

**Viewforth High School
Parent Council Meeting Minutes
24th March 2025 (Online)**

1. **Present** – Alex Tomlinson (Chair), Lisa Moore (Head Teacher), Daryl Scott (DofE) Jennifer Fenelon, Lara Smith
2. **Apologies** – Fiona Davidson (Treasurer), Kirsty Hannigan (Vice-Chair), Erika Cragg
3. **Minutes of previous meeting** – were approved offline on 5th March 2025.
4. **Daryl Scott – Duke of Edinburgh Awards talk**
 - Daryl is the Duke of Edinburgh Manager for Viewforth. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is growing in Viewforth and for the first time pupils will be moving on to the Gold Award.
 - Currently, there is a small group in 3rd year working towards their Bronze with a larger group working towards Silver. For the first time there is now a small group who have complete Silver and will be moving on to the Gold Award.
 - Whilst the Duke of Edinburgh is evolving and growing considerably at Viewforth in terms of offering and uptake, there is a considerable cost involved in running and taking part in the Award and as such funding opportunities should be explored to assist where possible so that cost to pupils is minimal ensuring equity of access to the Award. Examples of costs include:
 - Licence;
 - Expedition – currently planning the Silver Expedition for June where pupils will camp at the Pillars of Hercules which is the cheapest option but still a considerable cost;
 - With the Gold award there requires to be a lone leader – it may be that Viewforth will have to link up with another school so that the expedition can go ahead as this would be another large cost.
 - Minibus licence so that pupils can be transported more cost effectively. The school have a minibus but with very minimal numbers of staff able to drive the bus on their licence. It would be very beneficial if staff involved in Duke of Edinburgh had the ability to drive the minibus.
 - Trackers would be very helpful for safety reasons to ensure pupil safety – these are costly.
 - It would be beneficial for the group to have access to their own Gazebo.
 - There is a lot more cost with the Gold as there is a residential – it is estimated at around £400 per pupil.
 - Daryl can be the leader and assessor for the Bronze group but is unable to be the assessor for Silver and Gold. Monika has agreed to

do the necessary training so that the Silver group going out in June will be supported.

- The team are trying as much as possible to ensure the necessary training and expertise are in house but there are upfront costs to have the training and expertise in place. However, once the initial costs have been paid, then the long-term benefit means that there are lower costs in the future.

5. Head Teacher – Fife Transforming Learning Digital Devices talk – Lisa M

- On 6th March, Transforming Learning received full approval from Fife Council reflecting the capital budget for the next 10 years.
- Pupils in Fife will be provided with a 1:1 device.
- Communication will be sent out to parent/carers in due course.
- The aim is to provide staff and learners with the tools needed to transform ways we engage with teaching and learning.
- This confirms:
 - iPads for all P6-S6 and teaching staff (and every new P6 cohort receives a new device)
 - 11th Generation (upgraded processor and increased storage!)
- An iPad and stylus will be provided for all teaching staff.
 - Staff iPad stays with school – Schools track
 - Pupil iPad stays with pupil -Electronically track
- This confirms:
 - Gold Stock - Secondary Schools given extra iPads based on a 3% breakage rate.
- This confirms:
 - Secondary schools have a lending library.
 - Based on a 3.5% school roll.
 - Up to the school to decide who manages the lending library.
- This confirms:
 - Deployment Schedule – Headteacher has access to a Spreadsheet confirming the dates for deployment for each school.
- Chargers – Plug and USB-C cable provided with each 1:1 device. These plugs should go home and not be used in school. If kept in school, plugs must be PAT Tested.
- This confirms:
 - Fife School App Library (curated to reflect best practice in learning, teaching and assessment)
 - Separate Library for our special schools and learners with complex ASN.

Questions arising from the update:

Can the iPad take photos?

Yes, for the purpose of being able to upload work. The Council are currently working on a safe usage policy.

What will the learning day look like with an electronic device? There is concern that young people are digitally connected out of school and school is the place where pupils connect and discuss in person away from being glued to a screen all day.

Pupils will still be writing on paper as that is how the SQA exams take place. The devices are there to enhance learning, rather than replace learning. Additionally, the iPads will not replace work that takes place on desktops and laptops.

6. Head Teacher's report – Lisa M

Key Dates:

- Reach Assemblies – scheduled for 4th April.
- Last day of term – dress down day in support of the Foodbank. Pupils to bring an item.
- Study leave begins Thursday 24th April and ends Thursday 29th May
- Senior phase induction – Friday 30th May.
- Masterclass timetable has been finalised and distributed.
- New timetable will form a staged approach:
 - Everyone currently in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year they will start their new timetable on Monday 26th May.
 - Seniors will have their senior phase induction and will begin on Wednesday 4th June. This occurs after the Inservice day and holiday which fall on Monday 2nd June and Tuesday 3rd June.

