

Kinlochleven High School Parent Council

Minutes of meeting held in Kinlochleven on 7th January 2015

Present – GM, GM, FD, AB, MMc, EB, CMc, FB, SB, GD

Apologies – BG, Moira Hartley resigned, Pamela Higgins resigned, IW

Minutes from last meeting and matters arising – Still nothing to report regarding the Hydro Scheme

Head Teachers Situation – There have been 4 applicants. The professional interviews are the week beginning 12th and the final interview, at which we have 2 representatives, are on the 19th January.

Head Teachers situation - The new biology teacher is Sarah Sigersan and Jill has taken the Guidance roll back on.

Computing – Mr Mahoney has now left so Mr Milne has had to take these classes on again.

Both Jill and Gordon have stated that this situation can only be short term, therefore if no-one is appointed at the final interview some help will have to be forthcoming.

Tom, the janitor, has retired and Morrison's is advertising for a new one.

There is a staff meeting this Friday to identify and discuss budget cuts. Gordon has been informed that the possible cut in the Primary School day has been postponed, therefore, cuts are necessary in other ways. It is a strong possibility that the Secondary school day will be cut from a 35 to a 33 period week. This will mean there will probably one shorter day in the week. This idea will be decided by 1st April but will possibly only take affect from the new summer term. There may have to be a 1% cut in the staff bill, but Gordon is looking into this and we will get more details at the next meeting.

SQA – The school are making good, having started the new highers already (not all schools have done this). All these changes are creating a lot of work for single teacher subjects.

SQA verification checks for in-house assessment in Physics, English and French will happen this year. For single teacher subjects verification has too involve other schools and this takes away approx. 12 teaching days.

SQA study leave is still in question although the general opinion is that it will remain in some form or other.

SQA press release regarding appeals has caused some concern. Although there are no appeals a school can ask for a remark of a paper and it has been reported that the remark statistics show that a high percentage were successful. The school have normally not been encouraged to put forward appeals/ remarks however, this year there will be less caution due to these statistics.

This year subject choices s2-s5 may not be quite as varied but the school are hoping to get children some more career advice and to think more of the future.

The pupil activities – Outward Bound, OYT will be £150.00 each. A slight raise in last year’s cost to parents (but considering these activities work out to approx. £800 per pupil this is negligible).

These two activities normally run concurrently, with the 2nd years having day trips, however this will not happen this year and it was also viewed that the 2nd year’s activities would best be spread out throughout the year and also looked more closely at to ensure there is some educational benefit.

This year’s sixth form is very large and so the pupil/ parents have been asked to say whether they are going by 5th February.

Exam Results – Normally we have had a statistical analysis of the results but this is changing, however the results did come through generally as expected. Although initially Gordon thought the higher were not as good as expected, this was not the case. Overall the school are about average for Highland and above average for Scotland.

Discipline – It had been brought to Fiona Borland’s attention that there were pupils who were drunk. Both Jill and Gordon said the older pupil left of their own accord, but stated they would have been asked to leave if they had not. Unfortunately they were unaware that there was at least 1 child from the second year who was drunk. Although the board appreciated that the school cannot stop the pupils drinking out with school they asked for the school to be more alert for any child coming in drunk and to consider ringing younger children’s parents if found intoxicated. (It did come to their attention that the older pupils had brought drink into school and so the cloakroom was locked so no-one could enter).

Another area of discipline brought to the schools attention was the behaviour outside school at lunchtime. Andrew Baxter stated that the school had always had an excellent reputation in the community but over the past couple of month this had waned a bit. In particular pupils were found to be swearing, queue jumping and generally being a bit of a nuisance in the local coop. Jill volunteered to go there at lunch time to check on their behaviour and find out the culprits. The board requested all children to be spoken to again.

AOCB – Fiona had been asked to raise the issue of Dispersals again with no work left, however it was felt that the parent who brought this to her was talking about historical events. In most cases teacher know they are not in class and prepare work, the only exception being illness, which is unavoidable.

As this is possibly the last Council meeting with Gordon at the helm and Jill as Deputy, we would like to thank both of them for all the hard work they have put in to keeping the school running smoothly, we know it hasn’t been the easiest of times for them, and also for being a pleasure to “work” alongside on the Council.

Correspondence - None

Date of next meeting – 22nd April 2015