

GLENURQUHART PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENT COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 7.00 pm

Chairperson's Report

Session 2015/16 proved to be a turbulent time for Glenurquhart Primary School primarily due to a regional shortage of teaching staff as well as staff changes within the school. Following a long period of absence Miss K MacConnell resigned from her post as Head Teacher in December 2015, Mrs A MacLean (P6/7) went on maternity leave and Miss C MacPherson (P4) left for a teaching post elsewhere. In the Gaelic unit Miss L Green had been off with long term illness. Having had difficulties getting staff for main stream education posts and given the more specialist nature of Gaelic teaching, it has been no surprise that Highland Council have been unable to cover this absence. This has resulted in the parents of children attending the Gaelic unit sending them to BSGI and the unit being effectively mothballed by the Council.

Throughout this time the Parent Council endeavoured to support the staff in every way possible. As Chairperson I want to record the dedication of the staff and particularly Mrs Annie MacPhee who was Acting Head throughout this difficult period.

The Parent Council met eight times during Session 2015/16. An additional Extraordinary Meeting took place in December 2015 when the Parent Council met with members from the Highland Council's Education Department to discuss the findings of a Quality Improvement visit to the school earlier in 2015. This meeting was open to all parents and gave an opportunity to voice concerns, especially those which revolved around management standards, the seemingly constant turnover of staff and, to a lesser extent, teaching standards.

Highland Council appear to be listening to us as, jointly with members of the Parent Council, they interviewed and appointed a new Head Teacher, Mrs Kerrie Laird, who now acts in a full management role with no teaching commitments. Further, in appointing Miss K Mullin as Principal Teacher they have effectively created an assistant head position to help with management issues.

The Parent Council welcomes Mrs Laird and look forward to working with and supporting her in the running and development of the school. In relation to filling these posts a

special mention goes to Cllr Margaret Davidson, whose support helped us achieve this.

The Parent Council was not without its own changes. The Chairperson role was shared between Clelland McCallum and Hugh Montague. The post of Treasurer post changed with Julie MacLeod stepping down from the position after seven years in the post. Julie remains an active member of the PC and our thanks go to her for her efficient management of the accounts. Nichola Christie has taken over as Treasurer. Despite these changes a number of initiatives were successful including changes to the school times ie starting earlier and finishing earlier, and the installation of security fencing on the school perimeter.

Fundraising remains an essential part of the work of the Parent Council to help with the purchase of necessary equipment for the school or to support school projects. This year a separate fundraising committee was set up headed by Sally McCloskey with a school disco and Summer Fair being two of the highlights of their activities. We thank the parents, teachers, school staff and people of Drumnadrochit for taking part in these events and digging deep into their own pockets to make them a success.

Along with the fund raising events a grant application by our Secretary, Janet Murchison, to Soirbheas for camera equipment was successful making it possible to purchase digital cameras for each class to use.

Lastly in relation to Parent Council matters we joined the Highland Council Parent Council Partnership, a body made up of Parent Councils throughout the Highlands and which meets annually. It is a useful forum for sharing with and learning from other Parent Councils.

The new Session is now underway and as in previous years we look to bring the parents and staff of the school together to make Glenurquhart Primary the best it can be. Thanks to all in advance for helping with this.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Hugh Montague', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Hugh Montague
Chairperson Glenurquhart Primary School Parent Council

