

Parent Council AGM Meeting Minutes

Date: 2 December 2025, 6–7pm

Location: Balmalloch Primary School

Attendees

Parent Council: Alison Breingan (AB) (Chair), Carrie Strachan (CS), Laura Young (LY), Nicola Patrick (NP), Jennifer Molloy (JM), Sarah Curran (SC), Stewart Derrick (SD), Alissa Kaufmann (AK) (Minutes)

School Staff: Ruth McCarthy (Head Teacher) (RM), John Paterson (Principal Teacher) (JP)

Parent Body: Kimberly Wilson (KW)

PTA: None present

Apologies: Heather Brennan-McVey

1. Welcome

AB welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Election of Chair

Discussion Summary

AB invited nominations for the position of Parent Council Chair. CS confirmed she was willing to stand. The group discussed sharing workload and ensuring support for the Chair role.

Decisions

- **Carrie Strachan elected Chair** of the Parent Council.
- Parent Council members agreed to actively support the new Chair in her role.

Actions

- None recorded.

3. Constitution Discussion

Discussion Summary

The group reviewed the draft Parent Council constitution. Questions were raised about the current membership limit of 10, with members noting this requirement did not appear in official guidance. There was discussion around potentially renaming the group, but no strong feelings toward changing it.

A substantial discussion took place regarding the **relationship between the PTA and Parent Council**:

- PTA requires to sit as a subgroup of the PC for insurance purposes.
- There is confusion among parents about the roles of each group.
- Updates on PTA fundraising and spending are not routinely shared, and members felt this contributed to a lack of transparency.
- Discussion included current PTA leadership (Claire as Treasurer and Co-Chair; Cassie as Chair) and the staff links (JP as link for PC; Rachel Murphy for PTA; with Lorraine overseeing PTA and RM overseeing PC).

The group felt that improved communication and alignment between the PC and PTA would benefit the wider parent body.

Additional conversations covered fundraising practices, examples from other schools, and the benefits of clearly communicating fund usage, including visuals such as infographics.

Decisions

- Membership limit of 10 to be **removed** from the constitution.
- Group name to **remain unchanged**.
- PTA to be recognised as a **subgroup of the Parent Council** for insurance and governance purposes.
- Agreement in principle to improve transparency of PTA fundraising and spending.

Actions

- **AB to revise the PC constitution** and circulate an updated draft.
 - **PTA to share records of funds raised and spent** with JP for publication via appropriate school communication channels (e.g., infographic in newsletter).
 - **PC, PTA and school staff to arrange a joint discussion** to clarify structure, communication flow and meeting arrangements.
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4. Highlights from the Head Teacher's Report

Discussion Summary

RM and the PC discussed the content, purpose, and format of the Head Teacher's (HT) report. Key points included:

- The HT report should serve as a **highlight report** for the broader parent forum, not an agenda-setting document.
- Current formatting is **difficult to read on mobile devices**; PC requested PDF format.
- Agreement that the HT report and agenda should be **distributed one week before meetings**.
- PC suggested using parent chat groups to collect feedback and prioritise discussion topics.
- Group reviewed examples from other schools; mixed views on ideal level of detail.
- Group were positive about the Academy's next week at a glance email that included dates for the diary for the following week.
- General agreement that **attendance and attainment commentary** is valuable.
- PC stressed they do not want to "gatekeep" information, as some details are relevant to the wider parent body.

SD agreed to provide suggestions for making the report more accessible and user-friendly.

Decisions

- HT Report will be issued as a **PDF** going forward.
- **Agenda and HT report to be circulated one week in advance** of meetings.
- HT report will focus on **key updates**, including attendance, attainment, action plan progress, and relevant school initiatives.

Actions

- **RM to speak to the office** regarding feasibility of sending a weekly email on Friday including dates for the diary the following week.
- **SD to review the HT report** and provide feedback to RM/JP.

5. Follow-up From Action Plan Meeting

Discussion Summary

RM updated the group on developments following the previous action plan meeting:

- Jill (NLC) will attend one PC meeting per term and plans to attend the next meeting.

