Parent Council Head Teacher’s Report – March 2016

Our Vision

To ensure a confident, nurturing & inclusive learning community where ALL achieve their true potential & embrace life’s challenges.

Staffing
Lauren Hastings, temporary teacher of PE left on February 12th to take up a full time permanent position at Portobello High School.

Gregor McNeish took up the post of temporary teacher of PE on Monday 22nd February.

S3 Profiles.
All S3 pupils are now engaged in producing their S3 profile document.

These profiles allow pupils to recognise and record the development of skills and achievements acquired during S1 – S3.

These skills and achievements apply across all CfE areas studied in the S1-S3 phase.

It is hoped that the production of such a profile will assist in helping pupils reflect on their learning and also in the future production of CVs and personal statements which will help them achieve a positive destination.

The process of producing the S3 profile starts on 7 March 2016 and final profile will be issued to pupils in May 2016.

New School Delay
We have been advised by our contractor, OHMG that due to the adverse weather conditions over the last few months the construction work on the new school building will finish five weeks later than they had anticipated and will now not be completed until 28 October 2016. Unfortunately this means we will not be able to move into the new building after the October break as had been planned and, as it is our intention to move over a school holiday period to minimise disruption to pupils, this means the opening of the new school will now be at the start of the new school term in January 2017.

Although this delay is obviously disappointing, there will be opportunities between construction work finishing on site and our move date that will allow us to set up familiarisation visits for pupils and staff in the run up to the opening. As you may have seen for yourself the new building is now very much starting to take shape and I am confident that our new school will provide a fantastic teaching and learning environment and the wait will be worthwhile.

S2 Ski Trip
I accompanied our annual ski trip along with Mr Campbell, Ms McGinley and Mrs Somerville to New Hampshire, USA in the period 22nd – 29th January.

The 40 S2 pupils were an absolute credit to themselves and the school throughout the trip. Their manners, politeness and good behaviour was commented on by everyone from the airline staff to the ski instructors.

Trips like this provide great opportunities for our pupils to experience their hobby in a unique setting whilst learning skills around independence and personal responsibility.

It was a real pleasure to be part of this again and witness first hand our pupils and staff having a tremendous experience in a tremendous part of the world.

D Dempster
BFPA Inaugural Burns Supper
The new Boroughmuir Former Pupils Association held its inaugural Burn's Supper at Meggetland on Friday 29th January.

Our Head team (Head Boy/Girl and Depute Head Boy Girl) represented the pupil body and Claire Paterson DHT S5/6 and Liz Leslie Acting Business Manager represented the staff.

It was an excellent evening with input from our pipe band and one of our Scottish country dancers. Thanks to all involved and here’s looking forward to next year’s.

S2 Stock Market Challenge
All S2 pupils were involved in the annual Stock Market Challenge event on Tuesday 23rd February. Pupils worked in teams of 4 taking on the roles of Floor Trader, Finance Manager, Investment Manager and Media Analyst. They all started with £15,000 to invest in and were recommended to ‘speculate to accumulate’ with some teams making in excess of £40,000. Over the afternoon the atrium was filled with the buzz of noise as they checked prices, listened to the financial news bulletins and bought and sold shares from the S5/6 Stock Managers.

Future Careers – Evening for Parents at Dynamic Earth.
At our recent “Future Choice” events for S2 and S4/5 we have promoting the use of www.myworldofwork.co.uk as a fantastic resource to support subject choices and career planning. There is a free event for parents at Dynamic Earth from on 19th April 6.30-8pm which is entitled “Discovering Digital World Parent Insight Evening” If you wish to find out more about career and future opportunities in this field, here is the link to find out more. https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/discovering-digital-world-parent-insight-evenings

Seafood in Schools 23rd & 24th March
We are very lucky to have been selected to take part in a two day “Seafood in Schools” Interdisciplinary experience which will involve all our P7s from South Morningside and Bruntsfield and all S1 pupils. Our P7s at Buckstone will take advantage of a funded day out later in the session. This project is fully funded by the Scottish Government. Pupils will get a chance to learn about, taste and experience the Scottish Seafood Industry. They will learn about the process from “Sea to Plate”, get to taste of a range of our Scottish Seafood and watch cooking demonstrations from Chefs.

We would also like to invite all P7 and S1 parents to the Home Economics Department for a Seafood Community event from 4.30-6pm on Wednesday 23rd March when you can see what the children have been learning and get a wee taste for yourselves! Please come and join us.

National Qualifications
As we near the end of the academic year can I wish all our senior pupils well in their preparations for the upcoming National Examinations.

Exam Leave commences for pupils in S5/6 on Friday 29th April 12.50pm.

For pupils in S4 is Tuesday 3rd May.

Pupils return after their exams on Thursday 2nd June for Induction days on Thursday and Friday morning. S6 have their leavers’ breakfast on Friday 29th April from 10am – 11.30am before leaving the school for the final time!

