

**Viewforth High School  
Parent Council Meeting Minutes  
15<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

1. **Present – In person** – Alex Tomlinson (Chair), Lisa Moore (Head Teacher), Sarah McNamee (Deputy Head Teacher),  
**Online** –Jennifer Fenelon, Lara Smith, Lisa Brown, Erika Cragg
2. **Apologies** – Mark Reid, Ree Murray, Tatiana Chebotar
3. **Minutes of previous meeting** – The December Meeting Minutes were approved offline on Thursday 4th January 2024.
4. **Treasurer Update**  
Mark has completed the finances for year end 2023. These have been signed. There are 2 files – one for funding and one for the ring-fenced money awarded by the Mary Janet King Trust for the Fife Festival of Music entries and extracurricular music activities.
5. **Curriculum Pathways Update (Lisa M and Sarah McN)**
  - The proposed change will take place from August 2024.
  - The reasons for the proposed change:
    - **To get Viewforth High School to an equitable number of learning hours which pupils are experiencing within other schools in Fife and across Scotland:**
      - In March 2023 the Scottish Government published a consultation paper prescribing the minimum annual learning hours which equates to 27.5 learning hours per week.
      - The majority of schools across Scotland are already delivering 27.5 learning hours per week for Secondary schools.
      - At the moment Viewforth is 30 minutes short against the Government figure. When totalled up over the course of the school year this amounts to 19 hours less teaching at Viewforth High School.
      - Secondary Head teachers in Fife have been working to increase to be in line with the recommended learning hours. This will take place over a phased period of 3 years.
      - The reason a phased approach is necessary is down to bus contracts which have already been agreed. Whilst Viewforth does not have a bus contract, all other Secondary schools within Fife do.
      - The 4 Kirkcaldy based High Schools – Viewforth High School, Balwearie High School, St Andrews High School, and Kirkcaldy High School are forming a collaboration and will implement the change in August 2024 as the bus contracts for the other 3

High Schools are currently up for renewal. This means that there is the opportunity now for negotiation on bus times to support the change in proposed start and finish times of the school day.

- **To allow the improvement of the curriculum offer within Viewforth High School:**
- Viewforth High School currently offers 6 subjects in S4, however, almost all schools in Scotland offer 7 subjects.
  - Viewforth are looking to move to 7 subjects for S4.
  - It is proposed that Registration is removed as a block of time at the beginning of each day. Less than 50% of pupils attend registration and it is not valued by both pupils and staff. This would be more appropriately spent as part of learning time.
  - By introducing a 33-period week this will facilitate better progression for pupils.
  - There will be more opportunities to study a subject in a neighbouring school if it is not currently being offered – this is particularly helpful when it comes to the offering of Advanced Highers.
  - Working closely with Fife College to continue to improve the offer to pupils.
  - By increasing the period lengths from 45 to 50 minutes – learners needs will be met more efficiently. This is especially important in practical subjects.
- In order to deliver on the equitable learning and improving the curriculum objectives, there needs to be a change to the school week.
  - The 4 Kirkcaldy based High Schools are proposing to move to an A-Symmetric week from August 2024 and a week may look something like this (8.40am-3.25pm Monday-Thursday and 8.40am-1.05pm on a Friday);
  - By aligning the week across the 4 Kirkcaldy based High Schools this will allow better opportunities to work together to provide a wider curriculum to all pupils.
  - Fife Council are working closely with Active Schools to plan activities for Friday afternoons for pupils who wish to participate.
  - Friday afternoons could be used for Developing the Young Workforce opportunities.
  - 36% of Viewforth High School pupils are eligible for free school meals. At interval on a Friday there will be hot food, or a cold grab bag can be taken before leaving on the Friday.
  - Friday afternoons will also allow professionals within schools to work together.

## Questions arising from the Update:

**1. Where a visiting specialist attends on a Friday afternoon – e.g. music lesson. What will happen?**

Viewforth High School have spoken to the visiting specialists who usually attend on a Friday afternoon. If the proposed change is made to the timetable, the visiting specialists will attend at an alternative time during the school week.

**2. What happens if the other 3 Kirkcaldy based high schools cannot negotiate the change in time for the bus contracts?**

The bus contracts went out to tender before the Christmas holidays so it is hopeful that this will be known very soon. Once this has come back timings will be looked at and it is hopeful there will be some flexibility in start and end times. Viewforth will sit alongside the other 3 high schools so that a common alignment takes place.

**3. Will the school remain open on a Friday afternoon for extra-curricular activities?**

If staff wish to run extra-curricular activities on a Friday afternoon, then these can be run at the discretion of the staff – as is currently in place for lunchtime and after school activities, these are run on a purely voluntary basis.

