



**PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**Education & Children's Services Directorate
Meeting with Parent Council Chairs
The Gannochy Suite
Dewar's Centre
Perth**

Wednesday 18 March at 7pm

Note of Meeting

Present: John Fyffe (Executive Director), Chris Webb (Head of Education Services), Pat Fegen (Service Manager), Margaret Anderson (Service Manager Karen Robertson (Operations Manager), Avril Ker (Admin Officer), Gordon McKay (Child Protection Committee Development Officer), Catriona Laing (Teacher, Perth High School), Dr Drew Walker (Director of Public Health), Sandy Scrimgeour (Perth Academy), Dorothy Bancroft (Pitlochry High School), Jenny Davidson (Pitlochry High School), Barrie Rutherford (Blairgowrie High School), Julie Livingstone (Robert Douglas Memorial Primary School), Jenny Grieve (Balhousie Primary School), Stuart Clark (Primary Sector Representative on Lifelong Learning Committee), Audrey Miller (Ruthvenfield Primary School), Laura Jennings (Luncarty Primary School), Hazel Douglas (Moncreiffe Primary School), Elizabeth Judge (St Cloumba's RC High School), Graeme Milne (Oakbank Primary School), Mary Cumming (Dunbarney Primary School), Brian Frame (Perth High School), Jackie Clark (St Dominic's RC Primary School), Elaine Millar (Crieff Primary School), Alan Lundie (Invergowrie Primary School), Moray Fraser (Alyth Primary School), Peter Lodge (Dunning Primary School), Chris Meek (Abernethy Primary School), Gordon McLeay (Community School of Auchterarder), Jane Cox (St Madoes Primary School), Marc Rands (Kinnoull Primary School), Rona McCall (St John's RC Primary School), Mike Robinson (Guildtown Primary School), Colin Hutchison (Burrelton Primary School), Ian Jackson (Secondary Sector Representative on Lifelong Learning Committee), Anna Martin (Caledonian Road Primary School), Helen Archibald (Coupar Angus Primary School)

Apologies: Logiealmond Primary School, Crieff Road Nursery, St Stephen's RC Primary School, Perth Grammar School, Abernethy Primary School, Fairview School, Inchture Primary School, Arngask Primary School

Welcome

John Fyffe, Executive Director welcomed everyone to the meeting and said how pleased he was to see such a good turnout.

Scottish Parent Council Association Training

3 sessions had taken place over that past 3 weeks.

- Roles & Responsibilities of Parent Councils
- The Effective Parent Council at Work
- Parent Partnership in School Educational Development

The sessions had been very well attended and Karen Robertson commented that in the 17 years of School Boards, there had never been such a good uptake.

Copies of the evaluations had just been received at the Centre and were in the process of being collated. At first glance there appeared to be a lot of very positive comments.

If the demand is there, the Authority would be happy to organise more training sessions - please get in touch with Avril Ker aker@pkc.gov.uk or phone 01738 476217. Also, some comments had been made on the time and venue of the training, again please contact Avril to let her know your preferred time and venue and she will try to accommodate.

Parent Representatives on Lifelong Learning Committee

Karen introduced Stuart Clark who had quite recently been elected to the Lifelong Learning Committee. Ian Jackson wasn't at the meeting at this time but he did arrive later in the evening. Contact details for both had already been circulated.

It had been hoped to post these details on the Parental Involvement web pages, but it is not allowable to have personal details on the site. The link below gives a generic email address and any issues you wish to raise with Stuart or Ian will be forwarded on to them from there.

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/Education+and+learning/Schools/Parental+involvement/>

Grant Funding

In 2007, shortly after the introduction of Parent Councils, Parent Councils were asked to apply for one off grant funding to assist them in encouraging parental involvement. Karen explained that to enable evaluation of the success of the funding, Parent Councils will be asked what they spent the money on and how it has increased parental involvement in their school. The intention was to showcase the best examples on the website and also at the next meeting in September.

Priorities in Education

John Fyffe gave a presentation outlining the key priorities for Education & Children's Services and how the Service is going about delivering these priorities. Presentation enclosed.

