



Bathgate Academy Parent Council Meeting Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 21 January 2015

Present: G Abbot, I Meek, D Nelson, M Primrose, J Harkins, K Smillie, J Baird, Cllr H Cartmill, E Stewart

1. **Apologies:** Cllr W Boyle, Cllr J Dixon, D MacDonald, K Renton, J Smillie, A Cringan
2. **Departmental Presentation** – W Macdonald – PTC Support for Learning

W Macdonald delivered a presentation to Group giving an outline of provisions offered by Support for Learning. It was explained that one of the main aims of the Support for Learning team is to work collaboratively with class teachers to recognise and support the diversity of pupil requirements. A pupil database is held within the school relaying information on the support needs of individuals and offers detailed information on available strategies that will aid individual pupil progression. Alongside the In House strategies available, Bathgate Academy is in regular contact with outside agencies to further assist the learning and development of our pupils.

Parent Council were informed that staff are regularly involved in training sessions to enhance recognition of the support needs of our pupils and to offer detailed information and assistance on relevant support techniques.

On occasion the school adopts a Focus Period whereby staff are encouraged to endorse a specific learning strategy to aid not only individual but also whole class learning.

In relation to SQA examination presentation it is pertinent that all pupil learning requirements are recognised in advance ensuring the required assistance is noted and made available with no impact on the integrity of pupil examinations.

A paired reading scheme has been adopted whereby senior pupils will meet with S1 and S2 pupils to aid and encourage reading skills. This programme has shown to be worthwhile to both our junior and senior pupils alike.

On a day to day basis The Nurture Group offers a variety of opportunities to enhance pupil social skills and self-esteem also build confidence and resilience. The Lunch Club offers a safe and supervised environment for pupils to gather, build friendships and again develop any self-confidence concerns.

3. **Minutes of Meeting held Wednesday 19th November 2014**

With the recent Depute Head Teacher interview process now complete G Abbot confirmed that the stage of the interview process whereby candidates meet with 2 members of Pupil Council and 2 members of staff was well received by all parties involved. It was confirmed that this process to be a consideration for any forthcoming promoted appointments.

4. **Bathgate Academy 50th Anniversary** – G Abbot

To recognise the 50th anniversary of the Bathgate Academy building, suggestions on how to mark said occasion were welcomed. G Abbot confirmed that a working group will be formed in due course and Parent Council members are welcomed to participate. G Abbot will pass to Parent Council information on working group meeting dates for those parties wishing to be involved. Group are asked to consider this event and pass on any further suggestions accordingly.

5. **Amendment to Academic Session – G Abbot**

To pre-empt discussions re amendment to forthcoming academic session Parent Council were distributed relative briefing document for address.

G Abbot explained that in recognition to new study leave guidelines all S4 pupils will now receive 2 allocated study leave days per National 5 exam plus the actual National 5 exam day itself. All S5 & S6 pupils will receive full exam leave entitlement.

With this in mind G Abbot further explained the impact the reduction in study leave entitlement for S4 pupils would have on the timetable as it stands at the moment. An initial matter for address would be how S4 pupils, when not on study leave, would be housed as officially they would be expected in school however at that point in time no curriculum would be in place. Coursework for National 4 will have been completed and the new timetable for National 5 and Higher courses will not have commenced.

As a solution, the proposal was made to bring forward the timetable changeover date to either the 6th May or Wednesday 20th May. The rationale for change was discussed with pros and cons for all possible dates.

It was enforced to Parent Council that there will still be an opportunity for S4 pupils seeking assistance and advice to come to school and discuss with staff as required.

6. **Head Boy – Head Girl Update – J Mein, C Renton**

Having just returned from the Christmas break Jordan and Claire confirmed that on behalf of the pupils they had no points for review at this stage.

Parent Council were directed to the Student Council section of the Bathgate Academy web page. A demonstration of the Student Council section highlighted where the names of the S6 House Representatives could be located. Said page also offers the opportunity for pupils to contact Council members. The opportunity to view minutes from previous Pupil Council meetings is available for information.

7. **Head Teacher Update - G Abbot**

Continuing earlier discussions relating to the amendments to academic session and forthcoming National and Higher exam diet G Abbot relayed to Parent Council the logistics behind pupil study leave entitlement. It was explained that in order to maintain accurate pupils attendance records S4 pupils undertaking National 5 examinations will be required to advise in advance the days chosen by them for their individual study leave days.

Pupil assemblies are scheduled Friday 23rd January whereby relative prelim exam information will be offered to pupils. Said document will notify scheduled prelim dates, study support information and offer details on relevant Authority lead master classes.

G Abbot confirmed that information evenings are offered to parents delivering an informative overview of National examinations. Relative sessions are advised well in advance with parents welcomed to attend.

After a recent consultation period the decision was made to reduce lunch break by 5 minutes and to date, a notable positive impact has been observed. Prior to said change concerns had been raised as to the behaviour of a pocket individuals who at the end of the break have eaten and are purely waiting to return to class. This was showing to lead, in some circumstance to disruptive situations. This exercise is set to continue for the short term with a decision on it's continuation to be made in due course.

In recognition of correspondence received form Edinburgh University G Abbot confirmed that when a pupil receives an unconditional offer from Edinburgh University said offer recognises not only the levels attained at the end of S5 but also takes into account the subject to be undertaken in S6. If for any reason a pupil decides to amend coursing in S6 or indeed leave school Edinburgh University must be advised.

8. **AOB – I Meek** advised that the Scottish Parliament Education & Culture Committee have issued a survey for Parent Council consideration. M Laurie will distribute to Group accordingly for attention.

9. **Date of next Meeting – Wednesday 18th March 5.30pm**