



**Parent Council Meeting of Cults Academy
Monday 5th Sept 2022 7-8:30pm**

Attendees: David Barnett [DB] (Head), Alison Murray [AM] (Chair), Robert Brew [RB](Vice Chair), Daniel Verhamme (Treasurer), Ben Seldon (Secretary PC), Nancy Anderson (nitanderson@hotmail.com), Joe Ochei (joeochei@icloud.com) community council rep, Madhu Parlapalli (parlapalli07@gmail.com), Antonia Andison, Natalie Shand (nats65@hotmail.com), Caroline Nicol (jandcboomerang@btinternet.com), Duane and Nicola Wood (chirochristian@gmail.com, dnahcwood@gmail.com), Vannin Bloch (vanninbloch@gmail.com), Hari Boyapati (hbboyapati@yahoo.co.uk), Fransiska Louwagie (fransiskalouwagie@yahoo.fr), Michele Loseto (LOSEZUBI@gmail.com), maleeha ather([hotmail.co.uk](mailto:maleeha_ather@hotmail.co.uk)), Vijay (contactvjay@gmail.com)

Student reps: Jess Freeland gw10freelandjessica@ab-ed.org, Murray Bone gw09bonemurray@ab-ed.org

Apologies: Emma Gillibrand

Agenda items		Action
1	Minutes of the meeting 27 th June 2022 and matters arising 2. Parent Council Membership – S1 parents 3. Head Teacher update including a. S1 arrivals b. School Improvement Plan c. Attainment data 2022 4. Increase in number of National 5s to seven subjects 5. Pastoral care in school 6. Cost of living 7. Planning/school roll 8. AOCB	Action
	Minutes from June’s AGM accepted (2021-22 date correction)	BS
2	Parent Council Members introduced. Discussion on roles of council. Call for parents to express desire to join the council (email pccultsacademy@aberdeen.npfs.org.uk). Whatsapp chat list up and running. Attendance list will be emailed requesting Tel#’s for those that wish to join	BS
3	<p>DB Heads update: S1 arrivals. Great to see school getting back to normal. S1’s onboarding back to normal. Teacher feedback positive regarding the new intake. Parents evening next week Tuesday for curriculum & tour of the school. All students placed.</p> <p>School Improvement Plan (SIP): 1 request for S4 expansion. Review of 4 key areas detailed in plan and prior meeting review. Noticing improved confidence in Pupils with the return from lockdown to normality. Evening for support at home advice tbc Looking into breakdown of S1-S3 levels to track progress as per school report feedback SQIP standard quality imp plan document published next week</p> <p>2022 Attainment: Challenges in changes of methodology Move away from 100% exam high stakes env</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nat 5 92.5% highest in last 7 yrs • Higher S5 90.1% similar to 2016 high • 79% 5 or more Nat 5s down from 84% (5 year low was 75%) <p>Waiting on Insight (mid Sept) for comparison on cumulative data and across schools</p> <p>Some outstanding performances from individuals. Meeting w/Abz city councillors to discuss results to come</p>	

	<p>Improvement areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at individuals and improvements • Subject check • Intermediate check point – not being complacent <p>Appeals process if final grade lower than estimated grade. Direct appeals now possible as well as via school. 287 oo ~3000 grades – lower than anecdotal ave of 500ish</p> <p>RB: are checks made on any under prediction which might be important given University's may offer interviews based on predicted grades? DB: Not aware of issue. RB offered to follow up by email with an example M: Do the S4's go for Nat4 or 5? DB: Dependent on the child. M: are there additional classes to raise from children from N4 to N5 and how will the parents know? DB: Teachers/child support teacher can provide this information/understanding (including component marks per subject – pupils are aware). Working grades issued later this month as an indicator.</p>	
4	<p>Increasing Nat 5s to seven subjects</p> <p>Looking to increase to 7/8 tbc over next few weeks following consultation from Parents, teachers and pupils. Mr Strang timetabling dummy run to understand logistics over next few weeks. Changes to S3 over 2 years – cannot cover in 1 year. 1st yr group – current S2. Course choices made at the end of this academic yr. Exam change in 2025. Local Grammar changed to 7 in 2019 – now looking at 8. S2 reporting more detailed to support S3 decision</p> <p>Questions wrt premature scope narrowing (this change reduces that risk) and reduction in depth with greater breadth (timetable is extended so this is not the case) Broad till end S3 focussed to 6 in S4 and 5 higher in S5. Decisions from 7 or 8? Looking across school experience – more breadth/choice – greater success.</p> <p>Share NFPC resource explaining framework and comparison across Mr Strang from last year.</p> <p>SCQF ambassador school – leaflets explaining system. Action: print leaflets for PC</p> <p>Prof Louise Haywood – study/review of qualifications system/process – exam vs ongoing assessment. Next phase is key – share deadlines and feedback.</p>	<p>BS</p> <p>BS</p> <p>Parents</p>
5	<p>Pastoral care</p> <p>Child accessing pastoral care – through guidance teacher (PSA class). Important children know where this teacher is and how to engage with them – if not follow-up with parent.</p> <p>Anti Bullying Policy: https://cults-academy.aberdeen.sch.uk/respect-policy/</p> <p>Policy is due for update this year following guidance from council with 2 new components: online and role of parents Ambassadors – and senior pupils providing guidance. Contact school – and report any concerns</p>	
6	<p>Cost of living</p> <p>School energy bill covered by council. COL is an issue for society. Changes to school trips to make more reasonable. S3 residential trip this year. S1 & S2 day trips. Feedback: parents at the meeting were largely in favour of returning to pre-pandemic types of activities in terms of residential (eg for S2), although it is recognised in the current economic climate that the load placed on those families who would not be able to finance this would need to be mitigated and in some cases this topic introduces unwelcome pressure. Parents stressed the importance of this kind of life experiences for the development of their children, particularly in the wake of Covid</p>	

