

Inverurie Academy Parent Council Committee Meeting – Minutes

20th January 2021

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE
Welcome	Elizabeth welcomed everyone to the Skype meeting		
Attending/ Apologies	<p><u>Attending:</u> Elizabeth Watt (Chairperson), Alies Bartelds (Vice Chairperson), Simon Glazier (Secretary), Louise Anderson, Lyndsay Aspey, Linda Barclay, Tracey Barclay, Charlotte Bathgate, Sheila Cunningham, Andrew Hall, Cara Hay, Ruth Kydd, Stuart Laird, Jon McGregor, Leeanne Robertson, Juliet Serrell, Karen Simpson, Laura Simpson, Samantha Tribe, Susan Weetman, Emma West, Gail Winchester, Mark Jones (Headmaster), David Anderson (Depute Head), Scott Campbell, Liam Fuller, Cllr Neill Baillie, Cllr Lesley Berry, Cllr Marion Ewenson, Cllr Judy Whyte,</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Sam Grant, Kay Diack</p>		
Matters arising from previous Minutes/ Approval	<p>Minutes approved by Alies Bartelds, seconded by Cara Hay.</p> <p><u>Updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mark Jones fed back an idea for spending PC budget (on something that supports the whole school). Asking an organisation like Tree of Knowledge (https://treeof.com/tok-education/) to deliver a session (live or video) to students across the school on ‘Resilient Mindset and Positive Health’ together with a bank of supporting materials and this idea supported by the Parent Council. – Review of Social Media and Data Protection Policies. It was suggested that these policies should be less generic, more specific, to prevent us from falling foul of GDPR regulations. There is also a plan to run a Poll on the Facebook page asking parents/carers what they want to see within the social media sites to try and gather input from parents/carers across the full spectrum of age groups in the school. A Communications Strategy is being developed to reflect Inverurie Community Campus for discussion at our next Parent Council meeting in March. 	<p>Mark to look into costing of such a session and report at next meeting.</p> <p>Members of Parent Council to review Social Media and Data Protection policies and revert to Ruth Kydd and/or Cara Hay.</p>	<p>Mark Jones</p> <p>All PC members</p> <p>Ruth Kydd and Cara Hay</p>

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Treasurer Update	Balance: £1289.68. Unchanged from last meeting. This year's Council contribution to the Parent Council (approx. £500) is due in this month.	See Mark's action above.	
Headteacher Update	<p><u>Update:</u> See information on attached 'Rolling Slides' pdf. Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parentsportal – How to get access and support for this. - Cost of the School Day – Reducing everyday costs for schooling, where possible. Discussion topic for the March PC meeting. - Staffing: Additional staff requirements for next academic year noted on slides due to increase in school roll. - Connecting Scotland: Received Phase 1 equipment, hoping to receive Phase 2 (74 items) soon. - Website – New developments e.g., the Covid Page and Remote Learning section. <p>Improvement Plan – Slide Deck (slides 1 – 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has been delayed to a 2-year journey due to Covid, so a number of goals have yet to be achieved. - Google Guardian enabling parents/carers to see what work has been assigned and reminders for overdue work. - Two new Awards recently launched – Virtual Star for S1 – S3 – awarded each week by class teachers to one student in their class and the Home Hero where students are nominated by their family for their achievements. 28 Awards have been issued so far and the student is rewarded with a certificate and points for their House. - Collaboration in the online world: Inverurie Academy will offer an online graphic communication course being shared with the rest of the NE Scotland. In return we will get access to other courses offered by other schools. This helps smaller schools with a variety of content they couldn't produce or deliver themselves. - Learning Trios have gone virtual to allow support and feedback between teachers despite social distancing. - Remote learning not anticipated, so outwith the Improvement Plan but will add value to learning and teaching. <p>Improvement matters are all being submitted to the PC for accountability, but please be aware that Covid has delayed the implementation of many aspects.</p>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Andrew Hall – Wanted to express his appreciation for how much had been achieved so far this year and also the efficiency of the recent Schooling from Home delivery. Asked a question about delivery of live classes (which is covered in the Q&A session later). 		
Community Campus & Management of Resources	<p>David Anderson – Move to the new Campus. Slide Deck (slides 6 – 15)</p> <p>The photos show examples of the new facilities including Home Economics, Planned Learning Space, Messy Project Space, and later in the slides the Auditorium and Art Spine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry to the Campus was delayed, but that gave a bit more time to pack up and make the transition. Some equipment has gone missing in the move. The simple layout of the Campus has allowed navigation to be learned quickly by staff and students, as has training in the new technology in the building. - Covid-19 restrictions have meant that all have had to move around in an Anti-clockwise direction, with ‘Up’ and ‘Down’ dedicated staircases. The auditorium (slide 14) has not been used as desired because of social distancing restrictions. The floor plan highlights how students travel through the auditorium to access PE and Guidance as part of the building is restricted access to St Andrew’s. Slide 15 shows the Art Spine, which can have a flow of students through the Art areas. These areas are being considered for traffic flow/movement. - Snagging/Additional Spending. Signage is not felt to be strong enough, so a new package has been agreed to make this clearer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Ewenson commented that issues to do with signage and car parking had been raised by the Community and was glad to see these being rectified. - In the Community Foyer there are staff for both Live Life Aberdeen and the School working, so a sliding window has been requested to create a dedicated space for students to speak to school staff. - Staggered breaks and lunches have allowed the year group bubbles to be protected and limit numbers in key areas. It’s under consideration to keep staggered breaks and lunches even once social distancing ends. - Fire Alarms – 3 malicious fire alarms in the early weeks of terms. Are considering installation of CCTV, specifically in the stairwells where the fire alarms are 		

