

Banchory Academy Parent Council Meeting

Minutes

25 January 6.30-9.00pm

Learning Plaza, Banchory Academy and Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Sofi Izatt (Chair); Sarah Little (Secretary); Ruth Hutchinson (Treasurer); Louise Considine; Jennifer Currie; Jenny Morrison; Sophie Logue McLeod; Catriona Beverly; Claire Stutter; Lindsay Scaife Cumming; Inna Smertiuk

School representatives: Judith Wight (Rector)

Apologies: Rebecca Glansbeek; Fiona Melville, Scott Newey; Karen Alford; Julia Fleming; Fiona Shanley; Chigo Opara; Scott Newey; Kate Parton; Marion Fyfe

1. Review actions and approve minutes of last PC meeting

The minutes from the last meeting on 23 November 2023 were approved with no matters arising.

2. Chair's Report

Fraserburgh letter - teacher shortages in Aberdeenshire has been answered by the Cabinet secretary and a meeting will take place with Aberdeenshire PC chairs. The PC organised a ragbag collection in November and a preloved uniform exchange.

Chair noted that the parents evening on pathways (S2 and S3 choices) on Tuesday 23 January was very informative and well attended.

3. Treasurer's Report

Financial Statement for meeting held on 25/01/24
Opening balance from previous meeting £2068.09

Income:

Uniform Exchange £34.00

RAG BAG £84.00

Closing balance 25/01/24 £2186.09

The Uniform exchange held on 25th Nov raised a total of £54. £20 went to the Church for use of the hall.

Action: Spending of the PC funds - JW to ask the pupils what they would like to spend the money on.

Action: Those representing the working groups to ask if there is anything they would like money for.

4. Rector's Report

Staffing

Mrs Renata Ilska has been appointed PT ASL replacing Mr Nat Coe, Mrs Ilska will be starting with us in two weeks' time.

Mr Ryan Smith has been appointed as PTG replacing Mr Mark Adam. Mrs Laura Will is taking on the Acting PTG role and will be starting in it within the next few week. She will oversee our new "House" until June 2025.

We are currently advertising a technical post to replace Mrs Will.

Miss Sophie Hunt Modern Languages is leaving us to take up a new post at Bucksburn Academy.

Miss Anna Carey Miller has returned to her post as Pupil Welfare Worker and is job sharing with Mrs Michelle Corsar who was previously one of our PSA team.

Pathways evening

This was held on Tuesday evening (23 Jan) and was very well attended by parents of current S2 and S3 pupils. Parents were taken through the choice process and had the opportunity to discuss pathways in subjects with staff members. Further details can be found on the Banchory Academy pathways website on the school website page.

Snow Closures

Last week was a difficult week due to the adverse weather conditions. The school will always try to get information out as soon as it possibly can. School transport is something we do not control. A reminder to all parents to let the school know if there are any changes to their contact details.

Pre-lim examinations

Are currently underway and continue until 2nd of February.

Rotary Young Musician

This is taking place this year at Banchory Academy on Tuesday 27 th February at 7.30pm.

Additional note: Judith is setting up Rector drop-in sessions for parents.

Action: PC and school to post on social media channels reminding parents to ensure their contact details are updated

5. Working groups

5 out of 6 parents who volunteered to take part have now been contacted. Not everybody had been given a date for the meeting; terms of reference for the meetings are missing.

We discussed other ways to participate if a parent representative was unable to attend in person. If people need to swap their working group to attend on a different day this could be a solution. Alternatively parent attendance could be facilitated via Teams.

Action: JW to find the meeting schedule and circulate when they are

Claire Stutter - Tuesdays - Learning and Teaching Group - Moira Patterson

- Clare has a full schedule of meetings
- For teachers about teaching; not hugely relevant for parents but interesting
- Gathering and sharing good practice across subject areas
- Discussing pupil evaluations
- CLPL - professional learning - survey for staff
- Going to do observations - share when doing specific lessons e.g. presentations - teachers observe different lessons
- Discussing how to engage wider school at Feb inset days

Catriona - Developing Young Workforce (DYW)

- Update on skills weeks and different ways of doing it
- Embedding skills into US time
- Reflecting on skills they're using in each lesson and different ways of doing this - forms, STARR technique

6. Teacher shortages: Meeting with Cabinet Secretary for Education (Jenny Gilruth)

In this meeting we have been invited to raise other issues. The following items were identified: School transport budget allocation; every child laptop or ipad; no money for software updates; to follow up; chromebooks for BA for preference; BA doesn't have the IT infrastructure/WiFi to support a machine for each student

7. National Parent Forum Scotland update

Catriona has been a rep for Aberdeenshire since her children were in primary school
Feed into government on issues, for example around breakfast/after school clubs, SQA working groups, additional support needs and many more national groups
The forum allows sharing of good practice around parental engagement and involvement in education across Scotland.

In person meeting next Saturday

Review on the future of NPFS

Rep from every parent council across Scotland

Helping parents to understand the education reforms

Funding been taken away for staff so all volunteers

Claire from Fraserburgh PC may be joining NPFS

Autonomy within schools has resulted in variety of delivery not only across different local authorities but also within the local authority areas.

Less equity across Scotland in terms of resources in schools

Aberdeenshire NPFS sub group - Aboyne, Banchory, Fraserburgh and hoping for some primary parent council chairs to join the Aberdeenshire Parent Forum.

8. Future strategic topics for PC meetings

- a. DYW (school and/or Skills Development Scotland to give an overview of everything offered to pupils from apprenticeships to college, especially for parents of those in lower years making S2/S3 choices as it would enable them to understand their child's future pathways. Potentially November 2024 meeting).
- b. tracking-monitoring-reporting (including how to read pupil reports and the specifics for each year group)
- c. evaluating leaving students' performance (including results from exams, why BA gets the results it does and where pupils go on to. Potentially September 2024 meeting)
- d. working groups - invite working group leaders or a DHT to present to us what the working groups are doing.

Action: Chair to survey parents on what topics they wish to hear about

Action: JW to discuss future pathways with staff/SDS and feed back to the PC on what is possible to present to parents

It was also suggested that we could invite the parent representative of each working group to present a short (5-10 minute) update at each PC meeting.

Action: Chair to liaise with parent representatives

9. Events

- a. Uniform exchange - June event - JW to ask for S6 ties at the end of term - contribution to S6 ties - c100 ties @ £7/tie - a contribution from PC to be discussed
- b. Social Media Information Evening - Christine McLennan - SL to chase up when the toolkit will be available

10. Social Media & Comms Officer role

We discuss the new role (not an Office Bearer) of a Social Media & Comms person and we are currently recruiting for this role. This can be shared by one or more people and will involve posting on the Parent Forum social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram) and monitoring comments/direct messages. There is also an opportunity to create the BAPC newsletter several times each year.

Action: Promote the role on PC social media channels

Action: Send the audit list of school social media channels to Judith to include in a school communication and in primary to secondary transition information

11. AOB

We discussed rotating the PC meetings on different days of the week and running one or two meetings online, particularly during winter. To be discussed further at the next meeting.

12. Date of next meeting: Thursday 21st March, 6.30pm - in person and online.

13. The chair thanked everybody for coming and closed the meeting.