



# Minutes of 31st Stranraer Academy Parent Council Meeting Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2010

**PRESENT:**

**Parent Members:** Emma Sutherland, Neale McQuistin, John Crawford, Jo Cochrane, Lesley McColm, Fiona McColm, Robert Downie, Sheena Rogers and Fiona Spicer.

**Student Rep:** Matthew Love  
**Head Teacher:** Norman Dawson  
**Teacher Rep:** Susan Boyd  
**Clerk:** Lorraine Heron

**Attending:** PC Garry Mitchell

<b>1.</b>	<b>WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES</b>
	Chairman Neale McQuistin opened the meeting. Apologies were put forward on behalf of Richard Little, Kay Armitage, James McQuistin, Helen-marie Bradley, Nicola Kane, Rod Baxter and Councillor J Dougan.
<b>2.</b>	<b>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (15<sup>th</sup> April)</b>
	The Minutes of the last Meeting were proposed as accurate by John Crawford and seconded by Lesley McColm.
<b>3.</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING</b>
	<b>Item 9 – Dux Board</b> – Mr Dawson advised the members that the company he had approached to repair the Dux Board has deemed it beyond repair. However a colleague at Dumfries Academy thinks that he could maybe salvage it and is willing to have a look to see what he can do. Neale agreed to help arrange transport it to Dumfries if necessary. The members felt every effort should be made to try and keep it as it is an important part of the school's history. <span style="background-color: yellow;">Action N McQuistin</span>
<b>4.</b>	<b>PC GARRY MITCHELL</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do The Right Thing</b> – This event took place in February and was well received by the pupils. It involved S3 pupils learning about the consequences of anti-social behaviour. A great deal of positive feedback has been received about the event and it has in fact been nominated for an award. It is hoped that this can be made an annual event.</li> <li>• <b>Duke of Edinburgh Awards</b> – A number of pupils have been visiting the Police Station as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. The number of pupils showing an interest is growing each week and the students seem to be really enjoying it. They have covered various aspects of the Police Force and there have been a lot of interactive activities. There will be a presentation ceremony in June where Parents can come along and see what the pupils have achieved.</li> <li>• <b>Sponsored Fishing Event</b> – This was held last week and has raised about £800 in total. It is hoped that this could lead to an ongoing Angling Youth Development Scheme as part of the Curriculum For Excellence.</li> <li>• <b>Drive Alive</b> – This will be held on 8th June in the Ryan Centre for S5/S6. It is a hard hitting, emotional production which brings home the dangers of driving and the consequences of dangerous driving. It is funded by the Police and is being shown to all schools throughout the region.</li> <li>• <b>Benches</b> - Five benches have been made by pupils in the Craft and Design Dept. They have been donated to various places throughout the town such as Thorney Croft, Belmont Nursing Home and the ARC. The pupils made these in their own time during the Easter holidays.</li> <li>• <b>Memory Stick</b> – Dumfries and Galloway Police will once again be issuing all school leavers with a memory stick. They will contain information about issues such as Personal Safety and Health Issues which will be useful to them one they have left school.</li> <li>• <b>Internet Awareness Week</b> – This will be held in September and there will be events all over the region. Every parent will be issued with a DVD containing helpful information regarding use of the internet.</li> </ul> <p>Jo asked if all those involved in arranging these activities were thanked for their efforts. Garry advised that everyone received individual letters and there were articles in the local paper. He will also send some information on events to Mike Warren for inclusion in the school website. The members commended Garry and everyone involved for their efforts.</p>

