

Aboyne Academy Parent Council
Minutes of Meeting – Thursday 29th April 2021
online
Attendees:

Office Bearers	Parent Council Members	Parent Forum
Rob Brooker (Chair)	Susan Nicoll	Tracey Jamieson
Sarah Leahy (Vice Chair)		Sally Wallis
Natasha Pawlukiewicz (Secretary)	Claire Drewitt	Claire Smart
	Mette Cormack	Andrea Geddes
	Charles Dunbar	Jennifer Storey
Lorraine Scott (Head Teacher)		Heather Davidson
Michael Foy (Head Teacher)	Catherine Thomson	Jo Ellson
Barry Drennan (Depute Head Teacher)	Aileen Longino	
Ashley Easton (Guidance)	Lorraine Chesney	
Cllr Gibb		
Cllr Blackett		

1. Apologies

Julie Mitchell-Mehta (Treasurer) and Sarah Leahy (Vice Chair)

1. Head Teacher Recruitment

Lorraine announced she is retiring so on behalf of the PC we wish you all the best and thank you for all you've done, especially steering the school through Covid.

Recruitment process: The advert for the head teacher post together with that for Alford will be going out very soon. A shortlist will be drawn up in late May with interviews in mid June early June. Cllrs Blackett and Gibb, and two PC representatives, will be part of the recruitment process. The councillors will be happy to support PC members with recruitment process.

2. Minutes and Actions from last meeting

No actions from last meeting. The minutes of 2nd Feb were approved.

3. Chairperson's Report

Shauna Wright and Mo Cormack have stepped down so thank you. There has been a lot of support to the school re assessments etc. The PC discussed whether a letter should go to the Scottish government re the stress of blended learning however it was decided it wouldn't benefit staff or pupils. The PC put together Easter treat bags for staff.

A PC chairs' meeting was held this week: what can PCs do at this time? Hard to plan activities. Still difficult time for families so be mindful.

PC members contributed to a session led by Northern Alliance re lockdown learning: what was good, what could continue and lessons learned.

4. Treasurer's Report

Cheque £800 ready for school – can we drop it off? Yes

5. Head Teacher's Report –

Thanks to AAPC for Easter bags.

Covid – successful return to school. Pupils following rules. Will be another assembly

tomorrow to highlight adhering to them.

Lockers purchased and put in school, one for every pupil. Would like to give out free of charge. But if pupils lose keys, they will be charged. Hope to hand out very soon. Devices can be brought in, also somewhere safe for those with new devices acquired by school. PE kit too.

Increase in social space: the school is looking to construct some sheltered areas outside the school for socialising. Canteen was too busy when wet at lunchtime this week. PC to consider as cost will be significant (tens of thousands) and unlikely to get new school anytime soon. Fundraising will be required.

Six members of staff had interview today for a place on the Excelerate scheme for Aboyne to become an Excelerate school. 6 schools from Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City academies will get a place on the scheme which is being run by the Wood Foundation and Ford: upskilled teachers, links to employers, diverse pathways, motivated learners. The school would focus on the world of work and necessary skills. What does it mean for the school if we're selected? Huge input from industrial and business perspective. Dedicated member of staff to make industry links.

Mrs Law (guidance teacher) has got a permanent DHT post at Portlethen Academy. Ms Sivewright is retiring from Business Faculty Head Post. Four maternity leaves next session.

All jobs been advertised, asked for probationers to fill the gaps. Business studies teacher to replace Mrs Cleary has been filled.

Parents' nights: S3 - subject choice has been made so no sense to hold a parents' night now. S1 – full report will go out and a parents' night will be held early in the new session.

6. Assessments and SQA Update

Challenging time for senior pupils. Presentation sent out last weekend with lots of information.

Key points: no inferred attainment can be considered – must be based on evidence.

No data-based algorithmic adjustment.

2-4 pieces of work for each subject.

The predictive value of an assessment instrument is important i.e. sitting an exam in exam conditions is high, whereas homework is lower.

Trying to spread out the assessments but it is difficult as some pupils have 3 in a day.

Some coping, others overwhelmed with the length of time. But teachers are making holistic judgements so not every assessment will have a huge impact on their overall grade. Teachers will look for other evidence to be as reflective as possible of likely pupil outcome.

Having to invigilate themselves whereas normally 12 people would come in.

Exceptional circumstances not taken into account this year: schools have flexibility to run assessments and can meet the needs of pupils.

Robust quality assurance processes in place.

Cross marking (peer marking) often anonymously.

Partnership with Alford and Westhill Academies to do this cross marking.

Wellbeing: offering senior pupils blue masks twice a day as offer good protection and less chance of having to self-isolate.

Lots of sessions on offer from Mr Drennan, libraries, Karen Inkster etc.

Trying to get messages right re language about how hard and stressful it is.

Difficult that sessions are being held when kids want to hang out together: really hard to get this right.

Questions being told to other pupils: inevitable part of system. By telling they

disadvantage themselves. Difficult point. If anyone is found to be sharing, the consequences are serious.

Document with assessments is difficult to work out. Will try and work something out but hard to do for every pupil.

7. Road Safety Update

Mid Deeside Community Council held a meeting re road safety in Aboyne: the existing informal crossing into woodland separating Bridgeview and Old Tollhouse roads will be moved further south; and the community council will organise an onsite meeting to discuss the best location for a future crossing on the A93, and it is hoped that a pupil from the school can also attend.

8. AOB

What happens at the end of May? Start of new timetable June 7th. Pupils need to sign off modules. Keeping things low key for the moment.

Need to use the time to make sure every pupil can complete their assessments, and there is flexibility built in to defer assessments etc.

No activities planned - no time or resources.

Rob stepping down as chair of PC. Julie standing down as Treasurer.

9. Date and location of next meeting.

AGM will be held at the start of next term.