

## Minutes of Meeting- Wednesday 1st November 2017

### Torphins Primary School

#### Attendees

Office Bearers	Parent Council Members
Sarah Leahy (Chair)	Sheila McMurtrie
Andrea Geddes (Vice Chair)	Gill Ewart-Bannister
Lynn Murphy (Secretary)	Gail MacTaggart
Julie Mitchell-Mehta (Treasurer)	Elaine Starritt
	Veena Fernandez
Lorraine Scott (Head Teacher)	
Michael Mc Cann (Teacher Representative)	

#### Other attendees:

Anita Miller and Heather Davidson

#### APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Geva Blackett, Cllr Paul Gibb, and Natasha Pawlukiewicz,

#### 1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017)

Arising from previous minutes, the issue of sufficient seating provision in the canteen at lunchtime had been raised - Lorraine reported that the pool table will be relocated out of the canteen area to allow more seating to be added.

There was a desire to see more clarification with respect to qualification criteria for the Awarding of School Colours – this matter is ongoing and will be addressed as the school year progresses.

The minutes were approved.

Veena Fernandez, already a member of the Parent Forum, was co-opted on to the AAPC as an ordinary member. Sarah Leahy proposed and Lynn Murphy seconded.

#### 2. CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

Sarah thanked all who had contributed to the Rotary Silent Auction held at the end of September. £4051 was handed over to Academy from the Rotary and will be spent on ICT equipment. We are very grateful to The Rotary for organising this on behalf of Aboyne Academy and Friends of Aboyne Hospital.

Sarah passed round a card from Mrs Karen Birnie who wished to thank AAPC for their support over her 11 years at Aboyne Academy.

Aboyne Twinning Association wanted parents to be aware of their AGM which is happening on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 7.30pm in the Community Room at The Community Centre. All are welcome.

Aboyne Twinning Association have also made AAPC aware that there is a family in Martignas looking for a host family, or an exchange, for their 15-year-old daughter in June 2018. Any pupil or family interested in this opportunity should in the first instance contact the Modern Languages Department.

Sarah has received communication that Mid Deeside Community Council is trying to re-establish and they are keen to have a parent member. Anyone interested in this post should contact Sarah for further details. It is anticipated elections will be held in January 2018. It would be beneficial to have an Academy parent on the new MDCC.

NPFS (National Parent Forum for Scotland) are also seeking a Deputy Representative. It was agreed the September 2017 NPFS Newsletter including details of this post will be attached to these minutes.

### **3. TREASURERS REPORT**

There has been no change since AAPC AGM and the AAPC account balance remains at £533.06

A float is to be provided for the Christmas Fayre on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2017 **Action- Julie**

### **4. HEAD TEACHER REPORT**

- **AAPC teacher representative** -Jane Summers to join AAPC. Request from another teacher to attend occasional meetings.
- **Building update** – no further progress with building works. Alternative sites being looked at for the Learning Plaza, but these do not address the community access issue.
- **Staffing Update** – 3 vacancies still to be filled. Hopeful of recruiting a music teacher this week. Ruth Crawford continues to help us out in Maths meantime.
- **Sports Award** - Aboyne Academy has been presented with a silver Sports Scotland award.
- **National 5 Update** – Information provided for all parents by email
- **Senior Ball** – Date changed to avoid exam period. Marcliffe Hotel secured as venue. Staff ceilidh band to play and disco music to be provided from school. No external disco required.
- **Fund raising** – Grateful thanks to all who supported the sponsored walk and the Silent Auction. (£10 000) added to school funds. ICT equipment being sourced and pupils and

parents to be asked about anything else that is deemed necessary with proceeds from sponsored walk. School fund to be topped up to enhance the extra-curricular experience.

- **Curriculum Structure and Timetable** – Parental input will be welcome as we look at improving the pathways on offer to pupils. For some schools this has involved a change to the structure of the school day. Concerns remain about the number of pupils who stay on to do a sixth year which is relatively unproductive for them and who can have a negative influence on others.
- **CLD changes**- Change of personnel and new initiatives have been introduced with some pupils being offered an Achieve Award.
- **Support for Pupils** – New Faculty Head to be invited to a future meeting

## **5. ATTAINMENT/IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

This regular agenda item will remain. Next meeting will include a presentation by new PT for Modern Languages.

