**Northmuir Parent Council Meeting**

Thursday 16th January 2014

**Present;** Laura Law, Andy Howard, Kelly Cobley, Louise Dunn, Arlene Walker, Shona Curson, Andrew Scott, Leaca Crawford.

**Apologies**; Susan Morrison, Ruth Nelson, Claire Brown and Eddie Valentine.

**In attendance;** Paula Wharton HT, Barbara Donaldson PT, Norma Craigon PT.

Minutes of previous meeting were deemed to be correct.

**Matters arising from previous minutes;** Paula and the rest of the council wished to thank Derek Thompson for providing the disco’s for the whole school at Christmas time. This was really appreciated and a great night was had by all.

Andy welcomed everyone.

**Head teachers report;**The newsletter went out today, along with information regarding reading projects.

Unfortunately the school website is still not up and running, therefore the feedback from the reading habits questionnaires were given to pupils in paper forms. This also stated the action plan relating to these results. Paula welcomes feedback on quality assurance and how best to share practice with parents. 2 stars and a wish board is displayed in the foyer, which was kindly made by Mrs Davie. These are remarks made by parents following the learning open evening held in school in November, all very positive.

Extra budget money has become available and Paula wishes to spend this on finishing the carpeting in the upper block, music room and ICT suit.

Making a Difference (MaD) awards have started again. This is where the children take up a challenge over a course of weeks. Mr Valentine is again running the project and already over 60 children have signed up for this.

There is currently Wi-Fi throughout the school, however this will not be connected until August. This will mean that there will no longer be a need to have an ICT suite as the school is hopeful to receive laptops which can be transported to each classroom for teachers to deliver ICT.

Paula stated that the authority is funding a “Home from Home” room within the school to be used by various groups of children and run by 2 staff members. The current music room is going to be transformed into the Home from Home room and the current ICT suite, which will no longer be needed will become home to the music room.

The local library is holding a reading award and children will be encouraged to participate in this. Classes will also be visiting the library in the next few weeks.

**Matters brought to parent council;** Laura asked if smiley savers was still on and if so when. Paula was unsure of this but said she would find out and get back to her as soon as possible.

Several parents have mentioned that children are often coming home covered in mud. Paula stated that as we are currently experiencing very wet weather of late that the school had to deal with a number of issues relating to the playtime rules. As the grass is very wet the children for a while were confined to the tarmac areas of the playground, but staff supervising this noted that children were becoming very restless and often ended up arguing with each other more than normal. It was agreed that letting children have the freedom to run across all areas of the playground lead to much happier children. Paula also mentioned that children have been spoken to regarding how to try to stay clean in the muddy areas and should staff notice children becoming unusually muddy they will talk with them. Infant department sit on the floor in class therefore they are not allowed on the grass as they bring in the mud. Leaca suggested cordoned off areas which are really muddy. Gym shoes could also be worn when returning to class. Wellie boots could be provided, however storage of this is an issue. Paula stated that it is the duty of the parents/carers to teach their children the importance of looking after their clothes and processions.

Is there a protocol for children having an accident? We believe this meant if a child has had a toilet accident. Children are always changed into clean dry clothes, either which they have provided or the school always has plenty of spare for all ages. Parents are not informed at the time of the accident but a note will be put in the school bag along with the wet clothes in a plastic bag. If a parent has a particular issue to contact the school office.

Is the behaviour policy in the school handbook? No it’s not as the handbook as not long been renewed and this is a much smaller version with essential information in it. All policies are available on request from the school office. Again if parents have a particular issue relating to any policies or procedures then please feel free to contact school office and arrange a meeting with Paula or Eddie.

Is there a dress code for staff? Paula stated that all staff follow a smart but comfortable dress code.

Parents are happy that there has been an increased police presence of late. Andy stated that police are talking with drivers who are consistently parking in areas which they are not permitted, with several drivers receiving fines or warnings from Police Scotland.

**Class information**; Paula explained the background of how classes are allocated and the number of teachers which the school receive each year. Composite classes will again have to be made. Paula stated that she often takes many of things into consideration when deciding the class mix. Paula also mentioned that perhaps this year she could consult parents as to their preference for their child’s class grouping. The Parent council decided that this would perhaps lead to further issues and more work for Paula and her staff and that parents should trust the professionals who are dealing with the children on a daily basis.

**A.O.C.B;** Laura, Andy and Ruth attended recent parent council training at Angus House. Andy gave an overview of the event and mentioned that there is further training on Wednesday 12th February if other members wish to attend. Laura mentioned there were several leaflets and information available from the training and if anyone wished a copy of anything to let her know.

Barbara mentioned that the fundraising group were holding a Snowman drive on Wednesday 12th February, tickets will be going on sale soon. A great night is usually had by all.

Parent’s night is coming up again and wondered if parent council could have a presence on both evenings. Relating to the Quality Indicators Paula would like to find out “What parents want from the school?” Please let Laura know if you are available any of the evening to speak with parents.

The whole school from Nursery through to P7 will be learning French starting from August.

Laura wished to express how well she feels the transition process is going with P7 children currently attending Websters high school on a regular basis. Laura feels that this is of great benefit to all children as they are not at all fazed by attending the high school and in fact look forward to their next visit. Hopefully this will be something which runs in the future and perhaps to other cluster schools. Paula stated that after the Education Scotland inspection the school had, they received a grade 5 for their transition therefore working with Anne Collins, depute head at Websters and her staff team, the school wanted to enhance the transition process for the future.

Arlene mentioned that the local cubs were holding a quiz night at the Northmuir hall on 25th January with a Scottish feel, if anyone wished to put in a team.

Andy thanked everyone for their attendance.

**Date of next meeting** : Wednesday 26th March 7pm.

Meeting closed 8.35pm.