

St Margaret's Academy Parent Council Meeting

29th March 2021

Parents Present	St Margaret's Staff	Apologies
Lisa Loran (Chair) Caroline Wilson Mark Cooper Denise Lawson D Hook Roz McCracken	Siobhan McGarty (HT) Isla Wright (DHT) Julie Renfrew (DHT, Acting) Anne Crookston (DHT, Acting)	Martin Dobie (Church Rep) Tina Melville (DHT)

1. Opening Prayer
2. Welcome led by Mrs Loran who outlined the format for the evening.
3. Matters arising – Previous queries addressed
4. Mrs McGarty presented the HT report:
 - A staffing update was shared which included the news that Miss Nisbet has been successful in being appointed as PTC Social Subjects. Two posts have also been appointed- Acting PT Raising Attainment with a focus on data analysis and improvement projects- Mr Fagan and Mr Dudley. We have also appointed a DHT for Cluster Numeracy – Mr Valentine and we will be engaging in a joint venture with West Calder Cluster to develop Numeracy pedagogy and attainment.
 - Learning & Teaching- Since January, we have experienced two further phases of return, the first being for our senior phase pupils to undertake practical work. This was very successful as we managed to support a significant number of students and range of subjects to undertake vital practical aspects of coursework. In the most recent phase, all students returned during the course of a week. This was limited by the 2m rule in place in classroom settings but ensured that all young people experienced in-school learning and reconnected with their peers. This most recent phase was challenging as a number of groups of young people have been supported in school as well as those at home undertaking remote learning. Parents welcomed their children attending school even for 1 day per week in the BGE as it helped with social reconnections.
 - In February and March, staff and parents engaged with 2 Parents Evenings – supporting second and third year pupils. The full senior phase reports were also issued. Parent

feedback was positive with parents appreciating the personal nature of the reports, knowledge of their child with helpful areas for development. This had led to useful conversations with their child. There was discussion about the usefulness of the interim report for SP earlier in the session. A review of reporting will take place in the summer term with feedback from parents, staff and pupils informing planning for next session.

- A Reconnecting plan is underway which will focus on supporting pupils from late March until the end of term in June and preparing for return in August. The aim of the plan was shared which focuses on students being able to step forward with their learning in a positive and engaged manner to build on where they are with their learning and how they have managed with their well-being. Details of the plan were discussed with the full plan to be shared with the group and for feedback. Parents welcomed the innovative approach that the school is taking to moving forward.

5. Senior Phase Update

Mrs Wright provided an update on progress with preparing SP pupils for holistic assessments next term. She explained the SQA process and how the assessment calendar will work. The school will work closely with other schools in the local authority on moderation of assessments. A parent queried how to sign up for E-Sgoil- requires the SCN candidate number which Mrs Wright can provide. Another query was answered about additional arrangements for assessment which Mrs Crookston will oversee being put in place.

6. St Margaret's Skills Academy

An exciting new initiative supported by WLC funding is being developed within the school and Mrs Crookston provided an overview of plans. The Skills Academy will support a number of young people in S3 and S4 to enable them to access a wider curriculum and provide flexible pathways leading to employment and further education. The vision for the programme is based on principles to ensure equal access to quality education and life experiences. The initiative was warmly welcomed by parents who are keen to follow its development and implementation.

7. Student teachers and P7 Transition

Mrs Melville was not in attendance so Mrs McGarty provided an update. The school has managed to support a number of student teachers during this challenging time and will continue to welcome a group after Easter hopefully on a face to face basis.

Mrs Melville is working with a partner school to develop the transition programme for current P7 pupils which hopefully will involve them visiting the school (within guidelines). The full programme will be shared once it is ready but Mrs Melville and staff in English/Maths are working with cluster schools to prepare for next term.

8. S3 Transition into Senior Phase

Mrs Renfrew discussed a new initiative being developed for current S3 students to help them prepare fully for their transition to the senior phase of learning in May. A new Scottish Studies award will be created which the pupils will undertake across learning leading to an SCQF qualification at levels 4 and 5. They will continue with the award in S4 to achieve the full certificate. The aim is to support the pupils in understanding their move from a broad general education into the senior phase of their learning where they move into a qualification model and level of experience. The aim of the project is also to build pupil engagement with their learning, support reconnecting through peer interaction and team building. This received a positive response from parents who welcomed the wider qualification opportunity and sense of purpose for students at this stage.

9. AOB

Mrs Loran suggested that the next Parent Council meeting date move from the 31st May (inset day) to the following Monday (7th June). All agreed and this will be the date of the next meeting.

Thanks and closing prayer

Date of next meeting: **Monday 7th June 2021**