**Newbattle Community High School**

**Parent Council Zoom Meeting**

**24th February 2021, 7pm**

Present Apologies

G McMillan Head Teacher M Winning Parent

C Park Parent/Chair

P Macintosh Parent

A Donaldson Parent

A Westaby Parent/Vice Chair

K Maynard Parent

C Iley Parent

S Duncan Parent

S Fairley Parent

L Roxburgh Parent

C Beattie Counsellor

J Harvey Parent

F Oswald Parent

L MacLeod Clerk

**Senior Phase Return**

We have enjoyed having some of our senior phase pupils in this week to assist with the completion of their SQA coursework. We are permitted to have between 5-8% of pupils in each day, however the hub pupils are included in this also. We realise that there has been a lot of information communicated recently about pupils returning to school, therefore we have been sending a message to parent/carers the day prior to pupils attending as confirmation that we are expecting to see their child.

**First Minister Announcement**

Pending the infection rates and scientific advice, there will be an increased number of pupils returning on 15th March 2021. At the moment, we don’t know more than this.

Staffing – teachers still have to monitor S1-3 pupils who are remote learning (live opportunities), along with Senior Phase potentially being in school so at the minute we are still unsure how this will work. We will share more once we know it.

*Colin added to this stating that this depends on how far ahead we get with vaccines.*

There was then a discussion around pupils having study catch ups on Easter/Weekends/Summer (like some private schools are doing). Gib responded saying that he doesn’t think this would help the pupils who do need help. The same pupils will attend and are not necessarily the pupils who require the help. We will still be running our Easter Study sessions for pupils, which are optional.

We have asked for more funds for staffing to allow smaller classes and better quality lessons for pupils.

*Question* – Have we had any sense from SQA that they might adapt assessments in the light of the longer pupils aren’t back in school, the less opportunity they have to prepare and achieve their predicted grades?

*Answer* - We are asking for more deadlines from the SQA at the moment. We do not want to land formal assessments on pupils as soon as they return.

Exam leave – doubtful that there will be an ‘exam leave’ after such a long period off school, we would prefer to have our pupils in the building. However this is something that we will consult parent/carers on before deciding.

*Question* – Fiona asked will there be extra support is in place for pressures with shortened assessment diet for pupils?

*Answer* - Yes, we have just launched the mentor attainment programme for pupils who are in senior phase and off track in two or more subjects. Our masterclasses/revision/supported study will be returning, along with Easter revision.

A limited, targeted number of pupils will qualify for individual tutoring through a company called EH5. SEIC and Edinburgh University have also offered tutoring spaces for our pupils.

BGE – Learning coaches are up and running for our BGE pupils. All staff have 9 pupils each who will look at their engagement & tracking and will make a call home weekly to discuss any issues the pupil may have and how they can support them better. This new system only started this week.

*Question* – Colin advised that there will be money put into the mental health of children by the Scottish Government. Do we have resources to make use of the money?

*Answer* - Yes, we do currently have Mental Health and wellbeing units/awards, Pupil Care and Welfare Officers, Home School Practitioner, Mental Health Ambassadors (over 20 staff) within the school. We are already looking at what resources would assist Newbattle moving forward with this.

**Digital Centre**

A further £10.5million has been secured for the Digital Strategy in Midlothian. This means that every young person in Midlothian will receive a device. Newbattle will remain at the forefront with the Digital Centre of Excellence.

Additional Comments

“Parents Evening went really well – smooth and efficient”.

“Testing set up went smoothly”.

“Senior music pupils were delighted to be back in and was very well organised”.

*Question* - Pam asked about the plans for BGE Parents Evening, in particular S3 pupils who are going through coursing.

*Answer* - Gib advised that we have had to change the timeline for these things, however acknowledges that this has not yet been shared with parent/carers. We will arrange to share this with