

Dingwall Academy Parent Council 28th april 2014

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1 Apologies – Cllr Graham Mackenzie; Cllr alastair Mackinnon, Linda Watson; Mike Evans

Present – Helen Cameron, Karen Cormack, Cllr Angela MacLean, Stephen Mackenzie, Nigel Greenwood, Lindsay Ramsay, Anita Munro, Samantha Blyth, Alan Radin, Sandra Rea, Laura Ross, Dawn Morgan, Carol Seaton, Alison MacLeod.

2. Minutes of 17 March 2014 – To add apologies for Mike Ross. To correct AOCB Item 3 to have mention of staffing instead of school roll.

Then approved by Sandra Rea and Seconded by Laura Ross. Seconded

3. Matters arising

4. Partnering Evening Feedback

A very successful evening took place. 160 invites to potential partners and employers were sent out, with 10 attending on the night. There were some enthusiastic responses to general questions, and hopefully the school can build up some more partnerships.

We are to follow up with requests for parent involvement to mentor and help discuss work situations. In addition, Citizens Advice Service are to be asked to help with delivering financial discipline mentoring to pupils.

Thanks to Sam and Helen for their hard work in organising.

KC

5. Staffing cover

We are awaiting supporting statistics before we contact Education Dept. It was felt that there is rising concern amongst parents, and the school will need to address how it communicates the issue with parents.

KC considered that the last few weeks were a real choke point, with needs of CfE cover for exams and practicals added to staff sickness, and SQA exam preparation all happening together.

Where there are now needs for large study groups, the Senior Social area is being used which is more suited than canteen area to study. Some help will be needed to support pupils in how they do self study.

It was considered essential to ask Hugh Fraser/Bill Alexander to a Parent council meeting to discuss this.

KC

6. SEEMiS.

There will be staff training in June to a small number of staff, whom will then cascade the information to other staff. There is still uncertainty as to which software system to use for Monitoring and Tracking, but decisions are expected to be made to allow whichever system to be in place in time for next term.

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7. Parental Questionnaire

The last parental questionnaire had a return of around 10%. It was decided to try sending the next one out with report cards (starting with S1) to see if we could get a better response.

The issue of timekeeping at Parents Nights was discussed, but no conclusion as to which method is best was made. In addition, consideration may need to be given to confidentiality at these nights, where it is easy to overhear discussions about other pupils by parents. More thought will be needed on this item.

ALL

8. Fujitsu.

The Fujitsu contract has been extended, with price being lowered and more flexibility offered. All ECS users will be more adequately consulted on their needs before the whole contract is renewed.

Karen reported that the meetings scheduled had not all taken place,

KC

but that there was ongoing discussion on use of wireless and external devices. This was being developed over the Portree, Millburn and Dingwall Academy sites.

It was felt that we need to make certain that users are included in discussions on the new tendering process, as many of the current problems could have been avoided had targeted consultation taken place prior to award of the contract.

9. I-pads

This was deferred until Fujitsu situation was resolved.

10. Canteen

The new designated area for packed lunches has been set up, and so far has been successful, with the area much more tidy and less issues with conflict with canteen staff. This will continue to be monitored. KC

11. Finance

1. No changes to the bank other than interest. There is £1419 in the cheque account and £1177 in the deposit account. There will be some drawdown to pay for the Partnering Evening expenses.
2. The Drama Group requested funds to buy theatre rights, scripts and sets for upcoming performances. It was agreed to support to full value of £300.

12. AOCB

1. Sports Day. Once again we shall be selling drinks/sweets at sports day. Volunteers will be required to assist.
2. Rock Challenge need some help with governance for fundraising. KC will establish what is required and revert to Parent Council if we are needed to help. KC
3. Mini Bus driving test. Any volunteers please give their names to Helen/Stephen HC/SM
4. SQA review of qualifications. This will need a few parents to assist in looking at this. Karen will keep Parent Council informed and ask for help as needed. KC
5. Non Academic / Sporting Awards. There is consideration being given to reward citizenship and general inclusion. This may be looked at as part of Saltire awards, but there is scope to award on an ad-hoc basis too. KC

13. DONM.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 16th June, 7pm in the School.