



## **Largs Academy Parent Forum - Annual General Meeting Tuesday 19th September 2023 - in the school, 5.30pm**

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Cara McKee (Chair, taking minutes in absence of Secretary), Lynne Cameron-Finn, Stefanie Macnamara, Peter Bryson-Meehan, Jude Bryson-Meehan, Clare Hussain, Barry Wilson (DHT), John Doherty (HT), Katy Roser, Amanda Rawley, Analene Swan, Jennifer McAlane, Jenny Clark, Brian Teaz, & Sara Goyal.

1. **Welcome:** C McKee welcomed everyone to the AGM. At J Doherty's suggestion with so many new faces we all gave short introductions. It was a pleasure to welcome so many new people to the Parent Council.
2. **Apologies:** A Milner
3. **Minutes**
  - a. **Last year's AGM - 15th September 2022**  
Highlights: S Aron took on the role as Treasurer. T Turnbull asked about the DoE - now up and running again in the school. We were looking forward to more events in the school and more bids! One correction was made under point 1) Michelle Murray gave her apologies, not Michelle Mitchell.
  - b. **Minutes of last Parent Council meeting - 13th June 2023**  
Highlights: Staffing updates including a new Drama teacher. Lots of successful events. Parent Council bank accounts sorted out, more funding accessed and more bids made.  
**Minutes proposed by S Aron, Seconded by L Cameron-Finn**
4. **Parent Council Constitution** (C McKee)  
No proposed changes to the constitution, which is [available online](#).
5. **Parent Council Annual Report and Financial Statement** Available as Annex to these Minutes.
6. **Confirmation of Office Bearers**
  - a. Chair Cara McKee (elected 2020)
  - b. Vice Chair Andrew Milner (elected 2021)
  - c. Treasurer Shaukat Aron (elected 2022)
  - d. Secretary (pupil) Ash Raymond (took position 2023). As Ash cannot always attend **J Doherty** will also seek other pupils to fulfil this role.
  - e. **Appointment of Members**  
Every parent/carer of a young person at Largs Academy can attend Parent Council meetings, request items to be discussed or questions for the school at said meetings (to be discussed in advance with the chair), vote on any decisions at the meetings, and be on the Parent Council mailing list. More formally Members of the Parent Council may take on particular roles, for instance in fundraising or taking the lead for a certain issue. Members are appointed each year at the AGM.

Members of the Parent Council for 2023-4 are: L Cameron-Finn, S Macnamara, P Bryson-Meehan, J Bryson-Meehan, C Hussain, K Roser, A Rawley, A Swan, J Clark & B Teaz. Many thanks to all.

## 7. **Head Teacher's Report** (J Doherty)

The school has 995 pupils this year. It's the first time it's been below 1000 in a while.

- a. **Calendar for session 23/24:** A brief version has been shared from the school.
  - i. Duke of Edinburgh had 40 pupils taking part last year. There are 80 this year. This was restarted at the request of a parent at last year's Parent Council AGM, and relies on support from volunteers on the school staff and parents.
  - ii. A Unison strike may affect the school next week.
  - iii. The Silver Rights Respecting school visit will take place next Thursday. A small number of Parent Council Members are requested to help with this.
- b. **SQA Results Update** (B Wilson): Largs Academy focuses on pupils attainment, skills, and wellbeing, but as we have received SQA results recently we're focusing on attainment.
  - i. This year's results showed more people up for a qualification out of a smaller cohort. Over 1750 SQA qualifications were achieved (up 150).
  - ii. 90% of S4 achieved 1+ N5, with 50% getting 5+. Nat 5 levels are improving.
  - iii. 65% of S5s achieved 1+ Higher, 20% of S5s achieved 5+ Highers. This result is below previous years, but this was not a surprise, given the circumstances, and Insights shows that our pupils are above their virtual comparators. Largs Academy is still looking to improve S5 outcomes. When wider qualifications are considered 29% achieved 5+ Level 6 qualifications.
  - iv. 24% of S6 achieved an Advanced Higher, 33% achieved a level 7 (includes HNCs). This percentage is based on the school roll in S4.
  - v. The school has submitted 125 Appeals on behalf of pupils or staff. The outcomes will not be known until October 2023. This year there's a new appeals process which is basically an admin check.
  - vi. Insight is a tool the Scottish Government use which compares like for like, so a young person at Largs Academy will be matched with ten young people from similar backgrounds in a similar school across Scotland. This creates a virtual comparator which helps us see how our young people are doing, ironing out differences caused by the social circumstances of the year etc. Largs Academy is currently above virtual comparators.
  - vii. Largs Academy pupils have done really well and we're really pleased.
- c. **School Improvement Plan** (J Doherty)
  - i. **Wellbeing:** rights respecting discussions have highlighted a need for fun in the classroom and outwith. Excursions are being planned.
  - ii. **Learning and Teaching:** Staff are working together to see what they can do to improve things.
  - iii. **Relationships:** Staff are considering ways of learning, particularly around classroom layout and thinking of how things are done to invite participation.
  - iv. **Curriculum and Skills:** Developing pathways. There are lots of opportunities and lots of options.
- d. **Skills Academy Launch:** DYW Ayrshire are partially funding Skills Academy @ Largs Academy, this incorporates Creative Minds Photography, Events Management, Barista, and Largs Picture House, and aims to build skills for entrepreneurship. Pupils will work on brand identity in collaboration with LPC in Largs. For Level 6 qualification this is currently called Events Management but they're looking at renaming. Launch will take place on Friday 27th October 10.30-12. Parent Council Members are invited. Let J Doherty know if you would like to attend.

