**Leith Academy Parent Council**

**Minutes of Meeting held on 23 November 2023 at 7pm**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **In attendance** | **Initials** | **Apologies** | AM |
| Michael Irving (Head Teacher) | MI | Kate McDonald | MH |
| Richard Foggo (Co-chair) | RF | Cllr Jack Caldwell | CllrJC |
| Xanthe Bird (Treasurer) | XB | Emma Shaw | ES |
| Hilary Brown (Co-clerk) | HB |  |  |
| Vicky Allan (Co-clerk) | KH | **Minutes** |  |
| Katrina Milligan - fundraising | KM | Hilary Brown (Co-clerk) | HB |
| Rachel Hein | RH |  |  |
| Rodger Evans | RE |  |  |
| Jane Park | JP |  |  |
| Alex Nuth | AN |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** |  | **Action** |
| **1.** | **Welcome and Introductions**  RF opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. Introductions were made. He proposed an online meeting for January 2024 to encourage attendance on cold, dark evenings. There was general agreement. |  |
| **2.** | **Minutes from last meeting approved** |  |
| **3.** | **Items from previous minutes**  MI responded to the issue raised about a lack of school trips for pupils since the pandemic. He explained that Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring the equality, accessibility and climate justice criteria of trips before seeking approval. So the refusal by the Council of some trips is frustrating and he is seeking the support of other Head Teachers to ask for approval of more trips.  RH suggested it would be good to let pupils know it is not just Leith Academy who are not able to deliver as many trips as they would like, but that it is because of City of Edinburgh policy. MI pointed out that trips are happening, including an overnight visit to London by the drama department in June 2024. Cllr Jack Caldwell supplied a helpful email response to his enquiry to the Council which was noted at the meeting. |  |
| **4.** | **Head Teacher’s update**  MI advised us that Leith Academy won the recent Tesco community fund £1500 donation, and summarised various events and ongoing challenges, including:  S1 Halloween disco and drama clubs organized by senior pupils; a successful S1 ipad roll out; MPV training to train mentors and reduce violence by encouraging youngsters to be ‘active bystanders’. After school study support sessions are ongoing; an S2 visit from Scotland footballer Xander Murray to talk about ‘Challenging discrimination’; a visit from SQA staff to explore new pathway qualifications that Leith Academy is adopting; Mr Fox launched ‘Skills at Leith Academy’; a successful S2 careers fair; 18 families participated in a ‘Digital Learning Coordinators’ family engagement session; Graham Armstrong (The Young Team) presented to staff and there is a follow up session planned for some pupils; S1 parent evening and S5 parent evening both went well; there has been lots of sporting success; Equalities Ambassadors training is ongoing; the Christmas Concert is on 20 December \*UPDATE – teachers organised a successful raffle and Parent Council organised tea/coffee/cake for a donation at the start of the evening.  For full details of all these events see also the Head’s Updates which are available on the [school website](https://leithacademy.uk/news/). |  |
| **5.** | **Parent raised issues**  **Safe spaces for young people to discuss issues**  The parent council had received an email about how pupils are able to discuss or express concern about international and other issues, including the ongoing news of horrible events in Israel. MI indicated that the school does support young people in responding to news stories, and pointed out that a number of students are refugees from parts of the world where there is conflict and political persecution. He noted that £700 was raised in school today (23 November) for humanitarian relief.  **Queues at the canteen**  MI said the prices should now be visible and not a reason for any delay. He will take a good look at the situation in early December and report back his findings. Noone should find they don’t have time to eat lunch at/from the canteen.  **S2 Course Choices**  The timetable for these choices (and others) can be found on the [online school calendar](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fleithacademy.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2023%2F11%2FCalendar-of-Events-23-24-PARENT-FRIENDLY-VERSION-1.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK).  **Timing of pupil absence texts**  KM raised this issue on behalf of another parent. MI confirmed that texts should be sent period by period if a child is not present when the register is taken at the beginning of the class. If there is a specific issue please contact the office ([admin@leith.edin.sch.uk](mailto:admin@leith.edin.sch.uk) or 0131 554 0606)  **Thanks to the Senior Leadership Team**  RF thanked MI for following up on issues with the Senior Leadership Team weekly and thanked Ben Stewart and other members of the SLT for their input and support.  **Welcome Event 2024**  Parent Council to attend and mix and mingle to encourage parent support for the council and the school. |
| **6.** | **Financial Report**  **Bank Account** – £871 in the bank account. Thanks to XB for all the work it has taken to get the new signatories sorted out etc. LAPC has applied for grants totalling £3K to support prom 2024. Our preference for expenditure is to invest in infrastructure and equipment for a longer term benefit to pupils. We received the following bids which we agreed required more detail before we could reach a decision re funding:   * Creative Arts (re school show in June 2024) – more detail needed * Support for Learning - £100 for Tesco vouchers – agreed * Home Economics – unspecified amount requested for plants for the greenhouse. RH and VA to talk to Evie Murray at Leith Community Croft about possibility of plant donation and collaboration * The Learning Hub – requested 10 x textbooks @ £18 each. We agreed £90 for 5 textbooks and to ask MI if he can fund the other 5. |  |
| **7.** | **Fundraising**  Helen has the go ahead to get the survey produced and circulated.  We agreed not to do a raffle at the Christmas Concert this year due to low financial return on effort. Agreed to do teas/coffees for a donation. |  |
| **8.** | **AOB**  HC reported back from the North East Locality meetings where reps from Parent Councils across the North East of the city share issues and compare notes, and speakers from the Council present policy and developments.  Work experience for S5/S6 pupils to be added to the agenda for the next meeting for MI to give us an update. | Add Work Experience to the 25/1/24 agenda |
| **9.** | **Date and time of next meeting**  Thursday 25 January 2023 at 7pm – online meeting agreed. Link to be circulated. |  |