Abernethy Primary Parent Council Meeting Notes

23 January 2024, 7:00pm, in person at Abernethy Primary

Present: Rachel Causey (Chair), Sarah Fowler (Secretary), Abigail Elce (Treasurer) Chris Scrase (Head Teacher), Adele Law (Principal Teacher), Kirsty Campbell, Jenn Nielson, Alice Ross, Margaret Fraser, Heidi Stuart, Heather Rae, Douglas Winch, Anna Roberts, Iain Farrell, Jo Unda, Jen Kitchen, Seonid Beecham.

Apologies: Angharad Gronbach, Amy Milligan, Trista Sulman, Polly Dean

Agenda item and notes	**Actions**
Welcome Rachel welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were completed during the AGM prior to this meeting.	
Approval of minutes Approved by Heidi and seconded by Heather.	
Matters Arising • Rachel will follow up with Angharad who was due to meet with the Head Teacher to continue discussions over 2:55 club. • Follow up still needed re dining room noise levels. Perhaps Pupil Council could lead on this. • Pupil Council raised some funds for goal posts but that funding, which we agreed to match, ended up in the Parent Council bank account. Goal posts are no longer needed but as a Parent Council we are still willing to match fund for something the pupils would like to have for the playground.	**Angharad to meet with Chris re 2:55 club.** **Chris will do some observations in the canteen.** **Chris to follow up with Pupil Council once meetings re-established.**

Head Teacher Report (Chris) • Everyone has made Chris feel really welcome – lots of support and positive conversations with parents/carers. • The staff have been very supportive and are having good conversations. • It's great getting to know the children more. • There has been lots of inconsistency and instability over the last 18 months; Chris is keen to provide some stability and longevity. • The children have come back after the holidays revitalised and have settled back in well. • Adele has organised Drum Fun for the nursery, P6/7 are supporting the Young at Heart Burns Supper event this week, P6/7 have a 3 week snowsports block in February/March. • Transition support for P7s has begun. Liam Patton (Support for Learning teacher) has good links with Grantown Grammar. • 2 applicants for Early Years Practitioner post for nursery.	
Chair Report (Rachel) • The highlight of last year was the Christmas concert. It's wonderful seeing everyone using their skills and gifts. • We've had a great year in terms of fundraising – thanks so much to Heidi and the team. • We've had a £1500 donation from the Abernethy Highland Games Committee towards the climbing wall. • There has been a lot of change and our children have been very resilient. We're pleased to have Chris here now to provide some stability.	

Treasurer Report (Abigail) • Current balance is £17,686. • Main fundraising events – Hogmanay, Santa Run, 90s disco, Christmas concert and Christmas cards. • We get a small amount from Easyfundraising (1). • We're applying for our small grant from Highland Council. • Abigail is handing over the Treasurer role to Iain Farrell. • Jo asked if we've had an opportunity to explore different bank account options. • We need to review our constitution and perhaps can review banking options at the same time. It would be easier all round if we could use electronic bank transfers rather than using cheques. Jo is Treasurer for Grantown Grammar Parent Council – they are a registered charity. Jo is happy to chat to Iain.	**Sarah to parents/carers/school community re Easyfundraising.** **Iain to look at bank account options in conjunction with the review of our constitution by Sarah.** **Iain to follow up with Jo.**

Fundraising Update (Heidi) • Heidi gave a fundraising update. • 60 Santas did the Santa run and it raised around £300 as well as being a great community event. • £700 raised at the school Christmas show through refreshments and raffle ticket sales. Best year yet! • The 90s disco was a great adults, social event and raised £1580. • We now have access to card readers via the Abernethy Highland Games Committee which makes things much easier and will increase funds raised. • Sold a record number of torches for the Hogmanay torchlight procession and ceilidh - it was the best year yet – we sold everything! Over £6800 raised in one night - £3700 profit. • Started fundraising for climbing wall at back end of 2022 and have raised £15,102 plus the £1500 pledged by the Abernethy Highland Games Committee, giving us a surplus of funds to go back into the school community. • Rachel has been in contact with the supplier for the climbing wall and they are ready to go when we are; we still need Highland Council Estates to assess the undercover area to check it is suitable. Rachel plans to put in another funding bid to fund the 'crumb' required as a protective material. Hopefully installation could happen during the Easter holidays all being well. It'd be nice to have an 'opening' event once it is installed. • All of these events require a huge team effort – massive thanks to everyone.	**Rachel to follow up with Highland Council Estates.**

