 29 Nat 4s, 34 Nat 5s, 29 Highers and 23 Advanced Highers. There will also be a range of non-SQA qualifications, including 6 foundation apprenticeships. Students in 4<sup>th</sup> year will be able to achieve 8 Nat 5s this session, including Scottish Studies.

This year's leavers had a range of positive destinations - 50% went on to University, 27% went on to college.

The staffing complement will be reduced from 96 to 84 staff for the new session, and the Chair noted that the School staff do an incredible job of delivering such a wide and positive set of outcomes for the pupils.

Mr McClure indicated that there is a Plan B in case budgets are cut again, but that the current position is not sustainable if staff go off sick. The school is getting close to the point where further cuts will have an impact on the attainment and achievement of pupils. For the new session, there are some days where only 1 member of staff is available for cover.

#### g) Funding

Mr McClure highlighted some of the current funding issues within the school:

- Modern Languages need £500 for new text books
- Maths need £500 for new text books
- The Support for Learning department needs Netbooks for pupils, at a cost of £200 each.
- The Former Pupils group have offered £250 to support this.

There are 10 pupils moving up from Primary Schools who currently need and have Netbooks, but these don't transfer with the pupils, so the school needs to provide new ones.

Fife Council is introducing Windows 10 across all schools, and the current software on the Netbooks will not be supported beyond December 2019. This is a Fife-wide issue that means the netbooks will no longer work and will all need a software upgrade. There is some money in the School Fund and some will be available from the carry-forward, but this will not be enough.

The Parent Council agreed to provide funds to purchase 3 Netbooks plus the required Maths and Modern Languages text books.

Cllr Verner highlighted the potential for the school to apply to the St Andrews Welfare Trust or the Fife Education Trust Scheme, which supports educational needs, and encouraged the school to apply.

A parent also suggested that the Parent Council should consider only providing support for core school requirements rather than subsidising extra-curricular activities, given the current financial restrictions.

#### 9. Fundraising group

Peter Wood of the St Andrews Wine Company has offered the opportunity for another wine tasting with 10% of sales going to the school. This could be held in the Rugby Club.

The Parent Council thanked all members of the Fundraising Group for their hard work in organising events.

#### **10.AOB**

- a) The constitution needs to be re-done for the AGM in August, and the Chair will circulate the current constitution.
- b) The school thanked members of the pipe band who performed at the Chariots of Fire race on the West Sands. They played throughout the race, and it was a fantastic effort by all of them.
- c) The St Andrews masterplan was approved at the recent planning meeting. The next step is that a legal agreement now needs to be agreed between the University and Fife Council. This will be discussed at the University Court next week and if agreed, would allow the land deal to be progressed.
- d) The rugby posts provided by Fife Council for Station Park will be installed over the summer - there will be 3 sets of rugby posts and 1 set of dual football/rugby posts.
- e) It has been suggested that the pupils should be asked to come up with a suitable name for the road leading to the school - this will be actioned before the summer holidays.

#### **11.Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at Kilrymont

Meeting closed at 21.00

#### **Attendance List 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

##### ***Parents***

Lynn Christie - Acting Chair and Treasurer  
Jonathan O'Riordan

Marie-Noel Earley  
Irene McMenamin

##### ***Teaching Staff***

David McClure, Rector  
Angela Robertson, Deputy Head Teacher  
Hugh Watson, Deputy Head Teacher

##### ***Local Councillors***

Cllr Linda Holt  
Cllr Tim Brett  
Cllr Ann Verner

##### ***Other Attendees***

Fiona Crook (School Nurse Team Leader)

Jennifer Grant (School Nurse)