Nearly all subject departments are providing study support classes after school to give additional support to those who feel they need it. Pupils should know when these classes are but the days and times are listed on the web site and on posters around the school as well as in classrooms. Please encourage your children to go along and get that bit of extra help which just might make all the difference.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland has a very good website that provides parents a range of resources including the ‘Nutshell’ series.
Nationals in a Nutshell and Highers in a Nutshell give parents a summary overview of course content and assessment are really useful documents. 

There are other websites also that teachers will have provided for your children including the BBC Bitesize which has a range of useful revision and assessment resources. 
http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/levels/z6gw2hv

Additional information exists on our website in the Curriculum section within Information.

**Braids Rotary – Georgia USA.**

Every year S6 pupils across Scotland can apply via their local Rotary Club for a Scholarship, provided by the Rotary Club of Georgia (USA), to have a study year in Georgia after S6. In our area pupils apply via the Braids Rotary Club. This year across Scotland there were only 7 places available. 4 of our pupils have been successful in gaining a place which is an outstanding achievement! Congratulations to Jasmin Duncanson, Matthew Murray, Rachael Farren and Mhairi Dunnett.

**Mandarin**

Boroughmuir has teamed up with Independent school, George Watson's College and James Gillespie's High School to establish a Centre of Excellence for Chinese Teaching. The initiative will be funded by the Swire Trust as part of the Swire Chinese Language Programme which is being established in certain parts of the UK to mark the 200th anniversary of Swire Group. The programme is guaranteed to run for a minimum of 5 years with the likelihood of an extension to 10 years.

I and the 2 other Headteachers as well as the staff of the three schools have worked collaboratively to plan an ambitious programme which will benefit hundreds of pupils each year. In this first year we are offering Mandarin National 5/4 courses in S3 and S5/6. We will also be offering taster courses during S5 activity periods and perhaps in S6 also. We hope to offer some provision also into at least one of our feeder primary schools this year. In year 2 we plan to roll this out to the other feeder primaries and also provide progression from National 5 to Higher.

I am absolutely delighted at this new collaboration and believe that it will bring an exciting and relevant new context of learning to Boroughmuir and our 2 partner schools.

**TEDx / IGNITE @ Boroughmuir**

On Thursday 10th March Boroughmuir High School hosted the inaugural TEDx Bruntsfield event in St Oswald’s Hall. This event had a diverse group of speakers including the Head of an Autism Charity, Head of Innovation for PWC, the first Briton to dive to 100m on a single breath and the 2014 Women of the Future Arts & Culture Shortlist Nominee. The full list of speakers can be found on the website below.

https://www.ted.com/tedx/events/16300

This event was followed by an Ignite Edinburgh event in which 9 pupils from Boroughmuir individually got up on stage and gave a talk about something they are passionate about.

In this event the pupils had 20 slides and 5 minutes to present on their topic, which were as varied as drumming, fairytales, feminism and the numbers 2 and 73!

It was a great night and one we hope to repeat. Well done to all!

**The Basics**

Can I thank all parents for ensuring that pupils get to school on time in the morning with the proper equipment for classes and with the proper form of dress code. Pupils who do this on a daily basis represent themselves and the school as we would wish and are in a far better position to do well at school.

In the run up to National exams it is especially vital that pupils bring all the equipment needed to participate properly in the exam i.e pencils, pens, ruler, calculator etc. Only ‘see through’ pencil cases can be taken into official SQA exams.
Responsibility of Valuables
Can I take this opportunity to remind all our pupils, staff and visitors that they must keep valuables in their possession at all times. The school cannot be held responsible for the safety of personal possessions such as mobile phones, jewellery etc unless a staff member has taken possession of the item.
Although the incidences of loss or theft in the school are low my advice is not to bring valuable items to school and if you must then to keep them with you at all times.

Web site /Twitter
Please sign up for our Twitter Feed and keep an eye on our website for information on all that is happening in the school.

Recent Events

Wednesday 20th January – S5/6 Prelims
Friday 29th January
Friday 22nd January – S2 Ski Trip
Friday 29th January
Monday 1st February S2/3 Tracking Reports
Thursday 11th February Top of the Pops event, 19.00-21.30 in St Oswalds
Monday 15th February – Mid Term Break
Friday 19th February
Thursday 25th February S4 Course Choice Evening, 18.30-19.15 in the Atrium
Thursday 25th February S5 Course Choice Evening, 13.30-20.15 in Atrium
Tuesday 1st March – Munich Visitors at Boroughmuir
Thursday 10th March
Thursday 3rd March S2 Course Choice Evening, 19.00-20.00 in the Atrium
Friday 4th March Munich Exchange Ceilidh in St Oswalsd
Friday 4th March S2 Progress Reports
Monday 7th March S2 Parent’s Consultation Evening
Thursday 10th March TEDx Event in St Oswalds

Future Events

Friday 18th March S5/6 Progress Reports
Monday 21st March S1 Tracking Reports
Wednesday 23rd March - HPV Immunisations
Thursday 24th March
Friday 24th March - Easter Holidays
Monday 11 April
Monday 18th April Spring Holiday

Future Parent Council Meetings

Wednesday 27th January
Wednesday 16th March
Tuesday 26th April
Tuesday 14th June

David C. Dempster
Head Teacher
March 2016