



**Parent Council Meeting of Cults Academy
Monday 22nd January 2024 7-8:30pm**

Attendees: Ross Allan [RA] (Head), Alison Murray [AM] (Chair), Mark Raistrick (Vice Chair), Nancy Anderson (Vice Sec)

Emma Gillibrand
Alison Thomson
Greg Ogbeifun
Reem Hasson
Paul Hallett
Karimilla Vinod
Sonya Angus
Hari Boyapati

Student Captains: None

Apologies: Ben Seldon (Sec), Daniel Verhamme (Treasurer), Marie Boulton (C) ?

Agenda items		Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcome and apologies ● Introduction to Parent Council ● Minutes of meeting 13th November 2023 and matters arising (antibullying policy and curricular subject choice to be covered in Head Teacher Update) ● Head Teacher update including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staffing Update ○ Antibullying policy ○ Curricular Subject Choice ○ Family Liaison Officer Post ● Activities Week payments via Parentpay ● School buses ● Vaping ● Parents’ evening teacher absences ● Externally organized events involving pupils ● Council budget ● Meeting arrangements and pop-up choice ● AOCB <p><u>Dates of future meetings:</u></p> <p>4th March 2024, 29th April 2024, TBC Joint meeting with PTA (27th May or 10th June 2024)</p>	
1	<p>Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes of meeting 13th November 2023 - Approved 	
2	<p>Head teacher update – Mr R Allan</p>	

School Improvement Priorities – 2023/24

- Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion
 - At our last meeting I updated you on our work to develop our anti-bullying policy. Thanks to Ben, Sonya and Emma who formed a parent subgroup to consult on the draft policy. We've taken on board the feedback given and now have a draft that we will be consulting with staff on. We are aiming to launch this around the February weekend, which will involve a session with staff and work in PSE to ensure young people are familiar. We will also upload the policy onto the website and make parents aware.

- Curriculum
 - Subject choice has now been launched for session 24/25 for all pupils making choices (current S2, S4 and S5). There have been several changes to the choices available to S5 and S6 pupils to respond to our curriculum changes. We have worked to introduce a range of new courses to ensure that there are appropriate pathways available to all students. These include:
 - National 5 RMPS
 - Higher RMPS
 - National 5 Environmental Science
 - Level 5 Personal Finance & Numeracy
 - NPA Level 5/6 PC Passport
 - NPA Level 5 Hair and Makeup – external provider
 - Evaluating and improving our curriculum offer will continue to be a priority of the coming school years. We'll learn a lot from this first time through and look to make further changes to best meet the needs of our learners.

- To support young people and families we have been providing support and advice through PSE, 1-1 interviews with pupils, parents information evenings, and we are also running a subject choice fair for S2s this week at lunchtime.

- Introduction of Family Liaison Officer Position

- Today we interviewed for an appointed Family Liaison Officer (FLO). This is a role new to Cults Academy and predominantly funded by our Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) allocation. We are allocated PEF funding to implement initiatives or make staffing appointments to help close the attainment gap. Due to our demographic, we do not have a huge allocation, so it can be quite difficult for us to implement meaningful initiatives. We have given some careful thought as to how best to spend the money, looking at our data as part of the process. Through this process we identified that, whilst our attendance levels are well above national and local averages, young people on Free School Meals on average have an attendance % around 12% lower than their peers (93.8% vs 82.1%).
- Introducing a FLO will allow us to put more resource into working with families to tackle this issue. The role will mainly include administrative support and will allow enhanced tracking and communication around attendance for a targeted group of pupils. Our FLO will also be able to work closely with some pupils and families and may run family learning events to further support families.