SQA Exam Dates:

In February the SQA changed some of the dates of the exams. It is important to recheck with the SQA when the exam is taking place in case it has changed.

On the first Monday after the Easter break – Monday 21st, Lisa Moore and Brian Beaton (SQA Coordinator) will be holding assemblies for the seniors around best exam practices. Individual exam timetables will also be printed and distributed to the young people.

Staffing:

Sarah McNamee returned to Levenmouth Academy. As East Lothian Council have appointed Alastair Stewart in a permanent position, Lyndsey Jack is now acting Deputy Head whilst Mark Devlin is now the acting principal teacher of curriculum. This is expected to run through to summer, whilst interviews take place to fulfil the position.

7. Ongoing Actions (Matters Arising)

Name	Action
Alex	1. Invite Daryl Scott from Duke of Edinburgh to the next meeting. Completed 21/03/25 2. Update Lisa with the thoughts from the group on the new school week. Completed 15/02/25
Leona	1. Explore funding opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh equipment and D1 license to facilitate staff driving pupils to expeditions. Completed 06/03/25 - equipment funding with ASDA Foundation. Will look at D1 next.
Lisa	1. Email Alex with the equipment required and associated costs for funding. Completed 29/01/25 2. To enquire with Fife College about the possibility of a year 2 photography student/students taking the beginning of year school photographs. Because of the time of the year, early in the calendar it is not feasible for the College to support this. Lisa spoke to schools within the same demographic as Viewforth . There is a school in Glenrothes who use an independent photographer. Lisa has emailed the photographer to see what the cost would look like so that it can be compared to the current offering. 3. Provide an update from the meeting where the Prelim exam diet was discussed in reference to exams before and after Christmas. The prelims will be separated. 4th year prelims will take place before Christmas – end of November/beginning of December. S5 and S6 will be after Christmas but they will start a little later than previous – rather than first day back, there will be a few days before the exams will begin. 4. Provide an update on Workit. (Ongoing depending on the new timetabling being scheduled).
All	1. To think about the new school week and WhatsApp Alex with comments on advantages / disadvantages so these can be collated and provided to Lisa. Completed by 15/02/25

8. Members' Questions

There still seems to be issues in being able to access toilets at break and lunch with pupils locking themselves in and as such they cannot be used for the purpose intended. Lisa will ensure that staff on break and lunchtime duties will monitor the toilets closely.

There are occasions where departments will email parents to let them know of an upcoming test. This is positive as it makes the parents aware even if the pupil has not let them know – enabling the parent to support revision for the test. This would benefit from being consistent throughout as it has a positive impact. Lisa will suggest the possibility of including a BGE assignment calendar which already exists in the senior phase.

9. AOCB

Lara wanted to make the school aware that the after-school study sessions as well as the Friday afternoon pizza study sessions have made a huge impact academically and in confidence and is a real asset to have during the exam period – Lisa will feed this positive comment back to the team

Alex asked if the Newsletter can be distributed to all parents rather than just the primary carer. As it is free to distribute through GroupCall email, this will not have any cost implications. Lisa will ensure that all contacts receive the newsletter going forward.

10. Actions Arising from the Meeting

Name	Action
Lisa	1. To update the findings from the independent photographer and to make a cost comparison with Tempest. 2. Provide an update on Workit once the new timetables are in place – so staffing commitments are more visible. 3. To inform staff of the positive impact the afterschool study support and Friday afternoon pizza study sessions are. 4. Feedback that visibility of tests in BGE are positive and a consistent approach would be beneficial, especially in 3rd year where this may impact what classes the young person are allocated in 4th year. 5. To request that the newsletter is sent out to all contacts rather than just being the primary contact. 6. Ensure that staff on duty at break and lunchtime are monitoring the toilets to ensure pupils who need to go can and that there are not groups of pupils locking themselves inside.
Daryl	1. Provide a priority list with associated estimated costs for Duke of Edinburgh so that appropriate funding can be targeted in order.
Leona	1. Explore funding opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh equipment and D1 license to facilitate staff driving pupils to expeditions. When in receipt of the priority list, this can be more targeted.
Lara	1. Contact Nisa to see if there is any possibility of funding – in general and for Duke of Edinburgh.

11. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 12th May 2025 at 6pm online.