

# BAPC

## Banchory Academy Parent Council

Newsletter 01  
November 2022

### Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 6:30pm. Please contact the Chair if there is anything that you would like to discuss ahead of this meeting. We hope to be joined on this occasion by the school librarian.

### National Discussion on the Future of Education

Please refer to the email from the school sent on 17<sup>th</sup> November. The email outlines various ways in which you can engage but the opportunity to participate closes on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

### How Can You Help?

- Become an ordinary member
- Uniform Exchange
- Working Groups
- Drugs and Alcohol Information Evening

Welcome to our first newsletter! This will not be an attempt to cover everything that is going on or replace the updates from the School, but to provide an occasional window into what items are discussed at meetings and what our current priorities are.

BAPC held its second meeting of the school year on 10<sup>th</sup> November in the Learning Plaza. It was good to welcome existing, new and non-members (please remember that any member of the wider parent forum is welcome to come along). There was a busy agenda covering a wide range of topics, some of which are detailed in this newsletter. In addition to what is covered in more depth here there was also discussion of the issue of theft within the school, how the school has welcomed and supported Ukrainian families who are staying in the area and the enforcement of school uniform.

Thanks were extended to the school from Jean Henretty at No.1 café, for their close co-operation with the food waste/supermarket collection scheme. The school likewise wished to thank the supermarkets and No.1 for supporting the 'toast club' which has proved hugely popular with pupils across the school.

In the past, BAPC and the school have organised some highly successful **information evenings**, including one looking at mental health or internet safety. We are hoping to host such an evening on the subject of **drugs and alcohol** early next year and further details will follow. If anyone would like to assist in organising such an event, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

## Health and Wellbeing in Banchory Academy

We were delighted to welcome Eleanor McIlraith (PT Targeted Support) to the meeting. Mrs McIlraith gave a short presentation of the work that is being undertaken in school to support the mental health and wellbeing of our young people.

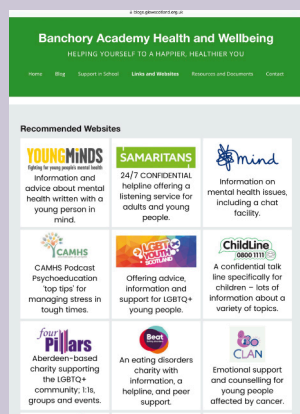
This may take the form of **universal support** for everyone, such as the use of materials in a class setting which might consider issues like anxiety, resilience, friendships or social pressures. This extends beyond just the dedicated PSE period and runs through the entire ethos of the taught day. Further, there are pupil peer-listeners (usually S5/6s supporting younger students) or stress busting workshops, as well as staff specially trained as mental health first aiders, easily identifiable by their green lanyards.

More **targeted support** may be needed by a smaller number of

pupils and there are several staff involved in this provision, including guidance teachers, a dedicated pupil support worker and a trainee counsellor. Throughout the school posters display a QR code, which can be easily scanned to provide a discrete means of accessing support. Several programmes of support can also be accessed via the school, such as LIAM (Lets Introduce Anxiety Management) an 8-10 week programme supported by CAHMS, which can give pupils tools to cope with and manage anxiety. Mrs McIlraith also outlined how the school approaches a sensitive subject like gender dysphoria.

Further information and links to many useful resources can be found on the link via the main school website, or go to:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/as/bahealthandwellbeing/>



Banchory Academy Parent Council

Email: [chair.bapc@gmail.com](mailto:chair.bapc@gmail.com) Website: <https://banchoryacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/parent-council>

Facebook: Banchory Academy Parent Forum

Instagram: [banchory\\_academy\\_parent\\_forum](https://www.instagram.com/banchory_academy_parent_forum)

The Additional Support for Learning Department have a beautiful garden and would be grateful for any garden tools, planting pots and seeds you are no longer using. They are also looking for scraps of material, bands, wool and other craft items as well as small glass jars. Boardgames would also be welcome. If you can help, please hand these into reception by the 9<sup>th</sup> December.