## **6. WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK**

The traditional work experience week will continue to take place in S4. However in addition to this a much more dynamic and flexible system will be operated in S5 and S6, whereby students will be encouraged to gain work experience as part of their timetabled curriculum. This will be communicated to parents at the next curriculum evening (currently scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018).

## **7. DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME**

Aboyne Academy has traditionally supported a successful Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. However it may now be the victim of its own success. Numbers are so large for S3 pupils wishing to commence the Bronze award that it is felt it may impact staffing requirements across the school. To lessen this impact, 9 parent volunteers will meet on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 with a view to gaining qualifications to assist supporting pupils through the award. Ms Glendinning, previously a DofE coordinator at Mackie Academy, will take over that role from Karen Birnie. Jim Wood has also volunteered to lead some of the groups.

It was asked whether the school would be able to continue to support those pupils who are part way through their Silver DofE awards (4 groups still to complete?) and also those who wish to progress to Gold. This was under discussion as the time required for staff to be away from their classes was becoming prohibitive, especially for the extended expeditions which are part of the Gold award.

Pupils currently part way through the Silver award are to meet with their group leaders in the near future to coordinate their final expeditions, possibly in March/April 2018. However parental concern was expressed at this timing due to the proximity of the May SQA examinations.

## 8. **FUNDRAISING**

The Christmas Fayre will take place on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November. AAPC will run a raffle and chocolate tombola. Lynn will put together hampers for the raffle from donations requested from the Parent Forum. Some of these donations will also be used to provide a raffle at the upcoming Aboyne Academy Christmas Concert to be held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

## 9. **AOB**

Further discussion took place with respect to sufficient teaching space at Aboyne in light of the postponement of the proposed Learning Plaza. Concern was also raised with respect to the situation at Aboyne Academy where community/general public can access the school building, and which current building amendment proposals do not address. All present expressed concern about this ongoing situation. Sarah agreed to write to councillors to seek their assistance. **AP: Sarah**

Lack of PSA support, both in the classroom and at prelim and SQA examination time, were also discussed. Because Aboyne is the special needs hub for both primary and secondary support there is an ongoing issue with an insufficient staffing ratio. Staff are being allocated, understandably, to pupils with the greatest support needs but unfortunately this means a number of pupils with less urgent needs are being missed/not fully supported in ways they would be in a school with a full complement of support staff. Sarah agreed to write to councillors to seek their assistance. **AP: Sarah**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018, 7pm, Tarland Primary**

Attachments:

- 1) NPFS September Newsletter
- 2) Education Scotland: Assessing Children's Progress – A Guide for Parents and Carers



Hello All,

Here is a update on recent NPF3 activity with Aberdeenshire, starting with a summary of the NPF3 reps meeting in Edinburgh, Sat 30th Sept.

**Session with John Swinney - Cabinet Secretary for Education and Deputy First Minister.**

Due a points failure outside Edinburgh I only caught the end of this session. Mr Swinney was explaining that there is [a review underway on making PSE more relevant to young people](#), with updates to potentially include more of the topics that young people experience through social media.

Mr Swinney went on to thank the NPF3 reps for all the work done to complete last year's review of the Parental Involvement Act. The Scottish Govt see it as a really valuable piece of work. The recommendations are being taken forward in full. Some of the proposed recommendations will require changes to national legislation, such as expanding the Act to include Early Years Settings, and providing greater clarity and backing to the role of the Parent Council. These recommendations will be presented to parliament later in the year.

Please share this with your own Forum. It is quite an achievement to have a direct impact on 'the law of the land', and it wouldn't have been possible without individual families making the time to respond. Thank you to all who took the time to contribute.

The other Agenda items are summarised below

**ASL and Mainstreaming - Fiona Robertson, Head of the Learning Directorate, Scottish Government**

There was widespread support from the reps for the principal of placing young people with additional support needs into the mainstream. It was recognised that there is a wide spectrum of additional needs. At the more demanding end of the spectrum it was emphasised that the support for the classroom teacher has to be in place. Without adequate support for the Class teacher, then the principle of mainstreaming may come into tension with the need to get it right for every child - which means for the young person with additional needs and for the rest of young people in the class.

Anecdotally reps reported that the need to protect teacher numbers had seen fewer support staff working in Schools. From the Government's viewpoint this decrease isn't reflected in the national statistics, but it was recognised that the experience in the classroom may feel different. [A consultation on Additional Support Needs closed earlier in the year, and a report on the findings is expected soon.](#)

# ASSESSING CHILDREN'S PROGRESS:

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

