



Meeting of Mackie Academy Parent Council

Wednesday 2 October 2019

PRESENT: Cheryl Brankin, Mark Brankin, Patricia Bruce, Morag Coull, Paula Durward (Chair), Rhona Grant (Clerk), Chris Ann Holt, Elaine Mitchell, Louise Moir (Head Teacher), Lisa Macaulay, Karen McClymont, Kat Thoires (Depute Head)

APOLOGIES: Dawn Black, Cllr Sarah Dickinson, Lorna Findlay, Andrea Forster, Fiona Hogg, Carol Howie, Dawn Milroy, Kim Milton, Marion Montgomery, Aileen McKellar

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair, Paula Durward, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that she and Patricia Bruce had taken on the roles of Chair and Vice Chair respectively at the recent AGM, and briefly summarised their roles and the roles of Parent Council members in general, especially as representatives of the wider Parent Body; bringing any general concerns to a Parent Council meeting, and directing specific concerns to the appropriate person.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 12 June, were approved.

3. Matters Arising

School Bus Transport Issues

Louise Moir, Head Teacher reported that the school has begun to compile a log of the school transport issues. The document was tabled and it was possible to see an emerging pattern. Louise advised that the school also acts as an intermediary in respect of parents' complaints; for example, the Drumlithie service. She explained that the bus routes have recently been re-tendered and some of the routes have changed. Students on the Drumlithie service are arriving into school very late because of the longer route and the frequency of stops, and currently compounded by the road works. The route is now taking between 40 minutes to one hour when before it took 20 minutes, and parents are transporting their children to school rather than relying on the service. Furthermore, one bus company will cease to trade shortly, thus creating further issues. It is intended to tender the affected routes on a short-term basis up to Christmas and then from 6 January 2020 until 2024, when all tenders will be up for renewal.



Louise said also that there has been a significant drop-out from the college courses and it is thought that this could be due to students arriving in school late and missing the bus for college. This is something that the school needs to look into further by talking to the pupils involved.

Paula queried the safety issues that had previously been raised, for example wearing seatbelts and Rhona agreed to contact Councillors Robertson and Dickinson, to ascertain what response had been received to the various points that Cllr Robertson had undertaken to raise with the Transport Unit and the bus companies. It was also noted that Kim Milton had written to the Transport Unit but had received a quite general response.

Louise pointed out that it appears that the issues and concerns are increasing, and it seems that buses are breaking down more often. Louise indicated that the bus company is responsible for ensuring safety on the buses, and if there is an issue affecting safety the bus should be stopped, and appropriate action taken.

It was agreed to invite Sean Jamieson to attend the next meeting of the Parent Council. Louise recommended that questions are compiled in advance so that he knows what will be asked, and can attend the meeting prepared with answers. Paula said that she would invite Mr Jamieson to the meeting, and would begin a draft of potential questions. It was requested that any suggestions for pertinent questions be emailed to Paula.

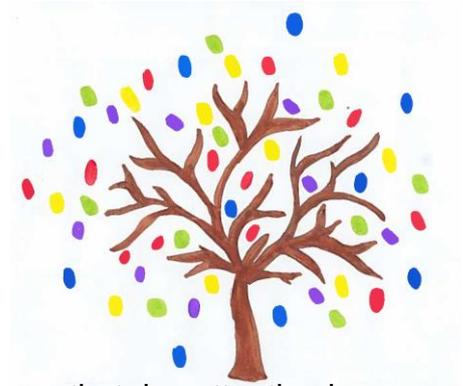
All other matters arising were covered in the agenda.

4. BGE Presentation

Kat Thoires, Depute Head, delivered a presentation on reporting of a student's progress within the Broad General Education phase. She explained that the process has changed and so the opportunity is being taken to determine how best to share information with parents and, where appropriate, improve the process.

The slides detailed the different levels of a student's progress within a course, and what is looked for to determine that a level has been achieved, as well as depicting progress between levels and the necessary steps to reach each level.

Kat explained that each faculty had been asked to produce a draft document of their interpretation of depicting progress at each step. Examples of the various drafts were tabled, and parents shared their preferred formats and the reason for their choices.



Kat said that the process is being rolled out in stages, to ensure that due attention is paid to each stage, and the first set of reports were scheduled to go out shortly but the consultation is ongoing therefore timeframes for the next steps in the process cannot be determined at present. It will also be helpful to liaise with primary schools so that in future parents have a familiarity with reports when their child moves up to secondary school. However, it could be said that it is hoped to have a complete Progress and Achievement Model by August 2020.

Louise explained that a draft template had not been drawn up in advance so that a variety of versions would be provided, and from them it could be decided what format works best for parents. Karen McClymont, Faculty Head stressed that she was aware that the history report is quite lengthy, because the course is content-based but she hoped to be able to shorten it, having had a chance to view other examples of similar content-based subjects.

Kat thanked everyone for their input, and requested that any further thoughts and suggestions were emailed to her or handed into the office.

5. Insight

Louise delivered a presentation on the Insight tool. She explained that the data collated covers the four key measures – Literacy and Numeracy; Improving Attainment; Positive Destinations and Closing the Gap. She briefly touched on what information is gathered from the data.

Louise suggested that at future meetings, one of the measures could be focused on in detail, highlighting what the data shows and how it is used by the school. It would also be helpful to have parents' opinions on the topic. It was agreed this would be worthwhile and helpful to parents.

6. Connect Training

Patricia advised that Aberdeenshire Council organise free training for parent council members and, depending on interest, this can be arranged locally. Patricia said she would email the details to parent members and relay any feedback to Connect. She said that online training is also available and she would provide the links for that too.

7. Meeting Schedule

The following dates for future Parent Council meetings were agreed.



13 November
16 January
26 February
23 April
3 June

8. AOB

It was decided that the Merit system would be discussed at the next meeting , and that the list of topics suggested at the AGM would be appended to the minute, for reference.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution to discussions and closed the meeting.

Items for Future Discussions

- 1. Delivery of Enhanced Provision**
Gretchen Perk would report on this topic
- 2. Merit Scheme**
Louise said that discussion on this subject would be helpful, as the scheme needs to be re-vamped.
- 3. SCQF Framework**
Laura Larkworthy and pupil ambassadors would take on this subject.
- 4. Foundation and Modern Apprenticeships**
This falls under Lucy Angel's remit.
- 5. Public Transport from Drumlithie**
It was explained that the school has no direct involvement in the school buses contract, and it would be worthwhile to invite someone from the Transport Unit to attend a future meeting, and discuss ongoing issues with transport provision. *(This has now been arranged.)*