

BALFRON HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

Notice of Meeting to be held on Tuesday 12 September at 7.00 p.m. in the Strathendrick Suite,
Balfron High School

A G E N D A

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Introduction of Head Prefects
4. Fundraising
5. Headteacher's Report
6. Village representation
7. Meeting Focus – Internet Safety
8. Treasurer's report
9. Halloween Discos
10. 500 Club Draw

11. Confirmation of date of next meeting

7 November 2017

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BALFRON HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 12 September 2017 at 7pm in the Strathendrick Suite, Balfron High School

Present: Jackie MacKay, Ado Adolphus, Fiona Lyle, Vivienne Mackay, Lynne Seaton, Tara Dunseith, Wendy Hamilton, Maureen Meredith, Katy Gibb, Gerry Eckersley, Amanda Quinn, Stephanie Harper, Elaine Bannatyne, Tracey Patrick, Freya Logan (Head Girl), Matt Chandler (Head Boy), Orla Reid (Deputy Head Girl)

Apologies: Wendy Robb, Grace Shaw, Andy Roger, Lachlan MacKay (Deputy Head Boy)

1. **Welcome**

Gerry thanked everybody for coming. It was encouraging to see so many new faces returning.

2. **Minutes of previous meeting – 14 March 2017**

Minutes were approved without revision.

3. **Introduction of Head Prefects**

Our new team of Head Prefects were introduced to the meeting, and a warm welcome was extended to Freya, Orla and Matt. The team have begun work in earnest and have some challenges they would like to address. From their discussions with the Pupil Councils they have identified the issues on which they would like to focus. They would like to support the more senior pupils with exam stress, family pressure and self motivation. They feel younger pupils could be supported more with awareness of online bullying and taking care of their mental health.

Orla and Freya have attended the S2/S3 Cyber Awareness presentation, and in discussion with the 3rd Year Pupil Council reps are involved with The Diana Award are focusing on training in awareness of cyber-bullying.

The Parent Council offered every support to the Head Prefects in their aims, and asked to be kept up to date with their activities.

4. **Fundraising**

All funds that can be made available to the school will be very warmly welcomed and very much appreciated. As a rural school we have significant additional funding challenges in making opportunities available to our pupils. During 2016 – 2017 Balfron High School spent in excess of £16,000 on the use of minibuses from which all pupils benefit. There are numerous additional needs such as software purchases, tables for eating in the atrium, outdoor tables, running of after-school activities etc

Regular Funding Streams

The **Candlelit Classics Concert** on the 16 June was greatly enjoyed. Many thanks to Katie for all her hard work in getting the event underway so successfully. The event made £631 profit.

The Clothing Company has been very well received with stalls at Killearn Country Market and at new P7 parent's evenings. The future involvement of the children of the school perhaps as a Business Enterprise was discussed. The possibility of having the stalls at Parent Evenings would be welcomed.

The **Club 500** has so far contributed approximately £1000 to Parent Council Funds. We would like to promote the Club 500 at Parent Evenings.

Amanda continues to access **Grants** for the school and has sourced £46,000 for an outdoor gym, the poly tunnel and Carbon Literacy in the school.

A big thank you to Maureen Meredith who gave an enthusiastic talk at the new P7 parents meeting at school about the parent council and our activities.

The Fundraising group will be holding their first meeting of the year on Monday 18th September at 7pm – all very welcome. In planning for the new year is a family friendly event such as a Music and Food Festival in September 2018.

5. Head teacher's report

➤ **Attainment**

Balfron High School pupils performed well in the national exams with 39% of the S5 cohort achieving 5 or more Highers. 100% of the S4 cohort now hold worthwhile qualifications, with 64% achieving National 5S at Level 5 or better. In the S6 cohort there was a slight increase in the level of achievement in Advanced Highers.

The performance was generally strong, but could be stronger.

It was noted that the universities are increasingly interested in achievement at Higher level, and there is perhaps less demand for Advanced Higher qualifications.

Attainment is measured by the % of any cohort in relation to that cohort at S4, for example the percentage of those in S4 who then go on to achieve Advanced Highers in S6.

