

Trinity Academy Parent Council – meeting 18 May 2023 (online)

Present

Paul Jeffrey (Chair)
Nick Burge (Headteacher)
Cathy Ballantine
Morag Burnett
Lisa Cardozo
Lucinda Horler
Rosie Hunter
Yvonne Jeffrey
Lesley Kelly
Judith MacKinlay
Manuela Molendini
Lorna Morgan
Clare Sharp

1. **Headteacher Update:** Nick Burge

Change of timetable: This happens every year after exams finish and all year groups move up. It will start as scheduled on 5 June. This be a normal school day for pretty much everybody, with some extra morning activities for S4, 5 and 6.

We have almost planned for next year. Particular focus on staffing, in line with other schools. This year there has been an increase in staffing. In August we are hoping to see increases in maths, English, PE, science, home economics and social subjects, particularly geography and sustainability, with work on outdoor learning, especially DofE. We will be fully staffed. We start the year with a very stable business and computing faculty.

Money: We finished the year in April with the DSM (devolved school management) budget in the black, healthily. We will be taking the full 1.5% carry-forward into next year. This year the council have cut the carry-forward from 2.5%. In the past we've used the money for technology – interactive boards for staff and laptops. The money for next year is a buffer to support the decant – staff and furniture needs.

School roll: We will have an increase to the roll again in August with the numbers as yet unknown. The Victoria ship will be leaving; we currently have between 10 and 16 Ukrainian children in the school who are being relocated throughout Scotland. Additionally, more 4th years are returning than anticipated.

Excursions: An acknowledgement and thanks to staff and parent volunteers for the work in assistance to the Duke of Edinburgh awards excursions. Thanks to all who have offered their service for next year.

Trinity Plus: These are a series of active events for S1, 2 and 3, culminating on Friday 2nd June (sports day). All successfully underway. A very few issues in planning due to popularity of certain trips but it's the first time we've done it to this scale before.

Trips: S2 will do the Bonaly experience going into S3. We are already talking about what it will look like next year. The staffing needs are incredible, numbers-wise. We might need to keep Bonaly at the beginning of S3. In terms of the details around the Spain sports trip and the S3 French trip 2024–5, we started to give people information but we are waiting for council approval, which is a risk. Expressive Arts trips: these tend to be S2 to S6. The challenge is trying to do everything for everyone all the time with limited resources, including personnel. A number of S2 parents are uncomfortable that their children won't be able to access the S2 France trip. We are trying to instigate a series of meaningful experiences that span the child's life in school.

Class charts: They are to track the movement and behaviours of children, a way of tackling things early, and rewarding. Previously for S1s to S3s, tokens were posted in the box outside my room and counted at the end of term. The system was convoluted and the 60% of students in the middle weren't being rewarded. The new system has been running for three weeks. During the pilot we have 1,156 positives, which is much more than before (400 a term). They help us see when children are late to class, too, and this is helping us plan.

New school: We have had the last big public conversation within the PAN. The process closes on 7 June. We had a schools-only consultation, a drop-in session with the local primary schools (30 people), plus a Trinity community council session (30 people). We had two statutory open nights at Bangholm which attracted about 40 people between them. We are expecting to move to the village either Easter or summer next year.

School calendar: At the end of its first final draft through the School Negotiating Committee. This committee needs to come to a consensus about how everything works within the 195 hours allowed. Draft calendar will be fed back on soon.

Trinity Primary P6s: Have been with us now for a few weeks. The pressure on our staff is significant. We don't know when they will be leaving apart from that they won't be there in August. Three classes along at the bottom of the building have been given fully to the P6 classes. The English teachers have been displaced, which has been OK but when students return on 5 June this will increase the pressure. But the impact on learning and teaching will be minimal.

Additional Note (Paul): To add, we have had an update from the primary school. There are rumours flying about the state of the building. They have discovered a building material used in some of the flat roofs which has been prone to unexpected collapse and the investigation will take another two weeks to complete with a plan to follow.