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	<p>positioned. CCTV is already positioned around the outside of the building and at the major exits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lates, Damage, Parking, Demolition of the old Academy, Community Lets & Flexible Learning Spaces – see comments on slides. <p>Questions raised –</p> <p>Q - Can the additional expenditure happen whilst the school is closed to students? A - The contractor is aware of this opportunity, but some of the works needs time to process (architect’s drawings etc.), so some might be delayed until Summer before they can be completed.</p> <p>Q - Where the exam space is in the school? A - David indicated that the Drama and Dance Studio, plus the Games Hall can be used depending on how much space is needed for each exam. Flexible spaces, rooms with dividing walls can also be used for smaller numbers.</p> <p>Q - How have students fed back about open plan spaces? A - Student Council meetings and feedback was that on the whole students had fared well, but it does take a while to get used to rooms with no walls between them and the corridor. On the whole it’s quite a quiet building to move around in.</p> <p>Q - Is there is a National policy on why there are more open plan classrooms? A - David commented that these rooms often are next to planned learning spaces, allowing classes to expand out into the flexible learning spaces, which gives more opportunity for teachers.</p> <p>Cllr Ewenson commented that many primary schools are already open plan, so the Students moving up to Academy cope quite well. Both staff and students are having to cope with this change, and it will take a while to settle and grow into the building.</p> <p>Q - Cllr Berry commented that as the school is being closed for 6 weeks (possibly longer), will the swimming pool be drained or maintained? A - David felt this was a comment for Live Life Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>Mark Jones commented that there are also some Covid related supplies with a shelf life which means that they have had to be removed and will be renewed when the school re-opens.</p>		

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	<p>As it's a big building for Primary pupils to move into, David acknowledged that the Transition Programme was important and that there are more tours planned to introduce P7s to the building.</p> <p>Q - A comment was raised regarding the Dance Studio being visible to people walking past, and David took on the idea of putting up a blind in this area.</p>	<p>David Anderson to investigate need to blind in dance studio for privacy.</p>	<p>David Anderson</p>
<p>Impact of Covid-19 Restrictions on Learning and Teaching – Q&A</p>	<p>See Headteacher Q&A Letter and Video (sent to all parents/carers post meeting)</p> <p>Mark addressed a number of questions that had been posed ahead of the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virtual Learning <p>It was mentioned that internet bandwidth in the home can also restrict the ability for some households to access live lessons.</p> <p>It was noted that pre-recorded seems to work well with access to these available after the lesson with teacher being available for support.</p> <p>It was pointed out that guidelines from the Education Recovery Group indicate all students should have access to regular interactive learning and teaching, which not all students are getting.</p> <p>Several parents commented that getting engagement from their children is much harder without live or pre-recorded content and that one style of teaching doesn't suit every student. Mark commented that each school is being asked to deliver this as they feel best within the Guidelines. Teaching Unions state that no teacher should be forced to deliver live learning with which they are not comfortable. He also referred parents/carers to the Faculty plans/support for virtual learning on the front page of the Academy website.</p> <p>Mark took various comments away to consider and see which can be taken on board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting <p>No additional comments during the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choice Processes <p>Comments suggesting that communication from teacher to parents indicating whether students would be able to manage the subject at the next level would be helpful. Also,</p>	<p>Feed suggestions back to appropriate staff.</p>	<p>Mark Jones</p>

