

Aboyne Academy Parent Council

Minutes of Meeting- Wednesday 15th March 2017

Attendees

Office Bearers	Parent Council Members
Sarah Leahy (Chair)	Jo Croll
Lynn Murphy (Secretary – joint role)	Andrea Geddes
Gill Ewart-Bannister (Secretary – joint role)	Sheila McMurtrie
Lorraine Scott (Head Teacher)	
Karen Birnie(Teacher Representative)	
Michael Mc Cann(Teacher Representative)	

Other attendees:

Rona Lindsay - (Teacher, Aboyne Academy), Cllr Geva Blackett

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Laura Larkworthy, Julie Mitchell-Mehta, Cath Thompson & Cat Houston

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (Tuesday 10th January 2017)

Arising from previous minutes, Lorraine had issued a list compiling staff and pupil ideas for fundraising. Discussion of this list was an agenda item for this meeting (see below).

The issue of appointment scheduling at Parents Evenings is still under discussion. SMT are currently working on trialling a different format for the evenings next session.

Parent Council Members had provided their input to the subject choice booklet circulated by Michael Foy.

The minutes were approved.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

No new items for discussion.

TREASURERS REPORT

The AAPC account balance at present sits at £299, a donation of £1,200 having been given to the school at the previous AAPC meeting.

The AAPC bank account currently resides with the Clydesdale in Aboyne. As this branch will be closing in May 2017 it was suggested that, for ease of administration, this account is moved to the Aboyne branch of the TSB. This move was approved by AAPC.

HEAD TEACHER REPORT

1. Staffing

We have recruited a new technical teacher (Nicola Topping) which brings our staffing up to the full complement in this Faculty after a challenging year. Ashleigh Easton has been appointed to the post of Principal Teacher of Guidance to replace Mrs Larkworthy who moves to Mackie as DHT. Ashleigh will start with us at the beginning of May. Mr Woods will become a permanent member of staff in the Art department on completion of his probationary year and Diane Shepherd and Louise Batchelor have also taken on permanent contracts to make up a post in Maths.

Ruth Crawford (Maths) and Alison Glass (Geography) both retire this summer. In addition Dr Meyer is returning to Germany at Easter.

We are currently waiting for the Authority probationer matching exercise to take place to find out if there are any staff to fill vacant posts in Biology and English. There are still no Home Economics teachers available although we continue to try to recruit.

2. Parent Survey

The results of this survey were shared with all parents. The self-evaluation group have collated and analysed the comments with suggestions for school improvements. The overall results were positive.

There is an identified need to look at how we report to parents and we would like to form a working group with parent and pupil members to help us take this forward. It would also be useful to promote our motto and values. A copy of suggested next steps was shared with Parent Council members.

3. Quality Improvement Visit

This is currently underway. 4 officers from the authority are inspecting the school over a 3 day period.

4. Attainment

The annual meeting with Councillors took place on Tuesday 7th March and we concentrated on highlighting the wide range of achievements of our young people which is hugely impressive.

5. SQA

Concern over the changes to the Nat 5 qualifications. Letter has been sent by ASHTA .

6. Transition

Extensive developments are taking place to improve the transition process from primary to secondary school following evaluation of current procedures. This includes introducing a new transition project, alteration to the transition days and more robust transfer of data to allow for progression.

7. Equity Funding of £18000 will be devolved to the school for session 2017/18. This figure is substantially less than expected. This funding is provided by the Scottish Government who have used a formula based on free school meal uptake to allocate funding.
8. Mental Health Awareness Session – 30th March 1pm – 4pm. Two parent reps can be nominated to attend.

ATTAINMENT/IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

At the previous AAPC meeting it was agreed that a regular AAPC agenda slot will be given to an update with respect to elements/aspects of pupil attainment, improvement or development at Aboyne Academy. Maths teacher Rona Lindsay has, for the past year been in a part-time role looking at ways of raising attainment at Aboyne Academy. Rona has had a school wide remit and gave AAPC an informative overview of some of the areas she has worked on - midYIS testing and staff training, the Aiming Higher initiative and literacy and numeracy attainment.

RATIONALE FOR PRELIM TIMING

Parents and pupils have queried why the recent prelim examinations continued after the mid-term holiday, the subjects of chemistry, drama and music being examined after the break. Parents and pupils felt that this was detrimental to those pupils affected as it caused additional examination associated stress over the holiday. Lorraine explained that this timing was due to scheduling constraints but recognised the concerns and the school will review for future years.

FUNDRAISING

It was suggested that a smaller group be set up to review the very comprehensive list of fundraising ideas suggested by staff and pupils and report back to AAPC (action SL to coordinate)

LEAVERS CEREMONY/LEAVERS LAST DAY

Lorraine outlined plans for this years' Leavers Ceremony. This will take place on 28th April 2017 at 9:30am and will be followed by a coffee and cake reception for pupils, parents and staff. After the reception parents and pupils will be free to leave the school building to celebrate the rest of the day on an individual, family basis.

SENIOR BALL

The Senior Ball is now deemed to be a school outing and like any other school outing will need to comply strictly with Aberdeenshire policy. A letter will be sent to all senior pupils eligible to attend the Senior Ball and their parents further clarifying, in the strongest terms, standards of behaviour and the schools expectations of pupils. The letter will emphasise that this is a school function and normal school rules and expectations will apply.

Consequently there will be NO smoking or consumption of alcohol. Disregard of this rule will be considered a very serious breach of school discipline. For the first time staff will travel on the buses to and from the venue. No pupil will be allowed on the bus if they have been drinking. Parents will be required to collect any pupil found to be drinking alcohol during the course of the evening.

AAPC also proposed that, as a way of showing our appreciation to the staff for giving up a considerable amount of time to both help organise and supervise this event, some funds raised by AAPC be allocated to supplement the staff tickets. This proposal was approved by all AAPC members present.

AOB

- The subject of litter being dropped by Academy pupils in Aboyne village has been raised with Councillor Geva Blackett. Lorraine confirmed that great emphasis is placed on litter awareness at Aboyne Academy and is reiterated to the pupils at every opportunity. The issue is taken seriously and there are consequences for any pupil caught littering. However it should be recognised that the open nature of the Aboyne Academy Community Campus and freedom of movement of the pupils makes this a challenging issue.
- It was asked whether revision techniques are part of the curriculum at Aboyne Academy. Lorraine confirmed that general revision classes are given within PSE and individual subjects, in addition to classroom support, provide past papers and lunchtime revision classes.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 8th June 2017 @ 7pm

VENUE: To Be Confirmed – BALLATER PRIMARY SCHOOL