

PRESENT: David Ashcroft, Karin Borland, Stuart Borland, Cllr Ian Campbell, Claire Dimmock, Eilidh Dow, Tracey Dow, Libby Hughes, Maryann Irvine, Elizabeth Leighton, Ailsa Macpherson, Rob Macpherson, David McClean (teacher rep), Eleanor McNab, Caroline Nash (Chair), Grahame Nicoll, Mel Nicoll, Josephine Pirie, Andrew Pointer (Parent Council member), Tom Pringle, (Treasurer), Margaret Quigley, Lorna Ross, Alison Steele, Linda Swan (Headteacher), Avril Taylor (Parent Council member), Cllr Barbara Vaughan, Gina Wallace, Karl Wright (Parent Council member), Sarah Yearsley (Secretary).

Apologies: Yvonne Kent, David McCluskey, (Depute Headteacher), Fiona Macdonald (Deputy Chair), Cllr Mike Williamson

Agenda Item	Action Noted	Action required	Action By
Welcome & Apologies	As above		
Minutes of last meeting and matters arising	Minutes were approved, matters arising to be dealt with under agenda items		
Election of interim chair to replace Caroline Nash	Karl Wright was nominated as interim chair to replace Caroline Nash who was stepping down. He was nominated by Andrew Pointer and seconded by Avril Taylor. A quorum of six Parent Council members was present. Karl was elected unanimously as interim chair of Breadalbane Academy to serve until the next AGM in May 2015.	Update school website info	SY
Headteacher's Report	<p>Primary Depute Headteacher:</p> <p>There has been no substantive Depute Headteacher, (DHT), of the Primary for a while. KW and AT were on the selection panel for a new DHT in December 2014 but no one was appointed. An invitation for suitably qualified/experienced candidates to act as interim acting DHT from March - November 2015 has been issued to primary schools across Perth & Kinross. The closing date is w/c 9/2/15. An advert for a permanent DHT will be put out in April/May 2015. LS clarified that parents will not be involved in the recruitment of the acting DHT. If no one suitable is found through this process then they will continue with the status quo until a permanent DHT is recruited later in the year. One parent suggested that parents should push for a full head post rather than depute post for the primary as it is a large primary school. PKC policy is that all through schools have a depute head at primary level rather than a head. Recruitment is an issue across P&K and the rest of Scotland. PKC is looking at its relocation packages to make them more</p>		

