

Linlithgow Academy Annual General Meeting

7:00pm, Wednesday 15 September



Parent Council

2021, Zoom Video Conference

1. Welcome

The Chair, Helen White, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes from Previous AGM - 30 September 2020

Minutes were approved by Douglas Maxwell and seconded by Dermot Murray. The approved minutes will be posted on the website.

3. Annual Report of the Parent Council for 2021/22

Helen White presented the report which provided the following information:

a) Parent Council membership

The Parent Council for the academic year 2020 – 2021 was made up as follows:

Parent Members: Helen White (Chair), Douglas Maxwell (Vice Chair), Campbell Ford, Pinelopi Louvrou, Dorte Al-Gailani, Dermot Murray, Jeremy Fuller, Iain Woodhouse, Ann Marie Penman, Silvia Small, Andrew Grant, Milca de Menezes, Pooja Gupta, Nicola Gordon and Keith Mason

Head Teacher and Advisor to Parent Council: Karen Jarvis (until January)

Staff Members: Rhona White, Luisa Burgess and Alistair Blair

Pupil Members: Finlay Watson and Eilidh MacDonald

Clerk: Karine McNair

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

b) Summary of the year

The parent council has had a very busy year. It was the first year where we fully implemented our new revised constitution which allowed us to have 15 members on the parent council, which brought lots of new voices and ideas on to the council.

We were particularly saddened to learn of the passing of Karen Jarvis' husband in late 2020. This provided its own challenges with the school being led by the three depute heads for the majority of the year.

As a parent council we were heavily involved in the recruitment process to pick Karen's replacement and are delighted to welcome Grant Abbot as our new head teacher to the school this term and to have him here with us this evening.

At our regular meetings we discussed many issues throughout the year including:

- Communication
- Covid response
- Accommodation and Capacity Issues
- Employability of our children
- Health & wellbeing
- Parental Reporting Evenings

- Exam provision for 2021

These meetings continued to be held on zoom due to the ongoing restrictions.

c) Detailed Areas

I would like to highlight just a few of the areas where we have been particularly active this year.

Recruitment

Following Karen's resignation during the year, a number of us were involved in the recruitment process to appoint a new head teacher. We initially ensured that a good proportion of the parent council had received the recruitment training provided by West Lothian Council. A smaller committee of nine people met on a regular basis to ensure that the parent voice was heard as part of the recruitment process and that your views were represented. Six of us took part in the full day of first round interviews. Douglas Maxwell (vice chair) and I were also involved in the second round of interviews at which Grant Abbot was appointed. We are delighted that he was able to fill the post straight away at the beginning of the new school year and look forward to working with him in the future.

Communication

Communication between the parent council, parent forum members and school has been an issue that the parent council have been discussing for a number of years. It was decided this year to tackle this more specifically and number of members formed a group to look at this more closely. They used the Connect 'Communication Healthcheck' to identify possible areas of improvement. Many different options for communication were discussed. This is still an ongoing topic where input is still being sought and lessons to be learned following a parental survey in the latter part of the year. This group were instrumental in setting up a LA Parent Council Facebook page which now has several hundred followers. Other areas have been considered such as notice boards, banners, twitter, apps etc. The Parent Council will continue to discuss this into the new school year.

I would like to thank all the members of this group for the time and effort that they are putting in on an ongoing basis.

Accommodation & Capacity

Following on from the concerted efforts that we had last year to raise the issue of the accommodation and capacity issues at the academy, we have continued to engage intermittently with the council regarding this issue. We were able to welcome James Cameron to our meeting in January to give us an update on the new high school being built in Winchburgh and how and when this would affect our own school. The minutes of our meeting on 28 January are on our webpage if you are interested in reading more of what was discussed. This will continue to be an issue of concern over the next few years.

Covid response & SQA exams

Many of our meetings were taken up with discussions on the school's response to Covid and the impact of the pandemic on the senior phase exams. We were able to spend time questioning the senior management on their provision and to offer feedback where we felt it was necessary. We also discussed the pastoral support and health and wellbeing provision as the pupils spent time in and out of school during the year.

d) Summary

I would like to note our thanks to the three teacher representatives Rhona White, Alastair Blair and Luisa Burgess who attended our meetings where they could. We also want to thank the Pupil Council representatives, Finlay Watson and Eilidh MacDonald for their valuable contributions over the course of the year. We wish them all the best as they leave school and

start on their chosen path. I would also like to thank the senior management team who stepped up to take on the leadership of the school during this difficult time and for the way in which they coped with that.

I would like to welcome Grant Abbot to our school and I'm sure the newly elected parent council will look forward to working closely with him over the next year and onwards.

And finally, I would like to personally thank all the parent council members who have given of their time this year in whatever capacity and for engaging at a level that we haven't seen for a number of years. Long may that continue.

4. Head Teacher's Update

Grant Abbot provided information:

Communication and transparency of information:

- Key area of improvement identified.
- Weekly Parental Updates and option to raise questions/comments. Positively received.
- Weekly Staff wellbeing checks and options to comment and receive feedback.
- School App reinvigorated and updated with more info
- Re-introduction of Pupil Notices and Monday HT Message
- End of term Sway publication to be introduced for school/ Faculty achievements
- UNRC right to privacy: ELT discussion re how info on pupils is communicated to those who need to know

School Improvement Plan and Standards and Quality Report

- Building on consultation from before summer holiday and on initial reflections/ meetings with staff and pupil reps
- 4 key themes for improvement activities:
 1. Everyone in our learning community shares the responsibility for creating a positive ethos and a climate of respect and trust - one in which we prioritise wellbeing, recovery, and engagement in learning and wider school life
 2. We will enhance the culture of learning and teaching by improving the quality and consistency of pedagogical approaches that promote learner engagement and agency, digital literacy and improved relevance to the world of work
 3. Our learner centred curriculum will offer learner pathways that build on challenge and improved attainment opportunities to meet the needs of all learners.
 4. Our bespoke and targeted curriculum offer will build on challenge and provide enhanced flexible pathways to increase attainment opportunities for identified cohorts of learners.

