

Parent Council Meeting
Minutes : Tuesday 31st January 2017

Present:

Mark Cockburn, Jacqueline Baird, Linda Irvine, Sandra Fannon, Anne Runciman, Pauline Allison

Apologies:

Angela Ritchie

- Minutes of previous meeting agreed

BUSES

- School bus to/fro Seafield appears to be running smoothly - no issues
- No concerns with new bus company
- Bus stops are used outside school grounds as bus company advised turning circle too small. Either side of underpass is used and so far pupils responding well. SMT viewed on various occasions.
- No direct bus service between Deans and Seafield. Various bus companies have been contacted to see if this is something they may pursue. HT advised school would help to coordinate if required.

Horsburgh, Bluebus and Westwood all advised any decision regarding bus routes is made by council.

STUDY CLASSES

- Study classes for 5th year are much improved and more structured.
- HT confirmed during study periods there can be no teaching but supported learning/revision.
- Study periods apply to higher courses
- Next school year 6 periods to be timetabled for Higher rather than current 5. New model being introduced. New model been devised to enhance learning and based on model ideas from visits to other high schools in area.

PARENTS NIGHT/INFORMATION NIGHT

- This was well received by parents and students

CHANGES TO SQA ASSESMENTS

- Recent news report suggests potential alterations. However no final decision yet. Schools and Head Teacher's meeting to discuss and as and when any firm statement released DCHS will do utmost to communicate effectively to parents.

HEAD TEACHERS REPORT

1. • Staffing

Vicky Porteous returned from Acting HT post

Dawn Fleming remaining as part of SMT in a development post

Helen Mark – long term absence

Emma Ward appointed as Business Education teacher, replacing Suzy Muirhead.

2. Continuing to review and evaluate the new curriculum model. Changes for next session resulting from this include:

In BGE, all S3 students will have some degree of modern languages (as per CfE entitlement)

In senior phase model, Higher courses will have 6 periods

3. News

- Christmas concerts a huge success
- School achieve second Gold Sports in School Award from Sport Scotland

Changes to SQA assessment

OTHER BUSINESS

- Q) Last year the change of timetable was earlier than previous years. How effective was the pilot and are there plans to revert back or stay this year coming

A) No decision as yet. Will be advised in due course

Q) Prelims in some subjects are purchased in by schools. With few examples of past papers etc then likely that many schools purchase same Prelim. With timetabling for prelims so varied throughout West Lothian could it be considered bringing prelims into line with other schools in area and them the same. This stops students having the potential of prior knowledge of content.

A) No. All schools in area decide best dates for themselves.

Students do not do their own learning any good if "cheat" or go into exam with prior knowledge.

No appeals in Scottish Education.

Prelims are an indicator of students' progress and areas to work on for exams in May.

Therefore students will only disadvantage themselves. Deans High would encourage students to seek help if needed in an area.

Q) Externally marked assessment/assignments/folio work.

There is confusion between students as to how exactly these impact on final grades. For example, 20% of final grade. This question has been raised tonight by several students themselves and they would like clear information. "Add on " assignment score - to some students is indicating their grade increases regardless. However these pieces have potential to increase or decrease final grade.

A) HT confirmed can effect grade either way and will ensure staff explain marking to students.

Q) On the occasions of separation for boys/girls in PE in particular swimming- does this increase participation?

A) HT to consult with PE dept. PE dept work closely with students and listen to students wishes. However will need to ensure any gender split for participation is inclusive to all needs including LGBT. LGBT liaison officer has good relationship with students and will be asked to meet to discuss. Other issues such as non-gender specific toilets being looked into by DCHS.

Q) S6 last day. Neither Deans High or West Lothian council will tolerate what was in past "traditional muck up day", eg eggs thrown. However is there a way forward that this can be enjoyable for school leavers without disruption to rest of school or community users?

A) HT and staff want this day to run as smoothly as possible. Classes are ongoing for existing pupils and school is used by community. HT reiterated will not under any circumstances tolerate "muck up" however has advised she has met with representatives of present S6 and asked for sensible ideas that may be considered. Once received back from S6 will look at and consider.

Q) Parents evenings appear to go much more to time when list outside class and names called in order. Although improving some subjects still ran way way over impacting on other appointments

A) HT aware and acknowledged there had been unforeseen circumstances however overall running smoothly and online booking used well.

Q) How does child catch up with missed class work after period of absence?

A) Students should be encouraged to ask class teacher.

Q) Are Heads of Houses emails available if parents wish to contact?

A) Yes. School website address and mark for attention of Head of House.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

28th March 2017