



LINLITHGOW ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 4th Sept 2019

Linlithgow Academy Library

Minutes of the 2018 AGM were presented and approved.
These will be posted on the website.

1. Parent Council membership 2018/9

The Parent Council for the academic year 2018 – 2019 was made up as follows:

Parent Members (continuing):

Elspeth Brown (Chair)
Laurie Boles (Vice Chair)
Jo Smith (stood down Jan 19)
Douglas Gray
May Geddes
Susie Hume
Campbell Ford
Douglas Maxwell
Alison Sharp (LAA Representative)

Parent Members (joined 2018/19)

Pinelopi Louvrou
Helen White
Dorte Al-Gailani

Head Teacher and Advisor to Parent Council:

Karen Jarvis

Staff Members:

Rhona White
Kate Dickson (stood down Nov 18)
Rachel Bryson

Pupil Members:

Emily Evans
Rose Easton

Clerk:

Position currently vacant

A copy of the Parent Council Constitution is available on the Linlithgow Academy website.

2. Summary of the year

The Parent Council has continued to enjoy an open and positive dialogue with Mrs Jarvis and the school over the past year, offering what we hope has been constructive support particularly in regard to:

- Changes to the Broad General Education (BGE) Phase
- Course choice
- Electronic homework system - Show my Homework
- Electronic Parents Evening booking system
- The LA App
- The West Lothian standard format school website.
- Learning and Teaching Handbook
- Behaviour Policy
- Skills Framework
- Parent Information Evenings
- Fire Alarms

The Parent Council has discussed many issues throughout the year including:

- Linlithgow Academy Attainment 2018
- Scottish School Performance Tables
- Tracking and Monitoring for SQA 2019
- School Improvement Plan 2018/9 progress
- School Improvement Plan 2019/20 development
- Merit Ceremonies and Awards Ceremonies
- Budget 2019/20

Parent Council were very disappointed that LAA, the fundraising branch of the Parent Forum, had to fold this year due to a lack of support from parents and carers. Parent Council is supporting the school in following up a number of alternative fundraising options which have been presented to WLC.

During the course of the year, Parent Council also supported the Careers Insight Event for S2 pupils.

The majority of Parent Council members have now received recruitment training from West Lothian Education Services.

The Parent Council would like to note its thanks to the teacher representatives, Rhona White and Rachel Bryson, and the Pupil Council representatives, Emily Evans and Rose Easton, for their valuable contributions over the course of the year. Parent Council provides a forum for Parents and Carers, Staff and our Young People to work together and share successes, concerns and ideas.

Douglas Gray and Susie Hume are standing down from Parent Council and we said farewell to Jo Smith and Kate Dickson during the course of this year. I would like to thank them all for their contribution to Parent Council over the years.

Keith Hay is also leaving LA and moving to Moray. Keith has transformed communication links between parents and the school and has been a huge support to Parent Council over the last few years and we would like to thank him very much for all his help.

3. Formal meetings

The Parent Forum consists of all parents/guardians of children at Linlithgow Academy who automatically become members on the entry of their child to the school.

The Parent Council is the committee representing the Parent Forum in the school and, where necessary, to West Lothian Council or other bodies.

There were 5 regular Parent Council meetings held during the academic year. Recurring items included the Head teacher's report and regular reports on behalf of the staff and the Pupil Council. Parent Council meeting agendas and minutes are made available to view on the school's website.

All parents/carers are very welcome to attend the Parent Council meetings to observe the proceedings though it is helpful if you can notify the Chair in advance if you intend to attend. A number of parents/carers have joined Parent Council meetings throughout the year and we would like to thank them for their contributions.

Dates of future meetings are given below and on the school website.

4. Other items

External meetings – a number of wider parental involvement bodies exist that Parent Council members are invited to. These include West Lothian Parent Forum (WLPF) and the National Parent Forum of Scotland. The Chair or other members of the Parent Council have attended these meetings where possible and have found the sharing of best practice hugely valuable.

Topics discussed at the WL Parent Forum during this session have included:

- Learning Together
- Instrumental Music Provision
- Attainment 2017/18

5. A message from the outgoing Chair

This is my last ever Parent Council. I am standing down after 8 years – 2 as a Parent and 6 as a full member – 2 as Vice Chair, 2 as Chair.

