

**Bathgate Academy Parent Council Meeting**  
**Minutes of Meeting held on**  
**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014**  
**Annual General Meeting**

Present : G Abbot, I Meek, D Nelson, Y Shaw, K Renton, E Stewart, L Bell, K Smillie,  
D MacDonald, J Baird, W Boyle.

1. **Apologies** : H Cartmill Jim Dixon, Shona Weir, W Macdonald
2. **Departmental Presentation** – Due to illness the presentation which was planned from Wendy MacDonald is postponed until the next meeting.

Ina Meek welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed that last year was a good year for the school and noted that there was an increase in parental contact through different mediums – web page, Head Teacher’s “open surgery” but we still need to work on reaching out to parents who are still not engaging. Ina suggested that perhaps an online survey would be worthwhile.

Ina offered to continue for a further year as Chairperson and asked if anybody would be willing to be depute Chairperson. Ina intimated that Parent Council will try to have a greater presence at events to reach parents. A list of dates and events will be circulated for members to offer to help out.

No accounts were produced but at this time Parent Council are holding parental contributions of £470.00. Some parents have identified problems with accessing the account and this will be investigated.

**Head Teachers’ Update – G Abbot**

G Abbot introduced the Head Boy, Jordan Mein and the Head Girl, Claire Renton. They will be given an opportunity to add a Head Boy/Head Girl item to the agenda. Both pupils sit on Pupil Council and will bring any concerns raised there to the Parent Council meetings where appropriate.

G Abbot said the school is looking at House Council structures and at vision and values. Senior pupils will travel around the school asking for pupil views and videoing pupils for comments.

Staffing: G Abbot informed the meeting that there have been difficulties with staffing; waiting for Disclosure Scotland to clear applicants. These problems affected our Modern Language department at the start of term.

At the moment, Business Education, Computing and Science have positions to be filled and the closing date for applications is Friday, however there is only one application received at the moment in Business Education. We also have a maternity leave starting in November in our Maths department. Although we have concerns over staffing we will endeavour to ensure that all children get their specialist teacher but this may be rotational.

**Exam Results:** G Abbot showed a power point presentation on our results and explained the statistics. Results are very pleasing overall and we as a school are doing very well within the authority. We are taking into account more pupils want to stay on at school because of the type of courses we are offering.

Free Meal Entitlement – this figure is showing an increase across the school.

There are many challenges to ensure we meet the learning needs of our pupils

**National 5 being introduced this year.**

**Appeals procedure with SQA:** procedure has now changed – there is no appeal structure – what you get on the day is what you get unless a clerical error has been identified but there is no appeals presentation to the SQA. Seven marking reviews have been sent to the SQA.

**Personal and Social Education :** what can we do as a school? Finding time for other aspects of life in 5<sup>th</sup> year. We are aiming for wider achievement, eg, Duke of Edinburgh to be brought into the school curriculum and recognise the achievement.

How do we personalise a particular course – a couple of periods a week working on higher personal development, employability skills, confidence building leading to a positive destination.

There can be mental health issues with pupils and the pressure on them to achieve 5 Highers. We can assist in Peer Learning, healthy eating and active study periods. We will quality assure the system – it is still a work in progress.

**School Improvement Presentation 2014-2015:** This was highlighted and discussed and four main areas were identified. Feedback is sought.

We are five weeks into term with a lot going on – we have had a successful trip to the Battlefields and the Ryder Cup; four of our musicians have been selected to play for the Scottish Government; Duke of Edinburgh project is underway with a trip last week. The feeling around school is that it is a happy and contented environment.

**Homework Online :** Show My Homework went “live” on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> giving parents a chance to see what is going on and links to our Homework Policy. This is a better resource and is integral to what pupils do. Homework can also be handed back electronically if appropriate. We will continue to find ways to interact with the digital world.

**Street Traders Licence** : ice cream vans and burger vans are restricted to being within 100m of the school with a view to moving this to a limit of 200m. There are litter problems also. We want to encourage pupils to eat in school.

G Abbot visited Tesco and informed the meeting that he had spoken with the store manager and found no issues and there are no restrictions on the number of pupils entering the store at one time. We have also had meeting the local newsagent and petrol station in an effort to reduce the lunch deals including high energy drinks. Councillor W Boyle informed that Scotmid is re-opening opposite the Church in Boghall and will try to get a name for G Abbot to make contact with, hopefully before opening date.

**S2 Parents Evening:** Ina Meek will attend and promote the idea of Parental Contributions. G Abbot informed that Ellis McKay is proposing an end of year raffle and is in conversation with the Rotary Club who have links to local businesses. We could look at selling tickets at parents' evenings and have representation from the Rotary club.

**Ongoing projects:** Social space within the school is still an issue – how is it being used, what space is being used. Parent Council to try to convince the Council to do something with the area opposite the dining hall. This will be this term's focus as lack of social space has a negative impact on staff/pupils. An application made through the Small Grant scheme was unsuccessful as in their opinion it was "not a strong enough fit".

We will continue with departmental presentations from different members of staff. These were described as enlightening.

## **AOCB**

**AAL** : This was mentioned by a parent and the meeting was informed that the issues had been rectified on Monday. Staff have been informed of this and we are monitoring for a week and will then inform pupils.

**Mobile Phones** : G Abbot informed that we as a school have a more relaxed attitude with use of phones but use in class was still with the permission of the class teacher.

Y Shaw asked about the Leaps programme and was directed to the website where all information is accessible.

**S1 Transition** was raised and a parent of an S1 pupil said her daughter found that different classes and different pupils had been a challenge to get used to but that the transition days were excellent and the support from the school had been "amazing". Parental feedback will be sought in looking to increase transitional visits to four days with primary teachers attending.

**Online Parents Evening:** The booking system is now available for the Parents' Evening on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October.

The date of the next meeting is 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 5.30pm