	<p>attractive.</p> <p>Gaelic Medium: Parents have had a good meeting with the new centrally based Gaelic development officer. There may be a Gaelic Croileagan 'stay and play' for 0-3 year olds and their parents from August 2015.</p> <p>Staff moves: Ms Mowat, Chemistry teacher, will be returning from maternity leave. Mrs Watson, Principal Teacher, Business, is leaving in March. Her job has been advertised. Mrs Shore, Drama/English teacher will return from maternity leave shortly. Mrs Swan passed on feedback from Moness about how well pupils and teachers worked together at the recent Burns Supper at the hotel.</p> <p>Secondary prelims have taken place in January and will give the school the opportunity to make sure that pupils who are perceived to be underachieving are supported appropriately. Mentoring is one approach that has been used, working with the local Rotary club. BA plan to roll this scheme out to involve the wider community in mentoring young people at risk of under achieving. Parents are involved in any decisions about mentoring.</p> <p>Mrs Swan leaving: Mrs Swan confirmed that she is retiring and leaving the school at the end of the summer term in June. Her post has been advertised. We discussed the recruitment process and the involvement of the Parent Council and Pupil Council. There is no official role for pupils in the recruitment process and the school takes no part in the process which is run centrally by PKC. Some concern was expressed at a potential power vacuum at the top of BA with Mrs Swan's departure and no DHT in the Primary School. Mrs Swan has every confidence in the process and believes that taking charge at BA is a fantastic opportunity at a great school. Two members of the Parent Council will sit on the interview panel. Tommy Pringle and Karl Wright were nominated to take part, with Andrew Pointer as a reserve. Parents present were keen to have input into the recruitment process.</p> <p>S4 Curriculum Choices: We had a wide-ranging discussion about the new approach to choices of number of exam subjects studied at National 4/5 level (the new qualifications replacing Standard Grades). National 5s are at the level of the top band of Standard Grade and are more difficult than Standard Grades as they have pulled down some elements from Higher Courses. Some education authorities have already reduced the number of subjects studied at this level to 6. Perth & Kinross have left the</p>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>decision to individual schools, with the expectation that the number of subjects studied will be reduced.</p> <p>BA is proposing reducing the number of subjects studied at this level to six with either an additional option to study seven where appropriate or one wider achievement award. LS explained that teachers have said that they need 4 periods per week to teach National 5 successfully and this means that it is not possible to fit more than 6 Nat 5 subject choices into the 30 period week that also needs to include PE, and RE/PSE lessons. LS explained how Scottish schools are expected to offer a range of wider achievement qualifications alongside more traditional academic exam choices. At BA wider achievement choices could include options such as: Automotive Engineering and Personal Finance at Nat 4 or Modern Languages for Life and Work as an SVQ. Other wider achievement courses could include: Retail Skills, Digital Passport, Navigation Award, Fashion, Childcare, Archaeology, Family History, Life in Roman Times, Musical Theatre, Sport & Recreation Officiating. For pupils who are able there may be an option to study certain subjects, such as Physics, Gaelic, Music and French as a seventh National 5 instead of taking at wider achievement award. LS explained how the three years of the Senior Phase, ie S4-6 are now more flexible, so pupils can study at the level most appropriate to them.</p> <p>Parents attending the meeting were very concerned about the reduction of subjects studied at this level to 6 there were a range of questions including:</p> <p>Narrowing of choices at Nat 4/5 would further restrict the number of choices at Higher</p> <p>Why can't course work start earlier if more time is needed by teachers?</p> <p>Why haven't we heard more about the positives of taking subjects at Nat 4 level?</p> <p>Why are some schools in other parts of Scotland able to timetable 7 or 8 Nat 5s?</p> <p>Will pupils with fewer Nat 5s than those from other areas be at a disadvantage when applying to university?</p> <p>Will the wider achievement awards be sustainable when the teachers who have offered a specific course leave?</p> <p>Can we have a summary of responses to the survey about S4 Choices</p> <p>Communication of the proposed changes was handled poorly, with the consultation sent out just before Christmas, little notice and short timescales to respond to the consultation</p>		
--	--	--	--

	<p>Reduction of the number of subjects studied will impact on the number of pupils studying music and language</p> <p>Restricting the number of subjects studied at Nat 5 will ultimately restrict choices at university</p> <p>BA needs to communicate better to parents how the Senior Phase works</p> <p>More parents, of younger children in the school, should have been consulted</p> <p>Mr McLean explained that the range of masterclasses offered in S3 is constantly developing to improve the skills sets to be applied in S4 and at Higher. Core subject masterclasses are required to be studied in S3 in order to progress to studying that subject in S4.</p> <p>LS explained that the Scottish Government policy was originally to keep 5 Highers and go down to 5 Nat 5s but schools expressed concern about reducing to 5 Nat 5s. There is variation across Perth & Kinross and across Scotland and some schools may not have moved to reduce the number of exam subjects studied yet. All schools in Dundee are studying 6 Nat 5s for example.</p> <p>The new approach prepares pupils for university and other career choices, with a focus on skills. The aim is to try to meet children's needs and the number of more academic subjects offered in column 7 of the choices sheet will be kept under review. Education is changing with a view to evolving into a more relevant preparation for employment. This kind of change is challenging and can be scary and the school is embarking on a process of change and will keep things under review. Parents need to bear in mind that only 17% of BA pupils will be looking to sit 5 Highers so the wider achievement/skills development/vocational approach is important for the 83% who won't. The school is looking to develop better links with Perth College to offer tourism options for example which would be useful preparation for local employment within the tourism industry. One parent felt that the wider, more vocational approach was great.</p> <p>Prelims are still taken at Nat 5 but can't be taken into account towards final results. Nat 4s are assessed internally and externally verified by a moderator. Nat 4 is not an easy qualification.</p> <p>One parent asked about academic achievement at BA. LS said that attainment has risen every year for the past three years and that BA's levels of attainment are above the Perth & Kinross average.</p>	Check exam results on school website	LS
--	--	--------------------------------------	----

