

## Abbey Grange Academy

### Minutes of Parent Council Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017

**Present:** James Fenton, Richard Hamlin, Janet Bove, Mike Kemp, Marion Kemp, Emma Hawker, Stephanie Cassidy, Jenny Thornton, Paul Cooper

**1. Chair's opening remarks:**

Mike welcomed everyone and explained that this meeting was in place of the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February which had to be postponed. He congratulated school on the recent good Ofsted report and – although everyone had hoped for an award of “Outstanding”, it was nevertheless important to celebrate the successes summarised in the report, as well as the overall award of “Good”.

**2. Apologies:** Catherine Kershaw-Guy, Susan Field, Jayne Hollick.

**3. Minutes and Actions from last meeting:**

Coats – Jenny advised that school will have clear guidelines in place by September. In the meantime, coats may be worn outdoors - and indoors, while walking between classrooms.

School calendar 2017/18 – this has not yet been confirmed as awaiting decision on first day of school for year 7.

**January minutes were approved.**

**4. Matters arising:**

None.

**5. AGM and report planning**

Mike shared the draft copy of the report for 2017/2017 and asked members to suggest anything else that needed added.

**Action – Jenny** to book Galeena room for the AGM.

**Action – Mike** to formulate invitation letter to parents and send out prior to the Easter holidays.

**Action – All** members to e-mail nominations for office bearers to Marion prior to the AGM.

Brief discussion was then held on possible areas for Parent council to consider over the coming year:

- The school development plan will be reviewed in May;  
**Action – Jenny** to feed back from senior leadership team if any action plans from this will require PC input/ support;
- Curriculum changes may require PC input in future – again school to let PC know if this is required;
- Christian values within school. Jenny shared work the pastoral and chaplaincy team is doing with students at the moment, in further developing Christian perspectives within school. Suggested that from parent perspective, PC could look at whether we feel these values are embedded in school, and if this can be developed further. It is acknowledged that not all families who are part of Abbey Grange may be from a Christian background, and there has to be sensitivity to this. However, it is agreed that our Christian values, for

example Trust, Hope, Koinonia (partnership/ community), are also British values, and as such, should be incorporated within school.

- Students as leaders – school is developing opportunities for students, including year 7 students, to be involved in leadership. Paul talked in particular about young students who have already been involved in leadership prior to joining Abbey Grange. PC members agreed this was a good idea and hoped all students (not just those who had previous leadership experience) would be given these opportunities. It was felt that this was not currently a topic for PC to become involved in though.

- Suggestions to further develop Parental engagement – find out what system other schools may have in place for parent engagement, and learn through others’ ‘good practice’.

Further, as way of improving parent engagement, Richard also suggested the use of other media, such as short video slots on the school website, to provide parents with information.

Repeating the parent council survey at parents’ evenings.

Ethiopia day – look at ways Parent Council can become involved in this

- Communication – it is felt that school is still not always fully sharing important information with parents. For example, students had information on recent short weeks of language ‘clubs’ (posters around school) but parents had not been made aware of this. Again, it was agreed that brief information videos on the front page of the school website may be useful here.

- Pupil premium / ‘most able’ students / students with learning difficulties / disabilities – what is Abbey Grange providing to support these students and could this be improved further? Dyslexia was given as an example and may be an area for PC members to look at – what does school provide and are parents fully aware of this provision?

## 6. Update on ‘useful guide to Abbey Grange’

Feedback give from Paul and Emma.

The senior leadership team found the list of questions that had been developed as very comprehensive and a couple of others were added e.g. who to go to if iPad broken.

Emma suggested that the ‘transition’ information for year 7 students contains a lot of useful information and this could be combined with the information from the guide to provide a more comprehensive document of information for parents, which could then be accessed electronically.

**Action – Jenny and Emma** will get together to develop this further, and look at ‘questions & answers’ for both year 7 transition, and transition from year 11 into 6<sup>th</sup> form (as questions here may differ slightly). As part of this process, they will look at guides that other schools have developed to feed back to Parent council at a future meeting.

## 7. Parent Council Survey:

Unfortunately despite sending e-mail to parents and publicising this on facebook, only 16 parent responses have been received. This response number is too low for the results to be analysed and conclusions drawn. Paul suggested that the survey could be attached to an iPad and given to parents to complete at Parents’ Evenings, when they first arrive.

**Action – Marion** to liaise with Alistair to set this up for future parents evenings.

## 8. Ofsted feedback and school/ staffing update:

Paul shared information on the recent report, which looked at two main areas – safeguarding; and if Abbey Grange could still be classed as ‘good’. Ofsted acknowledged

progression in other areas that had been expressed as a concern previously. These covered 'language provision' and 'pupil premium students' (of which Abbey Grange currently only has a very low number). Higher ability students within this are still slightly underperforming and the leadership team have already looked at, and are putting action plans in place around this.

A copy of the report summary has already been sent out to all parents via e-mail.

**9. Any other business:**

Leading Parent Partnership Award – Jenny presented information on this award for which Abbey Grange Academy has registered. It includes 9 objectives for which school has to complete an electronic self-evaluation. The hope is that this award can be achieved over the next 9-12 months. Benefits for the school taking part in this include that the whole process can be used as an audit tool, and is also a way of demonstrating effective communication with parents.

A copy of the objectives have been given to each PC member.

**Action – All** to read the objectives and highlight points in green, amber or red (green if feel that a particular point applies to Abbey Grange Academy, red if feel it does not apply), or write 'don't know' if unsure. Forms and any comments then to be returned to Jenny Thornton.

Home work policy – The leadership team is aware that teachers are currently doing different things. Peter Golding is reviewing the home work policy and as part of this will also be looking at 'MILK'.

Congratulations to Paul Cooper who will be taking on his new role of Principal for David Young Academy (within our MAT) after Easter. Mike on behalf of Parent Council expressed a massive 'thank you' for all Paul has done within Parent Council, from its initial setting up, to supporting its members and acting as co-opted member over the last 2 years.

Jenny Thornton will take on the role of co-opted member within Parent Council with immediate effect, and was welcomed by all members.

Mobile phones – parents are reporting use of mobile phones in school time (e.g. during form time; within 6<sup>th</sup> form lessons) as an issue – Paul made aware of this.

**Action – Paul/ Jenny** to feed back to leadership team

**10. Date and time of next meeting:**

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April AGM**