Issues raised for discussion by the school community	
· Family playground tidy session proposal Amy Milligan (unable to attend meeting) asked if we can organise a family tidy up of the playground to remove some of the broken toys, rubbish etc. There are a lot of loose parts in the playground for loose parts play, which is really beneficial for the children. It would be good to have a tidy but also to do a shout out for more loose parts – the children love it! Agreed it would be a good idea to tidy up the playground, remove broken items, refresh loose parts play equipment and litter pick. We could make it a social event with a BBQ or something similar.	**Sarah to follow up with Amy – would she be willing to lead on organising this?**
· 7-up youth group leaders assemblies offer Amy also noted that a few people from Abernethy who run the local 7-up youth group have offered to come and do some assemblies if able/desired by school. They're great role models and lovely people. There was a query about what the school policy is around religious content in assemblies. This is something to explore e.g. Chris is keen to have guest speakers coming into assemblies and we could have different faiths represented.	**Sarah to follow up with Amy – contact Chris to discuss further.**
· Understanding Gambling Harms & Links to Gaming for Scottish Parent Councils Feri shared some information (2) about this online training and wondered if the school community might be interested in. There was lots of interest from parents/carers. Iain works in the games industry and is also willing to answer anyone's questions.	**Rachel to follow up with Feri.**

· Proposal for working groups for different areas of Parent Council interest Jen thought this could be an option to explore to take some of the pressure from the Parent Council Committee members. We could establish various groups with themes and people with a particular interest in those themes could take a lead e.g. climbing wall project, playground resources. This might help involve more members of the school community in activities. Seonid would like to do a collage project with the children.	**Jen to post on the Facebook page to gage interest**
· Action over school building improvements Jen saw some information on the Highland Council Parent Council Partnership Facebook page around how we can come together to build momentum in relation to school building improvements e.g. writing letters to local Councillors. Generally a reactive approach than preventative approach to building management just now.	
· Fundraising for local charities and promoting voluntary action Sarah asked about raising awareness of charities and voluntary work to foster an awareness in the children that some children/families need extra help and they can contribute to supporting their communities e.g. through awareness raising assemblies, voluntary work, fundraising etc. It would be good to support a local charity, like MFR CashForKids or Badenoch and Strathspey Community Food Hub, who are supporting families in Highland who need a helping hand.	
There was also a reminder to parents/carers that Parent Council can help with costs of school activities where there are challenges e.g. subsidising trips. We don't want children missing out on activities with their peers due to financial barriers. Please do contact Parent Council (3) if you need some help and we will look at options.	**Sarah to put together some information for the next meeting.**

AOB	
There was discussion about getting a new shed and a lockable box to store things in the nursery garden. The current shed is no longer fit for purpose. There are various options we could explore; main thing is to get something robust. Could nursery possibly raise some funds and Parent Council match fund it? Adele will discuss with nursery staff and come back to Parent Council.	**Adele to discuss further with nursery staff.**
People commented it would be nice to engage more nursery parents/carers in Parent Council and fundraising activities, and make sure they feel part of the wider school community. Sometimes nursery can feel quite separate and maybe parents/carers don't realise they are part of the wider school community.	**Parent Council members to look at how we can raise awareness of Parent Council and engage parents/carers of nursery children.**
Should we consider varying the times of Parent Council meetings to increase engagement from the school community? We could vary the times during the year.	**To be considered when setting meeting times.**
Grantown Grammar Parent Council meeting is on Thursday at 6:00pm for any parents/carers with young people at Grantown Grammar.	**Chris to look into this.**
Pre Covid there were 2 trips - P6s went to Lagganlia and P7s went to Edinburgh – could this be reinstated?	**Sarah to ask Angharad for recommendations.**
Margaret requested sturdy storage boxes to store the costumes and pre-loved uniforms. We need them to be mouse proof!	
Friday 2 February 9:00am in the school hall – meet and greet with Chris and parents/carers. All welcome.	
Next meeting date – April 2024, date and time to be confirmed (likely w/c 22 April 2024)	

(1) Abernethy Primary School is registered with Easyfundraising. Easyfundraising is an easy way to support your school. Each time you shop through easyfundraising, the brands that are partnered with easyfundraising will donate to your chosen cause. It won't cost you any extra. See info here:

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/abernethyprimary/

(2) **“Understanding Gambling Harms & Links to Gaming for Scottish Parent Councils”**

This webinar explores the similarities between online gambling & modern video games, & the associated risks to children & young people for Parent Councils in Scotland.

“This session would be invaluable for Parent Council members to find out about some of the challenges that young people are facing in the ever-increasing world of online gaming. This session may shed some light on support that Parent Councils could ask their school to provide to the wider parent body”- Teacher.

Participants will:

- Gain knowledge of current issues surrounding gambling related to children, young people and families

-Discuss concerns regarding online behaviours including gambling and gaming

- Gain an increased awareness and understanding of gambling harms relating to children, young people and families

-Develop an understanding about gambling-like features within video games and how these can possibly lead to gambling harms

- Be more prepared to lead conversations and facilitate activities or discussion around gambling and gaming with children, young people or families

- Exploring the " Our Home" Activity within our Gambling Education Toolkit as a basis to explore the Digital World and linking to Digital Wellbeing

The webinar will also provide information on where Parent Councils can get further resources and support.

(3) Parent Council email address: abernethy.primary@highlandpc.co.uk