## 8. **Questions to the school** - please bring any questions to the chair in advance of the meeting.

- a. **Vaping** (C McKee): There has been a big increase in vaping (noted that this is not just confined to the school). Vaping is not permitted in the school
  - i. Staff rotas for checking toilets and other spaces at breaks and lunches were not in place for the first week, and J Doherty apologised for this, but they are in place now, however it is impossible to tell if someone is vaping in a toilet cubicle.

- ii. Concerns have been raised with PC Pollard around sales of vapes to underage people.
- b. Toilet access (J Bryson-Meehan): Young people should use the toilet at break times when possible. On the rare occasion when it is necessary to go during lesson time, pupils should ask the teacher at an opportune time. Teachers will be reminded to use their judgement on this matter. Problems with accessing toilets at breaks have been resolved with the increase in staff surveillance.
- c. Staffing (C McKee): The school has been advertising for a Technologies teacher. A temporary teacher has been put in place, and an interview will take place this week for a longer term appointment.
- d. Lunch queues (C Hussain): Queues were very bad at the start of term, but an increase in surveillance as well as getting the hang of pre-ordering has resolved this.

## 9. Bids

- a. **First Aid:** Bid from Colin Frew and Pastoral Team for £2,500 towards the cost of a Level 6 First Aid qualification for S4 pupils to be gained through PSE lessons and a one day external training course. This would be a good fit for the PSE curriculum which is currently under review. This should require 2-3 periods of PSE. In future the hope is to get a member of staff trained to deliver this training across North Ayrshire schools and so save money. **Unanimous approval granted to this bid. S Aron** will liaise with **J Doherty** to transfer funds.
- b. **Duke of Edinburgh:** The deadline for the Participatory Budgeting Bid process fell before the AGM so C McKee sought the go-ahead from the then membership of the Parent Council and worked with Sam Templeton to put together a bid for equipment for Duke of Edinburgh. This is to ensure we have a stock of equipment here as last year we found that many pupils did not have the necessary boots, waterproofs, and camping equipment. We aim to work with local businesses in getting the equipment. The bid is for the maximum £1,000.
  - i. Applications closed 17th Sept and are currently under review. Any voting that takes place will be live on Young Scot and only open to 8-25 year olds, who will need a Young Scot card to vote. Voting would be from Nov 6th to 19th, with results out between Nov 20th and May 3rd.
  - ii. A parent council member suggested the school also ask for donations of suitable clothing and equipment on a Fundraising Friday.

## 10. Forthcoming events

- a. **Christmas Fayre** - Saturday 25th November, 12-3pm - Mrs McNicol coordinating
  - i. Parent Council presence (A Milner)
  - ii. Book stall (C McKee). Please pass book donations to C McKee in advance of the event.

## 11. Dates of Parent Council Meetings 2023-4

All meetings are on Tuesdays. In school meetings start at 5.30pm. Online meetings start at 6pm.

Forthcoming meetings in 2023-4:

[Online meeting - 24th October at 6pm on Teams](#)

In school meeting - 5th December

Online meeting - 16th January

Online meeting - 27th February

In school meeting - 16th April

In school meeting - 28th May



## **Annex: Parent Council 2022-23 Report**

### **Executive Summary**

- ★ Regular Parent Council meetings were held throughout the year – a mixture of virtual and face-to-face.
- ★ 249 parents responded to the school's Parent Survey with 95% agreeing that learning and teaching at Largs Academy is high quality and that there are high expectations in the classroom.
- ★ Based on feedback from the Parent Survey and Parent Council, Parent's Evenings will include at least one in-person meeting and one virtual meeting.
- ★ We were able to release funds caught up in historic bank accounts since the pandemic.

