

Mintlaw Academy
Minutes of Parent Council Meeting
Wednesday, 01 February 2023

Present: Jennifer Byiers, Bruce Collie, Marianne Brooks, Geoff Crowson (Councillor), Elizabeth Preston, Victoria Fowlie, Pamela McLean, Lynne Pirie, Nikki Elrick; Joyce Mannion, Karen Osterberg (Chair), L Duthie (Head Teacher), Councillor Powell (attended virtually)

Apologies: Councillor Simpson, Rebecca Perry, Jane Ross

Welcome & Minutes

Meeting began 1800

Introductions and attendance

Minutes from last meeting were approved. 1st MB second LD

Chairperson's report

A lot going on, most notably HMle inspection. Chair had the opportunity to chat with the inspector and formed a good impression. The staff gift (cheese basket) was very well received. Reminder about food hygiene standards. At least 2 members of the Council are certified so it shouldn't be an issue if a fundraiser occurs regarding food.

Had a good response to Facebook comms including details on school stats, school updates and most importantly school closing. Request to provide more information on bus routes during inclement weather. Many parents don't know the names of the service providers, just the numbers. Informed that the bus companies make the final determination which can cause delays in notification. Councillor Powell will feed back comments to the buses.

Treasurers Report

£50 deduction for staff appreciation mentioned above. £491.10 in from Aberdeenshire Council. Total in account £2473.10. There was a discussion on how to use the funds. LD to consult with staff and come back to PC.

Signators are transferred and on-line banking is set up. New signators are Marianne Brooks and Karen Osterberg.

Head Teacher's Report

A combination of issues (travel costs, subject, etc.) is making filling certain staff vacancies concerning. Academy can't offer courses in subjects without teachers. Tech (practical woodworking) is of concern. Besides staffing there are issues with equipment. Trialing someone from Score coming in as a practical expert.

Increased numbers in Business. S1 & S2 are focusing on special projects to leave staff available for upper classes. Considering increasing offering more options in computing potentially focusing on coding. Considering Foundation Apprenticeships with North East Scotland College. Also considering a feasibility study for example for woodworking equipment.

2 open positions in English but less concerned about filling those. As well, Modern Languages should be staffed by summer.

As previously mentioned HT is back to 4 days per week. Mr. Oldham will stay on for another year.

Accommodation: There are significant issues at pick up with drivers being impatient with kids crossing or getting into taxis. Everyone must be mindful of the kids and the space around them.

Vaping: This is a big issue everywhere, not specific to Mintlaw but the issue is prevalent at school. With vaping materials being marketed to kids we are seeing the impact. Toilets are still segregated by class due to vaping use by students. Staff trying to mitigate but can't be everywhere all the time.

Pupil Behaviour: There have been some issues with fighting on a weekly basis. There have been exclusions for physical contact. Some small issues are escalating.

Head Teacher will be sending a letter to all parents addressing these issues.

Inspection: went very well. The inspectors were engaged and the school was prepared. It was a positive experience. The staff and administration do not disagree with the content of the report. For each item identified as needing improvement the recommendation was to "continue..." meaning they were already taking steps and heading in the right direction.

Staff surveys were significantly more positive than those done in October of Term 1. Also there was a great return from pupil surveys. They had a positive tone. As did the parental surveys.

Next up is the February inset days. Looking for volunteers to facilitate a ½ day session discussing the 15 quality indicators. Meeting will be Tuesday, 14 February from 9am - 1pm.

Any other business

No other business was discussed

Date of Next Meeting

Chair thanked attendees and scheduled next meeting for Wednesday, 10 May