

Brae High School – Parent Council Meeting Minutes

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| Date and Time of Meeting | Wednesday 9 th September 6pm |
| Location | Vscene Virtual Meeting |
| Those Present | Sarah Johnson, Louise Wood, Vivian Anderson, Alison Johnson, Patricia Batty, Janis Nicolson, Steven McDonald, Logan Nicolson, Julie Johnson, Emma McDonald, Fraser Hall, Shona Carter, Jeanette Budge, Astrid Nicolson (Clerk) |
| Apologies From | Loren Manson, Paul Bendix, Colleen Flaws, Karen Thomson, Pauline Moncrieff |

| Agenda Items No. | | Person Responsible |
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| 1 | <p>Welcome and Apologies noted as above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise welcomed everyone to the meeting. • Apologies shared | |
| 2 | <p>Approval of Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed by Vivian, seconded by Sarah | |
| 3 | <p>Chairs Report on Actions/Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise took the opportunity to acknowledge the surreal times we are in at the moment and thanked the school and teachers for the fantastic job they had been doing responding to the many changes required because of Covid. She said the parent council also felt reassured that there was a priority focus on the mental and emotional wellbeing of the school community. She also told the meeting that the Parent council we very keen to find way to feel together and stay connected with parents, carers and pupils, and felt it was as important as ever to continue the open communication and collaboration with the school to ensure voices where heard and understood as we go forward in working together and supporting the school across all departments | |

- Louise told the meeting about Connect which is a longstanding independent parents' group and a registered charity which provides support to parents and carers all over Scotland. It also provides membership services to Parent councils and PTA's, as well as offering advice and information to individual parents who have concerns about any aspect of the education of their child, or the wider education system. It also supports education professionals in developing effective partnership working with families and the wider community.
- Louise welcomed the news from John Swinney that the young people who had had their exam results downgraded would see the original estimates restored and additional university places would be made available to compensate for this. He also said the OECD review into the Curriculum for Excellence will be extended to cover how to transform assessment and qualifications. The SQA will consult on changes for the 2021 exam diet and Professor Mark Priestly of Stirling University will lead an independent review on the 2020 results process. She also said how Connect had welcomed the Scottish Governments recognition of this unprecedented year and had said that we need to take this opportunity to find a new way forward which does away with the inequalities of the old system. They urged for calm reflection and deeper analysis of other systems from around the world that respect and reflect learners achievements. We are at a crossroads and young people are right to expect a system which recognizes their individual achievements and builds in their views and voices. She also shared Connects response to the SQA's consultation on modifications to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher course assessments introduction. Connect said there was a lack of communication and inappropriate timescales.
- **Current Actions-**
- Recycling opportunities- on hold
- Info Sheet for Suggestion box- on hold
- System for Kids Council thoughts to be heard – on hold
- School gate – Waiting on quote from Malakoff for a gate.
- Lunch time activities – on hold
- RSPB – on hold
- Days of action for new area- on hold
- Fundraising -on hold
- Fundraising for new IT – Application for new IT has been granted so the school are getting and allocation of iPad and laptops.
- Invite Head Cook to attend meetings – become a regular item
- Hot trollies and Vending machines – Hot trollies will be implemented when the serving of hot food returns. Logan still looking onto Vending machines but they are proving to be rather expensive.
- Hand soap options – Neil Beattie says that the soap provided is with the current Ph guidelines so won't be able to provide any other types but, pupils are welcome to bring their own from home if an alternative is required.
- List of Primary Council meeting dates – on hold

