

Minutes of St Joseph's College Parent Council meeting held on Wednesday 16th March 2022 at 1900 virtually by Zoom

Present

Mel McGill (Chair), Claire Renton (Vice Chair), Bernadette Jones (Headteacher), Kenny Pullen, Rebecca Topping, Avril Dunlop, Lynn Mitra, Thalakunte Muniraju, Linda Nosratzadeh, Lynn Mitra, Keith Walters, Gail Stewart, Monjida Eldosh, Abdulrahman Jubhaji.

Apologies

Amanda Brown, Kirsty Little.

Welcome & Housekeeping

M McGill welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking them for attending. In terms of housekeeping, please keep microphones off unless speaking. As Amanda (Clerk) is not able to attend, the meeting will be recorded for writing up minutes and then deleted from computers and storage cloud.

Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Headteacher's Report

Easter School

B Jones reported that Easter school is planned for senior pupils who wish to study in school. Extra Scottish Government funding will be used to target lower SIMD, Vulnerable and Care experienced children.

Easter School is offered by teachers who volunteer their time in the holidays so not all subjects are available for extra study sessions. However, many teachers also offer after school sessions throughout the year.

Details of SQA revision packages have been given to pupils and can also be accessed on the SQA website.

SQA revision information for each subject: <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/100366.html>

There are many other sources of exam revision, some are listed here:

- E-Sgoil: <https://e-sgoil.com/study-support/>

You must register to attend these sessions and they fill up quickly so sign up asap.

- BBC Bitesize: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/secondary>
- West OS: <https://www.westpartnership.co.uk/west-os/live/>

West OS Live is a programme of real time, interactive study support webinars across 24 Senior Phase courses running between February and May 2022.

Learners can register for this programme of study support by visiting the West Partnership website. Each week's timetable will be shared and publicised well in advance. The revision information is also published in the weekly pupil bulletin and school newsletters.

SQA Estimates

Estimates of pupil attainment in each subject are to be submitted to the SQA in the main by 22nd April. These estimates will be based on evidence teachers have for pupil attainment to date. The estimates should be discussed with learners. The final format for sharing estimates has not yet been confirmed e.g. conversation, email/letter home etc. Learners have a right to appeal against final result if their estimate is higher than that awarded in the final exam.

Estimate grades are very important, these have always been submitted but more as a professional guide rather than this change to support pupils with appeals. SQA will look at all evidence and decide as to whether the appeal is upheld.

Chief Invigilator is Fiona Davidson (past teacher at the school) and has a team organised; she is reviewing additional support mechanisms for pupils, such as extra time, different accommodation, scribes.

Staffing

Subject teachers being recruited for the new session – August 2022 include an RE, English, Maths, Business Education and a Business & Computing teacher.

Interviews took place for the Depute for Personal Support for Pupil. Unfortunately no candidates were successful in moving to the final stage in the selection process. The post will be re-advertised.

Wider Achievement

School's Young Musician of the Year held yesterday – Jack McGowan (S6) winner from St Joseph's will go into regional final.

B Jones also reported that sports competitions are starting to take place.

She stated that the school will celebrate St Joseph's Day (19th March) on Friday 18th March with a 'Dress as you please' Day – all monies raised from donations going to SCIAF appeal for Ukraine. She indicated that the school could not organise the usual fun activities this year due to the Covid restrictions still in place in addition to the current SQA pressures for senior phase pupils.

Current COVID mitigation measures

- masks still to be worn in corridors, and school is keen to support wearing of masks in classrooms for those staff and pupils who choose to do so
- sanitising and washing hands still in place
- keeping year groups separate
- ensuring good ventilation in all areas of the school.

With regard to Covid absences B Jones stated that there are 2 teachers and 1 office staff currently off with COVID, 21 pupils off (higher than recent weeks but mirrors a rise in the community).

She did indicate that following the Easter break some current restrictions would be removed, including the opportunity to have Assemblies. Currently some small group assemblies are taking place to provide information on option choices and to share SQA related information.

Subject Choices

- S3/4/5 have made choices now
- S2 choices forms issued today (16 March 2022). These have been sent out electronically with an information booklet to help pupils make informed choices.
- Guidance and support has been given in Social Education lessons on choices and courses available.
- To further support pupils in making their choices, Skills Development Scotland has carried out group work and subject teachers have provided support and advice during class time.

Following B Jones' Report the following questions were asked.

Can National 4/National 5 be completed in S3?

- B Jones responded by stating that since pupils are completing their Broad General Education (BGE) until the end of S3 they do not complete national qualifications but work through **BGE** levels. For the majority of pupils this is level 3. NB: *CfE* and *National (Qualification)* levels are different but run side by side.

There are no exams until S4. At the end of S3 pupils choose subjects and teachers and pupils/families would discuss whether a pupil may be on a National 4 or National 5 pathway at this stage.

Are there any tests at end of S2?

- B Jones stated that pupils would experience class tests to assess progress through the BGE levels. More formal assessments usually take place at end of S3 to see which National qualifications level is best for pupils.

With regard to advice on pathways into Science, Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) courses such as medicine and engineering does school recommend taking all three science subjects?

- B Jones stated that there is no requirement for all three sciences – however universities would probably like to see 2 sciences and Maths (3 STEM subjects) but they often look for broad subject choices that demonstrate a range of learning skills.

Treasurer's Report

M McGill gave report in absence of Treasurer stating the current balance of: £569.37

She also stated that the Parent Council does not do fundraising; this is mainly organised by the school's Charities Committee. Local Authority funding pays for Clerk fees and any lets charged by the authority for in person meetings held in school.

AOCB

Next academic year hopeful of having in person meetings. M McGill to undertake a survey in August of parents and carers to see which option would suit most parents but looking potentially at hybrid meetings with some in a room together with a Zoom/Skype link available.

Action: *Mel to survey parents in August on format of meetings for 2022/2023 session*

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th May 2022 at 1900 via Zoom

There will be a calendar of meetings for next session agreed at the next meeting. There will be one in September and this will be followed by the AGM to be held in October 2022 where role bearers will be elected. M McGill reminded the Parent Council of her decision to stand down as Chair at AGM.