



Aberdeen Grammar School
Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 24th March 2021
7pm- 8:30pm, Microsoft Teams

Minute of Meeting Welcome

Present:

Parents: Margaret Davidson (Chair), Alan Denison, Sarah-Anne Kielczewski, Anne Boylan, Mohamed Elshaer, Liz Halliday, Jen Scott, Moira MacIver, Iain Gibson, Zoe Griffin, Hannah Osale, Patricia Irvine, Eileen Heywood, Clare Bostock, Tania Davidson (Treasurer), Amy Bender (Minutes) and Karon Mcewing

Teachers: Alison Murison (Head Teacher)

Councillors: Martin Greig

Apologies: Hayley Barr, Emma Mair, Graham Mutch and Councillor Jenny Laing

Apologies

Hayley Barr, Emma Mair, Graham Mutch and Councillor Laing

Head Teacher Report

- Aberdeen Grammar provided emergency accommodation for Northfield Academy staff and pupils following the catastrophic fire at their school. This was done without any risk to pupils or staff from either school, as there was no interaction between the bubble groups. Aberdeen Grammar pupils and staff were all housed in the main building, whilst Northfield pupils and staff were accommodated in the Bennum Building. Those present at the meeting were pleased the school could help.
- Relieved that changes to National Guidance have confirmed the full-time return to school on 12th April without the need for social distancing amongst pupils. The school has done a lot of forward planning so there is very little that will need to be adjusted.
- Students have been pleased to return to school and have been reconnected through Health and Wellbeing. Each class has received instruction for mitigations in place upon return to school and these have been presented in a positive way.
- Ms. Murison is looking forward to welcoming everyone back full-time.

Demonstrated Attainment:

- Recorded presentation for students available on Google Classroom explaining demonstrated evidence, in addition to verbal explanations. It is different from inferred attainment from last year and it is important pupils understand how evidence is weighted.
- Ms. Murison is preparing a document to be communicated on Friday which will:
 - Inform parents on the approach being taken to collect evidence
 - Provide details of adjustments being made from the previous year
 - Provide details of the advice from SQA regarding gathering evidence to support predicted results
 - Provide suggestions for approach pupils should take in preparation
- Key point from communication 18th March is that the amount of evidence required varies between subjects. Quality rather than quantity of evidence is important.
- Evidence is weighted in terms of SQA papers with greatest weighting because:
 - Under exam conditions
 - They have course coverage-more than a class test



- Level of demand within the questions
- Avoids bias as rather than being marked by one teacher, will be cross marked by teachers within each faculty
- Best approach to meet needs of pupils as well as to maintain a standard
- Ms Murison advised she was proud of our young people who have engaged well with the high quality remote learning provide to them. Staff have been providing 500 live meets on a weekly basis as well as offering and providing individual support.
- Practical subjects- currently using large blocks of time rather than 2 double periods a week which is working well. In Drama, videoing, captioning and filming assessments is underway and the school has managed to overtake the deficit.
- There will be some national moderation carried out by SQA.
- The school is being rigorous at every stage of the qualification process. Checking and re-checking data.
- Aberdeen Grammar fed into the appeals consultation which provided 3 options for consideration. Options 1 and 2 involve school based handling of appeals. Option 3 is for appeals to be dealt with by SQA. Ms Murison advised that in her opinion, options 1 and 2 are not appropriate due to the rigorous process being carried out by the school. This is a common view held by other Head Teachers throughout Scotland.
- Pupil will receive advice from their teachers as to what to revise over the holidays. After the holidays consolidation of learning will occur, including past papers and practice assessments, to build toward SQA paper completion.
- On Friday Ms Murison will issue a letter to parents regarding the gathering of information to inform predictive grades.
- Pupils will be issued with a summary timetable for SQA papers. It will include the date and time of the assessment as well as the faculty, course, level and type of assessment. Pupils will be told what to revise for each assessment.
- Ms. Murison advised that those due to leave school can do so as soon as she is satisfied the school has collected all of the evidence needed for their predictive grades. This should be around 31st of May, however it will be later if more evidence has to be gathered. If pupils need to self-isolate and miss the SQA papers, the school will look at the best way to gather the evidence for them on a case-by-case basis.
- Ms. Murison left the meeting at 7:30, after her presentation, to take part in a Senior Management meeting relating to the alternative certification model. She received thanks from several attendees for the work she had been doing.

Approval of minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Aberdeen Grammar PC meeting were approved without alteration. They were proposed by Tania Davidson and seconded by Alan Denison.

Outstanding Actions

- Review of PC constitution - on the agenda this evening and all PC members have had a copy of the current constitution emailed to them so they can familiarise themselves with it in advance of the discussion.
- Google Suite Training - carried forward; Margaret has not had the chance to do this.
- Working group for fun activities - Margaret passed names and contact details for volunteers to Ms Murison as agreed. The volunteers have not been contacted yet.

