

BELMONT ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting
Wed 28th February 2024 at 6.30pm
Conference/e-Learning Room



PRESENT:

Parent Members: Susan Bell (Chairperson), Emma Brown (Deputy Chair), Josephine Docherty, Heather Knox, Jonathan Hagen, Karen Harley, Kirsty Thomson, Lorna Russell, Lyssa McCartney, Lesley Strain, Rosemary Logie, David Codling, David Bulloch, Emily Hamilton, Karen McGimpsey, Emma Boyle, Vanessa Lawrence, Lisa Morrison & Pamela Gray

Staff Members: Kevin Boyd (Head Teacher), Graeme McLean (Depute Head Teacher), Lyndsey Lamont (Admin Team Leader), Sarah Keirs (Librarian)

Pupil Members: Caitlin M, Ross N (School Captains)

Guests: Kirsty Agnew (Barnardo's)

1.	Welcome & Apologies
Chair, Susan Bell, welcomed everyone to the meeting and intimated apologies on behalf of Ian Watson, Lynsey Pollock, Jonathan Hagen, Lesley Strain, Rosemary Logie & Karen McGimpsey.	
2.	Minutes of Last Meeting (31st Jan 2024)
The Minute of the last meeting held on 31 st Jan 2024 was approved by Kevin Boyd and seconded by Kirsty Thomson, as a true record of that meeting.	
3.	School Captain's Update (Ross N & Caitlin M)
<p>a) P7 Transition Burns Supper: Members of Belmont Academy's S6 leadership team had attended a cluster transition event for primary schools within the Belmont cluster, as well as cluster primaries for P7s from Prestwick Academy, Kyle Academy and Ayr Academy. The representatives acted as facilitators and talked through with the P7's what they may expect for their transition to secondary.</p> <p>b) Sponsored Walk: On the final day of term prior to Easter holidays, senior pupils will take part in a sponsored walk, with monies raised being split 50/50 between The Ayrshire Hospice charity as well as the senior pupils' prom fund. The route is yet to be determined, but it was suggested the Alloway/Doonfoot cycle path may be a good option.</p> <p>c) Belmont Academy Burns Supper: S6 students enjoyed a Burns Supper event on 1st Feb, with Ross delivering a toast to the lassies and Mr Boyd gave the reply to the lads. Arran House Captain, Charlotte was Chairperson for the evening and entertainment was provided by Mr Pringle and Mr McLean. A good night was had by all.</p> <p>d) Prom Event: Planning has commenced for the forthcoming senior prom. The band has been booked and an online payment system set up.</p> <p>e) S6 Barbeque: Arrangements are being made for the S6 BBQ event which is scheduled for April 19th at Kilwinning Sports Centre.</p> <p>f) Leavers Hoodies: These have been ordered and senior pupils will be permitted to wear these during their final week of school.</p>	

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4.	Treasurer's Report
<p>a) Funds: Treasurer, David Bulloch confirmed the current bank balance for Belmont Academy Parent Council had £1438.27 in funds. He advised there was a cheque outstanding for £120 (school prize giving) – it was unclear whether the cheque had in fact been issued, and if so, who to. Mr McLean agreed to look into this and report back at the next meeting. ACTION: Graeme McLean</p> <p>b) Card Reader: David had made enquiries regarding the purchase of a card reader for events hosted by the Parent Council and there would be an initial cost of £49 for the card reader, with a 1.75% fee for each transaction. Following discussion, other members thought there may be alternative options with a lower transaction fee – Kirsty Thomson agreed to speak to Alloway PC, who have a card reader and she will report back in due course. ACTION: Kirsty Thomson</p>	
5.	Parents Portal (Lyndsey Lamont)
<p>Lyndsey Lamont provided a PowerPoint presentation on the new “digital replacement for the school bag run”, Parents Portal, which South Ayrshire Council are piloting in a number of schools (primary and secondary), one of which is Belmont Academy. Benefits of this new system include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One single place to access other school apps / information• Sign in once access all• No longer have to remember other usernames and passwords• Services can be accessed from an app<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Timetable○ Attendance/Absence Reporting○ Payments○ Council / School Calendar <p>Parents have been issued with letters detailing how they sign up to this new system, which launched on Monday 26th Feb.</p> <p>Should parents choose not to interact with the new portal, there will still be a mechanism for communication via paper copies, but there will be encouragement for engagement in order to save on paper and printing costs.</p> <p>The current ‘Group Call’ text messaging service has associated costs, whereas Parents portal does not.</p>	
6.	LGBTQ+ Charter
<p>Sarah Keirs and Kirsty Agnew spoke about the work they're doing within Belmont Academy, along with parents and pupils in relation with the LGBTQ+ Charter, which Belmont Academy is currently working towards bronze level. They will look at school policies, enhanced staff training and see where they can build on cultural change to see wider acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community, such as respecting pronouns, consideration to uniform policy as well as PE changing room facilities, for example.</p> <p>Within Mr Morrison's RME classroom, pupils are provided with a 'safe space' to meet during lunchtime, with circa 15-20 young people regularly attending and a committee set up to take forward the work of the group, in order to achieve bronze level accreditation.</p>	

