Westhill Academy Parent Forum

11th October 2017

**Present:** Alastair Cozens (Chairperson), Carol Dalmon (Secretary), Mrs Alison Reid (Headteacher), Jason Fitzgerald (DHT), Sarah Colville (DHT), Peadar McCabe (Vice-Chairperson), Debbie Dalgarno (Treasurer), Emma Huntington, Karen Hodges, Cllr Ron McKail, Ganesan Palanivelu, Denise Kazmierczak, Cllr Iris Walker, Morag Stewart, Nikki Scott-Kiddie, Graeme Pond, Jane Tait, Gordon Tait, Chris Gibson, Jackie Poppleton, Diane Hendry, Caroline Lees, Paul Hastings, Heather Brock, Rachel Thomson, Diane Murray, Mary Arkless, Joanne Bennett, Ruth MacDonald, Mrs A Renner – Dafinon, Alison Reid, Kate Holmes

**Apologies:** Neil Jackson, Lesley Kay, Jenny Adie, Alistair McKelvie, Yvonne Rennie, Karen Gammie, Kirsteen Knight

**Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

Minutes were Proposed by Tim and Seconded by Morag

**Duke of Edinburgh Scheme: Paul Hastings**

Paul gave an overview of the scheme and provided some data on the number of successes at Bronze, Silver and Gold in the last 7 years.

**Head Teacher Report**

* Some students had recently taken part in a pupil participation forum led by the Authority
* There had been 2 recent Developing Young Workforce events, one run by Anderson, Anderson, Bain who were looking for students successful at Higher Accounts and they had accepted 3 students from S6 into their mentoring scheme. Another 4 S6 girls had attended a future asset conference which encouraged women’s interests in top finance positions
* There had been recent sporting success by an S6 student in swimming and also team successes at a South Aberdeenshire multi-sports event
* Mrs Reid was pleased that there were some new extra-curricular activities including music/sport/chess/Rock Challenge and a Charities Club which had been well attended
* 82% of S2 parents had attended the recent Parents Night
* The S4 Parents Night would be happening in November along with some extra evenings to cover the changes in the National exams; this would be communicated to parents in advance of the events.
* The recent pupil council meeting had been well attended with the subjects of the school building and toilets being discussed. It was confirmed that the toilets would receive some funding to improve their condition commencing with a deep clean and painting for the top floor in the October holidays.
* Some work in relation to the recently changed guidance groups was ongoing and it was anticipated that this would include a house system with some inter-house competitions and possibly pupil leaders/House captains
* Staffing – there are still currently vacancies in Maths (with Mrs Thompson covering indefinitely due to shortages in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire) and Humanities and Guidance (due to maternity leave)

**Consultation on uniform**

* There was some discussion on the method of consultation, audience, fairness and time permitted to respond following comments and concerns received by the Parent Council and the school
* Mrs Reid addressed the concerns and confirmed that the method/timescale and wording had been approved by the Head of services before the consultation document had been issued to all parties.
* It was confirmed that those who wished to receive a letter rather than email had done so
* Consideration had been given to the audience asked to respond
* All groups – staff, pupils and Parents/Carers had received equal weightings in the vote
* 753 pupils were consulted, 707 responded and the vote was 60%for uniform/40% against
* 671 parents and carers were consulted (with one vote per family), 467 responded and the vote was 86% for uniform/14% against
* 140 staff were consulted, 112 responded with 73% voting in favour of uniform and 27% against
* Further consultation would take place in relation to the choice of uniform and timeline for implementation but it was hoped this would be around the start of session 2018/19
* A quality impact assessment had been carried out. It was felt that the introduction of a uniform would improve inequalities. A clothing grant would be available for those who required it

**Treasurer’s Report**

* The bank account stands at £1,864.12. Funding for the new school football kits had been received from the Garioch partnership and passed on to the supplier. Debbie said that she was still waiting to see if we would receive any Aberdeenshire Council funding for the year (possibly around £400 in mid-November).

**Communication Group**

* The number of likes has increased to 746.
* Nikki had forwarded some comments received in relation to road safety on the Old Skene Road. Cllr Iris Walker confirmed that funding had been approved for the new crossing and that they were just waiting for the date to start. Cllr Ron McKail thought the likely location of the crossing would be near to Crombie Acres

**Special Topic – S1 – 6 Roadmap**

The group split into sub-groups and discussed the possible information which could be provided and in what format to parents for each of the year groups. Sarah Colville also provided copies of S1-S3 Broad General Education guidelines for review, which were met with very positive comments.

Given the short time available to discuss it was decided that a small sub-committee of parents and staff would meet to work on the roadmap and report back to the Parent Forum at a future meeting

**Action: Sub-Group consisting of Staff and parents to meet to discuss in more detail the format and information to be contained in the S1 – S6 road map**

**Fundraising**

This topic was deferred to the next meeting

**AOB**

The topic of replacement of school windows was raised. Mrs Reid confirmed that she had been advised that this was planned for completion by the end of the financial year. The job itself was bigger than originally anticipated and could cause more disruption that first thought.

There was a short discussion on lateness and possible sanctions although there were currently no details provided. Mrs Reid confirmed that sometimes the buses which took some students to school in the mornings could be late. This was being monitored but didn’t occur daily and would be addressed if considered an issue.

**Date of next meeting:**

There was a short discussion on the best evening for meetings and it was decided to rotate between Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings

The date of the next meeting is 23rd November, at 7 pm in the staff room