



Bathgate Academy Parent Council Meeting Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 22 January 2014

Present: G Abbot, I Meek, D Nelson, A Whyte, J Harkins, L Bell, K Smillie, J Bryce, Y Shaw, Cllr McGinty, Cllr H Cartmill, S Weir, D MacDonald, J Smillie, J Baird

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Dixon, J Jeromson, A Cringan
2. **Departmental Presentation – Dr E Marsh**

Dr E Marsh, Curriculum Leader Humanites delivered a presentation to Parent Council on RME/RMPS subject area. An outline of the curriculum contents pertaining to said subject in both the Broad General Education and Senior phase explored. Group were informed of the broad spectrum of worldwide religious beliefs that are covered and in turn offer pupils the opportunity to review a variety of moral issues and dilemmas. A philosophical approach is maintained throughout and thinking skills are continually promoted and developed. Pupils are encouraged to explore and investigate with the aim of making informed decisions. It was explained that RME/RMPS is part of the Humanities faculty along with Geography, History and Modern Studies. Parent Council were advised that at times said subject areas and teaching approaches will overlap offering pupils cross curricular links.

3. **Minutes of Meeting held Wednesday 20th Nov 2013**

In response to recent discussions relating to Parent Council fundraising activities, I Meek liaised with Parent Council members from St. Margarets Academy for a further insight into the fundraising programme carried out there. The levy initiative involves a parental contribution being requested as a means of fundraising. I Meek progressed to explain how said initiative is promoted and further suggested how we could adapt this process to work effectively within Bathgate Academy. A draft letter introducing the levy scheme to be prepared by I Meek and relayed to Parent Council for further consideration.

4. **Increase In School Roll – I Meek, E Cook**

Elaine Cook, Head of Education delivered information to Parent Council on current roll analysis and projected figures as a way forward. It was explained that in consideration of said forecastings Bathgate Academy will reach roll capacity in 2019. E Cook progressed to highlight additional accommodation requirements and further informed Group of the number of measures that have already been discussed as a possible resolve. An explanation was delivered as to ongoing funding considerations and the role of the Capital Board on making relative funding decisions. Discussions ensued as to the immediate requirement for adequate pupil social space and in response to this E Cook welcomed suggestions from Parent Council. On preparation of a proposal from Council members Capital Board will consider and decide a possible resolve. Parent Council agreed to pursue matter and prepare a relative proposal for address.

5. Easter Holiday – proposal – I Meek

Parent Council members were informed of Education Executive discussions relating to future Easter Holiday timelines. The possibility of adopting an annual fixed term holiday was raised for Parent Council comments. It was further advised that if Good Friday and Easter Monday fall out with said designated break these dates would be allocated as additional holidays. The benefits and shortfalls of said proposal discussed with comparisons made to other Authorities currently adhering to this structure. Parent Council members are asked to forward any comments to I Meek with an overall return to be submitted by 14th Feb 2014

6. Feedback from Parents' Evenings – I Meek

The valued impact of continued parental feedback was discussed by Group. G Abbot gave an insight to the parent evaluation tool used at recent S1 parents evening. A breakdown of the individual questions raised as part of said evaluation were explained for Parent Council consideration and the variety of responses were relayed for further information.

7. Employability and regeneration Funding Streams – Y Shaw

Y Shaw delivered informative literature to Parent Council on local, regional and national grant funding. It was enforced to Group the importance of attracting external grant funding with the question being asked if this should solely be the responsibility of the school or if Parent Council should be further involved. Group asked to consider distributed documentation with a view to further consideration in due course.

8. Head Teachers Update – G Abbot

G Abbot advised that a meeting is scheduled for Friday 24th January to discuss Grounds for Learning funding. A main topic for address will be possible educational/social area development. G Abbot will continue to update Parent Council on future developments.

Staffing Analysis delivered to Group for information. The staffing budget for next session is static therefore no significant amendments are predicted. It was confirmed that John Fleming is currently undertaking the Acting Depute Head Teacher role with the timescales for post interviews to be advised accordingly.

A reading list for senior pupil relative study material has been prepared at the request of Parent Council. Said information is available on the Bathgate Academy website for information.

A draft copy of Bathgate Academy Curriculum Booklet issued to Parent Council with an outline of the contents being explained. It was advised that this material will be made available online in due course.

G Abbot delivered a brief tour of the Bathgate Academy website highlighting a selection of informative areas for address. Parent Council are encouraged to familiarise themselves with said facility

To reinforce previous discussions relating to the pupil exemption programme. Group were informed that whilst exemption pupils will not be required to complete the Intermediate 2 examination at forthcoming SQA exam diet they will continue to complete relative assessments in school relating to their particular subject area. Individual pupil circumstances will however be taken into account when assigning assessments.

9. **AOB – All**

G Abbot advised that at present, there is no intention to change the current exam study leave process however it was informed that the Authority position may change. Any relevant changes will be subsequently informed.

After it being agreed that staff offering a departmental presentation to Parent Council is both an informative and worthwhile exercise it was further suggested that pupils could attend future meetings to offer an insight on Bathgate Academy from a pupil perspective. Group agreed that this is a worthwhile exercise therefore I Meek to arrange accordingly for next scheduled meeting.

10. **Date of next Meeting – Wednesday 19th March 2014**