	<p>One parent commented that the school website needs attention, links are broken.</p> <p>David Ashcroft offered to take on the role of Information Officer for the Parent Council.</p>	<p>Pass on details of website issues to LS</p> <p>Dave Ashcroft and Karl Wright to discuss better communication by the Parent Council</p>	<p>AP</p> <p>KW/Dave Ashcroft</p>
Fundraising:	<p>We agreed to carry forward more discussion about fundraising to the next meeting. The Parent Council will have the Thrift Shop from 19th – 25th April 2015 and will share it with the 6th year prom committee.</p> <p>We agreed to offer financial support of £150 to a group of pupils to take part in an engineering education scheme, as requested by Physics teacher Mr Blair.</p> <p>Emma Burtles has offered to set up a fundraising subgroup for the Parent Council.</p> <p>A parent asked for more information about the 50/50 club – forms are available at reception and the balls are drawn on the 28th month. We need more members and the winners' names are announced on the Parent Council Facebook page.</p>	<p>Put fundraising on next mtg agenda</p> <p>Write cheque to Breadalbane Academy for £150</p> <p>Look at options for fundraising subgroup</p> <p>Join the 50/50 club please!</p>	<p>SY</p> <p>TP</p> <p>Emma Burtles</p> <p>All</p>
823 bus service withdrawal update	<p>SY updated the meeting on confirmation from PKC that the public bus used by pupils from outwith BA's catchment area (Bankfoot and other areas) to travel to and from school was to be withdrawn from the end of the school year. This may lead to a drop in the school roll which will have a potential impact on teacher numbers. Parents of children from Bankfoot have been looking at other transport options and the possibility of their children travelling to school on an earlier bus. Cllr Vaughan commented that it is important that parents understand that the changes have been driven by the need to make spending cuts across PKC and that communities cannot expect that rural bus services will remain unaffected.</p>		
AOCB	<p>Noticeboard at entrance to Primary – this is an ongoing issue along with installation of a management notice board at the main entrance to BA.</p>		

	<p>Minutes of Parent Council meetings to be made available at school reception and in the library. Can PC mins be published in PDF format. PC mins to be published retrospectively in the Quair.</p> <p>Parents asked that school letters be uploaded onto the website. LS said that the Parent Council can use one of the noticeboards at school. We agreed to carry forward the school's mobile phone policy to the next meeting.</p> <p>A parent asked if it is possible to send a weekly bulletin to parents of the notices given out in registration. LS said that often notices would be out of date by the end of the week so the notices would have to be sifted before being sent out.</p> <p>Mel Nicoll offered to circulate some thoughts on better communication.</p> <p>A primary parent asked if an outline of key objectives for literacy and numeracy could be given to parents at the start of term. LS responded that children are all working at different levels so this wouldn't be appropriate.</p> <p>SY thanked Caroline Nash for all her hard work as Chair of the Parent Council since May 2013 and presented her with some flowers.</p>	<p>Ask reception and library to put out a copy of the minutes</p> <p>Check if school letters are always put on website</p> <p>Confirm which notice board PC can use</p> <p>Mobile phone policy on agenda for next mtg</p> <p>Note to parents about communication</p>	<p>SY</p> <p>LS</p> <p>SY</p> <p>SY</p> <p>Mel Nicoll</p>
Next Meeting	The next meeting is Thursday 26 th February at 6.30pm in Breadalbane Academy. All welcome.	SY to book room	