



MACKIE ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

NOTE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 31 AUGUST 2021

Present : 16 Parents
Head Teacher – Louise Moir
Teaching Staff Representative – Karen McClymont
Cllr Sarah Dickinson
Clerk – Rhona Grant

1. Welcome

Paula Durward, Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were noted.

3. Previous Year's AGM

The note of the previous year's AGM was agreed. Louise advised that it could be accessed on the website, should anyone wish to view it, and any queries could be addressed to either Paula or Louise; depending on the nature of the question.

4. Chairperson's Report

Paula began by thanking everyone for their efforts and support during what had been an unusual and challenging year. Due to the circumstances, monthly meetings had been scheduled but attendance had remained at a high level throughout the year. The fact that the meetings had been convened online no doubt contributed to the high attendance, making them more accessible.

Paula provided a summary of the year's activities as follows:

- Members had been provided with details of the regular updates from the SQA in relation to the awards process for 2021.
- Members were kept fully advised of contingency plans for the school in anticipation of changing restrictions depending on the status of the pandemic.
- The Parent Council and indeed the Parent Forum were kept well informed of changes as they occurred, and parent members of the Parent Council were given the opportunity to provide feedback to the various issues as they arose. (Focus Groups with S5 and S6 pupils provided the students' perspective.)



- Laura Larkworthy, Kat Thoires and Fiona Stark also provided regular updates on the SQA process, engagement with online learning, and health and wellbeing monitoring of students and staff respectively.
- Virtual Parents Evenings were piloted with a few volunteers before going live.
- The consultation process for the refurbishment of the PE area included parent council members as well as staff and pupils.
- Parents and pupils organised a very successful uniform exchange
- We voiced our concerns to the local MP and MSP in relation to maintaining standards within the teaching profession.
- We supported and lobbied for early vaccinations for teaching staff.

Paula advised of the intention, going forward, that Parent Council meetings become more focused and inter-active with the introduction of working groups which will mirror those already established within school.

In summary, Paula said, it had been a busy but productive year.

4. Funding

The Clerk provided a summary of the current financial position.

5. Appointment of Office Bearers

Paula explained that, contrary to recent practice, the Constitution states that Office Bearers will be appointed at the first meeting following the AGM. Paula advised that she and Patricia Bruce are standing down from their roles as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Paula had so advised current members of the Parent Council and Colin Esslemont had volunteered to take on the role of Chair, with Richard Sharp offering his services as Vice Chair. Unless there are any other nominations (to the Clerk) prior to the next meeting, Colin and Richard will be voted into these positions at that meeting. Rhona Grant had indicated her willingness to continue as Clerk to the Parent Council.

Paula pointed out that Cllr Dickinson and Cllr Robertson have regularly attended meetings as co-opted members and thanked them for their support. She suggested that it would be worthwhile also to co-opt a representative from the Community Council and from the Stonehaven Town Partnership. Karen McClymont has indicated her agreement to continuing her involvement as the teaching staff representative, bringing contribution to discussions from a teacher's perspective.

Paula advised that several parent members have now served 4 years and accordingly will be stepping down creating a number of vacancies. She requested that any attendees who wished to participate in the Council pass on their contact details to the Clerk for future reference.



6. School Report

Louise began her report by advising that the school is fully staffed at present and provided comprehensive details of staffing in each Faculty.

Louise then delivered a presentation entitled “Recovery, Renewal and Progress”. She explained that the Improvement Plan has not been active since 2019; while the school has been in a period of crisis management. The intention now is to reflect on the preceding 18 months before re-visiting the Improvement Plan to decide upon the important factors where focus should be directed.

For example, the number of pupils entitled to free school meals has increased significantly which is a reflection of changes within the local community which have to be recognised and addressed.

The core values will be reflected upon and there will be focus on Curriculum for Excellence, Getting it right for every Child (GIRFEC), and Developing the Young Workforce. Pupils and parents will be included in the journey. It is also planned to develop the Broad General Education Phase which will be aided by the re-design of the PE area and the resultant multi-purpose area. Facilities will be available to the community in the evening and at weekends.

Louise reported that GIRFEC work within the school is strong and being a Rights Respecting School is critical to that. A review of policies and practices is due in October 2021 and it will be a worthwhile exercise.

Obviously, Developing the Young Workforce has changed and it is not anticipated that it will return to how it was, pre-pandemic. The world is changing for all young people and it is important to respond accordingly to prepare Mackie’s young people for the world of work.

All these are parts of the jigsaw and a key piece of that jigsaw is the project with the Wood Foundation – Phase 2 of the Excelerate Programme. Louise advised that 4 Aberdeenshire schools had participated in Phase 1 last year and 6 additional schools have joined in Phase 2; including Mackie. The fact that it provides a 5-year investment means that the school can forward plan for 5 years, and the long-term investment means that the Implementation Team can benefit from the extra time to prepare and plan.

The programme includes upskilling for teachers and a Business Support Officer funded by the Wood Foundation.

Jacqui Hutchison pointed out that teaching staff had risen to the challenges of a difficult year and the time is right for staff to recognise their new skills and achievements, which can be utilised going forward.



7. AOB

Marion Montgomery reported that the uniform exchange had been a great success. She explained that because of restrictions, parental involvement within school had been limited. A meeting had been arranged with the Junior House Captains and one student had taken on the responsibility of organising the event and had done so very successfully. It had been well supported on the day and had gone well, with positive feedback. Marion suggested it would be worthwhile to organise another event soon, focusing on winter items eg coats, boots and waterproofs and indicated her willingness to be involved in that.

Paula thanked Marion, and all who helped on the day, for running the successful and worthwhile event.

Mandy Tulloch requested information for parents in relation to learning and studying, and what is expected of students so that parents know how best to support their young people.

Louise advised that talks are currently ongoing with Faculty Heads about how best to share such information. There is a Senior Phase Pathways Site but it is no longer relevant because of the SQA changes in response to the pandemic. It is a work in progress at present but it is hoped to have updates available after the October holidays. It is wanted to have better direction so parents are kept informed on how to support their young people and will include generic advice as well as information specific to individual subjects. Mandy said that would be very helpful.

Louise acknowledged that and advised that details of Course Content and Exam Content in 2022 is still awaited from the SQA. As always, information will be shared as it becomes available.

8. Date of Future Meetings

It was agreed that the first meeting of the new Parent Council would be held on Tuesday 21 September at 7 pm. As already noted, the office-bearers will be voted in at that meeting.

Meeting dates for the remainder of the school year will be agreed then too. As before, where possible, alternate days will be arranged.

Paula thanked everyone for their participation and contribution to discussions and closed the meeting.