

Minutes for Parent Council meeting Monday 29th January

Present: Lucy Files, Linda MacGregor, Peter Bain, Caragh Scott, Angus MacFadyen, Sally Weaser, Helen Hennessy, Maggie Thorpe, Julie Fairbrass, Gail Brack, Kenneth Brack, Anuschka Miller, Lindsay Maclean, Terry Donovan, Alex Craik, Suzanne Thompson, Joan Reynolds, Sam Martin, Nan Johnson, Bianca Tordai, David Duncan

Apologies: Kevin Champion, Francesca Bichard, Cheryl Howe, Lyndsay Elliot, Debbie McIntyre, Caroline MacArthur, Elaine Robertson

Appointment of office bearers

Secretary: Terry Donovan appointed at the AGM

Treasurer: Angus MacFadyen. Proposed Linda McGregor – seconded Julie Fairbrass

Chair: Maggie Thorpe. Proposed Gail Brack - seconded Helen Hennessy

Maggie Thorpe took over as Chair at this point

Co-opting teachers

Mr Bain suggested co-opting the following teachers to the Parent Council

Kevin Champion, Joan Reynolds, Dave Mclaughlan, Nan Johnson, Alex Craik, Sam Martin, David Duncan

Parent Council agreed

Introductions of members were made around the table – Mr Bain emphasised that parents were on the Parent Council to represent all pupils not individuals – Parents can always contact guidance teachers for individual issues

Mr Bain highlighted that the AGM was the time to allow parents to stand for the Parent Council, and any parents wishing to stand at other times of year required to be co-opted by the Parent Council

We will keep our current list of Parents who wish to stay on from last year, along with new members from the AGM. **Terry presently drawing together an accurate list.** Any new member over the year will be co-opted.

Forming Sub groups

Teacher group - worked to ensure sufficient money to buy in teachers – not in action now

Fundraising group – Terry, Gail, Julie, Lucy – asked for ideas to be sent to Terry and **Terry to email round to see if anyone else keen to join**

Furniture from the old school for reuse group – Members – Maggie Thorpe, Caragh Scott, Sally Weaser, Alex Craik, Suzanne Thompson, Linda Macgregor, Lindsay MacLean, Gail and Kenny Brack, Terry Donovan.

Timing for the completion of this project is the first week of April, after Tuesday and Wednesday. Group to identify organisations/charities that can take or help to distribute including Community Resource Network Scotland

Fundraising Update

Suggestions – Sponsored Raft Race

Relaunch Weather Lottery per calendar month and Easy fundraising with reminders sent out monthly on Facebook and use the website

Mr Bain to arrange access to Facebook for Terry

20th February – information evening new S3 – Parent Council could have a presence with teas and coffees

School uses Facebook, Twitter and website to provide information, and texts

Media platforms – Facebook used mainly due for ease of access to send information – what about those parents not on Facebook

Mr Bain mentioned that you can look at the pages for the high school without belonging to Facebook as it is an open page.

Sally Weaser mentioned problems that she has with her business page as a pop up screen comes up and covers information after a minute or two for people not on Facebook as a member.

The suggestion was made to arrange to bounce information onto the website. **Mr Bain will investigate this**

Information about the Parent Council needs to be updated on the school website - **Terry**

Parental engagement group - Mr Craik

Presented a possible curriculum model for next year – teachers, pupils, parents have been consulted
Better curriculum to offer more choice.

Option of 4/5/6 year together – 12 subjects not offering progression from Nat 4 onwards – looked at models from other schools

14 bi level classes – can offer a more suited curriculum for 5 and 6 – it will mainly be 4 and 5 together. These pupils will be at the same level where currently there can be Nat 5 with Highers

Had to create an extra period in the day – 7 periods + my time – my time 15mins at start of the day

Periods changing from 50 to 45 mins

Two periods after lunch – lunch to start at 1.20, just 10 minutes later than at present – changed from 3 periods after lunch after talking to pupils and teachers

6th year – 6 subjects – 5 subjects + 1 PSD, PE etc., or short unit qualifications

4th years will have 3 periods of PE gives them a chance to gain a national 4 qualification

Scottish Government now allows certification content in S3 in preparation for exams in S4

Pushing Scottish Studies – most units are taught in other subjects such as history, English, geography – the new curriculum allowing for 4th unit to be done and gain Scottish Studies which will be an extra qualification for pupils.