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7.	Head Teacher Update (Kevin Boyd)
<p>a) Staffing: Since the last meeting in January we have appointed the following member of staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jennifer Clark Teacher of English (Forfar Academy). <p>I am pleased to share that our current staffing levels have improved since my last update and we anticipate two more staff to return at the start of next week. This will mean we would only have one member of staff with a long-term absence.</p> <p>Mrs Flanagan DHT has overall responsibility for Curriculum and creating the whole school timetable for next session. We have met three times to discuss staffing levels and plans for next session and I will submit our proposals to the authority by Friday, 8 March. Further discussion will take place prior to this deadline to finalise NQT bids for specific subject areas.</p> <p>b) Internal Recycling: Next week we will receive delivery of new internal recycling bins. This initiative is being rolled out across all of the schools and replicates the domestic recycling that is already in place in SAC. We will promote this launch through TOTW and social media platforms.</p> <p>c) Parents portal: I have invited Lyndsey Lamont (Admin Team Leader) to provide an update and deliver a presentation on Parents portal, which went live across SAC on Monday, 26 February. (See item 5 above)</p> <p>d) Key Dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tue 5 Mar - S2 Parents' Evening, 4.30pm – 7pm• Tue 19 Mar - Young Musician & Singer of the Year competition, 7pm	
8.	Pastoral Update (Kevin Boyd)
<p>In the absence of Mr Watson, Mr Boyd provided the following pastoral update:</p> <p>e) S5 Mock Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful Applicants will be announced on Friday.• 145 S5 pupils went through the processes. The highest in the 6 years where the event has ran.• Moving forward – a small group (teaching staff, employers and parents) will look at process and improve. <p>f) Option Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finishing off S5 into S6 option choices this week. There continue to be challenges around pupils wanting to take a study column. We have been clear this year, although some pupils not happy.• S2 into S3 begin on Monday. Parents night is on Tuesday so most interviews will take place post parents night. <p>g) PSE programme</p> <p>Development group met to discuss the evolution of PSE programmes that focus on relevant, contextually relevant topics that meet the current needs of young people.</p>	

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9. Belmont Funding Futures (BFF) Update (Emma Brown)

Discussion centred on opportunities for a fundraising event 'An evening with...' and despite several efforts, it had not been possible at this juncture to find a local 'celebrity' to support such an event.

Other ideas mooted included:

- Scratch card (football ticket)
- Cinema Night
- Karaoke
- Belmont's Got Talent

From these suggestions, the most feasible was '**Belmont's Got Talent**', but recognising it would take a level of organising, it would be advisable to have this post exam time, potentially Thu 6th June or Thu 20th June. Mr McLean agreed to liaise with colleagues to determine whether staff members would be willing to lead the show. **ACTION: Graeme McLean**

Susan Bell agreed to link in with Ayr Film Club to determine if it would be possible to have a **cinema-type event** within Belmont Academy prior to the Easter holidays, with a small admission fee being charged and refreshments sold on the evening, in an attempt to raise funds. Enquiries would be made as to appropriateness of particular movie types, considering the movie classification ratings. **ACTION: Susan Bell**

10. Any Other Business

a) **Consultation on Proposed School Holidays for 2025/26:** Parent Council Members were asked to vote on their preferred choice from the 2 options being proposed for the main school holidays for session 2025/26:

Option 1	Schools will be closed on Monday 9 th February 2026. In-service day on Tuesday 10 th February and re-open to pupils on Wednesday 11 th February 2026.
	Schools will be closed on Friday 22 nd and Monday 25 th May 2026. Re-open to pupils on Tuesday 26 th May 2026.
Option 2	Schools will be closed on Friday 6 th and Monday 9 th February 2026. In-service day on Tuesday 10 th February and re-open to pupils on Wednesday 11 th February 2026.
	Schools will be closed on Monday 25 th May and re-open to pupils on Tuesday 26 th May 2026.

Agreed that Josephine Docherty would email all Parent Council Members to gauge preferences, with a plea for responses to be submitted by 11th March, to allow Chair, Susan Bell, to respond to the education department by 22nd March 2024. **ACTION: Josephine Docherty / Susan Bell**

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parent Council will take place on **Wednesday 27th March 2024 at 6.30pm** in the **Conference/e-Learning Room** within Belmont Academy.