

Parent Council Meeting

Held at Edenside Primary School on

Wednesday, 2 September 2015 at 7.00pm

Present: Harriet Campbell, Jill Scott, Cllr Tom Weatherston, Cllr Simon Mountford, Cllr Alec Nichol, Harriet Pattinson, Susan Mackie, Angela Hinnigan, Ginny Stewart, Jane Woodcock, Nicola Moir, Kirstin Murray, Lisa Bridgewater, Jill Bradshaw, Jane Jackson, Lorraine Tait, Zoe Currie, Cheryl MacLean, Louise Lodge, Diana Miers, Anne Marie Bready, Jane Nimmo, Jan Deans, Mhairi Jamieson

1. Apologies

Victoria Horsburgh, Eva Reader, Balinda Ball, Alison McGlasson, Gail Stewart, Margaret Riddell and Susie Lindsay

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved as correct by Sue Mackie and seconded by Jane Jackson.

3. School Website

Jane Nimmo showed the meeting an overview of the new school website. It is hoped that it will be up and running in the near future. It is also hoped that the website will help with reducing the number of notes and letters sent out. Areas that are to be developed on the website are a suggestions section for parents to discuss at home with pupils; curriculum overviews, etc. A plug in will be added to the website so any photos uploaded will not be able to be copied. Pupils in photographs will not be named, except if the photos relate to a news post and parents are happy for names to be added. It is still to be decided if there is a link to photographs for each class as some parents do not wish photographs of their children on the website. It is often, therefore, not possible to post whole class photographs. Thanks were made to Miss Rhead who has done a lot of work on the website.

4. Head Teacher's Report

Staffing

Miss Nimmo was welcomed back.

It had proved difficult to get staff in place and advise parents prior to the summer break. Classrooms also had to be shuffled around due to dampness being found in one of the rooms. Apologies were expressed to parents for not being able to let them know sooner.

Miss McHarg is settling into the Nursery. There are now 2 new job share classes in school, Mrs Whittle and Mrs Dijkman at P1 and Mrs Brown and Mrs Inglis at P4/5. The Management Team this year is Ms Bready, Miss Nimmo, Miss Deans and Miss Lindsay.

School Roll/Classes

The current school roll is 327 plus nursery and the 2 year old nursery. There were a number of new starts after the summer break. After consultation with Parent Council, it was agreed not to keep free spaces in classes for new starts, to ensure that composite classes did not have very small numbers of one year group mixed in with larger numbers of another year group. As a result There will be no spaces left in P2, P2/3 and P3 after October when pupils who have registered to start enrol in school.

Other Items

The literacy programme is now in its third year. Thanks were expressed to Parent Council for all the resourcing for this. All new staff who have not yet undergone the full training will be undertaking this in the very near future. This is now year 2 of assessments. The benefits of the "Making Children Visible" learning toolkit are being seen, teaching pupils to persist and believe in themselves.

The units have been purchased for the pupil kitchen at a discounted cost. Plans have been drawn up. Approval has to be given by Health and Safety from Council HQ. The kitchen will be used by pupils as part of for example maths and science lessons. It will be a great addition to the school and help with learning for life and work.

Literacy workshops are to be held for P1 – 6. Parents should go to one that is newest for them. A meeting for P7 re the Dalguise trip and transition to high school will also be held on the same night. It is hoped that the Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher from the High School will be present.

Parent's e-mail addresses are to be collected so that notes/letters can be distributed easily to parents. This will also save on paper, etc.

A diary of events has been issued, with reminders being sent out by Miss Deans at the start of each term to let parents know what is all needed for the term ahead and ask if there is still permission for trips and medical information is still up to date.

The railway assembly went well. Emails have been received saying how well behaved pupils were. The Golden Ticket winner was Aidan Whitson with 3 others receiving book tokens.

Nominations for the Head Boy and Girl close on the 7th with speeches and elections to be held on the 14th.

A book report competition was held by WH Smith with pupils writing reviews on books they had read at the end of term. The winners of the £10 book vouchers will be announced on the 7th and a display of the reviews will be displayed in the shop.

