

Chair Andy Walker

## Welcome and Introductions

### Apologies

Name	Position
<b>Greg Welsh</b>	Head of Education (Primary, Early Learning and Resources)

### Attendees

Name	Position
<b>Andy Walker</b>	Chair West Lothian Parents Forum Chair James Young High School Parents Council Chair Williamston Primary School
<b>Lisamaria Purdie</b>	WLC Parental Involvement and Engagement officer Head Teachers at St Ninians RC Primary, Livingston
<b>Tim Ozdemir</b>	Chair Calderwood Primary School
<b>Cheralynne Lambe</b>	St Joseph's Primary, Linlithgow.
<b>Ruth Galloway-Blair</b>	Vice Chair Falla Hill Primary School Parent Council Chair Whitburn Academy PC
<b>Siobhan McGarty</b>	Head of Service for Secondary & ASN

### Agenda Item 1 2022 West Lothian Attainment - Siobhan McGarty delivered the presentation

Results of the presentation has been shared with the WLC executive.

Siobhan – Higher levels of pupils leaving school earlier than pre-pandemic years. This was true last academic year and is same again for the year just completed.

Still awaiting appeals which shall be the end of October. Figures will be updated, and revised figures shared with the forum.

All results are shared and discussed with all schools, not to be competitive but to allow schools to learn for others who may show a particular high level of achievement in particular subjects. The idea is to encourage discussion and facilitate the building of support networks between schools.

Ruth – Raised issue that she felt that the school she represented, Whitburn, had been performing particularly well which was something a great number of school parents recognised. The feeling was that the teachers were all extremely supportive of the pupils.

Siobhan – Agreed and stated that there had been a very welcome upturn in the school's performance. The school's leadership team had presented to the other WL schools over the journey they were on, which had been very well received.

Shona – Raised a concern about those new schools which only had an S1. This lack of an upper school was a concern for parents as the younger pupils would have a lack of visibility as to how more senior pupils behaved and what they brought to the whole school ecosystem i.e. Achievements.

Siobhan – WLC had been acutely aware of this and had created several programmes that brought S6s from the WL schools such as St. Margarets, Linlithgow and Broxburn Academies to buddy up with S1s at the newer schools to try

and fill the gap. The schools and WLC had been very careful to listen to the pupils and parents at these schools to try and establish what sort of activities be they in-school/after-school that can assist with this lack of upper school.

Shona – Appreciated the focus from WLC and the update from Siobhan.

Cheralynne – Had been part of the longleat interviews for the head teachers at one of the new schools and had been greatly impressed by all candidates. One of the questions posed was exactly the situation raised by Shona and the quality and originality of the responses from candidates had been hugely encouraging.

## **Agenda Item 2 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - Lisamaria**

[Slides to be provided by Lisamaria]

Ruth – Appreciated the presentation. All parents would be happy that there is such a focus on the rights and wellbeing of their children.

A point was raised regards the use of composite classes within school. The point raised was of a more personal nature rather than one to be discussed at the forum.

LM – Was happy to follow up on the issue out with the Forum.

A more general point regards the issue raised was of the need to understand the process for raising issues with schools and then what a parent's options were if there was not a satisfactory conclusion to the issue. Lisamaria outlined the process to follow in these situations which involved raising the issue directly with WL Councils Customer Service department so an issue can be logged and WLCs proper processes for investigation can be followed.

### [Complaints - West Lothian Council](#)

[ Ask Lisamaria what she would like to include regards this]

Cheralynne – St Joseph's is a Silver Rights School and was on the accreditation assessment board. St. Josephs have a "Rights of the Week" posted on Twitter each week. School try and make the promotion of the rights topical. The school is also very much an EcoSchool. When the pupils choose their topic for the year it is highly likely to be associated with the environment.

Tim – Was new to the focus of the implementation of UNCRC within Schools. Raised a question around the legal framework associated with the government policy stipulating its implementation.

LM – Informed the forum that the legal teams of WLC were very much involved with the assessment of the convention and its implementation across education, as were a number of departments across WLC.

## **Agenda Item 3 Parentzone Scotland - Parent Council Resource published September 2022 – Lisamaria**

[What is the Parent Council? | Parent Councils | Getting involved | Parent Zone \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[Parent Council Resource \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

LM – A very welcome update to the Parent Council documentation available on Education website of the Scottish Government. First update in 15 years. Would appreciate any feedback from WL schools on available material.

Shona – Thought the information and website looked very useful and user friendly. Asked if this was part of the Connect material available to parents.

Lisamaria – Connect fed into the document but remain a sperate entity.

Tim – Thought the look of the document and other resources were very good. Was very happy this was an update from the Scottish Government.

**General question around the use of Social Media platforms by schools and parent councils.**

[Internet, Social Media and E-Mail - West Lothian Council](#)

LM – Employees of WLC have guidelines governing usage of Social Media that they adhere to. Schools engage with parents in the way that they find suits their parents. Each school has to ensure data protection and GDPR are always guaranteed. There are particular issues around the sharing of images on social media platforms.

Parent Councils are separate entities to school and can use social media and related platforms in ways that best fits their requirements. These platforms should be used responsibly and in no way infringe school staff or pupils privacy.

Parent Councils are advised to engage with their school and agree a communication framework that covers how the school communicates with parents and how parent councils re-enforce this communication and what platforms they will use. This framework should be regularly reviewed.

ACTION: Parent Councils to share their experiences of communication and what they have found to work and not.

LM – Possible to have WLC Lead Digital Officer Laura Harkins attend a future meeting to discuss electronic communications. Currently Armadale Academy are trialling a messaging app Xpressions as a possible replacement for GROUPCALL.

**General question around methods to try and increase PC meeting attendance**

Cheralynne – Found that childcare was a barrier to many parents who had younger children. The PC offered a room adjacent to the one holding the PC meeting and provided suitable supervision for the children while the PC meeting was held.

Cheralynne – Found having senior pupils present on topics at PC meetings increased attendance.

Cheralynne – Coffee mornings had been a success in starting conversations with parents especially those new to the area and/or school.

Andy – School Apps for Parents had been well received by the Parents at Williamston Primary School.

Cheralynne – Social events were always popular and a good way of connecting with parents.