	<p>Cost of school day. Scottish Govt stated schools shouldn't be clawing back costs from parents. School uniform: non badged jumpers accepted. Blazers not the most expensive. Donation bank to be organised in sensitive way.</p> <p>Note: feedback from parents is that donation bank is positively accepted in other schools with the ethos of reuse and recycle stronger than historic views on reusing others clothes.</p> <p>Question: PE day – skip uniform? DB: No – PE Day was a COVID exception due to unavailability of changing rooms. Standards dropped and it opens the school to security concerns so revert to pre-pandemic. Great to see high standard being maintained.</p> <p>Teachers Unions strikes comms going out to members – none planned in Aberdeen City.</p> <p>Question: Children get skill and life experience benefit from residential trips. Is there a way to bring these back for S2 (in addition to S3) in a more cost effective option – also considering they are some of the most impacted children from COVID?</p> <p>DB: S1 & S2 day trips were well received and S3 retains residential. COL is a sensitive issue and those for whom this would be a challenge may feel under pressure. It is not realistic for fund raising to cover the costs given the number and typical cost per head even for lower cost options. Engagement over the options will be given proper consideration and the manner with which to best poll the parents and manage bursaries be reviewed.</p>	
7	<p>Planning - School Roll Forecasts:</p> <p>Concerns of inaccurate prediction of growing school role which at the end of May predicted 17% lower numbers than actuals.</p> <p>Developments have been relying on these numbers to say there is capacity.</p> <p>Parent Council wrote to Council to inform them of mismatch.</p> <p>PC may need to keep an eye on this process in future years to ensure the school is accurately represented in future plans.</p> <p>Noted by community council rep.</p> <p>Observation: New arrivals are noticing significant pressure on activities outside of school – waiting lists on all activities</p>	
8	<p>AOCB:</p> <p>PC whatsapp group notifications and emails. Ben to request mobiles if people should wish to be part of it.</p> <p>RB: School's extra-curricular offering was excellent, but pupils could be assisted on super-curricular activities so important for university applications. Super-curricular activities are ideally started earlier than late S5. RB undertook to share some good collections of super-curricular links and reading lists to be shared on the school website?</p> <p>NOTE: Blazers are machine washable. Clothing Donation Bank – appealing from Eco perspective now.</p> <p>NOTE: Parent teacher nights – included in last Cults Academy weekly email on Friday</p> <p>From the Treasurer post meeting: In line with tight budgets we've received a reduced ACC annual grant for '22/'23: £ 200. In contrast to £ 362 last year (and £ 438 previously). So our balance at start of school year is £ 567, half of last year. To be used (not exhaust) for admin, training, contribution to school rel. matter (topic, leaflets, speaker...)</p> <p>School tour attended by PC and parents – many thanks to the students for showing us the school!</p>	<p>BS</p> <p>RB</p>
	<p>Any parent or guardian of a pupil at Cults Academy is welcome to attend any Parent Council meeting.</p> <p>The Parent Council can be emailed at PCCultsAcademy@aberdeen.npfs.org.uk</p>	