5. Fundraising Report

A profit of £6214 was raised last year. The fundraising committee will look to see which events were successful and easy to run, for example the discos will continue. Other new ideas being considered are a fireworks display, a quiz evening for adults, etc. The sponsored walk at the weekend went well with £800 being raised. New members to the committee are always welcome, with meeting times being flexible.

6. Treasurers Report

£6,700 was raised in the last year, including grants. Monies were spent on desks, the PA system, gifts, parties, etc.

There is currently £6,300 in the bank, with £2,900 being spent on the kitchen/units.

7. Proposed Spending

Last year, £3 was contributed towards trips. It was agreed to continue with this at the moment, until prices of buses, etc could be looked into. A percentage payment towards the cost of the trip could also be considered. It was agreed that it needs to be made clear in letters to parents regarding trips that Parent Council are subsidising trips.

P1 book bags and P7 leaving gifts are continuing. The P7 gift this year was a £5 book token. Jane Jackson will speak to WH Smith's to see if it will be possible for a discount being given when buying book tokens in future.

It was asked if it would be possible for cameras to be purchased so that there could be one per class, rather than one per stage. This was agreed.

It was asked if it would be possible to subsidise the extra 5p for swimming so that the cost remains a round £1. This was agreed.

A request was made that the 8.55am warning bell could be turned on again. This was agreed.

8. Outdoor area

Harriet Pattinson is still awaiting information from Council Headquarters re the entrance area.

The nursery are looking to renew some of the outside play equipment, for example raised flower beds.

The new painted outdoor games have been well received by pupils, with more planned.

The wooden gate at the P1 end requires to be repaired as it blows in the wind. Ms Bready will ask Jim to have a look.

9. Bikeability

People need to be trained in order to deliver the course. P6 & P7 are unable to cycle to school as they have not taken part in bike ability. There is a course available for trainers and some parents would be willing to attend the course, depending on its timing. It was noted that unfortunately school staff would be unable to help due to staffing issues. The possibility of bike sheds and costs will be looked into by Parent Council.

10. Other Business

An area has been included in the new website for a Parent Council newsletter.

Gifts for Staff – It was discussed whether or not funds should be spent on small gifts to staff at end of term. It was agreed that as staff go over and above their duties to help Parent Council raise funds that it would be OK to give them a small token gift.

It was discussed if the coffee mornings were still a good idea and if they should continue. It was agreed to try them again, but advertise these first in a newsletter. New P1 parents could be encouraged to come along. It was also suggested that Parent Council members buddy up with new parents/P1 parents to encourage them to Parent Council Meetings also.

Diana Miers suggested that as well as the new P1 booklet explaining what to expect, a booklet for new pupils further up the school would be of benefit, giving details of such things as what the pupils need to bring with them, swimming costs, etc.

It was agreed that when sending out letters advising what classes pupils would be in the following year, it should also be noted on the letter what pupils require for the following year.

The P7 classes will be taking part in the activities at Floors Castle that are being held as part of the Tour of Britain. Nothing is planned for the rest of the school as the cyclists are due to arrive after school. Should parents wish to take pupils out earlier on that day, a letter should be written.

The Councillors praised the pupils and school for the 'Golden Ticket' assembly to celebrate the new railway.

Discussions took place regarding the crossing. To be able to help with this, insurance is required.

The timing of the availability of the P7 hoodies was questioned. Ms Bready explained that staff work hard all year to prepare pupils for high school. The hoodies are a privilege as a change of uniform. It has been noticed that when pupils get their hoodies, attitudes drop, therefore do not wish to give hoodies too early. It was suggested that P7 pupils have a different coloured uniform to the rest of the school for the year, rather than getting their hoodies at the end of the year. This will be put to the pupils by Miss Deans, however it was felt that the pupils would prefer to have the hoodies at the end of the year rather than a different uniform for the whole of P7. Ms Bready would be happy with either option.

Discussion took place about a Parent Council noticeboard. It was agreed that locating this was not easy due to the layout of the school. Information can, however be uploaded onto the Parent Council area of the new school website.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

All were happy for the meetings to continue on a Wednesday night. It was agreed that the next meeting should take place on 4 November 2015. Dates for subsequent meetings were set as 20 January 2016, 27 April 2016 and 7 September 2016.