5.	<b>STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT</b>
	<p><b>Recycling</b> – Matthew Love advised the members that they had written a letter to the council to see if they could visit the Ecodeco plant and see for themselves how the recycling process at the facility works. At our April meeting Councillor Dick had agreed to try and arrange a visit from Alistair Speedie from Planning and Environment Services. Neale will contact him to see if this has been arranged. <b>Action N McQuistin</b></p> <p><b>Cycle Sheds</b> – Matthew raised a concern that some pupils were using the cycle storage area as a smoking shelter and this was putting pupils off bringing their bikes to school. Mr Dawson said that this was an ongoing problem with pupils smoking in the school grounds and they were moved on a daily basis. He suggested that in the meantime pupils bringing their bicycles use the cycle racks at the other side of the school as they were usually empty and just as convenient. He also advised that there had only been one incident regarding damage to bicycles in recent times and this had resulted in two pupils being charged by police.</p> <p><b>School Buses</b> – There has been no feedback from Councillor Dick regarding the issue of school buses.</p>
6.	<b>HEAD TEACHERS REPORT</b>
	<p>Mr Dawson reported on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Staffing/ Absence</b> – Steve Flower has announced his retirement in the summer. His job will be advertised in the next couple of weeks. As we are not allowed to replace Bernice Bryant as DHT, a temporary PT curriculum post will be advertised, internal to school, which will have Learning and Teaching remit and will also involve a line management roll for Classroom/Support assistants. We will be allocated 2 probationers next session – in Technical and RME, as well as this we will be advertising for a temporary Business Studies Teacher for 1 year. This will result in a change of 1 period in S2 from RME to ICT.</li> <li><b>Exclusions</b> - There have been 4 exclusions since the last meeting; 3 for persistent disobedience and 1 for assault on another pupil.</li> <li><b>PPP</b> – The MUGA surface has gone down today and they are on track to complete the work by the start of the summer holidays.</li> <li><b>P7 Class Allocation</b> – There will be 8 classes in S1 next session for Registration/PSE. The lists are with primaries for comments and the final list will be shared with pupils by Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>. A letter is being sent to parents explaining how the lists were created and that groupings will be different for some subjects. The SMT had a very constructive meeting with John McVie, Mary Thomson and Ann Appleford about class allocation who are aware of our plans. Many P7 pupils and parents have visited the Academy thanks to the efforts of Gary Burns, Home Link worker. The P7 class from Belmont school spent the day at the Academy being taught by their P7 teacher but using the facilities within the school.</li> <li><b>Open Evening</b> – This is scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> May. Letters have gone out to all S1-3 pupils. SVS classes will deliver fliers to nearby houses inviting residents to attend. An advert and hopefully an article will appear in next week's Free Press. Refreshments will be available in the canteen.</li> <li><b>Award Ceremonies</b> - Fraser Sanderson, former pupil and teacher at Stranraer Academy and ex-director of Education for D&amp;G will be guest speaker at the S5/6 Awards Ceremony. It was agreed, as in previous years, that the Parent Council would take him and his wife out for a meal prior to the Ceremony on 15<sup>th</sup> June. It was thought by some of the members that General McDowall was to speak at the ceremony this year, but Mr Dawson advised that they had tried unsuccessfully to make contact with him and had asked Mr Sanderson instead. Neale asked that the guest be discussed with the Parent Council members in the future and Mr Dawson agreed. The dates are as follows: S5/6 – 15<sup>th</sup> June, S3/4 – 17<sup>th</sup> June, S1/2 – 29<sup>th</sup> June.</li> <li><b>Other Dates for Diary</b> – Parents Information Evening – Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> June, P7 Visits – Thurs and Fri 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> June and Parent Council P7 disco Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June. Emma advised that the Disco had been booked and arrangements were starting to fall in to place. She asked if Neale could contact the primary schools to let them know that the event was taking place. <b>Action N McQuistin</b></li> <li><b>Activity Days</b> – These will be similar to last year. The majority of pupils signed up for the second last day. Any suggestions for an alternative to Bingo/Games on the last day would be welcome. The Parent Council members again agreed to do the BBQ on the last day of term. Neale to arrange. <b>Action N McQuistin</b></li> <li><b>D&amp;G Wild Science Week</b> – Pupils from 20 primary schools in the Rhins and Machars took part in the K'nex challenge finals at Stranraer Academy. There was also a visit from Glasgow and Strathclyde universities bringing with them a number of science recourses including their 'bus'. S1 pupils took part in a number of Activities and Science staff from the Academy along with some P7 teachers attended an after school in-service. It has already been agreed they will return next year. A 'Science show' on forces also took place on Sunday night at the Ryan Centre and very positive feedback has been received.</li> <li><b>Houses and Prefects</b> – We would like to re-introduce the House system within the Academy. It is our intention to discuss with staff and pupils possible names for the houses. We hope to discuss with the new S6 the possibility of re-introducing Prefects, including House Captains and Head boy/girl or similar. The PC members are very much in support of this as it gives the pupils an added sense of responsibility and opens up opportunities for them to develop new skills. There will be opportunities for all of the pupils within S5/6 regardless of academic ability.</li> </ol>

<b>7.</b>	<b>TEACHERS REPORT</b>
	<p>Susan Boyd reported on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Mock Election</b> – This took place on 30<sup>th</sup> April and was a great success. The pupils studied all the party policies and made their own election materials. They then ran campaigns for their chosen parties and had an election as similar as possible to the real thing. When the votes were counted (and recounted!) there only one vote separating first and second place. The election was won by Scott Marshall and runner up was Matthew Love. Only 6 schools in Scotland took part in the mock election and the students were then encouraged to check the results of other schools. An article will hopefully be in the Free Press next week.</li> <li><b>Mentoring</b> - The mentoring for S4 has now ended. We hope to start it earlier next year allowing more pupils to reach their targets. In the meantime there will be subject teachers available on the day before exams to assist anyone with any last minute problems. Thanks were extended to teachers who were giving after school study classes.</li> <li><b>Eco Group</b> – Any TESCO vouchers for schools are welcome. The greenhouse purchased with the previous supermarket vouchers is almost complete. The group are hoping to get a second green flag in December and S5 are looking at ways to make the school Fair Trade too. Neale asked if the Eco group had considered a wind turbine for the school. Susan advised she would find out what permission would be required and the cost implications.</li> </ol>
<b>8.</b>	<b>TREASURES REPORT</b>
	No report was available this month.
<b>9.</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>
	No Correspondence has been received since the last meeting.
<b>10.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
	<p><b>Exams</b> – Emma advised that the exam accommodation was very good and comfortable for the students. However some of the computers they were using were in need of a quick clean and it would have been helpful if more than one printer had been available.</p> <p><b>Canteen</b> – Sheena Rogers asked what the situation was now with the canteen. Mr Dawson advised that there were no queues at present; however a lot of pupils were on study leave.</p> <p><b>New Members</b> – Fiona McColm reminded the members that there would be a number of people leaving the Parent Council after this session as they would no longer have children in the school. It was agreed that Neale would speak at the P7 information evening and try to encourage new members to come along to meetings.</p> <p><b>MUGA</b> – Neale reminded the members that although there had been progress in getting the full size MUGA sited at the school, there were still hurdles to overcome. It was suggested that a sub-committee be formed and external sources be approached for funding. Public Awareness within the community had to be raised in order that everyone knew how serious the Parent Council was in campaigning for the facility to be within the school grounds.</p> <p>It was agreed that Neale would write to Harry Hay asking him to provide an update on a monthly basis as to how things were progressing with the MUGA. <b>Action N McQuisitin</b></p>
<b>11.</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>
	The next meeting will be held on Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> June.