Treasurer's Report

The balance remains at 410.53. Tania is waiting for confirmation that the school have received the cheque for £500. She has contacted the administrator and it is thought that it is in the school safe which can only be unlocked by G4 Security. If the cheque is not



cleared before 31st March, Tania will show it as carried forward into the next financial year. Admin will be in touch over the next few weeks.

Review of Parent Council Constitution

Margaret used screen sharing to display the Constitution for the benefit of non PC members in attendance at the meeting. Proposed changes were discussed, then the raising hand function was used to vote on proposed changes, ensuring the majority decision was carried forward. The current constitution to which the mentioned changes relate, is available to view on the school website.

- Section 1 - agreed to add that the term parent means parent, carer or guardian.
- Section 2- a discussion took place regarding whether we should continue to use the wording from Section 8 of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 or simplify it. The PC were split on this, however the final decision was to maintain the current wording to keep section 2e (ascertaining the views of the Parent Forum) intact as a reminder of the PC's legal responsibilities on this. Simplified wording will continue to be used in other PC documentation.
- A PC member asked why we were not doing more regarding 2e and Margaret advised that in order to do more, PC members would need to volunteer to take on additional responsibilities. The PC currently emails details of city wide and national consultations/feedback requests to parents on their mailing list. A discussion took place on how we can be more effective in this area. Volunteers were sought to take the lead, however the consensus was that this was not the best way forward and that it should become a regular agenda item to bring ideas to the fore. Members to volunteer to take ideas forward if they have the skill set for it.
- Members were asked to think in general about their skill set and what they can contribute to the Parent Council going forward. Spreading out the workload should make the council more effective. **Action:** Margaret to arrange for obtaining the views of the parent forum to become a regular agenda item.
- Section 3 – it was agreed to increase the maximum size of the PC membership to 30. Important not to exclude any parents or to be perceived as being exclusive. The hope is that this increase will ensure that anyone who wishes to join can do so. It was noted that online meetings have increased attendance. **Action:** when meetings can be held face to face again, discuss whether some should remain online.
- Parent Council discussed renewing attempts to achieve the aim of having a teacher, Grammar Former Pupil Club rep and pupil rep as per the constitution. It was suggested that it would be great if we could have input from pupils in both the Broad General Education and Senior Phase. **Action:** Margaret to discuss this with Ms Murison at the start of the next academic year.
- The use of social media to improve communication with parents was suggested and it was felt this could be a good idea. Margaret asked if anyone would be willing to take this idea forward with the support of Charlie Love from Aberdeen City Council but there were no volunteers. **Action:** Margaret to share the ACC social media policy with PC members and revisit this at a later date.
- Section 4 – it was agreed to reduce the term of selection to 1 year. Annual engagement encourages people to keep engaged. Members can volunteer to serve additional years if they wish.
- Section 5 – new wording agreed that would aim to ensure all year groups are well represented and remaining places filled through voting.
- Section 8 – it was agreed that we would add that an office bearer should normally have served at least 1 year as a committee member of a PC. It was noted that ideally, all office bearers should have an understanding of the school.



- Section 11 – it was agreed that PC members will continue to be the only people who can vote although an indicative vote of all parents present may be beneficial on some occasions. Four members of the PC will now need to request an additional meeting for it to take place.
- New section which states that if a parent council member misses 3 consecutive meetings without apologies or no longer has a child attending the school, their membership will be terminated.
- New section that explains how a PC member can resign.
- Discussion about keeping the PC section of the school website up-to-date. **Action:** Margaret to ensure she passes documents to Mr Martin for uploading timeously as he does this for us.
- Section 18 – wording to be changed so that ordinary committee members can also be selected as signatories
- Annual Meeting in Sections 10 and 18 to be changed to Annual General Meeting.

Feedback from APCF Meeting

- Secondary school estates review has been pushed back to 2022.
- There will be an extra 2 in-service days for secondary schools to allow time for the assessment and moderation of evidence used to provide recommended grades for SQA qualifications. Proposed dates are 28th May and 4th June.
- The APCF needs to appoint a new primary school rep for EODC. Training will be provided and they will be supported by the secondary representative. Paid special leave should be provided by employers to allow participation. Any PC member can apply by emailing Margaret at the APCF email address.
- NPFS reps have emailed the Chair of NPFS to request the funding of shelters be progressed at national level.
- Public Health Scotland Q&A webinars are now available to view on YouTube. The feedback is that they are informative and provide great insight into the data and why the Government thinks schools are safe. Links were sent to everyone on the PC mailing list on 9th March.
- The NPFS is hosting a webinar with the SQA tomorrow at 7.45 – 8.45pm. The Eventbrite link was sent to everyone on the PC mailing list on 15th March.

AOCB

There were no additional items for discussion

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was due to be on 2 June, but this clashes with Aberdeen Parent Council Forum meeting that Margaret needs to attend. **Action:** Margaret to liaising with Ms. Murison and agree an alternative date.

The Parent Council can be contacted by emailing pcgrammar@aberdeen.npfs.org.uk or by contacting the school office.

Parent Council information can be found on the school website www.grammar.org.uk

Shopping online? You can help Aberdeen Grammar PTA raise funds for the school by shopping via www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ags