



Email: balernohspc@gmail.com

Minutes of Meeting of Balerno High School Parent Council 25 September 2017 at Balerno High School at 6.30pm

PC members

Parents

Andrea Brewster (AB) (Acting Chair), Sanjay Kallat (SK) (Vice Chair), Jessica Bryce (JB), Tony Foster (TF), Peter Reekie (PR), Paula Miller (PM),

Co-opted community member

Marion Milne (MM)

School staff

Neil McCallum (NM) (Head Teacher), Ros Ranger (Depute Head Teacher), Michelle May (MM) (PTC English, Media & Drama)

Senior pupils

Annie Bowes (Head Girl), Ben Wilson (Head Boy)

Councillors

Ricky Henderson, Graeme Bruce, Neil Gardiner

Parents attending

Mandy Irvine, Blanca Nieto, Elena Anoshkina, Neil McDougall, Fiona McDougall, Utibe Udoh, Yvonne McEwan, Elaine McMaster, Trish Lumsden, Paula Robinson, Gillian Davies, Alastair MacLennan, Ruth Gillan

Apologies

Susan Webber (Councillor); Christine Paterson (PC member); Karen Murray (PTA Chair)

Introduction and Welcome

1. The Acting Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

Parent Council AGM

2. 2.1 Annual report & financial update

Andrea Brewster presented the annual report (see separate document) and Peter Reekie gave a brief financial update.

There are some financial transactions pending (including a donation to the school health and wellbeing fund) and these will occur as soon as possible once the 'new signatories paperwork' has been processed by RBS.

There were no questions from those attending.

2.2 Election of PC Chair and Vice Chair

AB expressed thanks to Tony Foster for his years of involvement in the Parent Council and all of his work as Chair. Sanjay Kallat was also thanked for his role as Vice Chair (& he will continue on the Parent Council as a regular member)

AB agreed to formally take on the role of Chair (proposed by TF, seconded by JB)

2.3 Approval of amended constitution

AB explained that following a review of the existing constitution some proposed changes were identified:

- Changing reference to the Head Teacher by name of the current postholder to simply use 'Head Teacher'
- The existing constitution only allowed for 9 parent members. In 2016-17 there were 10 parent PC members and it was felt that increasing the number further would be appropriate to allow greater parental involvement. (increase parent members from 9-18)
- Including a section whereby PC members would be deemed to have left the PC if they didn't attend three meetings in succession and didn't note apologies.
- The overall format was rearranged to be in line with the current proposed format on the SPTC (Scottish Parent Teacher Council) website

No questions were raised on the proposed changes and the new constitution was adopted (proposed by PR, seconded by SK)

Headteacher report

3. Mr McCallum gave his report:

Staffing Update

Staff Departing

Lindsay Fullarton (Depute Head Teacher) – Moved to Hamilton Grammar as Depute Head Teacher.

Ruth Douglas (CL of Science) – Moving to Lornshill Academy as CL Science

Elaine Ford (Biology) – Moved to Sweden and working in an International school.

Stuart Cook (Science Technician) – Glasgow University to study

Alison Kerr (Office) – Retired

Anna Billes (PSA) – University to study

Ruby Beveridge (PSA) – University to become a teacher

New Staff

Roslyn Ranger – New Depute Head Teacher

Colin Hay – CL Science

Rebecca Muir – Biology Teacher

Eric Ngagieh Nnoko – Biology / Chemistry / Math's teacher

Amy Crozier - Science Technician

Elsbeth Rollason – Support for learning Teacher.

Donna McKean – Clerical

Andrea Anderson – Clerical

Congratulations to the following staff

Ms Clinton who got married and is now Mrs O'Donnell

Mr Ward who got married

Mr McKenna who had a baby daughter.

Edinburgh Leisure

Edinburgh leisure are in the process of taking over the management of school sports facilities from 6pm Monday to Friday, Weekends and Holidays. This is to have no impact on the school programme. It has now been delayed and we are waiting on confirmation of a hand over date.

Building work

We have had a number of works carried out in the school building over the summer and we now have a new heating system, the lighting has been upgraded on the inside and outside of the building. The windows have all been replaced in the Riverside Cafe making it a much more attractive space. The floor in Design and Technology has been replaced and creates a much brighter space than we previously had.