School Calendar/ New Progress Reporting system and times

- Calendar dates and parent evenings now on calendar
- Intro of snapshot reports for BGE pupils by October
- Increase SP tracking to 3 per year plus prelim overview
- Succinct: strengths and next steps
- Colour coded for easy understanding
- Available online for parents and pupils
- Further developments likely
- Prelim timing and format

Staffing/new DHT

- Dr Ed Marsh will commence as Acting DHT on Wednesday 22 September. Previously PTC Humanities at Bathgate Academy
- 2 PSA posts currently out for advert

‘Catching Good Behaviour’

- Introduction of Positive referrals and merits: Emphasis needs to be on vast majority of pupils and recognising their positive actions
- Fortnightly analysis of all referrals/ merits for review and early identification of trends
- Positive Relationships Flowchart introduced to improve consistency of teacher approach

School environment

- Requires a freshen up!
- Maths and Languages corridors first up for new corridor visuals.
- Some additional painting around their PE department has been requested and a tidy up of quad area/shrubs.

Covid Update

- A number of positive cases over last few weeks.
- SP pupils contact teachers and use TEAMS
- BGE classes: weekly overview should now be in place.

Learner Voice

- Fortnightly meetings with Pupil Leadership Team
- Pupil Parliament on SIP
- Awards ceremony end of September to recognise academic achievement in SQA diet

A query was raised about the description of corridors and pupils feeling that they must keep their heads down. This hasn't been Grant Abbot's experience since he has been with the school, however the corridors are very busy and pupil parliament will continue working on the environment created in corridors.

A query was raised about the capacity of the canteen/lunch time interval areas. The HT suggested arranging a tour for the LAPC and more feedback will follow, after further observation.

A question was raised about pupil communication in term of the parents' and staff options created for weekly feedback. The HT confirmed that conversations are different in small one-to-one chats and that options are available through PSC, pupil guidance and Support Staff. This is also an Agenda point for the Pupil Council Committee, to require feedback that is sustainable, impactful and meaningful, even when it's confidential.

5. Pupil Council's Update

The Parent Council heard from Andrew McGrill and Ellie Roy about their plans for the year and working alongside the Parent Council.

We heard how they are planning on expanding from twelve pupils to approximately 60 - 80 pupils, across the board, to create a pupil cabinet. The different committees to cross over all faculties will be Eco pupil, Pupil Charity and Inclusive pupil groups.

The pupil council have already started working along S6 students to increase interactions and influences on S1 students. The staff feedback is that a reassuring presence, specially at lunch

time has been created. Moving forward they are planning opportunities for after school clubs; all sort of S6 organised clubs.

A query was raised about Discord, a gaming platform for networking. The Pupil Council is aware that S6 students uses this unsupervised platform to connect.

6. Election of Parent Council Members for 2021/22

There were 13 vacancies to fill. 10 members of the Parent Forum volunteered for the vacancies a. Since the number of vacancies exceeded the number of volunteers, there was no need for a vote. Two further volunteers at the meeting were appointed and there was one space remaining. The following will be **Parent Council members for 2021/2022** for a 2-year period:
Ann Marie Penman, Campbell Ford, Christine McGinness, Dermot Murray, Dougie Maxwell, Hannah Dun, Ian Woodhouse, Lesley Paxton, Mary Joseph, Helen White, Jeremy Fuller and Lynne Pascal.

Sivia and Andrew Grant will continue as PC members for a futher year.

7. Election of Office Bearers for 2020/21

The Chair and Vice Chair roles require at least 2-year membership, and the 2021/2022 office bearers will be:

Chair: Dougie Maxwell

Vice Chair: Ann-Marie Penman

Clerk: Soné Spottiswoode

8. Proposed Dates for Parent Council Meetings 2021/22

The Parent Council will meet 6 times a year, twice a term and the following dates were proposed for meetings in 2021/22:

- Tuesday, 5 October 2021
- Monday, 29 October 2021
- Thursday, 27 January 2022
- Wednesday, 9 March 2022
- Tuesday, 3 May 2022
- Thursday, 9 June 2022

Details will be posted on the Parent Council webpage, sent via Groupcall, posted on the Facebook page and the School App for Parents

9. Topics for Consideration by the Parent Council in 2021/22

- Proposal for pupil council parliament – excited about getting involved with PC
- A suggestion from Dermot Murray regarding career advice and career possibilities in term of apprentice bases or trades.
- 'Communication sub-group will continue to listen to parents/carers to improve communications between parent forum and parent council and bring regular updates on this to the LAPC meeting.
- A proposal from Ann Marie Penman, following comments/requests from parents, to focus on bullying alongside the school update of the anti-bullying policy.'
- Parent Council Committee to support HT to get a sense of what to do in line with government and WLC guidance.

Helen White was thanked for her contribution to the Parent Council as the Chair during the last year and a half, especially for her involvement in the recruitment of the new HT.

Patty McNair was thanked for her contribution to the Parent Council as the Clerk and the excellent foundation she has built for keeping Parent Council meeting records.

The Chair thanked everyone who joined and contributed to the AGM Meeting.