



The Gordon Schools Parent Council Minutes of AGM on 13 June 2023

Attending: Phil Gaiter, Alan Johnston, Paula Sangster, Helen Kings, Joyce Reed, Madie Whittaker, Gwyneth Petrie, Lisa Morrison, Carole Hartman, Pete Hartman, Colin Currie

Apologies: Karyn McVey, Rachael Ashley, Sarah Robinson, Donald Boyd, Marianne Lipp

Rector's Report

As I sit taking stock of the year that has come and gone at The Gordon Schools, it is gratifying to be able to convey details of a far more 'normal' school session. The return to in-person events, such as Prize Giving, Sports Day, Parents' Meeting Evenings, a great School Performance at Christmas, together with pupils exploring the wider world on trips and also many supportive and informative visitors coming into classes, has been refreshing. Sadly, this has to be balanced against a year peppered with industrial action and adverse weather which led to many closure days and really affected the rhythm of the school session.

Looking positively, we are starting to feel like a school again after Covid times. There have been and will continue to be bumps on the road but levels of engagement, achievements in and out of formal learning and feel-good moments are beginning to return in greater number. The spontaneous karaoke sing-along version of "Wonderwall" by the S1/2/3 crowd at the end of Sports Day is a memory that will live with me for a long time! This session has also seen a very welcome return to partnership working with our local community and businesses; S1 making new Shortbread for Deans; S2s producing marketing and publicity materials for Johnstons of Elgin and all of S1/2/3 taking part in our local sustainability week and showcase event.

These are the memories that pupils will take with them long after their time here, together their qualifications to support them to a wide range of positive destinations.

The support of Parents in Partnership in so many ways this session has been extremely gratifying and really is impacting the School in a positive way. Whether it be through consultation, fund-raising, asking the right probing questions, supporting equity and consistency, it has all led to improvements and a real feeling of partnership with our parent forum and PiP body. Thank you to everyone who has contributed – I know that my school colleagues really appreciate your inputs and support.

Chairperson's Report

Welcome everyone to the PiP AGM. We have had a busy and successful year working with the school to raise funds, consult on policies, and respond to parents concerns and views about various topics. This has been despite yet another highly disrupted year with extra bank holidays due to Royal proceedings and school strike action. I realise the strain this has put teachers, staff, pupils, and parents under, so I am even more grateful than usual to those who have attended the meetings and taken part in various ways to make all these things possible. Before I give you a summary of what we have done this year, I would like to extend some special thank you, firstly to Mary Turner who stepped down from the treasurer's role earlier this year she has been presented with card and gift for her contributions. Secondly, I would like to extend a thank you to Rachel Ashley, who continues in her active role heading up the fund-raising sub-group of PiP. Without her energy and expertise in applying for funds we would not have achieved the financial support that has been possible for all the pupils to benefit from. Rachel has given her apologies as she is working this evening, but I have a report to read out which gives an overview of the funding PiP has achieved this academic year. I would also like to thank Helen for continuing to update the website with information. Finally, I would like to thank the pupils from music technology who joined us last term to give a demonstration of how the MacBooks we funded last academic year have been used, it would lovely to see how they benefitted from creating music and using new technology to do so. And the confidence they had to present their work to the pip group.

Policy support and reviews

- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy – streamlining merit/demerit process especially for BGE.
- BGE reports – we held a focus group and school implemented changes which have come in line for this year's BGE group.
- Promoting Respect and Equalities Policy – PiP were requested to review this by Alistair Dixon which has been done and feedback has been sent to school.
- Uniform – this was discussed, and we provided feedback on a questionnaire that will be sent out to all parents before the end of term this year.
- Prize giving over-haul – we have spent a considerable amount of time and effort looking at the prize giving for BGE and senior phase pupils. The school has responded with a huge amount of work to streamline and standardise equity and selection within the awards process and PiP has agreed to contribute each year to medals and engraving in order to make sure that the prize giving remains equitable for all.
- Neurodiversity information is now on the website.

Funding

- Health & Wellbeing - NASSA North Aberdeenshire Schools Sports Association to allow participation in a series of events throughout the year
- Health & Wellbeing - 30 hockey sticks
- Health & Wellbeing - travel to the NASSA Swimming Championships
- Health & Wellbeing - steam irons and industrial tin opener
- Modern Studies - contribution to S4 trip
- Business Studies - finance and economic textbooks
- Higher History - textbooks
- Expressive Arts – Music - USB/hard drives
- Modern Language - audio files for N5 Spanish and N5 French
- Easter revision week part funded (£2000 contribution)

Treasurers update

Joyce and Madie have been filling this role temporarily.

Main account

Opening balance on 01/06/2022 £2987.94

Closing balance on 01/06/2023 £2585.06

This will be less approximately £750 once we pay for the prize giving contributions of medals and engraving. Rachel has just applied for funding to cover the prize giving for this year – we await to hear the outcome of this.

Lottery account – managed by Kathryn Wilson

Closing balance £2498.14

We will ask Marianne if she can audit the accounts.

Election of office bearers

Chairperson – Joyce Reed re-elected.

Secretary – Madie Whittaker re-elected.

Treasurer – Helen Kings elected.

School Uniform

PiP fed into questionnaire sent out to parents and there has been a good response so far but is not legally enforceable, parents need to support it. Ties were felt too expensive (£5.00) but school continue to liaise with Gordon Rural Action.

Industrial Action

Unions have agreed a pay deal and supplementary payment agreed. Further negotiations to start in April but there are no planned strikes.

Pupil Voice

Gregor has now left, and we need to look for a pupil member. School to liaise with Pupil Voice.

Agenda for next year:

Homework policy: support for pupils and parents

Future Meeting Dates

12 September

14 November

23 January (online only – due to possible bad weather)

5 March

23 April

11 June AGM