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School concert and Trips – there will not be a Christmas concert this year, instead there will be a summer show, there will be no Winter Ball but a Summer Ball. It gives more flexibility with better weather and possible reduction in current restriction. A Letter/Booklet will be sent out to parents outlining these and more changes. • School Trips – current guidelines are for no school trips to be planned. | |
| 4 | <p>Treasurers Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 31/3/2020 there was £729.05 In the bank • Ringfenced funding £436.86 for the Open Area and £200 Secondary • Auditor of the Accounts donated her fee back to the council £20 • Going to promote Easy Fundraising again as £58.79 raised before Covid. | |
| 5 | <p>School Report Logan ran through his report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID Update First of all, I would like to give me very sincere thanks to all the bairns, who have been brilliant, supportive, and very adaptable, to the parents, who have been so supportive, patient and understanding throughout the constant changes, and of course our staff, who have worked so hard to make the school safe and happy, and have ensured that children and young people are back learning We are aware that lunches have been tricky and finding a menu that works has been a bit of a challenge, but the canteen staff are doing a great job of adapting to the new situation and adjusting what they are doing based on feedback. • Early Years We are delighted with the impact our new Senior Practitioners, Danielle Johnson and Mairi Jamieson, are having in our ELC department. Since starting in August, they have made a number of changes to the learning environment that have improved the learning experiences of our ELC children. They have also set up a new ELC blog to ensure that families remain connected to the setting and up to speed on their child’s learning. • Primary Our primary pupils are doing a great job of settling back into school and all the new rules, restrictions and routines. We have tried to ensure that every primary class has their own outdoor play space. This has affected car park, but SRT have kindly allowed us to use the Astroturf car park. Each class having their own outdoor play space has been brilliant and it is something we would like to look at doing as a permanent feature of the school. Perhaps this is something we could work on with parents as a shared project when the situation improves. • Secondary Due to face masks in school and more movement around the building, the secondary pupils have been subject to more restrictions and rules than primary, however they have all displayed a great deal of maturity in coping with this. They are also more limited in terms of having their own social area, this is due to the red area being too small to adhere to limited mixing. The S6 have also lost the common room. I have been petitioned by the S6 pupils to reinstate the common room, however we had a really good discussion around risk, health and safety We agreed with the parent council that S1 and S2 would remain in their own classroom most of the day. I feel that this was a good decision at the time, there was a lot of uncertainty and fear about returning to school and this measure | |

provided some families and children with reassurance for returning to school. It was also in line with Scottish Government guidance to minimize movement around the school where possible. However, as the term has gone on and we observed the pupils they have demonstrated a great deal of maturity, and with the introduction of face masks we feel the time is now right for S1 and S2 to return to moving around the building to their normal classes. This of particular importance as the current arrangement is having an impact on learning and teaching. This is mainly due to the number of building and ICT adaptations being delayed due to COVID.

- **Key events this term**

At this point in time there are no school events planned for this term.

We have had a whole-school assembly on Teams outlining our School values.

Vision

To create a 'Learning Community' that is nurturing, supportive, ambitious and enables all children and young people to thrive.

Aims

- To work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff, and partner agencies to ensure that Brae High School is excellent.
- To ensure we work in collaboration so that every child meets their full potential
- To have innovative and excellent learning and teaching that meets the needs of all learners.
- To ensure the school provides a flexible and progressive curriculum that enables all children and young people to develop the skills they need to succeed.
- To have respectful relationships and communication at all levels in our school community, so that everyone feels included, safe and valued.

Values

Creativity

- We are curious, creative and critical thinkers who innovate and use our initiative and have fun learning
- We have a growth mind-set - we know that learning means facing challenges and making mistakes, then reflecting on and growing from them.
- We apply our creativity across all curricular areas.

Aspiration

- We aspire to achieve our best, and get there with resilience, integrity and focus.
- We support and help each other and celebrate each other's success.
- We have high expectations for ourselves and others, because we know that everyone has gifts and talents.