I am very proud to have been a part of this wonderful school and I would like to say a huge thank you to Linlithgow Academy – Staff, Parents and Young People – for my experiences and those of my children.

Changes in education dominated my first 5 years on Parent Council and the success of Curriculum for Excellence at Linlithgow Academy was a joint effort between staff, young people and parents – that is what Parent Council is all about. Presentation policy is settled now – but keep watching and keep communicating.

BGE has remained a challenge but the new structure to be introduced in 2019 addresses many of the concerns raised by parents over the years.

So, it feels like a good time to step down – I have achieved most of what I joined Parent Council to do.

Two big challenges remain:

- S6 – this is a fundamental issue for Scottish education but it has a particularly significant impact at LA because our young people are the ones with the potential and resources to obtain the maximum benefit from the opportunity – but it is ‘voluntary’ and many choose to waste the year. The school has made some big changes in the last 2 years – but there is lots more to do – I will be watching this space
- Communication – 3 websites, 2 HTs, an App, a Twitter account, 2 homework apps and 8 years later and this remains probably the single biggest issue for Parents. Good Luck

Going forwards please remember that:

- We need to ensure that Parent Council includes parents from all stages of the school – including those who have seen it all. Our young people enter Linlithgow Academy as children but leave as adults – Parent Council needs to be aware of the final product as well as the day to day workings of the school.
- Input from pupils and staff is essential.
- The objective of Parent Council is to support the school in obtaining the best possible outcome for all our young people – to achieve this we need to work together with WLC, the HT, staff, parents and the young people – this is a collaboration not a conflict.

My time on Parent Council has been a hugely rewarding experience – please enjoy and carry on the good work.

Thank you.

6. Head Teacher’s Report

Achievements this session:

- Successful fundraising for House Charities
- Successful Dress Down Day to support the Food Bank
- Sold out musical concerts and Expressive Art Show
- Successful Business Enterprise Fair
- Winners of the Lothian Area Enterprise Competition
- Pupils involved in a wide range of fun and academic trips including Madrid, CERN, Skiing
- Representation in a number of sports at local and national level
- Very successful presentations in new subjects Drama and Photography
- Fantastic Mr Fox, The Witches and other drama performances

Building works:

- New 2G surface ongoing
- More new science spaces
- Clean up of Tennis Court

Academic Success:

Continues to be very strong with additional focus on Wider Achievement

- Pupils achieving 1 or more Level 6 84%
- Pupils achieving 3 or more Level 6 74%
- Pupils achieving 5 or more Level 6 59%

Next session:

Raising Attainment for all

- Strong focus on high quality learning and teaching
- Questioning, learner conversations, differentiation, ACE aware

Improvement in Children's wellbeing and employability skills

- Make connections between the values of the school and the life of the school
- Relaunch of merits (Above and Beyond at LA)
- Increase opportunities to engage with planning and evaluation within the school
- Maximise input from employers in classrooms

Closing the poverty related attainment gap

- Continue to develop opportunities for pupils and families to engage positively with school life
- Continue to improve school experience for young people disengaged with school
- Continue to ensure curriculum includes opportunity for wider achievement

7. Proposed Parent Council Meetings for Academic Year 2019-2020

- Mon 30 Sept 2019
- Tues 26 Nov 2019
- Wed 29 Jan 2020
- Thurs 19 March 2020
- Wed 20 May 2020

All meetings will be held at 7.00pm in the Conference Room, Linlithgow Academy unless notified otherwise.

All parents/carers are very welcome to come along to these meetings.

8. Topics for Consideration by the Parent Council 2019-20

The following topics were proposed for consideration:

- Supporting a positive S6 Experience
- Communications (Subgroup)
- Parental support for school policies e.g. uniform and phones
- Wellbeing and Bullying
- Employability

9. AOB

The limited attendance at the AGM meant that it was not practical to hold elections for new members. Those who expressed an interest at the AGM were invited to come along to the first meeting (Monday 30 Sept 19) to find out more. Another email will be sent to the full parent body inviting them to come along to this meeting if they are interested in becoming part of Parent Council.