The Senior Management Team were available in school the day after the results were published, and approximately 50% of pupils were contacted. It is felt by some of the parent council that the team should be available on results day itself. The management team feel the effort is better directed the day after the results when they can be more focused.

Some young people requested **Re-marks**. Stirling Council's policy on this is very strict.

A Re-mark request is made on the assumption that there has been a mistake in the marking of a paper. This assumption is based on the evidence of the capabilities of that young person – the biggest item of evidence is the performance in the Prelims. If this estimate, the prelim result, is less than 2 grades below the achieved result then no remark is possible.

Approximately 50 papers were submitted for remarks, of which 4 were deemed a priority as future plans depended upon meeting grades. Of these 4, only one marking total was changed, but the grade was unaltered.

The importance of the Prelims is perhaps under-estimated by pupils despite clear explanations and encouragement during the run up to the prelims. A reminder to all parents is being considered during November.

➤ **Parents as Partners**

A **UCAS** information evening has been held in school and generated good feedback. 4th years were invited for the first time.

Pupils advised to speak to Admissions Teams – Advanced Highers appear to be less important in many cases than appropriate Highers. Some courses still require Highers to be achieved in one sitting. UCAS is now open for applications.

Pupils are encouraged to consider **Advanced Apprenticeships** (companies such as Aggreko, and SSE offer them) which are equivalent to Degree Level qualifications.

Show my Homework has been updated within school and all pupils and parents are encouraged to use it.

➤ **Curriculum**

The S1 Residential is underway, and the S4's are away from school on their Work Experience week.

The Curriculum is under review. The curriculum has worked well to raise standards of achievement in the school, which are now possibly leveling out. The possibility of changing the curricular model is under consideration.

One proposed model would have S2 taking 9 – 10 subjects, S3 carrying on 7 subjects and S5 5 subjects to Higher. It is thought this model may increase the choice of subjects available at crucial decision points at National 5 and Higher. Parental Views are very welcome.

➤ **National Qualifications**

The school are keen to support parents better in helping to prepare their children for national qualifications and welcome suggestions.

One suggestion might be to make available the timetable for all coursework and investigations that count towards national qualifications throughout the year.

Anne Ferguson from Rural Transport, Stirling Council has suggested that the Young Scot Card may give discounted bus travel for 15 year olds travelling to and from school. Lynne will explore further. The Young Scot Card gives discounted fares for 16,17 and 18 year olds on our rural buses.

6. **Village Representation**

We would like to hear the views from our wider school community and suggest that having a village representative from each of the feeder villages would be an advantage. There was some doubt as to how an individual would be able to make contact within their village to represent their views. An idea to explore.

7. **Meeting Focus – Internet Safety**

The Parent Council share the Head Prefects' views regarding the importance of Internet Safety. We would like to invite PC Diamond to present a wider evening for parents exploring the negative aspects of internet use and what parents can do to support and guide their children. Issues such as age appropriate websites/social media, privacy issues, discussions with their parents and the questions that a parent might like to ask their children would be discussed.

8. Treasurer's Report

There was opening balance on the 7th Sep 2016 of £469.89

As of 12th September 2017 the bank balance is £2317.00 with Cash in Hand of £398 giving an approximate balance of funds of £3000. We would like to thank the Killearn Beer Festival for their very generous donation of £250 that was given to the meeting.

It was agreed that we would like to maintain a balance of £1500 in the account, making £1500 available to spend. Although a proportion would be made available to the buses, the Parent Council would like to invite anyone in the BHS Community to approach the Parent Council for funds (e.g. from afterschool clubs, the pupil council, departments in the school). Applications will be considered at the next Parent Council meeting.

9. Halloween Discos

The Discos are to be held in October. 25th S3/4, 26th S1/S2 and 30th S5/6.

Parental Supervision at the Halloween Discos is always very much appreciated by the staff and the school would like to ask for any assistance possible this year.

10. Club 500 Draw

A Random Number Generator was used to select the winner for this meeting.

Many thanks to Matt Chandler for doing the honours and the winner was **41 – Amanda Quinn**. Congratulations Amanda!

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 7th November at 7pm in the Strathendrick Suite, Balfron High School.