

Gairloch High School Parent Council Meeting
Tuesday 28st January 2020 7 pm

Minutes

Present: Wim Chalmet, Julie Brady, Fiona McKenzie, Deborah Leigh, Emma Smith, Amy Gudgeon, Debbie Dillon, Adrian, Vanessa, McKenzie, Ashley Quinn, Ian?

1 Review of previous minutes

Fiona approved the minutes from the last meeting

2 Matters arising from previous meeting

Many will be raised during the meeting

3 Pupil Report

Amy – School Dance was organised by S6 last year along with Mr Caddell and Mrs Hildrey. It was a very successful evening. A big thank you to all the staff and Fiona in particular for helping and supporting the event. It was felt that there was great team working put in by S6 for the organisation and it is hoped that the opportunity can be handed on to the next S6.

Prelims – majority are now over. Some virtual courses ongoing. The process seemed to go smoothly and the digital timetable seemed to work. The Drama room was also a quiet venue. SMART Schools Council – hoping to get this started soon. There was a trial run with S2 at the end of the year on how the school could be enhanced. There was a proposal for a leadership role for S2. There will be more on that soon.

S3 – 10 pupils from S1-3 are part of Young Leaders for Scotland. Training day was held in Dingwall. Gairloch is working closely with Ullapool. First schools in the Highlands to introduce this scheme and first opportunity for pupils to have a say and impact the school in a positive way. On the training day there was focus on good leadership skills and also how to give constructive feedback. How to take forward good ideas that could impact the school, whether pupils feel safe at school and if they do not, what to do about it. Empowerment of youngsters, parents and school and how to move the school forward.

4 Head Teacher's Report

A big thank you extended for the Christmas Fayre. A big thank you to Julie Brady particularly too for her support in Hospitality. All pupils are on track to achieve a qualification. Support from the Parent Council is very much appreciated at this time with the over staffing issue.

2 x 9 seater mini buses are still outstanding. A temporary van has been made available for the time being.

Safer schools app – good opportunity for any member of the community to use. Feedback would be welcome. It is free and information on appropriate settings is on there.

Curriculum Design – research undertaken to look at what works in other schools and what is out there. Visitors have been in from Education Scotland. We have a very proactive staff open to looking at options with an open mind. A meeting was held with Nicky Grant and Don Esson with Wim, Vanessa, Angela and Ian.

S1-3 Curriculum Structure with languages (currently draft) – Scottish Government set requirements for what must be there. Art will remain on the timetable, however, instead of

having this as a 0.6 FTE this can be done as 0.5 FTE. Miss Velt will be leaving the school (1 full time equivalent). The weakness currently will be Modern Studies. The column will be Modern Studies/History taught in a similar way to General Science. PE in S3 will also include opportunities for leadership.

Senior Phase Structure – Some losses of roll are due to the fact that the school can not offer them anything. Applies to pupils who are in the lower brackets of achievement. An open senior phase structure is proposed. A total of 18 courses can be taken between S4 and S6. Slightly shorter teaching time but opens up more choices. This suits a small school structure such as us. It is hoped that an open choice can be delivered. German is currently not on the curriculum, however, there is thought going into how this can be delivered in some form. Toying with the idea of Outdoor Learning which used to be one of our Flagships. We have the foundations still and it could be done boldly and differently. Thinking about a number of Outdoor Options. Some would have credit at the end of the course. Potentially run a Friday once a month to do this. Clever timetabling would be needed.

PHSE – a parent was interested in course content. This information has not been shared due to all the other curricular discussions ongoing. Proposal to provide links on the website for topics for detail with a text/email to advise when sensitive subject areas are to be covered.

5 Staffing Update

Included above

There is no base line for the formulae in play for the Highlands. If we lose 20 more pupils we are trying for a base line to be set as a minimum number of staff to actually be able to operate the school. Need to continue to encourage interested parties to make contact as requested in the Yellow Pages.

6 Fundraising

a. Christmas Fayre Update

Very successful Christmas Fayre raising £***. More support needed to run the event. We will try a timetable approach for say an hour or so at a time. Stuart managed to pull the music together on the night. Stall holder feedback was very positive. Thank you to the Gairloch Estate for the venison.

b. School Fund Plan

Stuart Caddell working on this and will present at a later date.

c. Bring and Buy Sale – 7 March 2020 10 am – 2 pm

i. Whole school fund raising

ii. Parent Council – Teas/Coffees/Homebaking

10 am -2 pm Fiona willing to help but will need parent support as she is the only PC member currently available to help.

iii. Parent Helpers – Stuart.Caddell@Gairlochhigh.org.uk

7 School Event Funding

This was discussed in detail and the general feel was that this was not the normal model for attendance at sport or piping events. Vanessa will draft a response to indicate that we do not think this is a good use of school funds.

Every year 3rd years are put through the Certificate of First Aid Course (22 pupils this year). Costs around £500 and Emma Smith would like to ask the Parent Council for some funding towards this. The Parent Council were asked for a contribution of £250 towards this. The Parent Council were in agreement that we would support this.

8 Contributing towards and enhancement of our children's school experience

Hospitality – making hospitality better. Appeal for money to buy equipment for the hospitality suite. Gairloch Estate contributed the whole amount and a former pupil also matched the whole amount. In addition we had a number of others so we have had a fantastic response and been able to buy the entire amount of equipment needed and may even have enough to cover all the ingredients for the year. Farm & Garden provided the equipment at cost price.

Courtyard – if you can make it Friday for an hour or so to do a bit of gardening in the Courtyard. Free teas, coffees and cookies. Back up date 21 February 2020.

Lottery application was unsuccessful.

Tesco funding for Outdoor Learning and School Garden – application worthwhile

9 Any Other Business

None

10 Date of next meeting – 21 April 2020