

PORTLETHEN ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting – Wednesday 23 November 2022

PRESENT

Viv McNeil (Chair), Kerry Kidd (Treasurer), Lesley Robertson, Fiona Lindsay, Agnieszka Stephen, Anne Hingston, Hannah Saum, Sahet Keshiyev, Ejiro Fajinmi, Tracey Robinson (Secretary)

Barry Drennan (HT) Euan Lawson (DHT) Kirsty Campbell-Robertson (DHT)

APOLOGIES

Alison Harris (Co-Chair), Jenny Law (DHT), Lauren Miller (DHT) Rhona MacKenzie (DHT), Craig Cowie (DHT),

WELCOME

Viv McNeil welcomed all to the hybrid meeting

Viv mentioned that she had recently attended a meeting with the Director of Education in Aberdeenshire on PVG on 10th October

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND CHAIR'S REPORT

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 September 2022 were approved and the update on the open Actions are as follows:

- **Action:** Barry to ensure all the links on the Parent Council web page work. **Carried forwards** due to ongoing technical issues
- **Well-being evening 11 October** Parent Council to provide tea and coffee at the evening **Action: Viv and Tracey (discharged)**
- Request for Parental Communication Guide **Action: Barry** to send out the link to this
- **Well-being evening 11 October** Parent Council to provide tea and coffee at the evening **Action: Viv and Tracey (discharged)**
- **Action: Barry** to have a slot on attainment at the next Parent Council meeting (discharged)
- **Action: Barry** to ask Faculties for a wish list and why the items are requested (discharged)
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award – request for the school to consider taking this on, perhaps as an enrichment option **Action: Barry** (carried forwards)
- Request for S1 demystifying session (jargon busting) to be done as part of the S1 experience day **Action: Barry** (discharged)

Fund raising

Christmas Fayre to be held on 14 December

The teas and coffees will be done by the school in the social area and also a raffle for charity. There will be 16 stalls which will require help to set up in the canteen area. A let form needs to be completed **Action Viv** (discharged)

A request for chocolate for a chocolate tombola is to be issued **Action Viv** (discharged)

TREASURER'S REPORT

Kerry Kidd confirmed that the current balance is £1959.80. Recent income from the Dons Day out fundraiser and pending expenditure is the school ties and the purchase of a card reader. It was noted that a float would be required for the School Christmas concert and fayre.

HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

S1 - Uniform – reminder that no leggings or joggers

Staffing Updates

- Humanities - Jo Meynet – 0.6FTE Geography which will mean more specialist teaching including Advanced Higher
- Principle Teacher of Guidance for Downies – 1 FTE – Ellen Leslie
- Music – 0.6FTE – Lauren Heart
- ICT Faculty Principal Teacher - Technology (Business / Computing) – 1FTE – Izzy (Isman) Ahmed
- Maths - 0.6FTE - Mrs Waheeda Sultana
- Maths maternity cover – struggling to recruit, this is a problem nationally, so exploring various options
- New PSAs starting and awaiting outcome of recent interviews.

Annual sponsored walk the results of the survey means the walk will take place on the last day of term 3 on 31 March.

Uniform

This is being adhered to by a large majority of pupils. Discussion about second hand uniform swap/sale and donation of school ties from past pupils.

Action – Parent Council in favour, and to look into organising towards the end of this session.

Holocaust Event - S3 History pupils had an online interactive session with a survivor of the Holocaust and appeared on the STV News and may feature in the Aberdeenshire Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2023.

Physical Health Week - healthy breakfast was a success and all S1s had an experience from our Health and Food Tech pupils about a Healthy Breakfast. House Events are going well.

Speakers4Schools – Mishal Hussain the BBC Newsreader and journalist visited the school and hosted a Q+A session with some Senior Pupils.

Forthcoming **school trips** include a trip to Manchester and a court trip have taken place.

Parents' Evening/GIRFEC Evening/S1 Open Day – our biggest highlight has been in having parents/carers back into the building again, with great feedback from these events and a lot more to come.

Pupil Action Group / National Discussions

The Pupil Action Group (formally the Pupil Council) have reformed and are helping shape school improvements. They are participating in the National Discussion

Focus Groups and the Future of Scottish Education, along with a discussion around bringing back Merits in school to recognise all of the positives of our young people. **Action –Parent Council** to input into the National Discussion Focus Groups and the Future of Scottish Education (discharged)

Review of Expectations for All and school values is being undertaken by the Leadership Team and input from Parent Council welcome! Invite to come!

Exams - Prelims – a timetable will be issued and pupils are being prepared for what is required **Additional Assessments arrangements** are being verified by SQA and their initial visit was positive

Curriculum map –unfortunately the school website is still glitching and a new website is required, the Curriculum Map will follow in due course, along with our **3-Year Vision / SQUIP – Parent/Carer Friendly Version.**

Question – feedback form for the S1 parent evening **Action Barry** – to organise that the feedback form is resent

Attainment - SQA results (Euan Lawson)

Key measures are against Nat 5, Higher and Advanced Higher results. When other qualifications are taken into account, such as Foundation Apprenticeships, Portlethen Academy is doing well, with good correlation between estimated grades and those achieved. Results are good for maths and english.

Euan noted that for S6 pupils the COVID pandemic has meant that for some pupils S5 and S6 are about consolidation after some difficult years, rather than further progression. In the future there will be more challenge around the reasons for staying on at school, as aware that if there is no progression this could adversely affect work and other studies at college/university. The focus is getting it right for every pupil.

Level	Initial pass rate	Revised pass rate when Foundation Apprenticeships etc are taken into account
5 (Nat 5 level)	77.3%	89.5%
6 (Higher level)	70.6%	80+%

Portlethen Academy is one of the highest attainment schools in Aberdeenshire with a wide breadth of subjects on offer. Need to advertise this better.

Success stories: 5 pupils with 5As at Higher level and 2 pupils with 3 As at Advanced Higher level, as well as pupil success at levels 3 and 4.

Future focus is raising attainment levels including through stretching pupils aims and promoting

National discussion – closes 5 December

This recognises that not everyone learns in the same way and that mental wellbeing is important.

Keen to get a view across all subjects and a variety of parents.

Action Parent Council to meet via Teams on 29 November 8pm to provide a response to the 2 surveys (general education reform and SQA) (discharged)

Fundraising Sub Group

To follow up on the interest expressed by a member – **Action Viv**

To set up a separate gmail account – **Action Viv**

Christmas Fayre ideas – 100 square with £50 Amazon voucher – **Action Fiona Lesley and Kirsty**

Other ideas - Raffle for parents evening/summer concert, silent evening

Action – send out a request for ideas and then vote for the top 5 which will be taken forward.

AOB

Grampian disability sports - school will promote to pupils and Barry offered to get in touch with Active Schools team to see if they can promote to other schools

New housing development

This is outlined in Aberdeenshire Local development plan January 2023 [Appendix 7E](#) Land north of Thistle Drive with an allocation of 300 homes

Taylor-Wimpy are consulting on a [development proposal](#) for 250-300 houses with a further consultation in February/March. It was noted that the school role is rising and there are already issues with the school accommodation.

Date of next meeting

1 February 7:30pm hybrid meeting