

Coláiste Pobail Baile

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Minutes Parents Council 12th Oct 2020

Zoom meeting - Attendees X 48

Welcome to R McGrath – brief introductions

Brief word from chairperson – Yvette O'Brien

Lates & Punctuality

Q - Punctuality – can parents get a text re lates.

5th years will get the text to begin. Juniors will be phoned directly – 1st years especially as it might cause more anxiety if parents were to get such a notification.

5th years are part of the initial pilot so we may use the app in place of vsware for other years in time. Vsware is very costly so LCC will push the use of the app in the coming weeks. It's totally free of charge and it the best option moving forward.

Updates/ pdfs / video links can also be sent via the app so varied communication will be supported.

The app will allow you target specific parents also so it could prove very useful.

App download instructions were shared in the chat option of zoom and are also available on the website.

To date there are 400 people signed up to the app.

Continuous lates will incur detentions. Its incremental and will start at a 30 min detention and will increase by 30 min for each late. Holding students in the GPA(General Purpose Area) was not a good use of resources. Where notes are presented they can be signed and students can proceed to class.

Detention will be after school on Fri. Up to 70 students can be seated – 2 metres apart.

It is having an impact on unexplained lates so far.

Conversations will be had around reasons for poor punctuality and supports if needed can be applied.

Admissions Policy 2021

Admission is now a 2 part process. It's all online.

The law has changed and the 2 steps involved are – Initial Application is made first and then enrolment follows if a place is being offered. The initial application form is currently live and on the website. Packs will also be dropped to the primary schools this week.

Applications are being emailed in currently. They are then processed. No forms are being accepted by drop ins due to Covid restrictions. All printing will happen in the school. Enrolment uptake is high.

The deadline for step one of 2021 Admissions is oct 23rd 2020.

Illness & covid support

Support from parents is being sought to remind families not to send students to school if they are unwell or if there is a family member awaiting a test. We would seek support in getting this message out to parents.

Staff absenteeism- clarification provided that if there is a staff absence it's very hard to get a sub teacher of the subject that the student may be missing. Most absences are not planned so recruitment is very challenging and sub teachers are difficult to source.

This process was explained to the Parents assoc. in detail by Oide O Murchu.

The challenge of sourcing subject specific sub teachers is not unique to Covid times, this is a constant challenge for schools. Panels of subs are not available at post primary level. LCC is lucky in most instances to get a vetted and qualified teacher to step in.

LCC understands this is not ideal but this is the situation school find themselves in currently.

As it stands absence is filled by

- 1- Part time teachers
- 2- PME's (Professional Master of Education – Trainee Teacher)
- 3- School S&S (supervision & Substitution) scheme. Where possible if a qualified teacher of the missing subject is available that is matched but it's not always possible. In a normal year, ECA (extra curricular activity) would have led to a lot of cover being used. The absences now however are now for a more sustained periods and this is frustrating but the school is doing the best they can with the resources available.

If the parents council know of any vetted and registered teachers looking for hours please ask them to contact the school

Q - Are absent teachers requested to stay at home "in restricted movement" and are they expected to be available and to engage with students.

A- This is the case and within reason they are communicating with students via google classroom. If they are unwell they are not expected to engage with students.

There will be no live streaming of classes in any case – this has been ratified by the BOM (Board of Management).

Google Classroom

Siobhan O' Brien and Ger Nugent gave a brief presentation on how google classroom is being utilised to support students. A summary of classwork is shared with students for every class and is available to all students who are absent from school.

Live streaming has been trialled but it's not something that can work. There are GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) issues in addition to teachers teaching to the video and then this takes from the actual class. Therefore the best fit appears to be the use of google classrooms.

Learning in the classroom would be compromised if live classroom streaming was to be used. To date student engagement is very positive in using google classroom.

A quick tour of google classroom was given by Ger. The value of the iPad is key at the moment and LCC are using it to its full potential.

Any questions were welcomed and the layout of content was illustrated for parents. HW, assignments/ content etc all demonstrated.

Homework is being checked/corrected as normal but records of submission etc are being recorded online.

Feedback can be supported and corrections in class are still happening. Copies may not be being collected but work is being corrected collectively or for those students that are learning from home due to certified illness they can submit it to their teachers on this platform..

Q- Can parents get access to google classroom?

A - Parents can be added as "parents" but are not active members of the class. They can oversee work but not engage.

Google classrooms – LCC can monitor the use of the school domain. This platform is therefore safer and contained. Parents have signed up to the use of google classrooms for educational uses as part of the schools AUP. Parents should refer to the school journal/school website for terms and conditions of use.

Students should share their school passwords with parents and then parents can safely monitor all use.

Google meet can be used safely if we keep the school domain tight and just for the use of students and staff.

Any remaining google classroom issues can be emailed to techsupport@lccgmail.com

Wriggle App Updates

Q- Wriggle apps – updates have been a challenge, is there a fix?

This was an issue but in most cases it has been resolved now. Any outstanding issues can be resolved by class tutors.

Google classroom passwords can also be fixed by Tutors if there are concerns.

Oide O'Brien did outline one key observation and possible concern that parents might note.

Concerns about the time students are emailing and submitting work is a worry. Some work is being submitted at 2am & 3am. Student well-being is crucial and rest is key. Parents will share this concern for the school.

PTM options (Parent Teacher Meeting)

PTM need to be considered and are being discussed. Remote meetings are not practical. The DES (Dept of education & Skills)/ unions have not issued any guidelines. Ideas from staff incl:

- Nov assessments –2 reports will be issued at junior level. Assessment in relation to JC (Junior cert) and an assessment suggesting overview of progress. The care team of each year group will review reports and parents/guardians will be contacted if required for a check in.

8 people from each year group will make these calls. This is the current suggestion but is still being reviewed.

Q : What if a parents wants to meet a teacher?

A- Send an email requesting this and the teacher/tutor will contact you.

PTM Senior Level

Senior level = one report will be issued after assessments based on exams/progress.

Mocks will inform later reports. Phone calls will support these reports where deemed necessary by care teams.

Reports will have targets/ %/ feedback & comment.

Progress reports can inform future discussions regarding student progress so contact with teachers is welcome.

Principal noted that emails sent to teachers are cc'd to the Principal and the relevant Deputy working with that year group so responses do happen.

Ventilation & Classroom set ups

Cold classrooms – LCC is well ventilated and there is currently no need to wear jackets by students in classrooms. There are plenty of toilets and warm water in all.

In Nov. wearing jackets in classrooms will be reviewed. Jackets should be plain black jackets if not the official school jacket.

Hoodies / non-black jackets are creeping in and they are not allowed in school. They will be removed from students if worn.

Co-operation is being sought re this.

Q- Re corrections of HW

Can teachers be asked to give feedback re HW/ assignments that students are submitting. It happens in some subjects but not all?

HW is corrected in classrooms and principal will email staff reminding staff to share success criteria with students.

If a streamlined system of feedback could be given by staff that would be welcome, even be discussed.

Can homework/ project work be assigned more evenly during the school week – staff will be reminded to consider this in planning.

Suggested that success criteria and AFL (assessment for Learning) are shared with students. Success criteria are on the JCT website with learning objectives – www.jct.ie

Staff will be asked to share these guidelines on google classroom . These criteria may serve to focus conversations at home for parents. It will also serve self-assessment by students.

JCT success criteria links will also be shared on the app. The same criteria are not used for L. Cert currently. LC (leaving cert) should go to SEC (state exams commission) and go to archive and get 2019 papers and look a corrections and marking schemes.

This information will be shared on the website and app also.

Union questions were posed and the principal asked that specific questions be directed to the unions.