

Braes High School Parent Council – AGM

Tuesday 3 September 2024, 7 pm

Braes High School Library

In attendance

Parents and others

Kenneth MacKinnon, Kirsty Baird, Graham Thomson, Matthew Taylor, Jackie Ormsby, Councillor Anne Hannah, Morag Lang, Wendy McPherson

Teachers

Ian Livingstone, David Ironside, Claire Cowper, Kayleigh Graham, Emily Eve

Young people

Mariam Anwar, Willow Jamison, Abby Paris, Chloe King

Welcome and Apologies

Chair Kenny MacKinnon welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were given from Amanda Anderson. Amanda is standing down from the group as she no longer has children attending the school. The chair thanked Amanda for her contribution to the council for the last few years.

Rights Respecting Group

The group presented to the meeting. A video was shown to inform the council what was involved in becoming a Rights Respecting School. Being a Rights Respecting School allows young people to have their voices heard, teaches how to treat children and young people, adults listen to young persons' views, there are positive learned practices, young people are respected and their personal development is important. It is about A All being respected, B Being respected from Birth, C rights cannot be taken away, D Do not need to earn the right to be respected, E Everyone is equally important.

The group are involved in assemblies, informing others about their rights and this is incorporated into the UN charter on childrens' rights into law.

It encourages all young persons to assist in making policies and discussing rights at home.

They are involved in speeches across the community and writing letters in relation to homeless and being involved in the big sleep out to raise awareness and money. They are involved in campaigning for others, educating others in relation to their rights.

The scrutiny and inspection to become a Gold Standard Rights Respecting School is intense and comprehensive. It is in keeping with the school mottoes and the group will be encouraging others, especially the younger year groups to become involved. The older year groups can buddy the younger ones and assist them to become part of the group.

They will be sharing ideas on Rights v Responsibility and organising campaigns, fundraising, teaching other how to think differently. Encouraging people to listen to one another and consider different opinions, making people understand that rights can be empowering and they can also be taken away.

The parent council asked the group how we could assist and the group said we could share the video and also it was suggested updates could be placed in the monthly school newsletter.

Previous minutes and actions

Minutes proposed by Kenneth McKinnon and seconded by Jackie Ormsby

Chairpersons Report

The chairperson report was circulated to the group and is available if requested.

Graham Thomson, on behalf of the parent council thanked the chair for his hard work over the past year.

Treasurers Report

Treasurers report was given by Matt Taylor and is available if requested. The accounts are to be sent for auditing to Laura Arbuckle and thereafter sent to Falkirk Council.

The report was proposed by Kenneth McKinnon and seconded by Wendy McPherson.

Appointment of Office Bearers

Chair will remain as Kenneth McKinnon. Proposed by Kirsty Baird and seconded by Matt Taylor.

Vice Chair to be appointed – TBC

Treasurer will remain as Matt Taylor. Proposed by Kenneth McKinnon and seconded by Jackie Ormsby.

Secretary will remain as Kirsty Baird. Proposed by Kenneth McKinnon and seconded by Jackie Ormsby.

Updates from the school

1. Deputy Headteacher David Ironside Provided a comprehensive Initial attainment update for 2024.

This was the first year since Covid where there was a normal approach to SQA exams and marking.

In the S4 pupils (now S5), S5 pupils (now S6) and the Pupils who have just left S6 the pupils in Braes High showed higher attainment levels than the virtual comparator.

The virtual comparator takes into consideration schools with the same mix of backgrounds, subjects and services. They also consider the % ASN pupils and the multiplier of deprivation.

For S4 pupils the attainment levels are compared over 5 or more National 5s, % or more National 4's and 5 or more National 3's.

For S5 pupils the attainment levels are compared over 5 or more Highers, 3 or more Highers and 1 or more Higher.

For S6 pupils the attainment levels are compared over 1 or more advanced Higher, 5 or more Highers and 3 or more Highers.

The other aspects looked at are the Literacy achievements and Numeracy achievements as again Braes High pupils are performing higher than their virtual comparators.

These positive results are due to the perseverance of staff who identify with pupils early and try to ensure they reach their potential. The tracking reports assist with this.

Wider Achievement is also considered with many Personal Development courses offered at Braes High. There was a 23% improvement in these awards since last year. 633 total awards achieved.

Overall a very positive outlook for the school.

2. There are proposals from the local authority for future sports facilities for the school to incorporate weekend and afterschool use for the public. There is a consultation on this within the school on Wednesday 25 September from 6-730 pm.
Comments will be welcome from parents, pupils and staff. The comments will be listened to by councillors.
3. Iain Livingstone highlighted the new branding around the school in relation to the house systems and school values. He also informed the council of the Dance Studio having been re named the Ian Fergus Dance Studio to observe the outstanding work of former teacher.
4. There is due to be a national policy publication on mobile phone use in schools.

The new Director of Education John Reid will be meeting with headteachers to discuss mental health, development and the use of mobile phones within Falkirk schools.

5. RAP, Rigour, Aspirational approaches and Perseverance all still at the forefront for staff and pupils at Braes High.

Individual pupil pathways important,
looking at marginal gains, improving component parts,
continuous improvement,
small weaknesses into strengths,

The school are still waiting on the insight data to further develop plans within the school.

AOB

There was a discussion in the group regarding the reduction in the school week. The feedback from the consultation should be taken into consideration at future Falkirk Council meetings. It was discussed whether from this there may be any modified proposals.

The current proposal or any modified proposal would need to be considered along with alternatives and the challenges that any alternative plan would present.

Acknowledged there are financial challenges but a strong feeling within the group that a reduction in the learning hours given to pupils would not be acceptable.

There was a discussion about legislation/Scottish Government/COSLA/teaching numbers/learning hours/SG budget/curriculum planning. This will be monitored by the group.

Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7 October, 7pm, School library.