Questions for Nick: none

2. **Saltire Awards Update:** Lesley Kelly

There was a presentation during the last meeting but we didn't have time to get a decision on whether the PC and the school would be able to support the Saltire Awards. It wraps up all volunteering work and helps people remember what they've done. It's done online and after certain milestones, it generates certificates from the Scottish Government and then becomes good evidence for universities and colleges. Lesley wants some support to promote the Saltire Awards via the PC and via the school to young people. They register on the site and put their hours into it. If there was a PC stall at something, can Lesley come and talk to people? Can people who are doing DofE get involved, could Nick put something in his updates?

Nick: Happy to put it in the Friday update, particularly to highlight the DofE candidates. A while ago there was a barrage of complaints about how we were leaving the local area, particularly the park. We have been litter-picking and there is a mural being painted at the bowling club. We need to demonstrate that community is important, and this will probably marry with that. If you don't mind waiting until next term to look at staffing. I don't think it's a huge staff capacity issue, but just to get it off the ground. It would be good to have someone in the school as a contact. Lesley agreed with this.

Paul: Let's plan for next term. We need to look at communication and how we communicate things like this. We're very conscious that the PC website hasn't been updated. We need to make sure that it's informational. Let's get regular communication and put something on the website about it.

Action: the school will set up a contact next term, PC will look at communications.

3. **Fundraising Update:** Helen Davey/Paul Jeffrey

Paul: Helen and Colin and a few others had a meeting a couple of weeks ago and have come up with a document that suggests that the primary responsibility of a parent council is to raise money. We should be helping generate as much money for the school as possible.

Helen: We talked about the "whys, how's and what's" of fundraising. We've raised nearly £2,500. £900 has gone to arts and drama, £960 went to the S6, and £490 to the parent council. The café at Bangholm has raised about £1000, and the 50:50 club has raised money and we mustn't forget about the charitable trust. We can reclaim tax on giving to that. We're aiming to promote all of those.

Whys: The act of doing it brings the community together. Supporting the school, and meeting the expenses of putting on shows. Also, an opportunity for people to help and volunteer. They seem to enjoy getting involved.

We can have a further discussion about where the money goes and how we decide that.

How: We're aiming to set up a structure so people from school know whom to contact. What we're hoping is to get some department leads, perhaps the curriculum lead or head of department, we'd love to identify someone in each department if they're interested, and then we've contacted Caroline Bannon to apply for licences, and what rooms we can use. From our side, we will need a fundraising lead or team, a separate Gmail account, a group of organisers, bigger group of volunteers.

It's much easier than at primary school. We're going to set up how-to guidelines for all of this. What we've learned so far. Things like where the tables are kept, and where the urn is. The department might tell us what support they want, expected numbers, etc.

Questions: Where's it going to and how to do we decide? Have we got a general aim for fundraising, is it supporting extra-curricular activities, helping Trinity Plus, or poverty-proofing? What are we raising money for and how do we decide that is what I wanted to discuss as a PC.

Paul: There were two main points from the document. We need more bodies involved, more volunteers, purely to turn up to events and assist. Nick, would you want us to be involved in helping with poverty-proofing? How would you look to pull out additional funding for that?

Nick: It's about access for all. It's about our most vulnerable, most-in-poverty families. We want to make sure everything is as accessible and affordable as possible for everyone, with a focus on those who really have nothing. There might be people who don't have a house, and are waiting for housing. International experiences will continue because they are important for families. But it's a spectrum. I would welcome funding from the PC around these big international experiences. They are not part of our core entitlement but I have listened very carefully and they are important to our families.

There are also smaller endeavours, little things that I think are brilliant. Last year we started to support the breakfast club for the first time and I love that. It's becoming a real centrepiece in the morning. School ties: 2 years ago, work was done to ask alumni to sponsor a tie, and then we gave to the first year a card with the names of all of the donors. Might be the sort of thing the bigger Trinity Community family might be involved in. It's the big things and the little things.

Action: Communication of fundraising document to the PC in the first instance and then to the wider parent mailing list with a request for more people to get involved in fundraising.

4. **New Parent Welcome Pack and Updated App Guide:** Judith MacKinlay

Judith has updated the links to the app so they now work and sent them to Paul, but they might need to be tested. She has started to draft an information pack for parents and carers. She has been in touch with Kath Stewart and knows that there is some information given out already at P7 induction time and she doesn't want to duplicate that. Judith's approach is factual: this is where you go, what you do. She'd like it to be ready for the beginning of the academic session. This will give us a chance to think about what it looks like, how we distribute it, and to consult on it beforehand. It's in process.

