



Ullapool High School Parent Council
Comhairle Nam Pàrant Ardsgoil Ulapul
Minutes

Monday 13th Feb 6:30pm, Ullapool High School

1. **Present and apologies: Parent Council members:** Anthony O'Flaherty (Chair), Christine Crook (Vice-Chair), Dave Maxwell (Secretary), Nellie Collins, Andrew Lintern, Stephanie Sutherland, Fiona Saywell, Anne Wood, Janis Patterson, Ian Williams (Teacher Rep), Caroline Thompson (Pupil Rep, S5), Carla Lees (Pupil Rep, S4)
In attendance: Robbie McFedries (Head Teacher), Anne Hunter (Depute), Laura Talbot (School Office), Victoria Howard (PE Teacher)
Apologies: Joany McGuire, Sot Otter, Julie Allen, Helen Meek (Treasurer), Sam Richards, Sue Pomeroy
2. **Announcements or late additions to the agenda.** See AOB
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting (29th Nov 2016)** Proposed: SS seconded: CC
4. **Head Teacher's report (RM)**
 - **Staffing:** The school is allocated 23.4 FTE teachers and was not able to replace the Principal Teacher for English last year for technical reasons. This has resulted in multiple teachers for one S4 class and RM is continuing to work with Jon Miller (Head of Schools for HC) to improve this situation.
 - **Funding:** The Scottish Government is now directly funding Head Teachers based on catchment deprivation levels. Unfortunately this measure does not work well for rural schools and less than £5K has been allocated to Ullapool. RM is working with other schools in the local area to find a meaningful use for this funding.
 - **Activities:** AH highlighted some of the additional activities pupils had been involved in in the last 3 months: Royal Highland Educational Trust workshops; Tune Writing workshops with P6&7; Film G; Chemistry Lecturer visit; Cyber Christmas lectures; Youth Philanthropy; Musicians performing at Mo Dhachaidh; Christmas Ceilidh; Folk Group trip; PhD Chemistry students; Young Highland Voices; Swiss Students; S1 Entrepreneur Event; Future Chef; Languages career day; S2 Hill to Grill; Skills For Work group ran a P7 Sports Day; Technical student; Athletics Championship; PE Performance Day at KLB; Ski trip
 - **Vision and Values:** PSE pupils have recorded what they think is good about the school and what they would like to be different in 3 years' time. This is being combined with the Vison Group work led by Lorraine Thomson.
 - **S3/4/5 Course Choices:** Pupils are starting to choose their subjects for next session and a school timetable will be produced which should accommodate most pupils. Parents will be invited to a 1-1 session at the school **w/c 6th Mar** to confirm the choices. There will be a S4/5/6 Careers Fair on 2nd March. Parents of all year groups can visit between 5 and 8pm.
5. **Treasurer's Report (HM, by email)** - The Bank balance on 29th Dec was £794.71 inc £247.97 from HC
6. **Pupil Update** Too many tests – tick box work. RM said that unit assessments for Nat 5 and Higher will be phased out over the next 2 years.
7. **Matters arising from previous meeting**
 - **Astro turf** – work has been delayed, but a project manager has now been appointed and work should start in Apr and complete in Jun. **Action:** CC to keep chasing.
 - **S4/S5 English Reading Material** – A response has been received from the SQA, and after extensive consultation, there is no plans to change the choice.
 - **Pupil Reps** – Caroline and Carla will attend going forward.
 - **Sound recording studio** – Some issues with the room being kept tidy **Action:** RM to ask Ruth Morley to monitor this. Need to know numbers times for access to the room. **Action:** Pupils (William and Tiree) to find out numbers and agreed time with Ruth. No supervision for Friday afternoons: **Action:** Music Group to set up a parent rota.
 - **Funding** - Easyfundraising only 5 parents signed up - £30 raised. **Action:** More parents to sign-up.
8. **Anti-Drugs and Alcohol Update**
RM informed the PC that drugs (including tobacco, alcohol and cannabis) are **not** a significant

issue within the school, however there have been a small number of incidents mainly outwith school times where youngsters are finding themselves at risk. The school is always vigilant and acts on any information supplied, something is always done with any information that arrives at the school but because of confidentiality issues this is not usually reported. A very small number of young adults within the school displayed an unwillingness to engage with services around their substance mis-use and are no longer part of the school. The school works really hard with partner agencies including social work/health/police and the Youth Action Team to address any issues around substance mis-use and where children and parents work with these services then there are major improvements, though these can take time.

The school continues to provide a very comprehensive information service to all pupils through PSE lessons and the Guidance team are willing to share these resources and to discuss them with any parent who might have a concern about their child. The main safety concerns at present is around alcohol mis-use at weekends by under 18's. Note many of these are not school pupils.

The PC thanked RM and the school for their hard work to resolve these complex issues. **Action:** Parents are asked for their continuing support in letting the school know of any potential issues. The school will always contact parents to let them know if they have had a concern passed on. The Police have been a fantastic help in the past few months and the school would urge anyone with any concerns, at any time to contact 101, where local officers will act quickly and sensibly to resolve the matter.

There is a wider drugs problem across Highland. The police are aware that the Highlands is been targeted by gangs with tailored messages for young people and any information the public can supply will assist with dealing with this. **Action:** So again if any parent sees anything untoward outwith the school, please call the police on 101.

4. **Braemore Bus**

There have been problems with recent changes to the bus service to Braemore and beyond. LT joined the meeting and indicated that the school had no notice of the bus changes and had put together an email to parents at short notice. Highland Council have apologised for the delay in informing parents. **Action** LT to phone SP and confirm if her email address is correct. LT clarified that the early Friday bus will always be signed "Inverness". If any child is late for school due to the bus being late, this will not count on their attendance record. There have been a small number of incidents of bad behavior on the buses – pupils are reminded that they should report this to the school office. SP has kindly offered to drive the school minibus for special occasions so pupils can stay late.

9. **Junior Sailing**

Lochbroom Sailing Club has spaces left for pupils to join the annual Junior Sailing (training) week w/c 3rd Jul. No experience necessary. Min requirements are ability to swim and parents willing to volunteer for "shore support". A number of pupils are already involved. **Action:** anyone interested contact DM for more info.

10. **AOB**

- **Feedback to School** – parents and pupils can provide both positive and negative feedback to the school at any time via Guidance teachers; the pupil council; the school office or by contacting RM. Pupils are also given the opportunity to feedback to subject teachers.
- **New Broom update** – this is now registered to give Saltire Awards for volunteering. It runs Up-cycling, knitting and Ebay courses which pupils can attend, and has equipment for DofE etc. Contact SS or pop in.

11. **Date of next meeting:** Mon 3rd Apr @ 6:30 pm