

# BANCHORY ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

## Minute of the Meeting held on 26 May 2022: Learning Plaza, Banchory Academy

**Present (members):** Trish Amundrud, Jacqueline Conroy, Sofi Izatt, Scott Newey, Alison Smart (Secretary) and Linda Stromberg (Chair).

**In attendance:** Robin Carter, Nick Ledger, Kelly Noble and Judith Wight (Rector).

**Apologies:** Cllr Yi-Pei Chou Turvey, Louise Considine, Ruth Duddy, Cllr Eileen Durno, Kate Ellison, Rebecca Glansbeek (Treasurer), Andrea Hale, Colin MacLeod and Cllr Anne Ross.

Action

### 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

**LS** (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was her last meeting before demitting office now that she no longer had children at the school. Although she had Covid, Linda did not want to miss the meeting and joined via FaceTime.

### 2. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021 were approved.

### 3. CHAIR'S REPORT

Members had been deeply saddened to hear of the sudden death of the Vice Chair, Claire Hesketh Crafts. **LS** had sent flowers to Claire's family on behalf of the committee. Her contribution to the committee was acknowledged.

The following issues were also highlighted:

**Connect:** [Connect](#) provided useful information and training resources for Parent Councils – they were running an online Session on 31 May if anyone wished to attend. Various other events were delivered throughout the year. All parents could sign up as individual members.

**Members Stepping Down:** a number of long-standing Parent Council members were stepping down and their contributions over the years were acknowledged with much thanks and appreciation – Linda Stromberg, Jacqueline Conroy, Kate Ellison, and Colin McLeod had all been active members of the Committee involved in, for example, chairing meetings, organising events, running the uniform exchange, participating in working groups, and co-ordinating revisions of the Constitution.

**School Captains:** thanks were extended to the School Captains for their contributions over the past year.

RG

#### 4. **RECTOR'S REPORT**

**JuW** gave an oral update on the following key issues:-

***Return to Term 4:*** this had been successful; the removal of face coverings had created a different atmosphere albeit some pupils were still choosing to wear these.

***School uniform:*** there had been a great improvement in uniform since assemblies were held and letters were sent out. Girls were now permitted to wear leggings and boys were wearing black jeans. Thanks were extended to parents who had supported this.

##### ***Staffing:***

- Several retirements were noted: Mrs Angela Walker (PT ASL), Mrs Lorraine Brand (Faculty Head, Business, Computing and Technical), Mrs Mairi Skinner (PT HE). At least one replacement had been appointed with other posts being interviewed for soon.
- Dr Matt Skellern had been appointed Acting DHT at Gordon Schools Huntly for one year.
- Staff leaving: Mrs Noelle Pearce (Maths), Stephanie Benzies (probationer in English).
- Drama and Music were merging to form the Faculty of Performing Arts (Faculty Head Andy Bruce).
- PE and HE were merging to become the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing (Faculty Head Barry Petrie).
- Mrs Lyn Forman was remaining for one day per week as Acting DHT.
- Mrs Fiona Burnett was remaining for one day per week as Acting PT English.

***S6 Last Day:*** this had been a fantastic day and pupil behaviour had been excellent.

***Prize Giving:*** this was taking place on Tuesday 28th May 11.15-12.30 at the East Church and would involve S4-S6 pupils only. There were plans to review the format of this in future.

***Sports Day:*** this was taking place on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

***Health and Wellbeing Hub:*** this was now up and running and was there to support targeted pupils. It was being run by Mrs Eleanor McIlraith, PT Targeted Support, alongside Mrs Tanya Sinclair, Pupil Support Worker, and Mrs Michelle Corsar, PSA.

***Rights Respecting School Bronze Award:*** the school had achieved its Bronze Award and was now working on the Silver level.

***Digital Schools Award:*** School was currently working towards accreditation for this award.

Finally, the school was very sorry to hear the very sad news regarding the recent passing of two parents - Mrs Claire Hesketh Crafts and Mr Michael McCusker. Thoughts were very much with both sets of families at this difficult time.

5. **WORKING GROUPS**

Several groups were back up and running and some of these would welcome parent involvement. An update would be given at the first meeting next year and appropriate parent representation would be sought.

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6. **FINANCE REPORT**

The current bank account balance was £634 and it was noted that an administrative oversight had resulted in Parent Council not receiving its annual payment from Aberdeenshire Council for the past two years; this would be paid soon. **RG** would be completing the end of year accounts in due course. £379 had been paid out over the last year towards outdoor learning. **JuW** had requested a contribution towards S6 ties.

RG

7. **PARENT COUNCIL CONSTITUTION REVIEW**

This was on hold until September and there would be a need to identify someone to undertake this.

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8. **REPORT ON UNRC MEETING**

**SI** had, along with 2 staff members, attended an online meeting on the [UN Convention of the Rights of the Child](#) which had covered the following points:

- Ways in which parents could be involved e.g. policy development.
- Participation by pupils.
- Respect for young people e.g. avoiding punishments, humiliation etc.
- Parent awareness of the rights that children were entitled to.
- Advocacy by parents on behalf of children.
- Use of language.
- The transaction between pupil and teacher.
- Promoting relationships.

Consideration might be given to ways in which some of this could be shared with parents.

9. **UNIFORM EXCHANGE**

The last exchange was in March and had again been very successful; another one would be held at the end of June. Mrs McIlraith had also attended with products made by pupils in the Wellbeing Hub. There would be a need for more parent helpers at future events (**RD/RG/LC** were already regular helpers but **KE** and **LS** would both be leaving Parent Council). There would also need to be some discussion about what was done with any money that came in as donations (e.g. donations to Homestart / Food Bank). To date monies had been split between the school and the church (where premises were used free of charge).

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It was suggested that some money might be used to purchase new items of uniform. To date the purpose had been to recycle used items. There was also a box in school that pupils could take items from.

10. **TRIPS AND CLUBS**

Feedback from parents indicated a desire to get trips and clubs back up and running; it was anticipated that many extra-curricular activities would be re-instated next year.

Activities Week would have to be considered in light of: the current cost of living, ensuring that all pupils could participate, supporting local business, insurance cover in case of cancellations, as well as the huge amount of work required by staff, on a voluntary basis, to get this up and running. Consideration was being given to what staff could realistically do.

11. **SPORTS DAY**

**LS** highlighted that there was still a need for volunteers to organise home bakes for Sports Day. An email request would be issued to the wider Parent Forum.

**LS**

Related issues included the ongoing issue of drainage at Tillybrake – it was not possible to use this between October and April because the ground was so wet. There was still a push to get an Astro Pitch, involving the local councillors. There was discussion about potential funding options (grants etc.). It was noted that there was a group looking at sports provision locally.

It was noted that grass cutting at the school was outwith the control of the school. A certain number of cuts were allocated to each school each year and the school had no control over when this took place. The cut grass was not picked up by the cutters, which this resulted in it being traipsed everywhere.

12. **EXAMS**

A lot of extra support had been put in place and attendance at exams had been good. Anecdotal feedback indicated that some pupils put a lot of pressure on themselves to do well with many becoming visibly anxious.

13. **GOING FORWARD AS PARENT COUNCIL**

**LS** gave her final thoughts as her period as Chair came to an end, including:

**LS**

- School webpages needed to be updated with Parent Council information (minutes etc).
- Social media pages would require ongoing maintenance
- New PC members would need to be sought
- Focus topics for discussion at meetings would need to be identified
- It was easy to forget how much PC members had achieved in the past and this did not go unacknowledged.

14. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To be confirmed.