**4. How would the new timetable affect pupils with additional support?**

All young people at Viewforth High School will benefit from the additional 30 minutes learning time. Active Schools are looking at the possibility of running clubs on a Friday afternoon which will be open to all pupils. There are no separate arrangements for pupils with additional support – they will continue to receive the additional support during the normal school day. With the proposed change to the timetable, this would be Monday-Thursday 8.40am-3.25pm and on a Friday 8.40am-1.05pm.

**5. Would it be the same teaching staff for S3 and S4?**

For continuity, wherever possible it will be the same subject teacher for S3 and S4.

**6. For S3 pupils do they need to drop a subject? And does making choices so early on (end of 2<sup>nd</sup> year for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year subjects) restrict pupils as they may decide later through their schooling that a different pathway would have been more appropriate?**

S3 pupils currently sit eight subjects and will need to choose one to drop at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> year. This will enable 7 subjects to be taken forward to 4<sup>th</sup> year. The Wider Achievement options will enable pupils to experience different subject options across the curriculum throughout their senior years – e.g. hospitality / Duke of Edinburgh / Sciences.

## 6. Head Teacher's Report – Lisa M

### Staffing

Home Economics - Heather Aird has accepted a Support for Learning post in another school and Viewforth are interviewing candidates for this post.

Business Education – Currently recruiting and interviews will be taking place.

Principal Teacher of Guidance - Callum Simpson has accepted a promoted post at another Fife school - interviews are taking place for a replacement for this post.

Christine Edwards is due to start her maternity leave in February. A temporary Principal Teacher of Guidance post has been advertised to cover her maternity leave. Interviews will be taking place for this post.

Beverley Park has resigned her post as Support for Learning teacher and her post has been advertised.

## 7. Ongoing Actions (Matters Arising)

Name	Action
Alex	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To provide a Newsletter insert for the Winter Newsletter. <b>Completed – 12/12/23</b></li><li>2. To send out the Health and Wellbeing information. <b>Completed – 13/01/24</b></li><li>3. To update the website to reflect the recent Funding Award. <b>Not Started – Due to the Christmas holiday and change in School Staff, will be completed soon.</b></li><li>4. To initiate the payment of £315 to the school for the entry fees for the Fife Festival of Music. <b>Completed – 08/12/23</b></li><li>5. To approve the year end accounts from Mark. <b>Completed – 13/01/24</b></li></ol>
Lisa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To have the follow up text sent out regarding the senior parents evening – how parents/carers can contact Guidance if they were not able to meet at the Parent's Evening. <b>Completed</b></li><li>2. To discuss the upcoming overseas trip to see if the Parent Council are required to assist with funding. <b>The Battlefields trip is taking place in June at a cost of £550pp. Parent Council to investigate possible funding.</b></li><li>3. To discuss the dangers of crossing between cars, especially in wintry weather / monitor the ice situation within the school grounds to ensure that there is not a repeat of the morning of 4<sup>th</sup> December. <b>Prior to Christmas pupils were advised to be mindful within the car park especially during the winter weather. The school have been in touch with Fife Council. Fife Council have come out and agreed that a number of paths within the school will now be gritted.</b></li></ol>

<b>Leona</b>	<p>1. To find out what details need to be included in the funding report. <b>In Progress - Leona has accessed the Portal and identified the information that will be required in order that the report can be written and submitted as per the terms of the Grant Award.</b></p> <p><b>Leona will create 2 forms (Pupil &amp; Parent/Carer) and (Teachers involved in supporting the pupils at the Festival). Questions will be created on both forms so that the relevant information is obtained for the creation of the final report.</b></p>
<b>Mark</b>	<p>1. To authorise the payment of £315 to the school. <b>Completed – 09/12/23</b></p> <p>2. To complete the year end accounts and send to Alex for approval. <b>Completed – 13/01/24</b></p>

## 8. Members Questions

No members questions were submitted.

## 9. AOCB

- **Gritting of the School Paths Update**

This issue has now been resolved. Fife Council have agreed to grit the paths.

- **Recruitment of a new Treasurer**

Mark would like to leave the post of Treasurer. To provide a smooth transition the post will be advertised. Mark has created a task list and is happy to help work alongside the new Treasurer to make sure that they are confident in the new post.

## 10. Actions Arising from the Meeting

<b>Name</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Alex</b>	<p>1.To update the website to reflect the latest funding award.</p> <p>2.To create a post to be distributed to the Parent Forum so that the role of Treasurer can be filled.</p>
<b>Leona</b>	<p>1.To create forms for the Fife Festival of Music to be passed to Brian Beaton. Comments from these will form the basis of the report, which is a requirement of the funding.</p> <p>2.Look at the possibility of funding opportunities for the Battlefields trip.</p>
<b>Lisa</b>	<p>1.To check with the Business Manager that the Fife Festival of Music funding is in the bank account and let Alex know.</p>

## 11. Date and time of next meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm hybrid (Zoom and in person at the School).