- Introduction of **paired clusters** and broader collaboration across local schools.
- Discussion of attendance data and how inaccuracies (e.g., children remaining on registers after leaving) can distort comparisons.
- Detailed update on **remits** for the school leadership team (RM, JP, Lorraine, Rachel), with roles being finalised now that all staff are in post.
- RM explained upcoming changes to data collection and tracking through the new NLC dashboard and how this aligns with the action plan.
- Update on inclusion support, cluster teaching resources, and interventions (e.g., language and communication programmes, sensory room plans).
- PC emphasised the importance of communicating initiatives to parents using **generic, non-identifying language**.
- JP provided an update on book and library initiatives to update the resources currently available. Need for modernisation was supported by the PC group.
- RM noted a £12K library grant would go along way if successful.
- There was a discussion on the mini-duke initiative and an opportunity for parent engagement. RM explained the £10per book being a barrier to whole-school roll-out.

Decisions

- School leadership **remits to be shared with parents in January** once finalised with staff.
- Parents will receive the next **Action Plan update in January**.
- Engagement session with the Cluster Integration and Inclusion Lead (CIAIL) will be offered to parents, with the **audience to be all parents**, not just PC/PTA.
- Raise mini-duke fundraising request with PTA if school are wanting to roll-out school wide.

Actions

- **RM to share leadership remits in January**, once assigned.
- **RM and Jill to issue Action Plan update** in January.
- **RM/School to arrange CIAIL** sessions accordingly.
- **JP to provide a Pupil Voice update** in February.

6. Communication of Parent Involvement Throughout the Year

Discussion Summary

PC highlighted the need for early notice of events requiring parental attendance, particularly during working hours. Positive feedback was shared regarding the recent enterprise sessions, including the approach of having older siblings support younger pupils.

The group discussed the importance of reflecting on annual events to inform improvements and future planning.

Decisions

- Event scheduling and “dates for your diary” should be communicated **as early as possible**.
- Annual reflection on events to be incorporated into PC meeting plans.

Actions

- **Add event reflection from Year 1 to the May PC meeting**, enabling this to inform the August planning cycle (Responsible: JP).
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7. AOB

Discussion Summary

Traffic Issues:

- Ongoing non-compliance, unsafe manoeuvres, and verbal abuse toward staff were noted.
- Full gate closure remains an option if pupil and staff safety cannot be ensured.

Parents on School Grounds:

- PC expressed concern that a recent communication about restricting parents from the school yard suggested it was a PC-driven idea, which was not the case.
- Consensus that clarification should be issued, including clear pictures showing where parents should wait.
- Discussion on operational implications if parents cannot enter the yard.

Decisions

- School to issue **clarifying communication** regarding parent access to yard, noting the policy pre-existed and explaining the need for enforcement.

Actions

- **RM/JP to issue clarification** with visual guidance on waiting areas for each year group.
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Meeting End

7:35pm

Agenda Item	Action	Responsible	Due Date
Constitution	Revise PC constitution and circulate updated draft	AB	Feb 2026
Constitution / PTA-PC Alignment	Share PTA fundraising and spending info with JP for publication	PTA / JP	Annual – June newsletter
Constitution / PTA-PC Alignment	Arrange joint discussion to clarify structures and communication flow	PC, PTA, RM, JP	Jan 2026
Head Teacher's Report	Review HT report format and propose improvements	SD	Next PC meeting, Feb 2026
Action Plan Follow-up	Share leadership remits with staff and parents	RM	Jan 2026
Action Plan Follow-up	Issue January Action Plan update	RM & Jill (NLC)	Jan 2026
Action Plan Follow-up	RM/School to arrange CIAIL sessions accordingly	RM / CIAIL	TBC
Action Plan Follow-up	Provide Pupil Voice update	JP	Feb 2026
Communication – Yearly Involvement	Add event reflection to May PC meeting	JP	May 2026
AOB – Parents on School Grounds	Issue clarification with visual guidance for waiting areas	RM	ASAP