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	<p>that the S2 choice process was very informative and easy to follow. Mark took both comments on board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessments/Presentations Prelims are like a final exam and these types of exams are not going to run this year. Assessments have already taken place for N5 subjects and will take place for Higher/Advanced Higher in the week after students return to classroom teaching. - Return to Physical Learning After the half term break is the current earliest return to physical learning, and this might be in a phased or blended approach. The new guidance come out on this just yesterday. <p>A question was asked about feedback from teachers to pupils, as there is little given on work that has been submitted. Mark admitted that without teachers physically present to give live, ongoing feedback, this is much harder to give. This is still a developing area for teachers.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that handing out answers along with the questions (for appropriate subjects) helps students get instant feedback that they have worked out the correct solution. Mark agreed that this was important feedback and is part of the learning experience for how teachers deliver lessons.</p> <p>Mark was asked how best practice is being shared between schools across the area and even shared lessons. He agreed that there is always more of this that can be done. Mr Campbell, Head of Digital Literacy, has been delivering upskilling to all teachers on digital delivery. There are networks in place for each subject to share best practice across schools in Aberdeenshire.</p>	<p>Feed suggestions back to appropriate staff.</p> <p>Feed suggestions back to appropriate staff.</p> <p>Feed suggestions back to appropriate staff.</p>	<p>Mark Jones</p> <p>Mark Jones</p> <p>Mark Jones</p>
Equalities Policy	<p>Liam Fuller presented on this policy to strengthen and improve implementation of equality and diversity across the campus. (Slides 16 – 18). Draft to be shared on Academy website. The Policy is ready for implementation. Colleagues, Parents/Carers and Students are the three pillars of the school, and this Policy needs to be delivered</p>	<p>Issue invitation to the Parent Forum to ask them to register their interest in joining a</p>	<p>Liam Fuller</p>

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	<p>to each of these. A working group including a selection of teachers, pupils and stakeholders/parents/carers is going to be set up to get input and feedback.</p> <p>Timescale on next steps for Short, Medium and Long-term goals is drafted. Likely to be in place before the end of this academic year.</p> <p>Liam was asked to ensure all parents would be contacted regarding the creation of a working group to reach out to those who don't come along to PC meetings.</p>	<p>Focus Group to share their views on the draft Policy.</p>	
Fundraising	<p>A possible fundraising suggestion was discussed –if a small amount was added to items purchased for school uniform, this could raise funds for the PC. Questions were raised about the affordability of this to some parents. Mark also commented that Trading Standards advice to him previously was to keep the cost transparent so that parents know exactly what they are paying for. So, the school negotiated the best price and receives no benefit from using Academy Uniforms. The school is not beholden to them and can take their business to any other supplier if a better price can be secured. The transaction is between Parent/Carer and Academy Uniforms, the school are not involved, to minimise admin. At the suggestion of a voluntary donation to support families who couldn't afford to purchase new uniforms, Mark suggested that he would prefer the administration of this to be managed by the supplier, not the school.</p> <p>Pre-Loved Uniforms – In the past the school have collected pre-loved uniforms and Catalyst Vineyard Church have facilitated this more recently. Mark suggested that a separate Skype call with a small group to discuss how to facilitate this would be sensible.</p>	<p>To be discussed at the next PC meeting in March as part of the 'Cost of the School Day' topic. Add to the next PC Agenda.</p> <p>Discuss how a process could be introduced to collect pre-loved items.</p>	<p>Elizabeth Watt and Simon Glazier</p> <p>Mark Jones and Simon Glazier</p>
AOB	<p>None raised. Any items for the next meeting can be submitted to the Parent Council email address, inverurieacademypc@gmail.com, ahead of the next meeting.</p>		<p>All PC members</p>
Date of Next Meeting	<p>Thursday 25th March, 6.30-8.30pm</p> <p>Head Teacher topic - Self Evaluation for Self-Improvement.</p> <p>Venue: Inverurie Community Campus (room TBC), restrictions permitting.</p>	<p>Confirm venue</p>	<p>Mark Jones Elizabeth Watt</p>

