

# Bathgate Academy Parent Council

## Minutes of Meeting

Wed 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018, Conference Room

### Attendees:

Grant Abbot (HT), Tracey Bredski (T), Derek Cornwall (Chair), Cllr Harry Cartmill, Sharon Cochrane, Richmond Davies, Delyth MacDonald, Jacqueline Harkins, Helen Neary, Michelle Primrose, Pamela Reid, Kirsty Roger, Karen Smillie, Hazel Young, Heather Vyapooree

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### Topics

**1. Apologies**

Received from Tracey Ironside, Gillian Morgan, Susan Carroll

**2. Minutes & Matters arising**

No matters arising and minutes were approved

**3. Chair's Annual Report and Re-Election**

Derek provided a summary of the parent council activities over the last year as submitted within the Annual Report 2017/18 (Appendix One) and stated that it was a real privilege to be part of a process that aims to improve our children's educational experience and thanked everyone for their support without which our achievements would not have been possible. Derek was re-elected as Chair for the school term 2018/19.

**4. School Captains Update**

No issues presented by Murray and Jessica. Derek reiterated to the school captains that the agenda item was to provide pupils with a voice within the parent council forum so that parents/carers can be informed of any pupil projects being undertaken especially the work being carried out within the newly created pupil parliaments and vice versa.

Derek asked Grant if members of the parent council could attend one of the next pupil parliament sessions to obtain a better understanding of its functionality and Grant stated this was possible but maybe also ask some pupil parliament groups to attend parent council to provide an update on their specific work being carried out.

**5. Parent Council pupil logo competition**

Grant stated that he had received over 40 entries to the competition and pc members agreed that Grant, Derek and Full Circle Graphics to short list entries down to final six and

then send out to pc members that attended meeting 14/11 and those that gave apologies be invited to cast a vote to determine a winner. All to be carried out by end November 2018.

**6. Discussion Topic – Health, Wellbeing & Safeguarding (HWS)**

- (a) HWS - Derek asked pc members if there was any pressing subject matter that could be issued for the November release to parents/carers and this generated a full discussion on HWS. There are a number of organisations that can assist with MH issues and Grant to ascertain if one of these could attend the January pc meeting so that a common understanding could be provided to pc members. Derek meantime will issue an Exam – Stress release on the school app for end of November using the school app.
- (b) BA online payments system – Derek asked those pc members who use the online payment system to state a quote on their experience of the system so that PC can issue a release recommending with anonymous quotes received from parents/carers to try and improve system usage. Derek to collate and draft a release.

**7. Head Teacher update**

- (a) Exam Attainment Figures – Grant provided an insight on National measures covering Literacy and Numeracy and the school’s use of virtual comparator. School to undertake meetings shortly to seek improvements in course choices so that pupils can maximise their exam potential. S1, S2 and S3 will not have as many pupil school reports as these groups are still underpinning knowledge towards BGE.
- (b) Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) - Deferred

**8. Parent Involvement Matters Video**

Grant showed the parent council the completed version of a short video being produced by the pupils within the school which is intended to be shown at large groups of parents and pupils assemblies within the school. PC members were impressed with the video and asked that Grant express their thanks to Vigo, S2 pupil who had created the video from an initial pc brief. Derek stated also that the school choir singing in the background throughout the video was an excellent idea as it involved more pupil interaction in its creation.

**9. Parent Council Roller Banner Design**

Derek updated pc members that a meeting with full circle graphics had been arranged for Friday 18<sup>th</sup> January to further discuss a generic specification details which would include roles , responsibilities and how to make contact with parent council. This banner could be displayed in school reception area or at large parent attendances within the school to provide further information on the activities of parent council.

**10. AOCB**

No issues.

**11. Date of Next meeting**

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019, at 6pm Conference Room

## Appendix One – Chair’s Annual Report 2017/18

It has been a busy year for our Parent Council, working closely with the school, teachers and pupils and it has been a real privilege to be part of a process that aims to improve our children’s educational experience.

Working with the community, or pupils and their families helps bring everyone together and makes everyone feel that they are contributing towards their child’s wellbeing, a key theme being adopted by the parent council over the 2018/19 school year.

We have undertaken benchmarking exercises with most of the local academies and this helps promote working together with other parent councils who share similar interests rather than working in isolation.

Bathgate Academy has been represented at the local parent forums run by West Lothian Council and this again is an opportunity to listen and learn about issues facing local communities from an educational perspective. At national level Bathgate Academy was represented at the Annual Parent Forum which was held in Edinburgh where parent councils, teachers across Scotland were invited to attend.

One of key themes last year was to work better together and the parent council has been involved in promoting parent/carer involvement in their child’s education and a project was commissioned and undertaken by the school to involve pupils in making a promotional video ‘Learning together matters’ which can be shown at school assemblies or where large groups of parents are attending the school during the school year. Academic research has shown that involved parents help achieve improved child education results.

The parent council has also engaged with local business and a retail outlet to run a competition for pupils to design a Bathgate Academy parent council logo where the winner will receive a £100 voucher and a certificate of achievement.

Making contact with the parent council is seen as an opportunity for families to seek assistance in educational concerns that they may have and the parent council has set up a contact link via the school’s web site. Whilst use of this functionality has been limited, its main purpose is to provide parents another forum to address school matters and one of the matters undertaken by parent council was to influence the decision making process to reduce the instrumental music service in order to achieve a fairer outcome than what was originally proposed.

I would like to thank the support provided from parents, teachers, pupils and the local community over the past 12 months which has helped improve our understanding of our children’s educational requirements and identified areas of improvement which can only result in a better educational experience for our children. Without all of your help, this would not have been achievable.

Lastly I have thoroughly enjoyed the role of Chair of Bathgate Academy parent council and I am more than happy to continue as chair over the school term 2018/19.