Paul will go through and verify the links.

Nick: I was the last person to work on this, in 2021. Mike was working on this too and, because things change every year, and because of the way we now communicate as a school, it was put on the shelf. There should be more of a professional touch to branding. [Nick shows a brochure designed by Storie & Storie.] This will be printed professionally. It's not cheap but it's not corporate expensive. The same person has done our website. Paul at Storie & Storie has done great work for us. Turnaround time is two days. He could be supported through the PC. If you wanted Nick to take the work to take it to Paul at Storie & Storie, he could.

Action: Judith continues with her draft and will circulate it when it's ready. Later in the process, we can decide about design.

5. **Wardie Summer Fair PC Stand:** Volunteers Required Saturday 3rd June, 12–3pm. Paul K Jeffrey

In previous years at Wardie Summer Fair there has been a stand from the Academy PC and they're offering us the opportunity this time. If we're doing it, it would be good to have a banner etc. I will put out a separate communication.

Action: Anyone who would like to staff a TA stall should respond to Paul's communication. Helen Davey knows where to find a TA banner and Paul will message her separately.

6. **Response to Consultation:** Trinity Academy Rebuild
<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/new-trinity-academy/> Paul K Jeffrey

The consultation document by City of Edinburgh Council and Future Schools Initiative for the phase 2 plans looks great. There is the possibility of leaving feedback.

Helen Duncan is leading this for the feeder primary schools. We are looking to leave feedback in a joined-up way. The document will be circulated and all parents should be encouraged to submit feedback.

Action: Everyone to encourage other parents to submit feedback.

7. **Trinity Academy Parent Council Awards:** Paul K Jeffrey

Submissions close tomorrow (19 May). There are two awards. There are a lot of entries. There are a lot of kids who have impressed other kids. The ceremony is Thursday 1 June.

We need two or three people to sit with Paul and review the applications, and agree a voting method.

Action: If you are interested in reviewing the applications with Paul, respond to Paul's communication which will be sent out soon.

8. **Parent Council Accounts Audit Requirement:** Morag Burnett

A couple of things have come to Morag's attention through the City of Edinburgh council that links to the fundraising. There are guidelines about how we discuss how the money is spent, there needs to be a discussion that involves the headteacher, teachers and pupils. There will be some fundraising that will be for a specific purpose, and then when we have an amount in the bank how do we decide between the council and the relevant stakeholders what that money gets spent on.

I'm just getting to grips with the guidance about how to run the bank account. The bank account is really healthy, and we have to get the accounts at the end of the financial year independently examined. It doesn't have to be an accountant but it does have to be someone who's good with numbers and credible. It's about 45 mins work. Can't be us or someone related to us. It can be done in September.

Actions: We will need to consider council guidance on fundraising and consulting our various stakeholders when deciding what to do with funds. Anyone who knows someone who could review the bank accounts should contact Paul.

9. **AOB**

Judith MacKinlay: Can we have the date of the next meeting/meetings?

Paul: I was late in organising this meeting. Next time I sit down with Nick we will plan meetings for the academic year. These might include in-person meetings – people want to sit around a table again.

Judith MacKinlay: I went to a meeting of parents with children with additional support needs. Can we connect parents through the parent council who might want to support or share things together?

Paul: Yes, absolutely, and that might be a useful thing to put into the website redesign.

Judith: I went to a couple of the Connect (formerly SPTC) training sessions and can we flag those up to people? You can attend and you can also watch them as webinars.

Paul: It makes sense to put them somewhere where everyone can access them.

Clare Sharp: I haven't been getting mailouts from the PC. I wondered if it was to do with Mailchimp. I was concerned about the method you're sending out comms as I might miss things. What sort of method will be used to send out these comms?

Paul: Mailchimp is a respected platform which handles mass mailing in a responsible way. We have done some analysis on the content of the email and there are no specific issues. Delivery levels are high at 99%. However, just because it's delivered to a mail server it isn't necessarily going to an end-user mailbox. Paul will look through the settings. We have

Facebook and Twitter too, and when we put out a communication it needs to go out on all platforms almost at the same time.

Judith has set up a list in our Gmail for the parent council. So at least that email will get to everyone on the council.

Close and Thanks