



Bell Baxter High School Parent Council

Minute of Meeting held on Thursday 9th March, 2017 at 7.00 p.m.
in the Conference Room, Bell Baxter High School

Present: Karen Brown (Chair), Mandy Bateman, Romana Davies-Brown, Christine Dunnett, Clare Finnie, Jon Gill, Julie Goad, Crispin Hayes, Ian Jones, Chantelle Kidd, Alex Moodie, Anita Petrie, Julie Struthers, Paul Sykes, Cllr Karen Marjoram and Cllr Bryan Poole.

School Representatives: Philip Black (Rector), Karen Manders, Finlay Adams (School Captain) and Rachel Blair (School Captain).

1. Welcome and Apologies:

Karen Brown welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies from: Cllr Kennedy, Elaine Blake, Holly Clark, Steve Fearn, Joanne Haran and Lisa Ingram.

2. Previous Minutes:

The members present and the Chairperson's report to be updated and minutes reissued.

3. Presentation – Subject Choice

Karen Manders, Depute Rector, gave a presentation on the personalisation and choice of pupil's courses from S2 to S6. Ms Manders reported on the support given to learners and their parents in making these choices including the role of Careers staff, a Destination Evening involving local colleges and a local UCAS event. In February pupils have the opportunity to talk to industry professionals during Careers Week and to Curriculum Leaders during Faculty Information Fortnight.

Ms Manders discussed the role of parental support. Skills Development Scotland and the National Parent Forum have collaborated on a publication 'Career Conversations In a Nutshell'.

Feedback from the Parent Council was that the information evenings at various times throughout the session and the meetings with careers are very helpful.

Questions were raised about course changes in August following SQA results, the maximum number of courses for pupils in the senior phase and whether the school encourages girls to take up STEM subjects.

4. Rector's Report

- Mr. Black reported on the upcoming Centenary Music Competition, Spring Concert and Dance Show which take place on the last week of term.
- Mr. Black reported that the mobile phone policy should be shared with the parent Council the next day once confirmation from the Service has been received.
- Pupil Equity Fund - Scottish Government has allocated money directly to schools for Pupils in P1 to S3 who are in receipt of Free School Meals. The money allocated should be used to improve attainment. Not all pupils in Bell Baxter eligible for Free School Meals have taken this up which then affects the money allocated to the school. Approximately £87,000 has been allocated for 2017/2018, which has to have a clear strategy to target the attainment gap in the junior school. Nurture/Well-being posts are being developed to support this though a full audit is required before a decision can be agreed. Schools can determine how the funding is used within the criteria set by the Government. Cllr Poole reported on how Madras are considering allocating this money.

5. Fife Council Budget

Mr. Black reported on the Council's annual budget setting and the proposals for Education and Children's Service. The five key areas that may influence the school are:

- Looking innovatively at the connection between Education Officers and school Clusters.
- Increased the number of joint-headships in primaries
- Developing the Digital Environment – GLOW and 21st Century Learning
- Redistribution of Teaching Staff to Reduce Current Vacancies
- Corporate savings on vacancy management

The Elected Members were invited to comment which led to a lengthy discussion on vacancy management and teacher staffing levels across Fife. Cllr Marjoram stated she had voted against the vacancy management proposal. Cllr Poole reported that the corporate vacancy management target set would be unlikely to impact on Education as it is a key service. There is a chronic shortage of teachers in certain subjects. Cllr Poole gave examples of some of the staffing difficulties schools in Fife are dealing with. Cllr Poole stated there is not one teacher post being cut from Fife Council.

Mr. Black reported there will no changes to class sizes at Bell Baxter next session and there are no surplus teachers being declared for August.

6. Chairperson's Update

Parents' Evenings – thanks to everyone especially Ian who sold plenty raffle tickets

Raffle – prize winners have been notified and the main raffle prize winner has had a photograph taken with Karen and Mr. Black.

Colours Committee – Karen amazed by the quality of the nominations. Issue raised about the age that pupils can start to apply. Suggested that it is better publicised with clubs and groups.

Award – Karen suggested an annual award sponsored by the Parent Council. The group agreed in principle. Ian Jones suggested Karen draft a criteria for the award.

Future Meeting Topics: Karen received a request for 15/16 attainment to be on the agenda, this was discussed at the meeting in August. Crispin Hayes requested a more in depth presentation on the complete SQA results for 15/16 following the presentation to the area committee. Crispin asked a question about the sharing of insight data. Cllr Poole agreed to follow this up. Mr. Black reminded the group that he is not allowed to share the data due to data protection. The report used at the area committee meeting will be shared with all parents over the next week. It was suggested that the Community Police be invited to talk at the next meeting.

Agreed Action: Members to send any ideas for criteria for a Parent Council Award to Karen.

7. Treasurer's Update:

£786.50 fundraising account - £148 raised from the Parents' Evenings in February and March.

£25.00 raised by the sale of blazer.

£1,768.63 500 Club account – only 92 members now.

Compasses – Miss Doig, Support Services Coordinator, has requested funding to purchase 28 compasses at a cost of £421. For use with a range of groups of pupils including Duke of Edinburgh Award, World Challenge, orienteering groups.

Action agreed: £421 agreed to purchase compasses.

8. A.O.C.B.: None.

9. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 25th April 2017 at 7.00 p.m.