

# Banchory Academy Parents' Bulletin

August-October 2017



Autumn 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to the first Parents' Bulletin for this Session. I hope you had an relaxing summer—the extra week seems to have been enjoyed by everyone.

It has been a very busy term. Our new S1's have settled in well and all other year groups are continuing with the courses they started in June. We recently completed our ScotXed returns to the Authority, which state our staff and pupils totals. At this present time we have 825 on our school roll. I would like to welcome all our new pupils and families that have joined us since the summer.

Once again our SQA results were excellent and are above both local and national trends. Many congratulations to you all and a huge thank you to the staff that supported our pupils.

In September, we held our annual sponsored walk. With budget cuts affecting all schools, this event is becoming more important, allowing us to support the many and varying activities that we do at Banchory Academy. Many thanks to all the staff and pupils who participated and returned still smiling after some awful weather to contend with and to those that sponsored our young people. A special thank you to Mr Phimister, Depute Rector who oversaw the whole event. For those that still need to hand in their sponsor money, we would be very grateful if this is done by the last day of this term.

I know that this session will once again be a successful one and I look forward to reporting back to you termly on what has been happening.

I hope you have a very enjoyable October break.

Judith Wight

Rector

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## Staffing Update

Ms Maggie Bryce retires from the Drama Department in October, and we wish her a long and happy retirement.

Two Technical Assistants joined the team in August —Miss Anna Kellas on a permanent contract, and Mr Kenneth Gauld Fixed Term.



## Parent Teacher Association

Banchory Academy P.T.A are currently looking to recruit new members with new skills and ideas to help the team raise much needed funds, that will in turn benefit all pupils within the school in a variety of ways .

We are currently a small and friendly team of only 8 volunteers and would really like to meet more willing helpers. We normally meet approximately once per term in an evening and we arrange lots of small fundraising activities during the school year and we really would appreciate some new members to boost the team. Currently there is a vacancy for a new Chairperson to fill and we would be happy to chat to anyone interested in this role, but if this isn't the role for you then why not come along to our next meeting and see what we do. Everyone is welcome. **Next meeting is Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017** at 7.30pm held in the meeting room behind the reception area.

Our next fundraising event is the Bags2 School collection this will be taking place on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November from 08.30 until 09:15** therefore kids can drop off bagged donations before they arrive in class or parents can drop off larger bags by car and a PTA member will help them to unload these bags (A member of the PTA is usually found in the school car park collecting the bags and depositing them in the store underneath the music department ) . Any bags can be used to bring your donations to school for recycling.... carrier bags, black bags or official collection bags available from the school office. The PTA then receives a sum of money according to the weight of textiles donated on the day. It is a simple fundraiser that requires very little parental involvement and if every child in school donated even a small bag full we would raise a considerably larger sum. Bags 2school accept the following items—men's, ladies and children's clothing, shoes, bags, scarves and ties, socks, soft toys , bed linen, curtains, towels in a clean dry condition . For more information please visit [uk.bags2school.com](http://uk.bags2school.com).

Anyone wishing to contact the PTA can email Kate Diamond at the following email address:- [katherine.diamond@btinternet.com](mailto:katherine.diamond@btinternet.com)



[www.bags2school.com](http://www.bags2school.com)

# Parent Council



Banchory Academy Parent Council (BAPC) consists of 1 or more parent reps for each year group plus a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary & Treasurer. The Rector, Judith Wight, attends all meetings, and very often one or more of Banchory's elected councillors are present.

**Most importantly**, any Banchory Academy parent is very welcome to attend any of the BAPC meetings which take place on a Thursday evening at 7pm in the school library. Dates for the rest of the 2017/18 year are:

**December 7<sup>th</sup>**

**January 11<sup>th</sup>**

**February 1<sup>st</sup>**

**March 1<sup>st</sup>**

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**June 7<sup>th</sup>**

BAPC exists to support the school in its work with pupils and to represent the views of parents.

Key topics for BAPC this year are:

- supporting Mental Wellbeing in young people
- support with tackling anti-social behaviour
- tracking improvements to the school buildings and facilities following a report we compiled in late 2015 to highlight areas in need of attention
- understanding plans for the use of the old swimming pool and changing room area once the new sports centre opens in Banchory (estimated to open late 2018/early 2019)
- improving communication between the Parent Council and the Parent Forum (the Parent Forum refers to **all** parents/carers of Banchory Academy youngsters)
- providing input to school working groups for literacy, numeracy, health & wellbeing, and helping to run careers talks
- understanding how changes to the way schools are run in Scotland will affect Banchory Academy
- understanding how the community can lobby for a new academy for Banchory, which the recently-published Banchory Community Action Plan identified as the community's number one concern. (If you would like to find out more please email [alasdair@hillcroft.scot](mailto:alasdair@hillcroft.scot)).

At our most recent meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup>, as well as addressing some of the topics above, we welcomed staff member Claire Burt to explain literacy initiatives that are being implemented this year, and new School Captains Thalia Groucott and Kazio Wilowski who described their important role as – among other things - contact points for any pupils who may like to raise concerns.

Very comprehensive and informative minutes of the BAPC meetings may be found on the school website at: <http://www.ba-pc-test.org/index.php/meetings>

Please do get involved with the Parent Council! Your input would be very much appreciated and, interestingly, key research has shown that parental involvement has a significant effect on pupil achievement throughout the years of schooling. The Scottish Government is keen for parents to be very much a part of each school community.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [chair@ba-pc.org](mailto:chair@ba-pc.org)

Wishing you a very good October holiday.  
Megan Hare, Chair

# Diary Dates

## School Term Dates 2015-2020

We receive many telephone calls enquiring about school term dates. For your convenience, please refer to the [Aberdeenshire Council](#) website.

### Session 2017/18

|                                |                 |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Term 1 Ends</b>             | <b>Friday</b>   | <b>13th October 2017</b>  |
| <b>Term 2 Starts</b>           | <b>Monday</b>   | <b>30th October 2017</b>  |
| <i>In-Service (Staff Only)</i> | <i>Monday</i>   | <i>13th November 2017</i> |
| <i>In-Service (Staff Only)</i> | <i>Tuesday</i>  | <i>14th November 2017</i> |
| <b>Term 2 Ends</b>             | <b>Friday</b>   | <b>22nd December 2017</b> |
| <b>Term 3 Starts</b>           | <b>Monday</b>   | <b>8th January 2018</b>   |
| <b>Term 3 Ends</b>             | <b>Thursday</b> | <b>29th March 2018</b>    |
| <b>Term 4 Starts</b>           | <b>Monday</b>   | <b>16th April 2018</b>    |
| <b>Term 4 Ends</b>             | <b>Friday</b>   | <b>6th July 2018</b>      |

### School / Home Communications via Groupcall / Xpressions App

School mobile number for absences—07860 029020



A reminder that the school uses Groupcall to send texts/messages and email communications—please ensure the school is kept updated of your contact details so you do not miss out.

There are still a number of parents who we have no email address for, so for this or any other contact changes, please email the school at [BanchoryAcademyContacts@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:BanchoryAcademyContacts@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

A reminder also that signing up for the free App –**Groupcall Xpressions** will save the school the cost of a text by sending free messages. The more parents who sign up – the more the school will save when sending messages! (We will continue to send texts to those who prefer this method).