

Dingwall Academy Parent Council

Minutes 22nd April'24

Present:

Sam Blyth

Karen Cormack

Karen O'Hanlon

John Tompkins

Nicola Wojtunik

John MacDonald

1. Apologies: Gill Macpherson, Paul Macpherson, Susan Crookes, Cllr Graham Mackenzie, Cllr Angela Maclean
2. Minutes from previous meeting approved by Sam and seconded by Nicola
3. Matters arising:
 - Absence of councilors noted. ACTION: **Sam**
 - Vulnerable youngsters access to school during unplanned closures. ACTION: **Karen C to ask Headteachers Groups**
4. Headteacher's Report
 - SQA exams underway, with study leave and employability programme both running. Ms Hiorns has worked exceptionally hard to pull the programme together without DYW postholder in place.
 - Last Friday, was current S6 final day
 - Work on Standards & Quality Report and School Improvement Plan is underway
 - Employability and future workforce are key priorities for HC. Since last met, positive destination data published for Scotland and Dingwall Academy is above the national average. Five areas of focus including Green Free Port, care sector and tourism. Ask for PC funds towards employability on hold until plans from HC more developed ACTION: **Karen C and Karen OH**
 - Successfully parent info session on vaping. Opportunity to work with speakers going forward and Mears have offered to pilot 2 vape detection sensors
 - House Captains survey/focus groups and pupil voice have highlighted issues around vaping – not just about health but safety. Other issues include the quality of teaching and learning, inconsistency in feedback to pupils from teachers and the quality of the school canteen. ACTION: **Karen OH and Karen C - small group of parents to meet with the canteen staff**
 - This terms also busy with P7 visits and new timetable starts w/b 3rd June
5. Treasurer's Report – Cheque Account balance £5,963 and savings £79.66.
6. Chair's Report
 - Info session for parents on vaping– disappointing turnout but a great session, really enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and relatable speakers and offer of resources for youngsters. Potential to run future sessions for parents on other topics if enough interest
 - Making good progress with sensory garden – phase 1 activity discussed and agreed with Mears. Large Planter donated by WoodblocX, trees re-located, funding from Simpsons (£150) and applications made to Dobbies (£500), Westland Horticulture and Mushroom Trust (£500). Will continue to seek donations from local businesses and once timeline agreed with Mears will be looking for volunteers, including OAPs at Work, Dingwall in Bloom and parents. Potential to offer volunteering opportunities to youngsters w/b the 27th May as part of wider achievement week. ACTION: **Karen C and Karen OH.**
 - Sam asked if school intends to utilize and take-on the Marie Currie Garden. Karen C confirmed yes. ACTION: **Sam and Karen C – Community Council support/assistance**
7. AOB
 - Sam – community council is seeking projects that will celebrate the anniversary of Dingwall becoming a Royal Burgh. Karen C suggested that a group of S3 prefects (who will be in S6 in 2026) meet with the CC. ACTION: **Karen C and Sam**
 - Three football teams through to the North of Scotland finals, and 2 victories so far. Suggestion that Parent Council acknowledge this achievement and write to staff. ACTION: **Karen OH to write and Karen OH and Gill to follow-up**
 - Changes to Education in HC with departure of Chief Education officer – details unclear at this stage

- As the mid area Autism provision, Dingwall Academy receives some additional funding and resources. However, it is becoming increasingly challenging, particularly given the constraints of the school environment. This can then impact on the wider school. **ACTION: Karen C and Karen OH to discuss offline.** John M is happy to be involved.

8. Date of next meeting – **Wed 28th August 2024** – in person for AGM and regular meeting

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