

Kyle Academy Parent Council

Parent Council Meeting – Tuesday 29 October 2024

Present: M Byrne (HT), M Dorward (S6), E Edwards, A Fairie (S1), C Frame, M Ford (S5), L Gardner (DHT), C Heslop (S2/S5), A Ingram, C McClung (S3), K McHarg (S4), L Morrison (S5), S Robertson (S6), M Thomas-Cusick (S1/S4), N Stafford (S5), A Wilson (S4)

Chair: M Thomas

1. Minutes of last Parent Council meeting

Minutes proposed and seconded.

2. Head Teacher's Report – M Byrne

MB provided a report on recent events. See attached.

3. Report from School Captains

School Captains (AI and EE) gave an update on their fundraising plans for Children in Need and their recent Goatfell climb which has raised nearly £3000 already.

House Captain (CF) gave an update on the Buddy Breakfasts for S1 which were held in October.

4. Changes to the way the school gathers evidence for SQA (Prelims)

Mr Gardner, SQA Coordinator, outlined planned changes to SP assessment diet (traditionally known as prelims). This follows consultation with pupils and staff. These assessments will now take place over a longer period of time (November through to March) and in class time for the most part. Key aspects of the model are that assessments are done when pupils are ready and over time.

The reasons for this were outlined:

- Model is stretched out over time. This allows more time for consolidation of learning.
- Data for SQA estimates gathered from traditional assessment diet not as strong as it should be.
- Chunked assessments provide more time for pupils to prepare.
- Data shows that attendance dips around the assessment periods so time for L&T is wasted.
- There will still be the opportunity to have the hall experience for some assessments.

The calendar for this year was shared and discussed.

A few concerns were noted:

- Pupils not getting the opportunity to sit the whole exam in the same conditions as the final exam to support their preparation.
- Pupils not getting the experience of sitting high pressure exams in a short period of time.
- How will results of assessments be communicated to parents if they are ongoing and not aligned with school reporting periods?
- How will we ensure the course assignments fit into the calendar? LG stated that these have been built into the calendar.

Positives noted:

- More inclusive for middle attainers if assessments are chunked and spread out.

- Less pressure for young people.

ACTIONS

- School to monitor the impact of the new approach throughout the session and afterwards and share with parents to ensure all changes lead to improved outcomes for our young people.
- Ways to communicate results of assessments with parents to be considered.

5. Communication - Survey of Parents

MB shared feedback from the survey about home-school communication. There were 141 responses.

- Email is the preferred form of communication with the info in the main body of the email
- Most found opening attachments easy
- There is a need to promote the Expressions app and the info on the school website
- Twitter is only followed by 22% of respondents with the majority preferring Facebook.

ACTIONS

- Standardised email style to be introduced so that there is a consistent method of sharing info and accessing attachments
- Info to be shared with parents about Expressions app to promote better use
- Facebook to be explored as a more popular way to update parents on the life of the school instead of Twitter
- MB to feedback to parent body about results of the survey.

6. Feedback from the SAC Parent Council Convenors Meeting – K McHarg

- Facilities management – new menus on the website (link on the school website); any dietary requirements email SAC for plan.
- Gillian Carroll provided Children’s Services Planning Partnership update (partnership includes education, health, NHS, police and Thriving Communities).
- Sarah Pye (Quality Improvement) provided an update on the Early Years consultation which is seeking parent/carer views.
- Lyndsay McRoberts (Director of Education) shared info about the following:
 - Possible new ASN base at Troon Primary
 - Attendance campaign has seen a 1% rise in attendance which is positive
 - New South Ayrshire Youth Council has been elected with reps from every secondary school and reps for primary and post 16. They will remain on the council for 2 years.
 - Mothballing policy is being updated. It proposes that school with very small rolls are temporarily closed.

7. AOCB

Hoodies – these were introduced in October and have proved popular. Pupils look smart and cosy.

Supported Study – the school advised that attendance at the calendar of sessions last year was very low. We are currently looking at ways to rebrand and target gradebooster sessions for those who need it most.

Partnership with Tesco – blue tokens can be collected for our Fuel Up Zone that will provide snacks before and after school.

Sports Buses – there has been a positive response from parents and we have raised a few hundred pounds. MB to send thank you emails.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 26 November 2024 – topic for discussion changes to S3/4 curriculum – parents to be notified in advance and views sought.