

## **Abernethy Primary School - Parent Council Meeting**

### **Meeting - Wednesday 5 February 2014 @ 7pm**

#### **Attendees –**

Paula Morrison (Head Teacher), Morag Hodgkinson (Principal Teacher), Fiona Stewart (Chairman), Marian Fyfe (Treasurer), Sue Smith (Secretary), Anne McElnea, Gordon Miller, Jill Donnachie, Jill Young, Karen Jerrard Dinn, Kirsty Baird, Katie McAleese, Lynn Mitchell, Nicky Coulter, Sharon Smith, Alistair Robinson, Alison Craig.

**Apologies** –Lorraine Kinnear & Rachel Shepherd.

Mel Davies has asked to step down from the Parent Council as she is unable to make the meetings.

#### ***1 - Minutes of last meeting and matters arising***

There were no changes to the previous minutes and these were agreed.

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

#### ***2 – Constitution and Purpose / Aims of the Parent Council***

Fiona Stewart handed out copies of the Abernethy Primary Parent Council Constitution for discussion and review. There were no suggested amendments.

It was agreed that we would like a member of the community council to continue as a co-opted member and also that the new Church of Scotland minister, Rev Moira Herkes, would be invited to attend a meeting and potentially become a co-opted member.

*Action* – Lynn Mitchell offered to invite Rev Moira Herkes to the next meeting.

Mrs Morrison handed out copies of the Parent Council guidance notes and information sheets from the Scottish Government. These can be found online at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/194627/0052294.pdf>

#### ***3 - Head Teacher Report***

##### **Staffing changes**

- Mrs Suiter has now returned back full time after her phased return in January, and we welcome her back.
- Nursery staffing is finally stabilising – Ms Michelle Duncan joins us in afternoon session as our numbers have increased and we will be at 30 afternoon children by Easter. We have also appointed Ms Wendy Kemp as a fulltime ECP who will join us in about 3 weeks. We thank Avril Rankin and Helga Burns for holding the fort!
- Miss Scott (Pupil support assistant) has been successful in obtaining another post and leaves us on 28<sup>th</sup> February. Emma Moir will replace her. Emma currently supports in the nursery afternoon sessions.

## School News

- Parental questionnaires- good feedback from questionnaires as indicated on last newsletter. Full results will be seen on website in due course. Looking to introduce a board in reception corridor for parental feedback from a variety of sources, events. E.g. 'You said we did...'
- 28<sup>th</sup> December – Abernethy had its Healthy Promoting School accreditation, and received a very positive report
- Work on the new bike shelter is underway.
- P6 & P7 are receiving French tuition and this is also being supported by a French speaking parent once a week.
- Looking at programme to put French in classes across the school P1 – P7. Work on this development will start next session.
- We have several work experience pupils from Perth High School working in classes at the moment
- Children from across classes have been involved in learning discussions with Head Teacher and Principal Teacher – finding out what they think about the learning they are doing in school and what progress they are making and what the school needs to get better at. A particular focus is on maths.
- P6 & P7 held a successful Burns Supper on 24<sup>th</sup> January and the poetry competition was a great success- different format this year.
- P6 class won £100 for the William Souter competition – school with most entries. We had 3 pupils in the final.
- 4 pupils entered the schools gymnastic competition on 4<sup>th</sup> February.
- 12<sup>th</sup> February – Learning & Achievement visit – Karen Young (QIO) will be visiting and observing in classes and talking to staff and pupils. Part of Perth & Kinross quality assurance programme. We look forward to sharing our good practice and discussing next steps for the school.
- P2 will be getting training in a football fitness programme from 24<sup>th</sup> February until 31<sup>st</sup> March. Finishes with a mini sports festival at MacDiarmid Park.
- P5 – P7 are working in partnership with POST (Paediatric Obesity Support Team) to deliver a health programme called Fun Fit Tayside.
- Website – planning to get this up and running again soon, staffing constraints have hindered this been kept up to date as much as we would like. Steps have been taken to address this.

## Nursery News

- Staffing changes as listed above.
- Nursery 600 hours – Nursery registration begins 11 Feb for starting in August. It is anticipated the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill (this entitles three and four-year-olds to 600 hours of free early learning nursery education per year, an increase from the 475 currently offered) will be passed shortly and will allow more flexibility to parents for learning and childcare. This means that nursery sessions will increase to 3 hrs 12 minutes per session. Opening and closing times may change. It is likely that at Abernethy morning session will open at 9am and finish at 12.12pm, the afternoon session will start at 1.50pm until 4.02pm. There may be the option for 2 pick up sessions in the afternoon to accommodate parents collecting school children at 3.15pm. Nothing is set in stone as yet and will be confirmed within the coming weeks as information becomes available. Guidance can be found on P&K website at <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/3828/Nursery-registration>

## **4 – Homework**

Mrs Hodgkinson ran a small workshop session with Parent Council members on the following questions:

- What is the purpose of homework?
- What should the school keep doing in relation to homework?
- What are the benefits of homework for:
  - Pupils
  - Parents
  - Teachers
- What could the school do differently re homework?

