

Banchory Academy Parents' Bulletin



April-July 2018

Summer 2018

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing my last newsletter for this session as yet again the sun is shining. What a wonderful few weeks it has been and fingers crossed it lasts for the summer break.

This has yet again been a very successful year and a special thank you to Mrs Elaine Findlay who updates our school website virtually daily. With so much going on, it is often hard to keep up.

This term has passed very quickly and the SQA exams are now finished. Thank you to all the invigilators under the supervision of Mrs Marjorie Mason and the ASL team for the support provided for the pupils.

Sports Day was a great success and thank you to the Parent Council for providing teas, coffees and the most wonderful cakes and biscuits for the staff, it was very kind of you.

The end of term sees the end of an era for one couple in the school, the Betts. Between them they have been at Banchory Academy for 69 years. We will miss you both very much indeed.

On Thursday we will be celebrating pupils success at prize giving. Well done to everyone that is being recognised that day, we are very proud of you.

Finally, I would like to wish all our pupils, parents and carers a very enjoyable summer break and we look forward to welcoming you back on the 21st August.

Judith Wight
Rector

Inside this issue:

Message from the Rector	1
Staffing Update /	2
Absence Texts and Communications	3
Parent Council	4-5
Numeracy Group Updates	6
Term Dates	7



Staffing Update



There have been several staffing changes to note:

Mrs Moira Paterson will take up the permanent position of Depute Rector from August, following Mr Graham Bett's retirement. Mr Niall Bentley will continue in his Acting PT Humanities post for next Session.

Miss Lucy Manning has been appointed on a permanent basis to Principal Teacher of Guidance (Monearn).

Another couple of retirements mean we say goodbye to Mrs Carol Brimble (PT Guidance / Science) and Mr Les Sim (PT Tech, Bus & Ent). Mrs Michelle Skellern has been appointed to replace Mrs Brimble and Mrs Lorraine Brand has been appointed to replace Mr Sim.

Mrs Debbie Dykes was appointed to the Whole School Technician post following Mr Bob Reid's retirement, and Mrs Catherine Pirie joined the Technical Assistant team.

Mrs Lucy Tame joined the Pupil Support Assistant team.

Miss Courtney Duff has been appointed as permanent Teacher of PE in August, following Mrs Lesley Bett's retirement. Mrs Laura Webster returned from Maternity Leave to the PE Department, and Miss Rachel Kennard also joins the PE Department for Session 2018/19.

Mrs Karen McLauchlan, Teacher of Business Studies moved on earlier this month, and we wish her well.

Mrs Jane Kenneway, who has been Acting PT English leaves us in the summer, as Mrs Lyn Forman returns from her Career Break.

Mrs Natalie Radford takes up an 0.7 FTE position in Drama, and Mrs Darrell Anderson begins her Maternity Leave now.

We also thank Mr Raymond Penny and Mr Donald Whyte, who have been assisting in the Technical Department this Session.

Mr Gerard Urquhart takes up a permanent post as Teacher of English in August, replacing Mrs Jo Thom.

We will also be joined by two Probationers this Session—Mr Lee Dowling joins the Business Studies department, and Miss Alison Thomson the Modern Studies department.





Absence Text Number 07860 029020



Absence Reporting / Communications via Groupcall / Xpressions App

We would like to encourage parents and carers to use the school's dedicated text number **07860 029020** to report a pupil's absence. This is an efficient system for both parents and the school office—please advise pupil name, reason and length of absence in your text.

The school then sends out a text to parents/carers for pupils who are absent without notice.

Note that if parents send an email regarding absence, due to the volume of emails received in school this may not be read before the absence texts are sent. Therefore the preferred method is either text or phone (01330 823357).

Pupils should be reminded that if they feel unwell during the school day, **they should report to First Aid or Reception**. We still have a number of instances of pupils phoning home and leaving the building before the school is aware, which has potential for anomalies if there is a fire alarm.

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

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).

Summer term report from the Parent Council



BAPC – dealing with matters that directly affect our children

We welcome new members

We welcome parents/carers who want to attend one or all of the PC meetings

We welcome new ideas about what would help parents support their children's education

Email chair.bapc@gmail.com

Check out our Facebook page 'Banchory Academy Parent Forum'

Here are some things the Parent Council have been involved in this term:

We organised refreshments for staff on Sports Day to say a big thank you for all their hard work over the year. Thanks to all the parents who helped on the day or provided delicious home bakes. Our 'thank you' was well received and the bakes lasted the rest of the week!

We have been liaising with the PTA, figuring out how best to support the hard work of the 8 parents whose dedicated fundraising efforts have subsidised many pupil activities, including the numerous buses that get our children to all sorts of places where they represent the school. The PTA needs as much parent help as possible, and their fundraising is more essential than ever as a result of diminished Local Authority budgets. Please contact chair.bapc@gmail.com if you think you can help, either as a helping hand or by organising a fun event.

PC members have attended the school's Literacy working group and Numeracy working group. These working groups give parents an opportunity to have their views represented through the year. If you would like to find out more, or would consider being involved, please email chair.bapc@gmail.com

We continue to enquire about improving the drainage of Tillybrake Field to allow more use of this facility by the academy pupils

Behaviour – to promote partnership working with shopkeepers, the Chair of the Parent Council and the Rector met with Banchory Business Association this term.

