

Parent Council Meeting

Held at Edenside Primary School on

Wednesday, 29 April 2015 at 6.30pm

Present: Harriet Campbell, Eva Reader, Zoe Currie, Jane Woodcock, Pauline Carruthers, Nicola Moir, Harriet Pattinson, Sue Mackie, Jill Bradshaw, Balinda Ball, Cllr Simon Mountford, Cllr Alex Nicol, Jill Scott, Donna Manson, Nicola Fleming, Jan Deans, Mavis Whittle, Angela Hinnigan, Sheila Fleming, Laura Douglas Anne Marie Bready, Mhairi Jamieson,

1. Apologies

Alison McGlasson, Margaret Riddell, Cllr Tom Weatherston, Lorraine Tait, Victoria Horsburgh, Jane Nimmo, Gail Stewart

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved as correct by Eva Reader and seconded by Jane Woodcock.

3. Donna Manson – Service Director

She thanked the Parent Council for all their hard work for the children.

Ms Manson explained that she knows Kelso well, having spent some time visiting prior to taking up post.

She explained that she was at the meeting to ask how things can be improved with education in the Scottish Borders.

She advised that Edenside is a “green light” school and isn’t a school that she is concerned about.

H M Inspectors had been at the High School the previous day.

She hopes that we can all be more ambitious for young people in the Borders so that they can be higher attaining. Consideration is being given as to how we work with companies to get more apprenticeships and other possible opportunities for young people. The drop out rate from University for young people from the Borders is higher than Ms Manson wants it to be. Support will need to be given to those young people should they return to the Borders.

This year the recruitment process for teachers was changed to encourage more local teachers to apply and also those going off to teacher training are being encouraged to come back to the area on placement.

Clarification is being sought as to what information parents need about children’s learning.

Consideration also needs to be given as to how support can be given to children with additional needs.

It is hoped to extend employability skills and career fairs to P6 & P7 pupils. Other aspects being looked at are for example having engineering clubs in primaries to try to encourage more girls into engineering careers.

PE at S1 and S2 is being looked at to try to encourage, for example more boys to take up dance and more girls into rugby and football. Mixed teams would also be of benefit. This would follow through to the workplace and teamworking there. Support from parents would help. It is hoped to invest more at Kelso High School in co-education rugby.

In order to help pupils, it was felt by parents that benchmarking on for example 1 to 5 on ability and potential would be helpful to see if they are putting in the effort plus this would also see how they are comparing with other pupils throughout the Borders. It is currently being considered how to track attainment and get consistent reporting. It is hoped to have a 3 – 18 tracking system for the Borders. Consideration is also being given to developing an app for this. Comments would be welcome.

Concern was raised regarding composite classes. Anne Marie Bready explained that she had no fear of composite classes as she had every confidence in the teaching staff at Edenside. Determining composition of classes has been made easier, now that there is no longer the same requirement to keep places for any new starts.

More foster carers are required for the Borders. Anyone who is interested in fostering is urged to get in touch to help children throughout the Borders.

Ms Manson explained that there is no shortage of teachers this year, following the new recruitment drive. There have, for example been a number of applicants for Head Teacher and some Secondary teaching posts. A permanent supply team will put in place to cover across the Borders.

4. Head Teacher's Report

Staffing

Mrs Hardie will be commencing her maternity leave soon and Mrs Morgan will be covering her post. Mrs Brown is currently on maternity leave and Mrs Inglis will be returning in June from maternity leave.

Miss Douglas will be taking up post as Acting Depute Head Teacher at Trinity Primary School for one year. Her commencement date has yet to be arranged.

Miss Jamieson is still on secondment to a role at Council Head Quarters with Mrs Hinnigan covering her post.

Becky Bass has taken up post as the area Home Link Worker and will be attending round table meetings with school and Katherine Devenny, School Nurse to discuss vulnerable pupils.

It has been approved that a third permanent Principal Teacher post can be advertised.

Updates

A drop down screen and mics are to be ordered for the stage and an outdoor play area for the nursery.

The 2 year old nursery is still requiring a further sink fitted prior to sign off and the pupils starting.

