

Wallace High School PTN
Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday, 21 January 2015

1 Attendees: Rashid Al-Kindi, Aisha Amba-Ali, Jennifer Bairner, Kathryn Fraser, Jackie Gee Faulkner, Donna Harris (Depute Head Teacher), Helen Hawthorn, Sandra Hayashibara, Gill King, Janet Laverty, Valerie Martin, Rachel Metcalfe, Karen Morrison, Scott Pennock (Head Teacher), Jane Riley, Janet Stott, Colleen Swagar, Kitty Toua (Chair)

2 Apologies: Maureen Firth

3 Matters arising from minutes of previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

4 Discussion on academic year 2016/17 proposed timetable changes

Scott Pennock explained that transport issues were being explored regarding the start date of the proposed timetable changes. There were logistical issues to be resolved as Wallace shared buses with Bannockburn and St Modans. Transport costs to the authority for any change may be very significant. Stirling Council was carrying out a Transport Assessment to agree parameters for start and finish times and once this was completed the Head Teacher Group would meet to agree each School's new timetable. Parents would then be notified. There would be at least a year's notice but a Summer 2016 change was currently expected. School staff were largely untroubled by the proposed changes which would mean only a 10/15 minute change at the beginning and end of each day. As everyone would have a year's notice there would be plenty of time to resolve any childcare issues that might arise.

SP was asked to clarify the purpose for the changes. He explained that it was to maximise efficiency in the system. Teachers were contracted to teach for 22.5 hours per week which divided exactly into 33 teaching sessions of 50 minutes each. The current timetable did not allow for the full usage of these sessions and the timetable changes would enable every 50 minute teaching session to be fully used. This was especially important as the school was facing savings to the equivalent of three members of teaching staff over the next three years. The proposed changes would have a big impact on savings, especially when taken in combination with all the other Stirling and Clackmannan High Schools.

5 Chairperson's Report

Kitty Toua made everyone aware that the PTN was looking for new active members and anyone interested should get in touch. It would be especially useful if parents with children in S1, S2 or S3 would join up as most current members had children in the higher school.

The meeting was presented with a Summary of Fundraising for 2013, 2014 and up to January 2015 and Investments for 2014/2015 and Scott Pennock explained some of the figures. There would be a big spend on lockers as new and bigger ones were required. The School would be investing in technology such as laptops and iPads for pupils to use across the School and new projection equipment for the theatre as the current equipment was getting quite old. The School was also acquiring a big screen for the Social Space which would be used for presenting and disseminating information to pupils and at School events, Parents' Evenings, Awards Ceremonies etc. The idea was to create an even more pleasant and lively environment within the school. With this aim the School was also adding to the new furniture for the social spaces.

SP went on to discuss the proposal to upgrade the School's pitches from 2G to 3G. Negotiations with were in progress with all partners regarding this.

A question was raised about when the School facilities were available for use by the pupils. SP explained that the School had sole use of the facilities between 8.00 am to 6.00 pm after which the facilities were out for let. However, some of the facilities had to be supervised, e.g. the pool, and their use would depend on whether a member of staff was available to supervise. The list of after School clubs was updated each term and could be found on the School website.

6 Treasurer's Report

Jane Riley reported that the PTN raised approximately £200 from the School Christmas Fayre and approximately £400 from the Christmas Concert and had a bank balance of approximately £2200.

7 Communications Report

Sandra Hayashibara drew everyone's attention to the PTN website which could be accessed from the School website as well as directly at www.ptn.wallacehigh.org.uk. There was also a Facebook page and she asked if everyone could like and share information on the page to try to increase the network of parents receiving information. Questions or requests for items to be put on the next PTN meeting agenda could be sent to the PTN via the website or Facebook page.

8 Fundraising Group – Future Events

Jennifer Bairner reported that following the success of the Sponsored Walks in previous years the PTN was aiming to do a bigger fund raising event this year aiming to raise a larger amount of money just for the School rather than sharing with a charity. It was proposed to hold a family ceilidh at the School with a provisional date of Friday, 13 November 2015. She appealed for ideas for how to get families to come along such as all members of the PTN selling a table each and performances by pupils. She also drew attention to the need to find new sponsors events, raffle prizes etc as currently the School was always going to the same contributors. She asked for anyone with ideas, or who had an enthusiasm to help to get in touch.

9 Head Teacher's Report

Scott Pennock reported that the staffing plan for the term had been submitted the previous Friday. He reported that

- The Fashion Show would not be happening this year and would happen every two years.
- Mr Kirkpatrick (Music) was leaving and a full-time replacement was being sought.
- The Gaelic teacher would be going on maternity leave and a replacement teacher would be needed for the next academic year.
- There were vacancies in Home Economics and Design and Technology.
- The School would be seeking probationer teachers in English, Maths and PE.
- There was a National drive for improving employability of children leaving school and to help children with college placements etc and the School was interviewing for three positions in relation to this: two positions for six months and one for a year.
- Mrs Henderson (Head of English) was going on secondment from the end of February until the summer and the position would be filled internally. Parents would be kept informed.

10 Any Other Business

- Scott Pennock was asked if there was anything the School would like the PTN to fundraise for. He suggested there may be a club the parents would like to fund the running of, buy equipment for etc. He also suggested the possibility of purchasing a lectern sponsored by the PTN for events such as Awards Ceremonies.
- Donna Harris reported that the Homework Group had been looking at setting up an online homework calendar for pupils and she would share more details at the next meeting. Parents could visit the www.showmyhomework.co.uk website and app which was already in use in Falkirk, to see how it would look. The aim was to make homework more meaningful, to keep everyone informed, pupils, teachers, parents alike, and to provide support appropriately.
- Donna Harris also reported that the Homework Group was looking at improving the use of Edmodo across the School as its use was currently inconsistent. The School was intending to provide staff training to get the best use from it. Its use was growing each year and it was especially effective when used by pupils for chats about work and homework, providing a learning community of pupils supporting each other. Parents could have access to Edmodo depending on how individual teachers used it.
- Scott Pennock announced that the School was back on Whole School Live Twitter. The aim was to share notable events and pupils' achievements with followers.
- There was a query about making progress reports for children easier to understand and it was agreed that a letter to clarify the information contained in the reports and explain such items as target grades expected would be useful. At present all Schools had to use the same bank of templates but there was a group looking at frameworks to present the information better as they were currently considered too broad. It was not possible to integrate progress reporting with the online Homework system as the School's computer system, SEEMIS, whilst very secure was quite old-fashioned and wouldn't allow this.
- It was suggested that reporting could be more holistic, covering how a child was performing as part of the whole School community, not just academically and subject specifically, and with a section where pupils could comment themselves as in primary school reports.
- It was pointed out that parents could get lots of information about the School curriculum and how it progressed through the years on the School Website www.wallacehigh.org.uk. Information was also presented at the P7 induction meetings and the S1 Introduction evening.
- New lunch cards which could be topped up online were due to be rolled out soon though there was no definite date. They were being piloted at McLaren High School and would be introduced to one School at a time.
- Jackie Gee was welcomed as a new member of the PTN Committee.