## Uniform Exchange

We have now run several uniform exchanges at the West Church. Thank you to everyone who has donated pre-loved or new items of clothing or SQA text books and to all individuals who have assisted on a Saturday morning. The exchange has made a big difference to many families, we often have blazers, jumpers, shirts, ties, trousers and skirts, PE hoodies and shirts, as well as text or revision books. Look out for notices regarding future dates for the exchange.

Offers of assistance with this would be gratefully received as it is now dependent on a very small number of individuals. If you can spare one Saturday morning every few months please get in touch.

## Rector's Report

At each meeting Mrs Wight provides a report on current priorities facing the school. Topics included, amongst others: staffing, school performance indicators, extra-curricular activities (sports, Christmas concert, prize-giving, special services, etc) and the school improvement plan. The full report can be found in the Minutes of the Meeting on the Parent Council section of the school website.

The recruitment of staff and cover for long-term absences continues to be problematic across the entire local authority area and Banchory is reasonably well-served in comparison to some other schools. Priorities for the School Improvement Plan 2022-2023 include developing a shared vision, values and aims for BA and its community, embedding a culture of positive values at all levels, the roll out of the local authority learning and teaching standards assessment policy, and how to support families in order to better support our young people. A proposal to revise how the school curriculum is being delivered is currently under development and further consultation will be undertaken with all stakeholders in the coming months. There will be a focus on attainment in literacy and numeracy across the Banchory cluster and in regard to pupil's wellbeing, the school's anti-bullying campaign will be launched alongside participation in the national initiative of SHINE (Schools Health and Wellbeing Improvement Research Network). Further information on this can be found at: <https://shine.sphsu.gla.ac.uk>

## What is a Parent Council?

The Parent Council is the committee appointed by the Parent Forum (*all* parents and carers of pupils at Banchory Academy) to provide representation to the staff body and support the school in providing the best learning environment for our children. The PC has its own constitution and is independent of the school and local authority. We seek to be as representative of the Parent Forum as possible, so please do get in touch if there is anything you would like to raise.

**Chair:** Sofi Izatt **Secretary:** Trish Amundrud **Treasurer:** Rebecca Glansbeek  
**Ordinary Members:** Catriona Beverly, Louise Considine, Marion Fyfe, Ruth Hutchinson, Sophie Logue McLeod, Scott Newey, Alison Smart

## Communications from BAPC

How to best communicate the work that we do to the wider parent forum and likewise to receive feedback, concerns, etc from parents/carers that we can then take to the meetings, is an ongoing concern.

We will aim to produce a newsletter such as this once a term, which will hopefully give you some insight into what we do and make it all seem less of a mystery. New members are always welcome, especially as a few long-standing members naturally moved out last year as their children left the school, but you are very welcome to attend a meeting without signing up. Becoming an 'ordinary member' does not bring with it any onerous workload but does provide interesting glimpse into what goes on in the school.

Our old **Facebook** page had to be removed unfortunately so a new one has been created with the same name '**Banchory Academy Parent Forum**' and it would be great if you could give that a follow. And the **Instagram** page is still live at [banchory\\_academy\\_parent\\_forum](https://www.instagram.com/banchory_academy_parent_forum). To date there are not many fresh posts, but we hope to begin to utilise these better over the coming months.

**Groupcall/email** will continue to be the most immediate form of communication and the best way to get in touch with us is to email Sofi Izatt (Chair) at [chair.bapc@gmail.com](mailto:chair.bapc@gmail.com). Minutes of previous meetings can be found on our section of the school **website:** <https://banchoryacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/parent-council>

## Working Groups

The Parent Forum, are invited to send a parent representative to each of five working groups in the Academy. This is a unique opportunity to get an insight into what the school does and to give a parental view.

We are looking for five volunteers who would like to take part. The task involves attending occasional lunchtime meetings, 1.00 - 1.40pm, and reporting back to the PC. How often the meetings take place is decided by the group and the day of the week may vary.

We understand these timings may be difficult for most working parents. There is no expectation to become a member of the Parent Council if you are a representative in a working group, only to provide feedback to us from time to time.

The current groups are:

1. Health and Wellbeing, HWB
2. Developing the Young Workforce, DYWF
3. Learning, Teaching and Assessment, LTA
4. Promoting Positive Relationships, PPR
5. Curriculum Structure