Time scale – to be rolled out in June

Formalised tomorrow if passed by the Parent Council

At present pupils have free choice in 4/5/6th but doesn't suit all pupils

Fixed column structure will be returned to – better model for more children – less pupils getting 1st choice, but more getting more of choices

The Parent Council agreed to these curriculum changes

New School

Total cost 34 million

Sports and performing arts – best in Scottish schools and second to none respectively

Tour Iain Fulton – Friday afternoon and morning. Tours to be arranged for the Parent Council members after the February break. **Terry to arrange with Mr Fulton**

There will be open evenings/days for the wider community

Staffing issues update

Current Vacancies

Art – 4th advert – 3 applicants – none – part-time cover for certification classes

Gaelic – covered by ESCOL teaching online

Tech and science has been covered

Support – one vacancy

Engineering science – both teachers left – biggest issue – work was left for qualified teachers to follow

7 vacancies – but some of this has been covered – crucial gaps are art, engineering, support

All vacancies have to be provided by internal coverage – not enough supply teachers in rural area – easier in urban areas with other teachers/schools in catchment area

Actions being taken:

Relocation packages - £5000

Staff accommodation offered – only school in Scotland to offer this

Adverts in My jobs Scotland – Times Ed Supplement

Partnership with local business for IT advertising

Mr Bain visiting Belfast teacher training college – encourage teachers to come here

Permission has been asked to offer more financial incentives - this is now with the Chief Executive. All secondary schools in Argyll and Head of Education are supporting this – already happening in Aberdeen, Moray

2 people being supported to train through Argyll College – tech and business – planning to do the same for Art

Maggie highlighted a programme providing teacher training in rural schools

Discussion of how Parent Council can help

Problem with attracting teachers when couples moving and only one can get a job - teachers are attracted but couples need jobs. David Duncan highlighted this issue from his experience of coming back to ban.

HIE and University town – launch day on 1st March – Suggested that Parent Council help with a presence.

Investigate linking with other organisations in Oban such as NHS and SAMS - show how vibrant Oban and area is and highlight all the opportunities

Presence at Careers Days at teacher training colleges

Maggie asked for thanks to be passed on to teachers for doing so much to cover this situation

Further discussion on ways that Parent Council can help and what the school is doing to provide learning opportunities for the pupils

Video conferencing was suggested by Anuschka – schools quite different –timetables matching are a problem – only really for smaller groups – need a presence due to health and safety.

There is a problem of junior school pupils seeing too many teachers – 13-17 teachers a week

More focussed homework suggested by Anuschka. Mr Bain cited an education study – In S1-S3 additional homework not seen to be beneficial to education.

Supported study: Many opportunities provided after school, in Easter Holidays, early morning, and recently at weekend. Not well attended, though better in the run up to exams.

One of the problems is for pupils not in town - getting home and travel/public transport. Suggestion of a study bus driver. **Mr Craik to look into this.**

Satellite study groups discussed previously– Luing, Easdale, Dalmally, and Kilninver. **Maggie Thorpe and David Duncan to look at setting up a pilot in Seil.** Try to encourage parents in areas outside Oban to be involved in this project for their area

Lunchtime club suggested – difficult with timing – short time. Also pupils need a break in the day.

How can Parent Council help– persuade other parents to use support?

Suggestion that a reminder of how to work Facebook to encourage parents to encourage their children take advantage of support groups

Changing mind-sets – new group – co-opt pupils and attend pupil forums – parents cannot attend when their own children are there.

Parental Engagement Group to take on Ethos and Satellite study sessions

Thanks expressed by Maggie on behalf of the Parent Council to Julie and Helen for all their hard work

AOB

None

Date for next meeting

Not set but decided it would be after the Easter holidays and on a Tuesday to cater for the parents who couldn't make Mondays