

Working with our Parents as Partners

Learning at Home – Home & school partnership – Parental Representation

Minute of Parent Council Chairs meeting Inverurie Academy Thurs 27th Oct '16 7-9pm

Officers attending: M.Walker; Cllr Evison; A. Griffiths; V.Docherty; D.Wilson; N. Morrison; I.Parkin

Attendees: J. Hutchison (Mackie); T. Lawson (Mearns); A. Fleming (Kinellar); S. Sloan (MillOF); S. Leahy (Aboyne); B. Jones (Kemnay & NPFS); C. Beverley (Banchory); V. Carpenter (Pitmedden); A. King (Keithhall); T. Skene (Inverurie); F. Bland (Newburgh); I. Buchan (Kintore); S. Strachan (Inverurie/Kellands); T. Lennon (Westhill); K. Osterberg (New Deer); R. McLean (Fyvie); F. Mathieson (Port Elph); B. Elrick (Kemnay); A. Lyon (Midmar); S. McKay (Gordon); M. Noble (Crombie); J. MacMillan (Insch); J. Eunson (New Deer); S. Watt (Cultercullen); U. Mitchell (The Gordon schools); K. Terlow (Markethill); R. Camm (Banchort Dev); D. Paton (Chapel Of G); D. Miller (Torphins); G. Truby (Torphins); J. Foad (Drumblade); S. Kelly (Daviot)

A warm welcome and thanks to all for attending.

Agenda

<u>Item 1: Excellence & Equity – Andrew Griffiths (Head of Service Primary)</u>

In June 2016, the Scottish Government launched their new delivery plan "Delivering Excellence & Equity In Scottish Education". Go to: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00502222.pdf

The plan stems from the OECD Report which reviewed Scottish education and recognised that we have a good system but identified areas for improvement. The National Improvement Framework was then launched which sets out that vision for improving:

Excellence through raising attainment: ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and

Achieving equity: ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Within Aberdeenshire we are now planning how we take forward this vision and will focus on the following:

- A Curriculum which Delivers for Children and Teachers
- Empowering our Teachers, Headteachers, Practitioners, Parents Communities and Children and Young People
- Improving Attainment and closing the gap by focusing on School leadership; Teacher professionalism; Parental engagement; Assessment of children's progress; School improvement & Performance information.

The **Governance Review** launched by Scottish Government will examine the system changes required to deliver their commitments to empower schools, decentralise management and the support through the encouragement of school clusters and creation of new educational regions.

We would encourage every Parent Council to discuss this with the support of their Headteacher. The Scottish Government have issued some information for parents around this: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00509546.pdf

QUESTION:

We use SEEMIS as our Management Information System, what type of data does it hold and will standardised assessment data be held there?

SEEMIS holds all staff and pupil personal information along with pupil medical notes, tracking, assessment & reporting data. At the moment we are exploring the other capabilities it has.

<u>Item 2: Getting It Right For Every Child – Vincent Docherty (Head of Service Secondary)</u>

Getting it right for every child and young person is a national policy to help all children and young people grow, develop and reach their full potential. Its focus is to improve outcomes for children and their families based on a shared understanding of their wellbeing.

What does GIRFEC mean for you and your children in Aberdeenshire?

In Aberdeenshire our ambition for our children is clear: we want Aberdeenshire to be the best place in Scotland for children and young people to grow up. We want them to be loved and cherished, safe and healthy, and to enjoy being young. – It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, after all.

We believe that joining up children's services – with children's wellbeing at the heart of that approach – will help us achieve that ambition. That's where our getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach comes in.

GIRFEC isn't an extra thing people have to do. It's a way for those who support children to work differently, making sure they are all on the same page. Where needed, GIRFEC links day-to-day work in education, health, policing, social work and the voluntary sector – in fact any public or voluntary organisation whose staff come into contact with children. It makes it easier for those different organisations to communicate consistently with each other, and with children and young people.

GIRFEC provides a structure that helps people to work in the same way, using the same terminology, and allows discussions with the child and their family to focus on what is good in a child's life, and what might need attention or support.

For more information on any aspect of GIRFEC please visit www.girfec.aberdeenshire.org

We in Aberdeenshire Council are revisiting our structures to ensure our services meet the needs of all our young people and have introduced Area groups which have staff from a variety of organisations attending. Their focus is to ensure we have robust systems and processes in place in all areas. They do not discuss individual cases.

See attached PPT produced by Vincent.

QUESTIONS:

We as parents were promised a LEAFLET explaining GIRFEC but have never received it. Why?

This was not circulated as the advice pertaining to the Named Person was not clear. We are still awaiting an update from Scottish Government on their next steps and would hope to have to this is the New Year.

Can you clarify the role of the Named Person?

This is merely a co-ordinating role to ensure the needs of the child are being met - which in the instance of a primary school would be the Headteacher and within secondary would be a Guidance teacher.

ACTION: It was agreed that Donna Wilson would produce a "Jargon Buster" for parents relating to the terms used in Education.

<u>Item 3: Aberdeenshire Priorities & Staffing – Maria Walker (Director Education & Children's Services)</u>

The recruitment of staff in the North East continues to be difficult particularly within our primary schools in the North and certain subjects within secondaries.

National shortages, a rising population and staff retiring are all contributing factors.

Aberdeenshire Council is doing their utmost to attract people to the area and have been working with Government and universities to enable training opportunities to be made available in Aberdeen.

We have successfully recruited staff from the oil and gas sector who have retrained though our Delite project and are currently placed in our schools. We are exploring part-time training opportunities to make the transition for joining the profession more accessible and are offering enticements for people to relocate or indeed come out of retirement.

<u>Item 4: National Parent Forum of Scotland Rep - Bob Jones</u>

Bob is our recognised Local Authority rep for the above organisation.

As our rep Bob will attend national meetings 2/3 times a year. NPFS have a variety of sub-groups which feed into key National strategies such as the National Improvement Framework; Governance and the CfE management forum.

At a local level Bob regularly communicates with Parent Councils and works closely with the authority Parental Engagement Officer.

Key priorities this year are:

- Communication all parent Councils are asked to introduce a generic email address to aid improved communication. These could then be used to support contact with your parent council by the wider parent forum via school websites/council websites.
- Introduction of a Strategic Parent Forum for Aberdeenshire. Your views will be sought relating to whether you think there is a need and whether it would be possible faced with time/geographic challenges. This would enable greater engagement with parents on key strategic priorities.

MEETING CLOSED at 8.45pm, thanks to all.