

Deans Community High School

Parent Council Meeting Notes

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022

### **Attendees**

Pauline Allison (HT), Mr Small, Gillian Campbell, Sandra Fannon, Laura MacMillan, Caroline Bennett, Heather Marriott

### **Apologies**

Angela Ritchie, Eddie Carson, Patricia Miller, Janice Ritchie, Ann Edwards

### **Agenda**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Review of the minutes from the previous meeting
4. Parental engagement
5. Transition Update – S Small
6. Head teachers' update
7. AOB

#### **1. & 2. Welcome & Apologies**

As above.

#### **3. Minutes from the previous meeting were accepted by all attendees**

#### **4. Parental engagement**

Agreed that we would pick up this topic again at the next meeting when there are more people in attendance.

#### **5. Transition Update**

The curricular transition has been running from August involving the live streaming of various subjects to P7 students in the cluster primaries and over the past few weeks they've had the opportunity to attend swimming sessions in school. The enhanced transition started today with an online session, with in person transition starting next week for a period of 5 weeks. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May the students will work on an 'All About Me' booklet which will give the Heads of House some background information on each of the students that they'll have in their house.

There will also be a house competition towards the end of May which will be made up of a combination of work the students will do at home and in class. In w/c 26<sup>th</sup> May the P7 parents will be invited into the school. We're also working on plans to invite the parents of the current S1 students into the school as they've not had the opportunity to do so due to Covid.

W/C 6<sup>th</sup> June, Mr Small will go to the primary schools on the Monday to provide a timetable and talk about the plan for the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday that they will be in the high school. The plan is to give them as much experience of subjects that haven't had as much exposure to so far, such as sciences and the expressive arts. During that week they'll also have a session with the student council to find out about what they do and how they can get involved.

## **6. Head Teachers' update**

### **Staffing**

Requests have been submitted to the council for probationers in English, Home Economics, Drama, French and Computing. The subjects are chosen by looking at where there are vacancies, departments the school are looking to grow or want to develop further strength in. The council then review the students who have selected West Lothian as their preference and allocate them. It's looking promising that the school will get probationers for all the subjects requested. This is great news particularly for Home Economics as this is always a subject that the school ask for, and having had a probationer this year, it's made a huge difference to the department and the ability to offer more in this subject. This will bring the department to three members of staff.

A temporary replacement for Miss Cabezudo, Spanish teacher, has been appointed. Holly Jones, will be joining the school to cover Miss Cabezudo's year-long sabbatical.

Mrs Allison received confirmation today that the school will receive additional funding for a temporary teacher for 1 year to do some of the Covid recovery work. The management team will review where this resource would be best placed over the coming weeks.

Caroline asked if having the new Spanish teacher, will this ease some of the pressure on the class sizes that has been experienced this year? Mrs Allison advised that part of the issue this year was having only one qualified Spanish teacher, however we now have a better balance as one of the other teachers has now qualified.

### **Pupil Equity Funding**

It was confirmed that the school will receive £133,500 PEF the purpose of which is to support raising the attainment of students from low-income families. That said, we find that the initiatives or actions put in place frequently benefit all students. The biggest spend from PEF is on the counselling service, and the fund has been used this to pay for additional days from the service. The counselling service provides a great health and wellbeing service; supporting both students and staff and provide ideas for PSE programmes based on the difficulties that they see students are experiencing, allowing strategies to be put in place to

address them. Look to invite Dawn Fleming to the next meeting to discuss use of the money.

Caroline supported this and provided feedback from her daughter on the PSE topic of attachment theory which may come from the counselling service, and asked if it was possible to extend the support to include physical health, specifically in relation to alcohol, drugs and smoking. Mrs Allison advised that the PSE programme changes each year based on what the teachers see as issues within groups in the school, and the input from the counselling service. There are other support options and agencies that are available if there's an identified need for a student, and that these topics are covered in PSE.

### **Easter School**

This was well attended with 76 S4 students and 71 S5 students attending at least one session. Feedback was that they were helpful. Caroline asked if the school will be asking for feedback on the sessions, and Mrs Allison confirmed that a request will be sent out.

The SQA Exams have started, with the first for Deans taking place tomorrow (Geography). Students who test positive for Covid this week cannot attend school for the exam, and there are processes in place for this. From next week the guidance changes. The school has guidance from the SQA for any situations that need to be discussed.

### **Covid Guidance**

The school is now mostly following the same guidance as wider society:

- Masks are still available if students and staff want to wear them but no requirement.
- Staff are still asked to retain 1 metre distance.
- The focus of the mitigations is ventilation. Deans is fortunate that it has wide common areas/high ceilings and good ventilation.

### **End of Term Activity Days**

Miss Campbell is starting to plan activities for end of term activity days, looking at different options to suit different preferences and circumstances. More information will be provided to students soon.

## **7. Any other business**

None

### **Next meeting**

**7pm on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May. This will be a hybrid meeting using the school conference room for those able to attend in person and for those attending remotely, they can be dialled in.**

Two key topics for discussion at the next meeting:

- Planning for the P7 & S1 parents visits and promoting of the parent council.

- Mrs Allison will be asking for the councils' feedback on items such as parents evenings, health & wellbeing priorities, ways to bring parents back into the building and suggestions on hybrid ways of working.