Feedback and views were varied and polarised even within such a small group! This highlighted the wide range of viewpoints on the subject of homework and illustrated the challenge the school faces when it undertakes its planned review of homework.

### **5 – Fundraising Update**

80s Disco is organised for the 8 March. Tickets (£5 each, BYOB and cup) are currently on sale. Fliers have been put in the school bags, it has been mentioned in the newsletter, on the Abernethy “What’s On” page and Rachel Shepherd has promoted via Facebook. Posters will go up week commencing 10 Feb.

*Action* – Parent Council members agreed to provide snacks for the tables, please bring along on the night.

*Action* – Sue Smith will promote the event on the Hall facebook page and website to supplement Rachel’s posts on the main village page.

### **6 – Finance Update**

Since the last report the Parent Council has had expenditure on the food for the children’s Christmas Parties and a contribution towards the cost of the buses for the P7 citizenship day. There has been some small income from the continued sale of the Peel 2 Save cards.

As balances are healthy there was some discussion around further expenditure for the school. It was agreed to investigate the purchase of small inexpensive digital cameras (as the ones currently in use by classes are beginning to fail) and also small hand held cameras with better video capability to support the film making work to be undertaken by P6.

It was suggested that external funding opportunities be looked into to see if media equipment could be obtained via a grant. (NB – Katie McAleese subsequently investigated a number of potential funding sources which were emailed out to Parent Council Members. It was suggested by Mrs Morrison that we keep these under review as the school may wish to apply for funding for other projects in the future (e.g. playground markings and/or a trim trail)).

Future expenditure for the Parent Council fund includes dictionaries for P7 leaving presents, buses for some of the P7 transition events and some small monies towards ice-poles for the Sportsday.

### **7 – Museum Matters**

Alastair Robinson raised that the Museum is keen to improve links with the school and promote more involvement. with a view to promoting inter-generational learning opportunities and projects. Mrs Morrison will act as the initial contact point for this and it links in nicely with the film-making work P6 will be undertaking on Abernethy as the school had already planned to approach the museum regarding this.

The possibility of the school having its own display area at the museum (e.g. to show work such as the recent Titanic topic) was discussed as was the possibility of the school website being listed on the Abernethy Community webpage.

*Action* – Alastair Robinson agreed to look into adding the school’s webpage to the community council site.

## **8 – Parking**

The topic of road safety and cars parking in the school turning circle was raised. The problem is again growing and an increasing number of cars are parking in the drop off zone, and even on the central pedestrian island. It is particularly an issue at 3.15pm pick up time and worryingly there have been a couple of near misses recently. Parked cars also cause issues for buses collecting pupils for trips and delivery drivers, with both of these causing delays for the school and staff.

The school have asked for parents / carers not to park in the turning circle in the last newsletter and it was noted that the local community Police did drive past and review at pick up time recently. However it was unanimously agreed that more action is needed as there appear to be a hard core of parents / carers who either have somehow not seen the request or choose to ignore it.

After some discussion it was agreed that a flier explaining the situation would be produced and given out in the school bags. Once these have gone out parent council members will also hand out the fliers to “offending” drivers for a two week period. In the interim members were asked to have a quiet word with anyone they know who parks in the drop off one / turning circle and warn them it was to be focused upon.

*Action* – Lynn Mitchell agreed to produce a flier with Jill Donnachie offering to help.

*Action* - All parent council members to “warn” or have a word with drivers where appropriate to tell them of the upcoming focus on safety and parking. Once fliers are produced council members who are at the gate to hand them out as appropriate.

## **9 – AOB**

- The issue of school meals was raised. The dinner staff are now serving the whole advertised meal to each child in the hope it will encourage better consumption of fruit and veg. Appropriate encouragement will be given by those supervising mealtimes and Mrs Morrison will speak to staff regarding this.
- Perth & Kinross Council (& partners) are hosting a free seminar on Thursday 6 March on the theme of “Keeping Your Child Safe”. The event will be free and held at Perth Playhouse Cinema. There are 3 identical seminars with places limited at each one and the event is likely to be popular so early booking is advised. A note with full details will go out in all school bags and can also be found at <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=23563&p=0>

Meeting closed at 8.45pm