Creating a Curriculum for Excellence

Chris Webb explained that a Perth and Kinross strategy had been developed to support Creating a Curriculum for Excellence from 2009 onwards. A paper was circulated (copy enclosed) giving an overview of the strategy and also the link to the PKC website where all documents relating to the Perth and Kinross approach to Creating a Curriculum for Excellence can be found.

Home Learning Environment

Linking into parental involvement, Chris also gave a short presentation on learning and play activities in the home (copy enclosed). It was very apparent that a good home learning environment helps lead to educational success. He emphasised that the biggest impact on home learning was encouraging your child to talk.

Childhood Obesity

Dr Drew Walker, Director of Public Health, NHS Tayside explained that addressing obesity was a major priority for the NHS. This was a problem that carried many health risks and affected both children and adults. It also had huge financial implications and by 2050 it was estimated that it would cost the economy in the region of £5bn per year.

Dr Walker gave a presentation (copy enclosed) on the Arkansas Child and Adolescent Obesity Initiative. The presentation covered the whole process from identifying the goals to the conclusions and challenges. Dr Walker did emphasise however, that the figures and results of the initiative has not been interrogated.

As detailed in the presentation, the initiative included a confidential child health report delivered annually to parents with body mass index (BMI) assessment.

After discussion it was decided that Parent Councils Chairs should get back to their Parent Forums to ask for their opinions on taking this initiative forward in Perth and Kinross. Dr Walker would link with senior managers in Education & Children's Services to look at a set of questions to go out to all Parent Councils asking for their views as this could not go ahead with out parental support.

CEOP (Child Exploitation & Online Protection)

Catriona Laing explained that the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre is dedicated to eradicating the sexual abuse of children. They are part of UK policing and are very much about tracking and bringing offenders to account either directly or in partnership with local and international forces.

The CEOP video was played (not available for circulation) and it highlighted the issue of children accessing the internet and having no idea of who they are 'chatting' to. It also gave statistics on the number of children who actually met up with people they had never met before, but had chatted to online.

Gordon McKay, Child Protection Committee Development Officer also played a video. This was based on a social site called Habbo Hotel. This again highlighted the issue of young people not knowing who they are meeting online and chatting to.

At the moment training is being rolled out to staff in all schools in Perth and Kinross. Last month over 200 staff had been trained and child online protection will feature in every school development plan across the authority.

A leaflet entitled Fact Sheet for Parents – Internet Safety was distributed (copy enclosed). This gave parents some advice on helping to keep their children safe while they are online. It also gives details of websites parents may find useful.

Question Time

Following on from the SPCA training that had recently taken place, a request had been made for a slot at these meetings for parent council members to facilitate the discussion of issues and points pertinent to Parent Councils.

A few questions had been emailed in for this session:

- Q. Had headteachers and staff been training on working with Parent Councils as there appeared to be a varying and inconsistent approach to parental involvement?
- A. Yes they have. Parental Involvement had been given a high profile at Headteacher Development Days at the time Parent Councils were established.
- Q. There appears to be a huge difference across PKC on how effective Parent Councils are. Could we explore ways that Parent Councils could support each other?
- A. Suggestion that in conjunction with the Parent Council Focus Group we look at what shape the next meeting in September should take. Perhaps we could showcase examples of good practice amongst Parent Councils and this in turn would help other Parent Councils in being more effective. Parent Council reps should feel free to contact Ian or Stuart to talk about the content of future meetings.
- Q. With regard to school budgets, where does Perth & Kinross Council have responsibility for supporting schools and when is fundraising appropriate.
- A. Budgets are devolved from the Centre to headteachers to effectively manage the day to day running of their school. However, any fundraising undertaken by the Parent Council to purchase extra resources would be welcomed by schools.

Finally, the issue of slippage targets was brought up. John Fyffe agreed that slippage targets were a challenge for schools, however, slippage targets for Services are set as part of the budget process.

John thanked everyone for attending the meeting and hoped they had found it useful and worthwhile.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 September at 7pm in Dewar's Centre.