Relationships

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| | <p>Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We know that safe, positive, respectful relationships are vital to success. We treat each other fairly, with kindness, compassion and empathy, and always take responsibility for our actions. We know the importance of good communication and collaboration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We value each other, not in spite of our differences, but because of our differences - we celebrate diversity. We all have a responsibility to ensure that everyone feels included, valued and worthy. We expect to be listened to and help shape the school, and understand we have a role in ensuring that others have that opportunity too <p>In September, our year group assemblies will be focused on relationships, in secondary this will be MVP, and in primary this will be on positive relationships. In October, our year group assemblies will be focused on equality and black history month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Improvement Plan We are having a SIP meeting on Thursday with a focus on re-establishing and completing priorities from last year and identifying recovery priorities. I would be interested in hearing any priorities from parents. Louise asked for feedback on the S1 and S2 being able to move around the school again. Patricia said that if it was having an impact on learning and teaching then she thought that it was time for them to be put back into their proper department classes, Alison also agreed with this. Julie said that for health and wellbeing it was a good idea as they were feeling quite restrained currently and the sooner it happens the better. Louise said it was quite reassuring to come back into school that was going to be one classroom but balancing up everything and how well the pupils have settled in, it was time to start moving around again. Shona concurred also. Logan will talk to pupils and say it will happen from Monday. Louise asked Logan if he would like the School improvement plan as a regular Agenda item? He said that would be a good addition and the other council members agreed. Louise welcomed the news of additional office staff in the secondary. | |
| 6 | <p>Staffing Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This session we have welcomed the following staff to the team: Mrs Colleen Flaws (Family Learning and Support Worker) Miss Sadie Simpson (Librarian) Mrs Janetta Williamson and Mrs Pauline Doull (Clerical Assistants) Ms Ellie Clubb (Teacher of Primary – Probationer) Mrs Loren Manson (Teacher of Primary – Probationer) Mrs Kate Hopper (Teacher of Primary) Mr Brian Murdock (Teacher of PE – alternative route probationer) Ms Sheryl McLennan (Teacher of CDT – probationer) Mrs Drina Hughson and Mrs June Ward (Teacher of Home Economics - job share for Mrs Williamson’s maternity cover) | |

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| 7 | <p>Pupil Council Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logan said it was tricky for the pupils to meet without breaking the current restrictions. They were trying to find a way for this to happen. Louise commented it was still very important for the pupils to have a voice and feel like they were being heard. • Julie suggested using the suggestion/comments box for this purpose. Louise agreed • Vivian asked if each class had a representative? Logan confirmed that they did. • Logan felt that a bit more work on the processes and how it works was needed and suggested it be part of the school improvement plan. The PC agreed and said they were very willing to assist with this. | |
| 8 | <p>Comments Box</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logan said that there is a comments box in the ELC, Primary and Secondary departments. Louise said the PC needed to put Notices on them and to advertise what they are and that pupils, teachers and parents could use them and thought needed to be put into how the parents and people outside the school could access them or use another way to put a suggestion/comment to the PC. Louise said they could be emptied the week before every meeting. | |
| 9 | <p>School Lunches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise welcomed Steve McDonald Head Cook to the meeting • Louise read out the feedback from parents to Steve for him to respond to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 Portion sizes, children coming home from school quite hungry. ○ 2 A lot of waste appeared to be happening, children not eating their lunches. ○ 3 Choices? Any scope for more? Quality? ○ 4 Any update on hot food coming back? ○ 5 If the Brae school could have its own flexibility in menus? • Steve gave his response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Portion sizes - The canteen had to respond and adjust very quickly to the change from hot meals to packed lunches and had had difficulty with food and packaging supplies. There is still some issues but they are easier to deal with now as time has gone on. Portion sizes were a bit smaller than they should have been, this was due to dealing with the new packed lunch set up and also catering for approx. 120 children with North Roe and Ollaberry schools being included. This has since been resolved with portions sizes increases and some more choices added. There is also a difference in the size between Primary and secondary. Logan added that the portion sizes were just teething problems. ○ Waste – Steve said he felt that the waste was still the same as with the hot service, not so much with the Secondary but definitely with the primary. Louise asked about the flexibility in the menu choices to see if that would have a impact on the waste? Steve said Billy had suggested weighing the food waste to see exactly what was happening with it. Logan added that there maybe needed to be a change to the menus to split popular choices on different days which may reduce the wastage. ○ Choices - Louise asked if there could be a pupil survey about packed lunch choices? Steve said with current staffing adding more choices would not be possible. He also said Neil Beattie had suggested that smaller schools were having hot menus reintroduced by the end of term so there was hope that the larger schools would follow shortly after. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hot Food – Steve hopes the hot food would be back as soon as possible. As said previously they were hoping to reintroduce them into smaller schools to iron out any issues. There was also a lot of risk factors around covid to think about with class bubbles being very difficult with the hot food. ○ Flexibility in menus - Neil Beattie had told Steve that there would be new menus coming out for hot food and there would be gaps in the menu so each school to tailor them to suit. ● Emma Macdonald said that the council were very keen to get back to hot lunches as soon as possible. ● Logan said that parents/children could make some suggestions to tweak the menus. ● Steve said that he would like to come to the meeting on a regular basis and welcomes feedback. | |
| 10 | <p>Additional Items</p> <p>i Social Distancing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Louise had queries from parents, ● Were primary pupils going to the secondary and how was that being managed? Logan told the meeting that this was happening for practical subjects that couldn't be taught in their own classroom, for example Art but not for things like German where the teacher would go across to the primary. The process is the pupils go through the main door sanitizing their hands as they come in and go directly to the Art room. This was a necessary measure as there is just not enough room in the primary and save the children from missing out on their subjects. ● When playing outside does the supervisory staff need to adhere to social distancing? Logan said staff should be adhering to social distancing where possible, but for example if a child tripped they would assist the child for their health and wellbeing but have facemasks on. <p>ii Winter Weather provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New Area, how will that work when the weather turns? Logan said he wasn't really sure how it would work as everyone taking in rubber boots would not be possible with the lack of storage. Only essential services are available due to Covid so finishing/altering the new area is not possible. There would be a possibility to utilize the secondary polycrumb if needed to give some extra outside space. <p>iii Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficult – any scope for more spaces. Logan said that SRT had given us use of the Astroturf and the only other space that could be potentially opened up is across from the P1-3 class rooms but these could only be used to park before 0830 and leave again after 1730. Patricia suggested using part of the grassed area next to the car park to be made into additional spaces but Logan said that would be a very big project costing a lot. He also says this highlights the parking issue the school has and he is going to raise with children's services again. Louise told him the PC could put in a letter of support for this. <p>iv Mobile Phones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School policy for teachers, visiting instructors and pupils? Logan said phones can be used in class for school work with the permission of the teacher, teachers can use a mobile for teaching purposes but not for social reasons while teaching. Logan going to remind staff on school bulletin. | |

