

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 6th November 2019

Present:

L Duthie (HT), A Hynd (PT Science Faculty), V Fowlie (Chair), K Osterberg (sec), J McAdam, L Newbold, N Elrick, Cllr. Smith, E Preston, Y Beagrie (treasurer), C McHugh (teaching staff), J Mannion, D Willox

Apologies:

S Neuman, A-M Craig, Cllr. Ingram

Minutes of last meeting

No amendments required.

Propose - V Fowlie

Second - E Preston

Chairperson's report

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if everyone had received the communications regarding Parent Council training sessions and the school business dinner. Members present said they had.

Treasurer's Report

No transactions and so no change to balance.

£1059.01

Head Teacher's Report

- A Hynd, Principle of the Science Faculty, stated that they are in the middle of Engineering Week which is very busy with lots of activities, speakers etc all of which have been shared on their Twitter feed. They have been focusing on engaging the children with industry and have had site visits, talks and workshops. He and L Duthie and two senior pupils met with Maree Todd MSP Minister for Children and Young People and Education Scotland personnel to give a presentation on their Community Resilience projects on flooding. The school with its various ongoing programmes like Green Flag and Respect place it well ahead nationally amongst all schools.

Unfortunately there have been issues with the Technology workshop which is currently out of commission due to health and safety issues. The authority has changed suppliers of their regulators and the new company have assessed several of the power tools to be unsafe. This assessment is not exclusively our school but across the shire. Some of the equipment is 35 years old and has been here since the school opened. Flamefast has now declared some equipment fit and children can now get back to work. National 5 Woodwork has been affected due to lack of access to equipment but L Duthie stated firmly that their Nat 5 qualification would not be jeopardised. As the school is fully staffed there is no spare cash to pay for improvements. L Duthie said she is approaching Vincent Docherty Head of Education at Aberdeenshire Council to ask for the money once they know exactly what is required and how much it will be. It has been highlighted that the school needs an upgrade of its technology workshops. A three stage plan is being put in place. Cllr. Smith offered to speak to Mr Docherty on the school's behalf.

• Staffing

The new PT of the Science faculty Mr Phimister has started and is also teaching chemistry lessons.

Rachel Lawson Social Subjects has returned from maternity leave. Nicky Martin PT Guidance has also returned. Jen Innes teacher Technology is leaving and the school is advertising the post for an Acting Principle lead teacher of Technology on a 23 month contract. There is currently a post for PT Achievement being advertised which has received one applicant.

- HT Communication

L Duthie wondered if the members would like the school newsletter reprised. Previously it had been on paper then became electronic. There had been a struggle to find articles for it which was suspected to be due to teachers sharing their news on their Twitter feeds. She stated that there is still an HT surgery every Tuesday for parents. Some of the members either didn't know this at all or wondered if it was still going on. It was suggested that a reminder every so often on Expressions and a more prominent notice on the school website would be a good idea.

It was mentioned that the Daily Bulletin on the website had not been updated since August. L Duthie said she would look into this and follow up at next meeting.

Sketchnote is a way of making and taking notes with pictures and text. It is currently very popular in education. The school is working on them for future use. L Duthie handed out an example for everyone to see.

The school has now removed all landline phones, except for one in the school office and all teachers are now using Skype Telephony. There have been some issues with getting an outside line and tracking down individual pupils due to the nature of ringing an individual teacher rather than a room but over all it seems to be looking successful and strategies are being put in place to support emerging issues.

New Schools Solution- an IT system used across the shire is now in place. It is working but there are issues with wi-fi and programmes running slowly as well as printers. Reviews from users mixed so far.

- S3 Parents' Evening Survey

Schools in the area are being inspected and the school is due to be. With 64 respondees the S3 survey is a strong sample. Overall very positive response. Q's 24 "I would recommend the school to other parents and 25 "Overall, I am satisfied with the school" key questions both with very positive replies. Q's 19 and 20 regarding the Parent Council indicated work could be done to promote the PC more.

- Business Dinner 21st November

V Fowlie, J Mannion and N Elrick and E Preston had responded to the email sent out from the chair saying they would attend. Originally only two were required but as others expressed an interest to attend L Duthie said the more the merrier. E Preston and Y Beagrie to attend also.

J Mannion discussed tracking reports and the confusing format on the report. There had been a lack of consistency in Faculty's approach to the ratings for Effort / Behaviour / Homework. Dialogue has been ongoing across the school and L Duthie stated the school has now gone for the default which is

2) the word "usually" will be removed in future reports eg "homework done well"

1) is now reserved for exceptional performance in Effort / Behaviour / Homework.

Review of Parent Council Constitution

The current one is dated 2007 and in need of modernising. V Fowlie has obtained a generic Aberdeenshire Council constitution that is currently favoured by PCs. She talked through the changes she felt were needed including changing the maximum amount of members which after discussion was thought should be abandoned all together. She will run the changes by Christine McLennan at Connect and then to the PC for approval. The next meeting will be an EGM in order to change the constitution. Holding an EGM gives us the opportunity to promote the PC amongst the parent forum.

Auditing the Accounts

The accounts haven't been audited for a long time so at the next meeting an auditor will be nominated

AOCB

PC Email account

V Fowlie stated that the old email address is defunct and we need a new one. Discussion on what the name should be and something along the lines of mapc@aberdeenshire.gov.uk was decided on. V Fowlie to follow this up.

Cllr. Smith commented that the hooligan activity in the park was much improved. L Duthie said there weren't any problems around the school.

Date of next meeting (General meeting)

Wednesday 29th January 6pm in B2. Please note this is an EGM.

VF thanked everyone and closed the meeting.