It is good to hear that Edenside is a green light school. This comes from a very hard working and committed staff and parent council.

The new literacy programme is now being delivered at P1, 2, 4 & 5 and extending into P3 & P6 this year. Staff were thanked for their hard work with this.

Maths is now well established with no further development required at the moment. There is now clear direction for pupils on hand over to new classes at end of year.

Good assessment and tracking will help to identify which pupils require extra support.

Science will continue to be progressed in the cluster. Some funding has been secured through SSERC.

Pupils who require extra support will be identified and will be linked to an adult buddy within the school.

£800 has been donated from the Maxwellheugh Fund by Tait's the Solicitors. This funding will go towards supporting pupils who require help with funding new uniform, clothing, etc for Dalguise trips, etc.

There are one or two technical issues at the moment with the school website, but it is almost good to go.

The school has been nominated to receive £100 in books tokens by WH Smith. Book reviews will be done by pupils and a visit to the shop will take place.

Edenside won the Bruce trophy this week.

Parent Council was asked if they would be able to help at sports days by setting up water tables once more. This was agreed. It was also considered erecting gazebos.

A list of all events for the summer will be issued.

P7 hoodies will be looked at on receipt of information from Border Embroideries.

Sports days will take place as follows:- P4 – 7 in the afternoon of 11 June and P 1 – 3 in morning of 12 June. Nursery Sports day will take place on 26 May at 9.45am and 1.30pm in the P1 playground, or hall depending on the weather.

5. Treasurers Report

There is currently £5700 in the bank with film night and disco to be added to this.

Funding has been given towards the new flag and Professor Brainstorm science show. The workshops were well received.

6. Fundraising

The shorts and shades disco will take place on 21 May. It was agreed that as this is the last disco of the school year, this should be gifted to the children. This will cost approximately £90. It has also been agreed to invite the pre-school to come along so that they can get used to discos before their first disco at Primary school. This would be the Halloween disco which can sometimes prove quite scary and daunting for the younger children.

The Fire Brigade and Ambulance Service will attend the Strawberry Fair on 6 June. A bouncy castle and rides are to be hired free of charge with a percentage of the takings going to the hire company. Letters will be sent out asking for volunteer helpers at the fair. A notice is to be placed in Kelso Life advertising the event.

It is hoped to have a red balloon day on the last day of term, with labels attached to see how far they travel. This will be at a cost of 50p per balloon, with juniors in the morning and seniors in the afternoon.

Grants of up to £2,500 may be available to celebrate the return of the railway. Applications are to be submitted by December.

The next meeting of the Fundraising Committee will take place in the school library on 25 May at 1.30pm.

Derek McGlasson will be re-doing the playground paintings soon.

7. Funding Requests

A request was put forward to the Parent Council Nicola Fleming, Laura Douglas and Mavis Whittle for funding towards a kitchen area for use by all pupils in many areas of the curriculum, such as developing life skills, healthy eating, food from around the world, etc. It is hoped to locate this in the stage area. It was agreed that a design could be drawn up for display at the Strawberry Fare so that parents can see what they are raising funds for. Costs will also be established. It was agreed to fund the kitchen.

8. Entrance Project/Sainsbury's Money

The work will be carried out for free by the Criminal Justice team, with materials costing £2000. The total cost of the project is expected to be £12000.

9. High School

It is still hoped to complete the High School on time. Although building work was put on hold as a result of queries regarding EU funding, preparation work has still been continuing.

10. Any Other Business

It was raised at the Parent Council Forum that it is beneficial for the Pupil Council to be invited along to the Parent Council. It was agreed that this was a good idea if nothing sensitive was being raised.

Harriet Campbell advised that she is willing to be Chair for a further year and Jill Scott is happy to remain as Treasurer for a further year.

Neil Innes is hoping to start a junior jog Scotland club and is looking for parent volunteers. It isn't clear how this will fit in with the existing running club.

It is planned to produce an exit questionnaire for parents when pupils leave school to ask for their views on the school. Jane Woodcock volunteered to look at the questionnaire and give feedback.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The AGM and next Parent Council meeting will take place on 2 September 2015