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| 11 | <p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What access do the pupils have to the Library? Logan said secondary pupils have access but the primary children can't go across as yet but there are boxes of books put across to each class and the pupils can request books also. • Occasional Holiday suggested 24th May PC agreed • Week lost this summer is added to next year's summer holidays. • The school is holding a Halloween costume and Christmas jumper amnesty to cut down on waste and cost for families. | |
| 12 | <p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25th November 6pm via Vscene AGM and ordinary meeting | |

| Action No. | | Person Responsible | Update on Progress |
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| | Emma McDonald to look into the recycling opportunities and get update to the PC | EM | On hold |
| | PC office bearers to make info sheet to display next to suggestion boxes and raise awareness of the boxes on the PC update | PC Office Bearers | On hold |
| | System to be implemented for Kids council's thoughts to be heard, PC Office bearers to help facilitate this | LN/BF/PC Office Bearers | On hold |
| | Speak to DLO about the safety of the school gates. PC to email Logan to assist/progress the issue with the DLO | LN | Waiting on Malakoff quote |
| | Lunch Time activities Logan to discuss with Danny Peterson | LN | On hold |
| | Billy to speak to Karen from RSPB | BF | On hold |
| | Days of action dates to be decided to finish off the new/adventure area | LN/BF/PC | On hold |
| | Logan to discuss with DLO regarding carpark issues and put reminder out to staff and parents about car park usage | LN | On hold |
| | Project Proposals for fundraising: school interface PC to put out an update to parents and ask for fundraising ideas | PC | On hold |
| | Project Proposals for fundraising: new IT needed for the schools (tablets). Action plan to be made on how we can work together on this | LN with PC Office Bearers | New IT provisions secured by the school |
| | Invite Steve Head Cook to next PC meeting | PC Office Bearers | Make a regular item |
| | Logan to speak to Neil Beattie about Hot trollies and Shona Thompson about Vending machines. | LN | On hold |
| | Logan and PC to look into hot drink vending machines | LN/PC | On hold |
| | Logan to speak to Neil Beattie about hand soap options | LN | Soap provided is within PH guidelines so alternative not available, children can take in their own if required |
| | List of Primary council dates and times | BF | On hold |
| | In PC update, ask parents for ideas on how the Primary concert could be done differently this year. | PC Office Bearers | On hold |

