

Aboyne Academy Parent Council
Minutes of Meeting – Monday 14th January 2019
Aboyne Academy

Attendees:

Office Bearers	Parent Council Members
Rob Brooker (Chair)	Sarah Leahy
Natasha Pawlukiewicz (Secretary)	Veena Fernandez
Julie Mitchell-Mehta (Treasurer)	Gail MacTaggart
	Gill Ewart-Bannister
Lorraine Scott (Head Teacher)	Suzanne Sant Angelo
	Charles Dunbar
	Peter Barker
	Sheila McMurtie

Other attendees:

Michael McCann (Faculty Head Science), Jenny Law (Principal Teacher Guidance), Barry Drennan (Depute Head Teacher), Sam Basford, Angela Gilbert,

Apologies

Apologies were received from all councillors, Ashley Easton, Jane Summers, Lynn Murphy

1. Minutes of Last Meeting (Tuesday 8th November 2018)

Arising from previous minutes:

Industrial mentoring – Mr Drennan looking in to it.

Study leave for prelims – there is no room in the timetable for it.

Assessment of support for prelims: additional arrangements have been put in much earlier.

Information is available on the school website.

The minutes were approved.

2. Chairpersons Report

Learning Together consultation. Rob attended a feedback session, and is awaiting a response from Aberdeenshire Council on the consultation. Rob will be attending a Parent Council Chairs meeting.

Increasing parental engagement. This is a challenge and the Council needs to understand why parents don't engage, including data to support this. The Council is to do a questionnaire. *Action – Rob to follow up. (PMN – Rob checked on this at the Parent Council Chairs meeting, 16/1/19; the Council is not going to do a questionnaire to find out more about this issue, so this may have been a misunderstanding on Rob's part from the discussions during the Learning Together consultation event. It was suggested PCs should do their own questionnaire if they're interested in finding out more about this issue).*

3. Treasurers Report

The Christmas Fair raised £267 and the concert £226, which is down on last year. The current AAPC bank balance is £1015.36. A cheque for £800 was written for the school. Aboyne Twinning has a £10 renewal. *Action – Rob to be put on as signatory.*

It is good to update parents on how this money will be spent. *Action – SLT.*

Still no funding received from the Council for last year. *Action – Rob to chase up.*

4. Head Teacher Report

- The last donation from the PC went to the librarian and has been spent on revision resources, which will remain in school.
- New teaching vacancies. This should not be a cause for alarm, as the school needs to build up its numbers of staff, as some are going part-time, and some are going on maternity leave. This may involve the next round of probationers. Interviews are going ahead for the modern languages position. A full-time business teacher is required.
- Welfare suite. Should be ready by February.
- Dr. Grandison is stopping his clinic after Easter. There is money for a mental health counsellor to come in once a week, although two days would be preferable.
- Remembrance Service. The Rotary have donated a plaque to be erected by the Tree of Remembrance planted in commemoration of WW1.
- Uniform survey. The majority of parents and staff would like a smarter uniform, but only 40 percent of pupils. The school will keep reviewing, as no changes can be made until there is a clear majority of the pupils in favour.
- Sports Day is being re-introduced and will be held on the 3rd Friday in June.
- The school expedition is being arranged for 2020 with a trip to Botswana and Zambia. S3s and S4s can apply to go.
- S3-S5 curriculum evening takes place on 15th January.
- Prelims start on 21st January.

5. Pupil Council Report

It would be good if a member of the Pupil Council could come to our meeting to update us about their work. If no one can attend, then a written update would be sufficient.

The Pupil Council have been consulted about various aspects of form time. They have also been asked how they would like the Parent Council money to be spent:

- Water fountains - can they be repaired/replaced? School is waiting on a company to carry out the work.
- New textbooks for English and Maths
- Updated PE equipment
- Ways for chrome books to print

It was asked whether teachers have a list of what they need. The faculties can provide this. **Action – SLT**. The aim is to have a list of priority items from pupils and teachers together with costings for the PC to then make a decision.

6. Social Media

Julie and Charles looked at the guidance policy and have put together a proposal, which explains how the PC could use social media, in particular Twitter and Facebook (one for all parents, and one for PC members). It was agreed that they will set up a Twitter account, and the Facebook groups. If any negative comments appear, those posting will be directed to contact the school. The usage and administration will be reviewed monthly to see how effective it is.

7. Positive school climate initiative and anti-bullying policy

Feedback re the anti-bullying policy is that it has been well received by pupils, and a pupil group is being formed to promote it, including the creation of a mural led by Mr. Woods.

Positive school climate – a restorative working group was set up (chaired by Jenny Law and Mr. Ball) to get pupil feedback, and now they would like parents' views. Jenny explained that staff will be trained around restorative behaviour, with attendance, number of referrals etc being used to monitor its effectiveness. She said that this will take up to 5 years to fully embed.

A booklet on the positive school climate and a handout explaining how restorative behaviour works in the school was handed out to all present, and the PC members were asked to read, digest and give feedback to Rob who will collate the information. The PC can help the school in refining the questions that will go out to the parent forum. **Action – read the documents and send feedback to Rob – all members of the PC.**

8. AAPC Constitution

A paper was sent out prior to the meeting explaining where changes might need to be made to our constitution in light of Aberdeenshire Council providing their own template. Sarah talked through her recommendations, all of which were agreed apart from no. 2. Membership – the number of Academy staff can be co-opted to 4; no.8 Agenda – Members of the Parent Forum should email one of the PC members one week prior to the meeting; no.9. the Head Teacher keeps a record of any confidential discussions.

The changes will be made and the revised document sent round to the parent forum, who will be given 2/3 weeks to agree. It will then be agreed by the PC remotely and forwarded to Aberdeenshire Council. **Action – Sarah to revise the changes noted above.**

9. School roll projections

Rob confirmed that the Council followed standard practise to calculate the numbers for the projected school roll. Lorraine suggested that the numbers for the 2019 school roll may be up to 20 pupils less than anticipated. After discussion about how to influence future plans, and where the main pinch points are in the school, it was agreed to take forward two actions: firstly Rob will contact Cllr Paul Gibb to get a better understanding about how to have a say in future plans, and secondly the PC will draft a letter to the Council (copied to councillors) outlining the concerns of the PC particularly in relation to the corridors, canteen and drama room at the back of the theatre.

Action – Rob to speak to Paul, and to draft letter before approving with PC and SLT.

10. Proposed changes to AAPC procedures

An informal email update will be sent round to the parent forum after every PC meeting, this time the focus will be on funding and social media.

A volunteer is sought to co-ordinate the fundraising on behalf of the PC. **Action - Rob to email the PC**
A plant sale in May (with refreshments) was suggested as a fundraiser. The pupils could be involved by growing plants/baking. This event could be linked to raising money for the water coolers. The Eco Group could help lead on this. Date needs to be set.

11. Behaviour on the buses

There have been concerns about behaviour from a couple of sources and there is a lack of clarity re responsibility. The bus drivers are required to inform the school of any bad behaviour and the school will take appropriate action. Prefects travel on the buses and are asked to report back to the school if anything happens. It was asked whether there is a bus code of conduct provided by the bus contractors. **Action – SLT to investigate and Rob to include in email to parent forum that if pupils or parents have any concerns, they should contact the guidance teacher.**

12. AOB

13. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 19th March, Learning Plaza, Aboyne.