**Newbattle Community High School - Parent Council Zoom Meeting**

**16th September 2020**

**Annual General Meeting**

Present Apologies

G McMillan Head Teacher M Leslie

C Park Parent/Chair

P McIntosh Parent

A Donaldson Parent

L MacLeod Clerk

A Westaby Parent

K Maynard Parent

C Iley Parent

J Harvey Parent

J Read Parent

M Winning Parent

S Duncan Parent

S Fairley Parent

C Beattie Counsellor

**Welcome**

Gib welcomed parents to our Annual General Meeting and first official Parent Council meeting of the 2020-2021 session.

**Overview of Highlights of session 2020-21**

Gib talked the group through some of the successes from the previous session. PowerPoint to be sent out to the parent council along with the minutes so they can look through in more depth. If anyone has any comments on the presentation, please email them into the school.

Gib summarised the senior exam results and reiterated the outstanding achievements from our new school captains.

All of our S6 pupils will receive a blazer free from the school this year. This will help identify them as the role models they are, helping younger year groups talk to them about issues etc.

The hyperlinks below show the senior prefect updates that have been shared on twitter. If you haven’t done so already, please follow us on twitter where updates and successes are posted regularly.

<https://twitter.com/newbattlechsht/status/1301962582207721475?s=12>

<https://twitter.com/newbattlechsht/status/1301962198147891206?s=12>

<https://www.linkedin.com/posts/gib-mcmillan-7933a822_proudht-aimhigher-activity-6707732521544622080-6num>

We will invite representatives from the school captains to our next meeting to update on their role and improvement plan too.

*The group were asked if they had any comments or questions at this time.*

Comment – Catherine Park attended a meeting held by the authority for all Parent Council Chairpersons in Midlothian. Catherine felt very proud to be part of Newbattle when Fiona Robertson (Director of Education) was praising the school for the work we have done with deprived children.

**School Improvement Plan**

Gib spoke about Gail Williamson joining us from Jedburgh Grammar as Depute Head Teacher, Learning & Teaching. Gail will be with us until June 2021. Jim Fair is due to return from Beeslack High School in October, so Gail will enhance the strength of the team from then.

Gib spoke through areas of improvement they will be looking at in the session, priorities being Learning, Teaching & Assessment. Achievement and Attainment will also be a focus.

The full School Improvement Plan will be available on our website once finalised.

We also expect our School Inspection to take place as soon as covid restrictions are lifted.

**School Recovery**

Gib talked through a slide he shared with the group which highlighted the great attendance stats we have had since returning to school in August.

We are pleased that our curriculum is running as normal.

We have had many Health & Safety walkthroughs, phone calls etc and all have passed the requirements.

We do have a Blended Learning plan in place should this be required at any time.

*The group were asked if they had any comments or questions at this time.*

Comment – Catherine raised the issue with some younger pupils on the bus not wearing their masks once they have left on the school bus.

Response – Gib advised that we have spoken to the travel team to take this forward with the drivers and bus companies. SLT and the House Teams ensure that all pupils are wearing their masks when entering the bus. This will again be raised with the transport team.

**Election of Office Bearers for Parent Council**

It was decided that Catherine Park would remain as chair and Andy Westaby would remain as Vice Chairperson.

**Election of Office Bearers for Friends of Newbattle**

Jena McGhie (last year’s chair) is no longer able to attend the meetings and after many years of serving the group well, Shirley Fairley has decided to step down. Thank you Shirley for her efforts over the years.

The group decided that Friends of Newbattle would be shared amongst them this session. At the moment, there isn’t much fundraising efforts that can be done anyway.

**Friends of Newbattle – Financial Report**

The amount of £943.30 was shared with the group. Shirley suggested to Gib if there was anything that the school required during this time to put forward a request to Friends of Newbattle to consider funding for.

Questions via email:

I was going to ask about this year’s prelims as the current S5 pupils have not had the experience of sitting exams in the normal way. The prelims last year were spread out and so not representative of how things happen in April and May and then the actual exams did not happen. Assuming exams take place as normal this year Newbattle S5 pupils could be at a disadvantage when compared to others who sat prelims last year in a more normal fashion. What is the planned format?

*Response from C. Philp (Curriculum Head) – ‘It’s on the agenda for our next Extended Leadership Team meeting (at the end of the month) so there will be confirmation soon.*

*We want to support the students as much as possible though and all factors will be taken into consideration – hence why we are discussing it with the ELT’.*