



## **Bathgate Academy Parent Council Meeting Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 20 November 2013**

**Present:** G Abbot, I Meek, D Nelson, J Jeromson, A Whyte, J Harkins, L Bell, K Smillie, J Bryce, Y Shaw, Cllr McGinty, J Baird, Cllr Boyle

1. **Apologies:** Cllr H Cartmill, Cllr Dixon, S Weir, D MacDonald, J Smillie, K Renton

2. **Minutes of Meeting held Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

After contacting Blazer supplier it was advised that recent manufacturing issues have now been resolved. An additional supply of Blazer buttons will be maintained in the School Office if required. Alternatively, all additional concerns can be directed to the company for address.

3. **GIRFEC Presentation – E McKay**

Ellis McKay, Pupil Support Manager delivered to Parent Council an informative presentation on current Child Protection guidelines. The annual training undertaken by all staff members was explained with the key aspects of said training informed. EMcK informed Parent Council of the variety of categories that neglect and abuse are recorded and gave physical abuse, emotional neglect and parental drug and alcohol abuse as examples. Staff are trained to recognise signs and behaviours that would indicate neglect or abuse for example unexplained injuries, frequent absences, withdrawal and introversion. Parent Council were informed that as part of the staff training programme it is reiterated that if any person knows or suspects that a child has suffered it must be reported to the appropriate designated member of staff. Parent Council were advised of the step by step process that staff must follow when dealing with any allegations, ensuring adequate and accurate information is gathered. The importance of relevant questioning techniques by staff is enforced during Child Protection training sessions. Once an allegation has been made and passed to the designated staff member decisions will be made as to which, if any, core agencies are to be involved as a progression.

Moving on, EMcK delivered a brief explanation of the GIRFEC process. Getting it Right for Every Child is an exercise that aims to improve outcomes for young people and their families. A further aim of the GIRFEC process is to identify strengths and establish a positive progression as a way forward. Problem areas are addressed and discussed with a positive approach being maintained throughout. The emphasis is always however placed on the pupil strengths. An outcome of the Planning Meeting will be to establish the level of support most suited to the particular child and the individual situation. Four levels of support are considered ranging from Level 1, classroom support through to Level 4 Senior Officers review group intervention.

4. **Head Teacher Update – G Abbot**

R McFedries, Depute Head Teacher has been appointed a Head Teacher post in Ullapool and will leave Bathgate Academy at the end of this term. The process is currently ongoing to appoint initially an acting Depute with a permanent position being appointed at a later date.

Up to date staffing information relayed to Parent Council. It was advised that the lack of cover teacher positions is an ongoing concern and matter for address.

#### **Head Teacher Update – Continued**

Pupils and staff raised the sum of £1350 for Children in Need with a variety of events taking place and all parties involved showing great enthusiasm and commitment.

After a rigorous selection process Luke MacDonald, S5 pupil, has been appointed Queens Baton Bearer and will participate in a relay to celebrate the commencement of the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

After a recent staff consultation G Abbot confirmed that the forthcoming Curriculum Review Document is moving towards its final draft and should be issued to parents in due course. An outline of said Document explained allowing an overview of the intentions for progression as a way forward. With new examinations coming in to force G Abbot explained how our preparations compare to that of comparator schools. It was highlighted that due to Early Presentation of examinations Bathgate Academy arrangements differ slightly to our neighbouring schools however as our cohort of pupils move further into their senior phase we will fall in line with other schools within the Authority.

The difference between existing examination certification and the new National 4, National 5 and Higher certification explained. To ensure a natural progression for pupils G Abbot confirmed that if a pupil sits an examination at Intermediate level they will progress to the old Higher certification and when certification has been achieved at National level the new Higher will be completed.

#### **5. School Roll**

In response to a 2010 Council Review relating to school roll projections concerns have been raised to our impending school roll and the capacity within the school to house said numbers. After discussing logistics it was agreed overall by Parent Council that this should be considered as an ongoing concern and as a next step Council Representatives should be invited to Parent Council to discuss this matter further.

#### **6. Fundraising**

I Meek distributed a list of possible fundraising suggestions for information. Discussions ensued as to possible activities for Parent Council consideration. Suggestions were made to enforce Enterprise opportunities within the School and at the same time raise monies on behalf of Parent Council. Moving on, I Meek introduced an initiative undertaken by St. Margarets Academy Parents Council whereby a Parental contribution/levy is requested as a means of fundraising. After in depth discussions it was agreed that I Meek will contact the Chair of St Margarets Parent Council for further information on this exercise. Said findings to be relayed to Group in due course. Parent Council fundraising to be considered as an ongoing concern and discussed at forthcoming Parent Council meetings.

#### **7. BAA Bank Account**

Parent Council were informed that as a result of the closure of BAA bank accounts the sum of £1659.06 has been received. Group considered possible allocation of said monies with a number of suggestions offered. Parent Council asked to give further consideration with a final decision to be made in due course.

#### **8. Text Book Availability**

It has been recognised that in certain subject areas within the school there is a short supply of text books for pupil use. G Abbot confirmed that this is indeed an issue and has previously been noted as a matter for address. It was further explained that issues occur when pupils have the option to take text books out of school to complete allocated tasks however said items are not returned. Parent Council were informed that financial constraints have an impact on the purchase of replacement items. Whilst the benefits of having a hard copy to work from were duly noted it was intimated that the role of the text book could be adapted and not used as a prime source of information.

A suggestion was delivered that perhaps parents could be offered the opportunity to purchase required text books at the start of the academic year. G Abbot to discuss with staff the possibility of establishing a reading book list that would enable parents the option to purchase text books. This is an ongoing matter for consideration and will be duly addressed.

9. **AOB – All**

Cllr Boyle thanked H Fowler and group of musicians for attending recent Firework event. An apology and an explanation was passed for the event being cancelled however it was stressed that the efforts of pupils and staff was very much appreciated.

10. **Date of next Meeting – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014**