

Senior School Parent Liaison Group
Meeting held on 11th February 2019
In Senior School, Room 1
At 7pm



Present: Mrs Angus, Rector, Mrs Reilly, Senior Depute Rector, Mr Milligan, Director of PE and Sport, Mrs Irene McMaster, Transitus Representative, Mrs Lisa Hutton, S1 Representative, Mrs Karen Burns, S2 Representative, Mrs Jacqui Scullion, S4 Representative, Mrs Fiona McMillan, S5 Representative, Mrs Shona Findlater, S6 Representative, Mr Graeme McNicol, Head of English, Mr Allan McKay, Head of Transitus and Depute Head of Junior School

Apologies: Mr Stuart Cruickshank, S3 Representative,

The Rector welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Mrs Reilly for chairing the last meeting. She welcomed Mr Milligan, Director of PE and Sport and advised the Senior School Liaison Group that the meeting in May would be the last meeting for this rotation and new members would be sought over the summer term to join the Senior School Liaison Group for the session 2019/20.

1. Minutes of the Meeting on 10th October 2018 were passed with no changes.
2. Matters arising from the last meeting were answered in the minute circulated and Mr Milligan was in attendance at this meeting to address the Sports Questions.

Mr Milligan advised the meeting that on a weekend the School regularly fielded 9 rugby teams and up to 12 hockey teams, supervised by 7 members of the PE staff with the help of Senior and Junior School teachers and parent/pupil volunteers. The School's ethos is one of participation - to offer every pupil the opportunity to play either Hockey or Rugby. It is often the case that teams fielded by other independent schools, even though they were far larger than St Columba's, they would often only field two teams. This means that some pupils may not have the opportunity to compete, but as often as possible the staff will try and do training with the teams who do not get to play.

While most of the independent school teams play only Hockey or Rugby for the majority of the School year, St Columba's offers Hockey and Rugby on the curriculum in the Autumn term, with pupils then playing, football, badminton, basketball, boys' hockey, cross country, running etc. This

allows the staff to encourage pupils who enjoy a particular sport, to perhaps join local clubs who specialise in the activity. Mr Milligan advised that after-School Hockey and Rugby is available all year round.

Mr Milligan advised that injuries in Rugby are taken very seriously indeed. Boys are all taught the correct way to tackle, but unfortunately injuries do happen and mostly at the start of a season, but all schools are working as closely as possible to keep the game as safe as possible. St Columba's follows the SRU protocol.

Mr Milligan advised that asking boys to play hockey competitively on one day during the week would have a large impact on their studies, and with all the PE staff already having a full teaching timetable, there would be no one to facilitate this.

3. School Update

The Rector outlined some of the trips the Senior Pupils have recently been on; these included a Physics Trip to CERN in Switzerland, a Spanish trip to Madrid, a German trip to Munich and a Geography trip to the Lake District. The Pipe Band will shortly be going on a trip to Omagh in Northern Ireland to take part in the St Patrick's Day celebrations.

At a recent Rotary competition our public speakers were runners up, as well as being the youngest competitors. A Support for Learning coffee morning will shortly be taking place and this will be open to all parents.

The Wellbeing Centre is now open and the recruitment for a School nurse will shortly be underway. The Drama Club, with help from the Performing Arts Technician, former pupil Fiona Mackinnon, will put on a performance in June with support from the lighting and sound team led by pupil Scott Downie.

A number of pupils across the whole school have been involved in the Inverclyde festival with excellent results. Going forward the School has approached the organisers of the festival to offer to host the Pipes and Drums competition, which has grown enormously over the years. Fiona Mackinnon had also offered for next year to offer her support for the tutoring of pupils for the LAMDA qualification.

The new Anti-Bullying Policy, will be launched by Mrs Reilly on the 6th March. Mrs Reilly thanked all the Parents and Staff for filling in the on-line survey and taking part in the discussion groups.

4. Mrs Reilly asked the Senior School Liaison Group members to discuss questions from Education Scotland's HGIOS4, "How Good is Our School? 4th Edition." The questions offered the opportunity for parents to discuss all aspects of the School's performance under this indicator and responses will support the School's Leadership team in taking forward required developments.

5. **AOCB**

Transitus Hockey – There is concern that the C team are still not able to get games or sometimes no practise on a Saturday and they are not rotated into the A or B team. Mr Milligan explained that not all schools are bringing a C team with them, with most of the independent schools only playing two teams on a Saturday.

Mr Milligan advised that regarding the rotation of the girls into the teams that it would be unfair to the pupil and to the team if someone was swapped into an A or B team and they then felt overwhelmed or performed badly. Going forward into S1 the Hockey teams would grow in size from 8 players to 11 and this would give more girls the opportunity to play.

Firefly Transitus – Some parents had advised that pupils are still confused about firefly and that some pupils were unaware of deadlines for their homework because it was not on Firefly, and asked if all teachers could put homework on Firefly for Transitus.

The Rector advised that very shortly Mrs Berry, Depute Rector was going to be running a trial for S1 and Transitus parents regarding the rollout of a Pupil Portal on firefly and that from next session all teachers would be issuing homework on firefly.

Homework Club – pupils being left unattended or pupils turning up after 4pm for homework club to find that it is not on.

The Rector advised that homework club is supervised by members of the Senior Management Team. Occasionally they may be called out of the room to deal with an important issue, but they do try and not be away from the room for a long period of time. Members of SMT are in school until 6.30 pm.

Mrs Reilly advised that if by 3.50pm no one has turned up for homework club, then the Senior Management member may have returned to their office, *(Note: Parents should ask their son/daughter to come to Reception if they turn up late and report to the member of management team).*

The next meeting of the Senior School Liaison Group will take place on Tuesday 14th May at 7.30pm at Senior School.

Andrea Angus
Rector
7th May 2019