

**PORTLETHEN ACADEMY PARENT ASSOCIATION**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2015**

**Present:**

**Parents:** Mhairi McCrone, Claire Howard, Zayne McIntyre, Fiona Squires, Gillian Smith, Louise Reid, Nicola Harper, Lena Gentle, Gale Beattie, Pauline Ord, Steven Gibb, Elaine Northcroft, Viveca McNeil

**Staff:** Neil Morrison

**Apologies:** Nadine Brown

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
2. Nicola welcomed everyone to the meeting especially the new members and encouraged everyone to bring along additional people if possible. All parents are automatically members of PAPA and are welcome at the term time monthly meetings and to help out at events such as the Xmas fund raising event and serving refreshments at the Panto.

**3. Chair's Report**

There are a few potential candidates for the new Chairperson and this post will be decided at the AGM on 17th September. Neil offered to start publishing the AGM to encourage a higher turnout than for normal meetings via a letter to all parents. The timing of the AGM within the school year was also discussed with it being suggested that a meeting later in the school year might attract more new parents once they are more familiar with the school. May was suggested as an appropriate time.

PAPA realises that our section on the School Website needs to be updated and we are keen for someone to take on the role of working with the school to create a blog, Facebook page or similar social media form for the group.

Fiona, Mhairi and Nicola have been discussing details of the Xmas Event so that preparations can begin such as contacting previous stall holders.

**4. Headteacher's Report**

**Results** - the Scottish Government use Insight to analyse the exam results but this analysis wasn't completed at the time of the meeting. Results so far from Seimis Vision indicate an improvement in the schools results both at National 5 and Highers/ Advanced Highers. The numbers of pupils achieving 5 or more Nat 5 was up 9% on the previous year with 12 pupils getting straight As. The number of pupils in S5 getting 3 or more Highers was up 6% compared to the previous year.

The Insight analysis will give a greater depth to how the data can be manipulated allowing performance to be assessed down to a class/individual level. Lorraine Scott is on a Shire wide group discussing how this analysis can be used to improve attainment. All faculties will be discussing their results with the Head to identify which classes/ teachers performed well.

The Art faculty and Media studies had disappointing results but English, Music and P.E. All did well. The number of No Awards in English was halved. Overall the Academy has gone

from 5/6th from bottom in Aberdeenshire to 5/6th from top of the 17 secondary schools in relation to the National 5 measure.

There are big differences between universities in their entrance requirements with regard to whether they want to count Highers taken in one sitting in S5 or over two years and whether they prefer a broader range of Highers taken in S6 compared to a limited number of Advanced Highers. If pupils have an idea of what they wish to study it is worthwhile to enquire at their preferred universities about their preferences.

**Staffing** - the school is 3.5 full time equivalent short at present though all classes are covered by qualified staff. Adverts are currently out for the posts in Home Economics, English and Art. There have been several good applicants for the art post, the closing date will have passed by the time of writing. A new, experienced Home Economics teacher will be starting soon and a new, well recommended, Physics teacher is also in place. The new S1 intake is approximately 130, lower than the previous year but over time the school roll, is expected to increase.

**Upcoming events** - the sponsored walk will be held on Friday 25th September but chemical toilets are now required by the Forestry Commission. Four senior pupils will be attending a Leadership event. The Drama class are going to a production of 'A curious incident of a Dog in the night' as part of their course.

Uniform standards are high, even the boys are wearing black footwear with an increasing number wearing proper shoes.

A group of 3rd year boys have offered to 'take ownership' of their social area.

There is no central collation of information on clubs that is available to parents but Neil agreed to look into whether this would be possible.

#### **Dates -**

AGM on Thursday 17th September

Xmas event on Friday 20th November

Further dates will be decided after the AGM. The possibility of changing the day PAPA meetings are held was discussed with alternating days being considered to hopefully allow more people to attend.

#### **5. A.O.B.**

All outstanding bills have now been paid by PAPA except a sum of £533.34 to Design and Technology. There is currently £2,828 in the bank.

Ailsa Mason and Caroline Mitchell (library) will be included in the circulation list for the PAPA minutes.

**The next meeting is the AGM on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm**

