



Strathaven Academy
Parent Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 19th September 2023

Attendance: Jack Campbell (Chair), Jo Tunney (Vice Chair), Cheryl McMorris (Secretary), Elise Frame (councillor), Waheeda Huq (Head Teacher), Kirstin Kinniburgh, Carlyne Mitchell, Gillian Baker, Lyndsay Rae, Mrs Leck (Teacher), Mr Brown (Head of Faculty for Science), Paula Hamilton (Principal/Teacher/Acting Depute Head Teacher), Iain Fleming (Depute Head Teacher), Catriona Webber, Aqsaa Khan, Christine Hall, Amanda Minns, Julie Le blanc Smith, Becky Howie, Catherine Cain.

Virtual: Emma Hall, Yvonne Vance, Giovanna McKenna

Apologies: Melanie White, Elaine Richardson, Ray Maclean, Adele Brennan.

1. **Minutes of Meeting 6th June 2023** – Agreed
2. **Matters arising not covered as agenda items** – Nil of note
3. **Mentoring – 2023/4 Programme**

The mentoring programme has been expanded with the development of S6 mentors as curricular and social mentors. Training has been provided to the S6 mentors including around disclosure.

“Business” mentoring by parent/carer volunteers will be restarting and this year and will include selected pupils from 4th year. Pupils will be identified for the mentoring support through pupil support and pupils or parents can refer for this also. Any requirement for additional volunteers will be determined dependent on how many pupils sign up for the mentoring.

A suggestion was made for people from the community to attend the school to do talks around their careers and career developments, particularly those who had not followed traditional routes – examples of this already occurring were discussed as well as events such as the career session that was held earlier in the year.

Cllr Frame kindly offered to come in and talk to the pupils about her career progression.

4. **Vaping** – Cllr Frame raised this at the recent education committee (education committee to be involved in the motion). They are looking at development of posters and dissemination of information from education. Cllr Frame expressed her disappointment that these were not out already. It was acknowledged that leadership from the Scottish Government was needed to push the motion through for the ban on disposable vapes. Cllr Frame stated

that they were looking at social media “harm of vapes” and she reassured the meeting that she continues to push this agenda forward. The Council has been alerted about shops in Strathaven selling vapes to pupils and one shop that has allegedly been selling “poppers”.

A query was raised about the school toilets and vapes. It was stated that teachers / staff continue to check toilets regularly; if pupils are caught vaping, their vapes are confiscated & a telephone call is made to parents. There was discussion around provision of support and education for pupils about the harms of vaping and how to quit, which is continuing throughout the school, as well as deterrent measures for those caught.

5. Traffic Management – Cllr Frame has raised the issue of traffic management around access and egress to the school with SLC Transport. It was acknowledged that there were no funds available to take forward any of the suggestions for improvement of the current road layout. Cllr Frame had a meeting with S McGovern from the Police and there will be more police presence in the area at morning and afternoon start and finish times. Any issues will be documented through a report which Cllr Frame will take back to the council. The senior leadership team is establishing methods of collecting data of incidents and problems, to provide evidence for improvement.

6. Sandford School Bus – Update was received from Lyndsay Rae. An expression of interest form, on behalf of students currently not eligible for free school transport, is being processed. If the support of Sandford Community Ethos Group (SCEG) can be gained, a grant application will be submitted at the end of October with an outcome expected in November. The funds being sought would be paid directly to the current bus company to fund a larger bus being provided which could accommodate the non-eligible students. Cllr Frame has sent a letter of support. The Sandford group is continuing to look at alternatives if the grant is not successful.

7. Communications – Mr Fleming

Parents portal – there have been some initial technical issues for some parent/carers trying to gain access to this. The School App will remain in use until Parents Portal is fully accessible for all.

There have been some issues with Google Classroom and Satchel One not communicating with each other in Scotland. Strathaven Academy has received the go ahead from the Scottish Government to pilot integration between Satchel One and Google Classroom.

Concern was raised about the language that is used in correspondence from South Lanarkshire Council, with parent / carers; the level of formality and the assumption of level of learning and understanding. This will be raised with SLC.

8. SIP – Parent/carer Partnerships:

- i Consultation with Parent/carers. It has been agreed that at the next parent evenings, parent / carers will have the opportunity to book a time slot to speak to someone from parent council in order to gain a

knowledge of parent council, how they can be involved or to raise concerns around the school or processes. This will be a trial for this year's parent's evenings.

Parent's evenings will be face-to-face for all years. The booking system to be used will be the system from the online sessions. Concern was raised about the availability of slots and consideration given to the time slots and ability to book with all teachers. It was suggested that feedback could be given to parents who were not able to get appointments and a suggestion that the school looks to see if there are examples of models that work in other schools that we could follow.

- ii Lunchtime Clubs are being established again as part of a initiative to increase the use of school lunch provision and pack lunches.
- iii Wellbeing Provision – The senior leadership team and the parent council are looking to establish a sub-group that will compare the experiences of users and providers of student support in relation to wellbeing. Expressions of interest will be sought as this is developed.

11. AOCB

Cllr Frame thanked parent council for allowing her to donate a prize for school awards and prize giving and for their support.

There being no further business, Jack thanked all who had attended and closed the meeting.

Dates of next meetings:

Tuesday 28th November 2023 @ 7pm

Tuesday 30th January 2024 @ 7pm

Tuesday 19th March 2024 @ 7pm

Tuesday 4th June 2024 @ 7pm

Virtual links will be circulated with the agenda.