



Bathgate Academy Parent Council

Chair's Annual Report 2019/20

What an extraordinary school year we have come through. Who would have thought that our lives would be turned upside down and government restrictions imposed upon us all to stay at home, protect the NHS and ultimately save lives, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The school had to transition from normal teaching practice to remote learning, setting up new lesson plans, devising and recording communication feeds and findings new ways to connect with their pupils. Through everyone's resilience and working together, we have navigated these unprecedented challenges to see out the school year.

We could not comprehend that our school neutral 2020 "Backup" your child poster distributed at the end of January 2020 to every school within West Lothian would be enforced indirectly onto Parents/Carers as schools were closed and remote learning/working from home became a reality for parents, pupils and teachers.

Our poster was also endorsed by the National Parent Forum of Scotland, who further distributed across Scotland via their Twitter and Facebook accounts. In addition, a letter was received on behalf of the Rt Hon John Swinney, deputy First Minister and Chair of Education and Skills Committee, who further used government networks to distribute and showcase our "Backup" poster and acknowledged the best practice being adopted by our Parent Council.

Our Parent Council continues to send out articles from the National Parent Forum of Scotland via the school app that maybe of interest to parents/carers.

This year we refreshed the shape and feel of our Parent Council web page within the school's website to ensure that it portrays all aspects of our Parent Council work which in turn will hopefully increase our Parent Council profile.

I would like to thank the support provided from parents, teachers, pupils and the local community over the past 12 months which has helped everyone navigate these unprecedented times. Without all of your help, this would not have been achievable.

Furthermore, before the summer recess a letter (Appendix One) was sent out to all staff at Bathgate Academy from our Parent Council in appreciation of the extraordinary work they had undertaken to keep our pupils engaged in learning during the school's shutdown period.

Lastly, I am more than happy to continue as chair over the school term 2020/2021.

Appendix One

(Parent Council Appreciation Letter to School Staff)



25th June 2020

To: Grant and all staff

On behalf of Bathgate Academy Parent Council, can I take this opportunity before the summer recess to say a very special thank you for all your ingenuity, your resilience, your passion and your strength, as we have navigated unprecedented challenges over the past three months. As Chair of Bathgate Academy Parent Council, I am proud to be part of a wonderful team that keeps on delivering the very best for each and every one of our pupils.

These past months have been hard. You and your colleagues have had to transition from your normal teaching practice to remote learning, setting up new lesson plans, devising and recording communication feeds, preparing materials, and finding new ways to connect with your pupils. And all of you have done this while juggling the effects of COVID-19 on your family and personal lives as well.

But you have achieved great things despite the hardship. I've been reading many messages and news articles via the school app about your incredible efforts, the great innovations and new practices being adopted, and relationships you are forging as you work to provide for our pupils. You are using existing resources and tools in new ways, and developing systems and practices that are wholly new, that will continue to provide future benefits.

I believe that out of something bad always comes something good and as we recover from this pandemic, the things that we have learned, the innovations you all have adopted, can be utilised in building new platforms and practices that will last beyond COVID-19, and will benefit Bathgate Academy staff and pupils for many years to come.

Thank you and enjoy a very much truly deserved summer recess, as best you can.

Kind regards

Derek Cornwall

Chair Bathgate Academy Parent Council