- Staffing Updates

- Since we last met there have been some changes to our staff.
- Staff who have left Cults Academy:
 - Miss Greenslade (Home Economics)
 - Miss McWilliam (FH Health – seconded as DHT in Lochside Academy)
- New staff:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr Netherway (Physical Education) – Fixed term until August 2024 ▪ Mrs Meagher (Physical Education) – Fixed term covering Miss McWilliam ▪ Mr Murray (French/Spanish) ▪ Miss Smith (FH Social Subjects) ○ New staff appointed but not started: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs Heathcote (Geography) – Starting April 2024 ▪ Miss Feranz-Rodrigues (French/Spanish) – Starting April 2024 ▪ Ms Astor (D&T) – Starting May 2024 ○ Change of role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs Radbone – Acting PT Pupil Support Pastoral (covering for Murtle for up to 12 weeks) ○ Vacancies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maths ▪ French/Spanish ▪ English ○ All vacancies are being covered by subject specialist supply teachers. 	
3	<p>Activities Week Payments via Parentpay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concern expressed that no reminders are currently sent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ross Allan will investigate this, as it is believed that the facility already exists; he will liaise with Vikki. ● Post meeting note – Parent Pay reminders are now being emailed. ● Work is ongoing to organise S1 activities which will be held locally.; advice to follow imminently. 	RA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced Provision pupils will also be offered activities in Activities Week. 	
4	<p>School Buses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The frequent late arrival of school coaches is causing a traffic safety issue at the top of Hilltop Road around 1500 daily. Please will it be possible to ask the coach companies to arrive on site earlier, and before the home bell rings at 1510 to avoid this? ● Perhaps a note from School to parents to advise that priority should be given to bus drivers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ross Allan had drafted a letter to the bus company to draw this to their attention. 	RA
5	<p>Vaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is School policy, and what is being done to discourage vaping and advise pupils about the harm caused? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ross Allan said that this needs national attention. The School is continually updating PSE advice (substance misuse) in line with emerging research. ○ There has been no evidence of vaping in corridors or outside; evidence in toilets; Vaping or Cannabis? Some vapes may have THC; some look like highlighter pens and are attractive to children (colours, flavours); need to be tackling how they look/disposability. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fewer toilets are open on the first floor during breaks/lunch and senior managers are regularly on duty at these times to disperse groups. ○ Teachers in Scotland do not have powers to search pupils; it's difficult to find hard evidence; logs are kept and letters sent to parents; pupils can be asked for a voluntary search; if they say no, they can't be forced to comply. ○ The School will be ramping up patrols over next six weeks to try to bring levels down; big clampdown – things will calm down for a while but generally creep back up; no CCTV in WCs. ○ Parental assistance is needed to talk to pupils; moral compass. 	
6	<p>Parents Evening teacher absences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What can be done to address this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ross Allan advised that it is uncommon for this to occur. However, when it does there is a limit to any alternatives that can be put in place; no opportunity to meet the teacher directly if this happens. ○ No additional written feedback is possible; any concerns will be communicated in advance, e.g. learner update system. ○ If parents have concerns, they may seek advice/feedback from Principal Teacher Pupil Support. 	
7	<p>Council Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New school? ○ Removal of free school transport (>3 miles away); negotiate with Stagecoach/First ○ Catering? ○ Reduction in music service? ○ Budget decisions made? 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RA responded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No inside information ○ Scottish Government approval would be needed ○ 2.5 hours non-contact time ○ Public meeting to be held on 23 January (postponed from last week) 	
8	<p>Dates of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4th March 2024, 29th April 2024, 27th May/10th June 2024 (10 June preferable, if possible) ● Any parent or guardian of a pupil at Cults Academy is welcome to attend any Parent Council meeting. ● The Parent Council can be emailed at PCCultsAcademy@aberdeen.npfs.org.uk 	
7	<p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Externally organized events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Senior Pupils are arranging external events which are often cancelled/shortened with little notice ○ RA said that the responsibility lies with external venues to know who is making the booking. Cults Academy will send notice(s) about the official School Leavers Ball (sometimes a ceilidh) ● Hybrid meetings possible? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AM said that she's not sure how this would work ○ RA said that in person is preferable, virtual less so ○ Cults Primary run a hybrid (often on the same day/time as Academy) ○ Funding available for babysitting? MR asked if this is only for committee or for any parent attending? ○ It would be okay for young people to accompany parents/carers and sit quietly in the room on a tablet/ read a book 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Once a year online? All together if possible. ● Designs for Pop-up banner<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Two S3 designs were reviewed by members present and are both amazing! Very close decision by vote.○ Great skills – so impressive!○ Please can the PC thank the pupils for their efforts?	
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