Lobby for a new academy – the PC has sent a letter to the Marr Area Councillors asking that a piece of land set aside for education use be retained for such use. *Our academy premises and facilities are showing their age. Help lobby for a new academy. Join the Facebook group 'Campaign for a new Banchory Academy'. For the lobby to have any hope of being heard, we need as many people involved as possible. Land use in Banchory will be reviewed by Aberdeenshire Council in January 2019. Unless people in the community raise their voice, the land that had been set aside for a new academy may well be given over to another use.*

Two lunchtime careers talks have happened this term. Thank you to:

Shelley MacKenzie of Nescol (North East Scotland College) who spoke about college courses while in school as well as after school

Chartered Accountant Lisa Christie who spoke about careers in accountancy

The variety of paths open to pupils after school are growing fast! Find out how you can give your child(ren) careers support by going to the excellent My World of Work website, and checking out the NPFS nutshell guides online (National Parent Forum of Scotland).

The PC has also sought information about many matters this term. Here is some useful information for parents/carers :

There are no plans for the old swimming pool area yet, but work is expected to happen in summer 2019

The old sports centre will be managed by Aberdeenshire Council. It will be available for the school to use. Some sports clubs will continue to use it rather than moving to the new sports centre

The school library has moved to a temporary location in Drama 2, making way for the Additional Support for Learning (ASL) department to move into the old library area. This gives much-needed extra space for ASL. Plans are that the library will eventually occupy a part of the old swimming pool area.

Mental Health – the Parent Council wishes to thank the school for having run a lunchtime Chill-Out space for pupils this year. Mental Health is a priority for the Parent Council and we will be looking at ways of supporting the school in this area in 2018/19. Please contact bapc.chair@gmail.com if you have any ideas, or to tell us what you would find helpful in this area.

Living With Your Teenager course – following very positive feedback of the April course, Community Learning & Development (CLD) will run three individual sessions at the start of the 2018/19 school year. The first will be on Thursday September 6th at 19:30 in the Community rooms next to HOB school, then monthly after that. These sessions don't tell parents what to do, but rather they provide information and a space for parents to meet and reflect together.

The Parent Council will meet early in the new autumn term. Look out for an email at the start of the new school year.

Have a great summer break!

Banchory Academy Parent Council

Numeracy Group Update

The Banchory Cluster Numeracy Group has now completed the Primary/Secondary “Preferred Methodologies Booklet” which has been issued to all our new S1 pupils during Transition Week. In addition, it has been shared with the Cluster Primaries and added to the school website for easy access

(<http://www.banchoryacademy.co.uk> then click on the “Information” tab, followed by “Numeracy”).



Numeracy

At Banchory Academy we recognise that parental involvement has a significant impact on children's learning. We hope that this booklet will be a starting point when working with your child to support them with their maths homework, as we understand that Numeracy and Mathematics is an area of the curriculum that many people lack confidence in. Our message is to be positive about maths and think "growth mindset". Maths is not a subject you either can or can't do. Like everything else in life, it is something you can learn to get better at. This is the attitude we want to pass on to our learners.

Click [here](#) to view Banchory Academy's Numeracy Booklet

It is hoped that the booklet will help both pupils and parents access Numeracy methodologies used across the curriculum.

Planning for next session, we are going to look at how we can use the recently introduced “Scottish National Standardised Assessment” data for the P7/S1 cohort to help strengthen the curriculum and direct support.

As ever, we are very keen to receive any feedback regarding work being developed.

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

Term 4 Ends	Friday	6th July 2018
--------------------	---------------	----------------------

Session 2018/19

Term 1 Starts (Staff Only)	Monday	20th August 2018
-----------------------------------	---------------	-------------------------

Pupils return	Tuesday	21st August 2018
----------------------	----------------	-------------------------

Term 1 Ends	Friday	12th October 2018
--------------------	---------------	--------------------------

Term 2 Starts	Monday	29th October 2018
----------------------	---------------	--------------------------

In Service (Staff Only)	Monday	12th November 2018
--------------------------------	---------------	---------------------------

In Service (Staff Only)	Tuesday	13th November 2018
--------------------------------	----------------	---------------------------

Term 2 Ends	Friday	21st December 2018
--------------------	---------------	---------------------------

Term 3 Starts	Monday	7th January 2019
----------------------	---------------	-------------------------

Local Holiday	Friday	8th February 2019
----------------------	---------------	--------------------------

Holiday	Monday	11th February 2019
----------------	---------------	---------------------------

In Service (Staff Only)	Tuesday	12th February 2019
--------------------------------	----------------	---------------------------

In Service (Staff Only)	Wednesday	13th February 2019
--------------------------------	------------------	---------------------------

Term 3 Ends	Friday	29th March 2019
--------------------	---------------	------------------------

Term 4 Starts	Monday	15th April 2019
----------------------	---------------	------------------------

Term 4 Ends	Friday	5th July 2019
--------------------	---------------	----------------------