Parent Pay

CEC moving to parent pay and feedback is that this has a better interface for parents and should be positive in its application. This has now taken place and all systems should be operational.

School Charity

I am also delighted to share that the charity fundraising over the last year for our chosen charity 'Jaks Den' has raised a fantastic £5000. A huge thank you to everyone that has made a contribution to allow us to raise this outstanding sum of money. The presentation will be made to 'Jaks Den' in the house assemblies.

Sport

Congratulations to the PE department and Active schools in achieving the Sport Scotland Silver award for sport. This is a recognition of the activities that are on offer to pupils through the curriculum, extracurricular programme and wider community involvement.

School calendar

The school website now has a calendar of all the school events and this can be located at - <https://balernochs.wordpress.com/calendar-2/> or by going to the school website and clicking on the News & Events tab at the top of the screen. We will inform you if there are any updates added to this in the course of the year.

Upcoming Events

- 26th September – P7 Open Evening
- 2nd – 6th October – S1 Residential
- 9th – 13th October – S4 Work experience
- 16th – 20th October – Holiday
- 23rd October – In-Service (Staff only)
- 24th October – Pupils return
- 30th October – Parent Council meeting Updates on News and Events

Head Boy / Head Girl report

4. Annie Bowes and Ben Wilson were congratulated on their appointment to the roles. They gave a presentation on the pupil leadership structure, their responsibilities and their plans for the year (see separate presentation 'Head Girl & Boy report' for more information)

'You said, we did.....'

5. AB explained that prior to the interviews in May 2016 where Neil McCallum was appointed to the post of Head Teacher the Parent Council undertook a parental survey. Two key questions were asked:

- What qualities are parents looking for in a new Head Teacher?
- What priorities do parents identify for Balerno High School?

Six top priority areas were identified by parents (ranked by total number of comments) which were:

- Communication & engagement (35 comments)
- High quality education (27 comments)
- Staff retention, motivation & action (24 comments)
- Discipline, drug and alcohol abuse (21 comments)
- Extra curricular activity, school trips, sport (18 comments)
- Increase subject choice and work with partners (17 comments)

AB invited Neil McCallum to give a presentation on work carried out in the school to date in response to these findings. See separate presentation ('You said, we did.....') for more information.

Parents commented favourably on how much progress had been made in one year and NM was thanked for his work with the school in his first year in post.

Looking forward

6. Following on from the previous presentation, AB invited Neil McCallum to give a presentation on the school's aims and plans for the coming year. See separate presentation ('Looking forward') for more information.

SQA results

7. Neil McCallum gave a presentation outlining a summary of the exam results of senior pupils in the recent SQA exams (May / June 2017). See separate presentation ('SQA results') for more information.

Q&A

8. AB invited those attending to raise any questions. While there was insufficient time to respond to each question adequately during the meeting, they have been grouped into categories below and will be discussed at a future Parent Council meeting.

Curriculum / Learning & Teaching

A request for an information evening on BGE (Broad General Education)

Are there any subjects that pupils would like to study which can't currently be provided at BHS?

Looking at the choices offered from S2-S3 and then S3-S4, is the way choices are configured and offered likely to remain the same or can we expect change?

A request to explore how maths overlaps between feeder primary schools and BHS

Why does work experience happen in S4 and not S5?

Could NM foresee the school becoming a specialist school e.g. in music or sport?

From the presentation on SQA results there appears to be a drop in the number of pupils getting straight A's in Nat 5s compared with Highers. What more could be done to support those studying Highers? Suggestion made for S6 pupils to buddy S4s.

Website / communication

Could the bulletin be posted on the website daily?

How does BHS celebrate success? Could more be done via the website to share good news?

Could the website include more general information on subject areas and what is taught at different stages?

Parental engagement

How could we use parental surveys more regularly in the future to gain as wide an opinion as possible?

Could parents get involved more in the life of the school e.g. giving information on their careers?

Pupil support

Could we consider lockers for pupils who have a lot to carry?

Date / time of next meeting

9. Next meeting will be 6:30pm on 30th October 2017, in the LRC, Balerno High School

Note that meetings for the rest of 2017/18 are:

4th December 2017, Balerno High School

22nd January 2018 (Ratho Primary School)

12th March 2018 (Kirknewton Primary School)

14th May 2018 (Balerno High School)