### **Report**

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, the Parent Council has been able to meet on a regular basis. Unlike the previous two years, the meetings have been a mixture of face-to-face (held at Largs Academy) and virtual (Zoom/Teams).

Engagement between the Parent Council, the Headteacher and the Senior Management Team at Largs Academy has been good throughout the year. It is worth noting that this engagement has been continuous and not just limited to the formal Parent Council meetings. The Parent Council is grateful to the Headteacher and the Senior Management Team for their continued support.

One of the main functions of the Parent Council is to facilitate communication and interaction between parents/carers and the school. The aim of this is that it will work to improve the learning, teaching and community experiences of pupils. Communicating what is working well is as important as communicating any concerns that pupils and parents/carers may have.

The school completed a Parent Survey in March 2023 with 249 parents/carers taking part. Most parents/carers (89%) believe that their young person is treated respectfully by their peers and almost all (95%) believe that they are treated respectfully by staff and that Largs Academy cares about their young people. Almost all (95%) believe that learning and teaching at Largs Academy is high quality and that there are high expectations in the classroom. Most parents/carers (89%) believe that Largs Academy is preparing their young person for life after school and that they are developing skills for learning, life, and work through the school's curriculum and extra-curricular programme. The Parent Council are supportive of the Parent Survey and welcome the positive response from the Senior Management Team in terms of their commitment to address some of the issues that have been raised. In particular, several parents stated that they felt less connected to Largs Academy than they would like to be. The school took action to increase parent presence in the school. The Parent Council would like to highlight that we can support parents/carers in communicating with the school, and there are also routes for parents/carers to communicate with school staff directly.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme was discussed at a number of the Parent Council meetings and was fully supported as a valuable extra-curriculum activity for pupils. The Parent Council and Senior Management Team are grateful to the Parent/Carer Volunteers and teachers who have made it possible for the The Duke of Edinburgh's Award to go ahead for pupils especially the Expeditions which are a key component of the award. Thank you.

The Christmas Fayre was held in December 2022 and raised over £2,000 for the school. Feedback from those who attended was that it was a good event and that people would like a longer Christmas Fayre for 2023. There was no charge for the tables at this event, but this will be reviewed for future Fayres as this may provide additional fundraising possibilities for the school.

Parents' Evenings were discussed and evaluated at the Parent Council meetings. Feedback from the Parent Survey was that the majority of parents/carers (62%) would like to see a return to in-person parents' meetings at Largs Academy, although many valued the ease of access with online appointments. The Senior Management Team responded that they will ensure that each year group has at least one in-person parents' evening as well as one virtual parents' evening.

As stated above, the Parent Council has an important role to play in facilitating communication. A range of questions have been presented to the Senior Management Team by the Parent Council. These have covered a wide range of topics such as: Cost of ingredients for Home Economics; home IT access for pupils; UCAS processes; the alpha male movement; school uniform; availability of subjects (drama); and parents' evenings.

The Parent Council is looking forward to engaging with the Headteacher and the Senior Management Team throughout the upcoming school year and to representing the parents and carers of pupils of Largs Academy.

Finally, the Parent Council would like to recognise and thank the pupils of Largs Academy who have attended and supported the Parent Council meetings by taking the minutes of our meetings, and contributing to discussions. Thank you, we also look forward to working with you in the coming year.

## **Finances – Parent Council 2022-2023**

Please see the breakdown of payments in/out of the PTA account. All new transactions start from the 12/2/2023

<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque Nr/Action</b>	<b>Paid out to/Received from</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Total</b>
08/12/2020	C	NAC Credit	566	3600.87
23/08/2021	C	NAC Credit	651	4251.87
29/11/2021	Cheque 000072	Largs Art Dept reqst from 2019	-500	3751.87
08/06/2022	C	Bouncy Castle Event	-550	3201.87
20/06/2022	Debit	S6 Leavers Event	-540.99	2660.88
20/06/2022	Debit	Athletics Vests	-300	2360.88
22/06/2022	Debit	Mental Health Course NA College	-700	1660.88
21/07/2022	Debit	NAC Credit	630	2290.88
02/12/2023	Transfer in	Cara Mckee(xmas books sales)	77.21	2368.09
21/04/2023	Transfer in	Closure of 50/50 account	5414.2	7782.29
21/04/2023	Transfer in	Closure of PTA account	5725.38	13507.7
22/06/2023	Transfer out	Successful bid(S6 leavers pens and catering	-1870	11637.7

We would like to thank all those involved in closing the 50/50 and PTA accounts. In addition the change of signatories has been an ongoing and challenging process but we got there in the end. Thank you once again for your perseverance.

Andrew Milner (Vice-Chair)

Shaukat Aron (Treasurer)

On Behalf of the Largs Academy Parent Council - September 2023