

Minutes of Meeting Kemnay Academy Parent Council

Meeting: Tuesday 17th January at Kemnay Academy, Bremner Way, Kemnay

Present: Bob Jones (Chair), Catriona Skinner, Ava Rennie, Alex Kovacs, , Phil Dymond, Alan Smith

Also in attendance:

Lizbeth Paul (Headteacher), Sandra Buchan (Science), Fiona Allen (Guidance) Cllr Hood

1. Apologies

Apologies received from, Eric Marston, Phil Goby, Louisa Dunn (Head Girl), Robert Lamb (Head Boy), Cllr Nan Cullaine, Cllr Lonchay, Cllr Ford. Post meeting apology - Janie Keddie.

2. Welcome & Approval of Previous Minutes.

Approval of the previous minutes (subject to minor typo corrections) proposed by Ava Rennie, Seconded by Catriona Skinner.

No pupil report available - see apologies from Louisa and Robert.

Change of Treasurer - Forms signed, passed back Alex. Additional person forms may now be required.

3. Parent Forum Communication & Parental Skills

Parent Council Website - A simple (free) google site has been set up to hold the Parent Council's documents, minutes, agenda, newsletters etc. The website seems to be difficult to find from a direct web-search. A link will be installed on the School's website parent pages, and will also be shared via Newsletter etc. The link to the Parent Council site is

<https://sites.google.com/view/kemnay-academy-parent-council>

Attendance at School Events - Pop up banner design and costs are typically £60. There is general agreement within the Parent Council to volunteer some time to attend school events, raising awareness of the Parent Council amongst the wider forum. A pop-up banner would help facilitate this.

Newsletter - Phil D volunteered to complete for this meeting.

Secretary - Bob proposed that we drop the secretary advert for the remaining meeting of the year (three). Bob confirmed to the Parent Council that he was happy to Chair and minute the meetings.

4. Standards and Quality Improvement Plan

5. Standards and Quality Report

6. Attainment Data

No dedicated discussion of the above topic areas was scheduled for this meeting. Although, Mrs Allen's presentation on the work and aims of the Guidance Faculty can be linked back to all three of these items.

Also related to the above -

Mrs Paul flagged a need to address the increasing pressure on safe bus parking at the school. With the school role known to be rising over the coming years, this will become a high priority issue for the School community. The Parent Council agreed to contact our local Councilors to see what can be done.

A complaint has been made to the school concerning the arrangements for Higher Psychology. Mrs Paul explained the action the school has taken to continue with Higher Psychology. The arrangements are in place due to the on ongoing health issue for the current subject Teacher. The school is currently running twilight classes for this course, whilst continuing to look for a suitably specialised teacher to cover the course. Alternatives that were explored were; Support from North East College was explored, but they were unable to take all pupils. As Kemnay is only school in the locality to offer Higher Psychology, there isn't an option of travelling to another local Academy.

7. Guidance Presentation

This was the main topic for the evening. Mrs Allen gave a very interesting and detailed presentation on the work of the Guidance Dept. Guidance has two main focus areas, the delivery of the PSE (Personal and Social Education) Curriculum areas and the Pastoral care of the young people at Kemnay.

PSE covers, in an age appropriate way, areas such as social media, drugs awareness, sexual health and relationships, college and university application procedures. Teaching the PSE curriculum takes up about half of the Guidance Teachers time. It is

seen as a key part of their role as it enables regular contact with all the young people under the Guidance Teacher's care. Mrs Allen explained how relationships of trust are built up, from link week and S1 onwards within the PSE classes, such that open discussions can be held on what can be thought of as difficult or embarrassing topics.

The Pastoral aspect of a Guidance Teacher role takes up the rest of their time. Pastoral care is concerned with Wellbeing. In turn 'Wellbeing' can be broken out into several focus areas, referred to under the acronym **SHANNARI** (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respectable, Responsible, Included).

For most the question are they Achieving results in a positive answer, for some this isn't the case. And it then becomes part of the Guidance role to offer the necessary support to enable the young person to meet their potential at school. Equally its encouraged that pupils themselves can meet with their Guidance teacher to talk over any concerns or problems that they may have.

Mrs Allen took us through some of the various types and level of support that the Guidance team co-ordinate. Everything from making subject teachers aware of the current difficulties a young person may be dealing with; help with job, college and university applications. At times supporting a young person in their formal education can mean providing support outside school. Help can include things like sending work out for those laid up by prolonged illness, to support with dressing and washing for youngsters who are coping as the main carers at home, through to full multi-agency support of educational psychologists, social services and NHS specialists from various discipline. All provided with the aim of supporting a young person whilst at school. It is the Guidance Teacher who chairs the multi-agency review meetings, which can also include the young person and their family.

Co-ordinating the different methods of support means that the Guidance Team has to handle sensitive and personal information. Mrs Allen explained that this information is kept separate from the general information the school holds on its pupils, and uses its own abbreviations and shorthand. It is available to the Guidance Team and the School Senior Management Team only. Parents can request a copy of any information the school holds about their child.

One of the key messages from the presentation was that although not all children need a high level of support, and not all children are struggling with 'issues' all the time, there are times when any child can feel like life is spiraling out of control, be it exam stress, 'friend' stress - social media or otherwise, or feel overwhelmed by family events like bereavement, divorce, illness etc. The Guidance Teacher, due to their experience and knowledge of available support, is a good place to start looking for the help you may need.

8. PTA Report

No report scheduled for this meeting.

9. Correspondence

S6 Future Development - Bob attended a morning event for all S6 stakeholders (Teachers, Pupils, Parents, Employers, College and University representatives) which looked at how S6 currently meets the needs of learners and other stakeholders and how it may develop in future years. A report of the meeting was promised in Q1 2017.

10. Forthcoming Events

None identified at the meeting.

11. Next Meetings

Tuesday 28th Feb, 7pm. Pre-meeting for parents only starting 6.30pm. The meeting will focus on Academic Achievement over the 2015-16 session.