**Crossmichael Parent Council Meeting**

**Monday 5th October 2020 7pm via Zoom**

1. **Attendees**:Mary Lidstone-Scott (Head Teacher), Gilli Hodson (Chair), Shani McMiken (Treasurer), Debs Nelson (Secretary), Rachel Mair, Sarah Cooper, Heidi Gunther, Katy Collins, Zara Gell, Jackie & Derek Kernahan.
2. **Apologies**:Emma McCracken, Lucy Wilson, Ben Wild, Lindsay Smith, Natalie Richards, Hannah Green.
3. **Introductions**:Gilli welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves and their children at the school.
4. **Approval of Minutes of last meeting**: From 24th August Meeting. Agreed as correct. Proposed – Shani McMiken, Seconded – Gilli Hodson.
5. **Matters Arising**: Shani confirmed that the new signatories are now added and we await information about online banking.
6. **Headteachers Report**:

Covid-19 Related Health and Safety

We have 84 pupils in Crossmichael Primary School and 38 pupils in Gelston Primary School.  We have tried to minimise contact between children and adults from different classes within the school building.  We have several measures in place to minimise the movement of pupils **inside** the school buildings.

Within each class, pupils do mix with each other in different groupings.  They do not remain seated at their desks all day. We ensure regular hand washing before and after completing group tasks or before entering/ exiting the room.

Pupils can mix together in the playground although staggered lunch times reduce contact between pupils.

We have a strict cleaning schedule in place where the school is thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day and touch points are cleaned twice throughout the course of the day.

There have been implications for staff too with us trying to minimise movement between classrooms during one day and also between schools. We have Mrs Todd who provides teachers’ Reduction in Class Contact Cover (RICCT) and she teaches P2-4 on a Friday. She can only be inside with two classes per day. Mrs Bielinski, our Music and Art Specialist, is currently based at Gelston and provides RICCT there. This is to minimise movement of adults between schools. This term, Mrs Clifton has been based at Crossmichael.

Attainment and Achievement

We have spent a considerable amount of time gathering assessment evidence to find out exactly where learners are and to identify their next steps in learning. The school closures have had a considerable impact on learning but we are able to move forward now that we have the evidence required. Mrs Hermon, our Additional Support for Learning Teacher, has been helping to advise us on programmes of work for individuals.

In addition to this we have been supporting pupils with their health and wellbeing needs. We now have strategies and support in place to help those pupils who have really struggled with the transition back into school.

On the whole, we are delighted with how well our pupils have settled back in to school.

Additional Support for Learning

In Crossmichael, we have approximately 30% of learners with additional support for learning needs. We are very fortunate across our partnership schools that we have enough Learning Assistant hours to support pupils. In Crossmichael, we have the equivalent of two full time Learning Assistants and one part time Learning Assistant (3 days) – Mrs Stitt, Mrs Cowan and Mrs Jennings. Across the partnership schools, we also have a full time Learning Assistant, funded by Pupil Equity Funding, whose remit is to raise attainment through targeted interventions in Literacy and Numeracy – Mrs Clifton.

Playground Developments

Our outdoor classroom is being built and it looks amazing! Our Portakabin is also now fully operational.

Pupils are keen to develop our playground. Mrs Cowan (Learning Assistant) is working with two small groups of children who are leading this. Their focus is on nurture and developing resilience, team-building, cooperation and life skills. The children are documenting their learning in a Big Book. They had a meeting with me last week where they shared their ideas and showed me maps, drawings and letters outlining their ideas for the playground. They hope to reuse and recycle items as much as possible and are going to approach local businesses for donations.

We would like some parents/ carers to help us by applying for more grants to help fund some of the bigger items mentioned such as a pirate ship.

Finances and Resources

We bought a 12” x 10” wooden shed last year as we had little storage space. This cost £1800 and used up a huge chunk of our school funds. We now have very little money left in school to pay for school developments. We are not keen to ask our families to fundraise because we are very aware of the impact of Covid-19 on our community. Perhaps we could consider a sponsored event in the future. The First News literacy resource is proving to be very popular, particularly with our reluctant readers! Thank you to the Parent Council for purchasing our subscription for this excellent resource.

We are looking for funding to buy more ICT devices for school. I have contacted our Support Services Manager, Business Infrastructure to find out if we can source devices ourselves. We need laptops for pupils and a computer in the staffroom for teachers. We had to put our staffroom computer in the Portakabin. This means that teachers often need to return home to complete their paperwork during RICCT time.

If possible, could the Parent Council donate £400 to the school so that each class can order specific resources to support learning? E.g. Sets of class novels for the older children, books to supplement the ‘Closing the Literacy Gap’ and ‘Fastlane’ interventions, Totem reading books, ‘Emotions Journals’ for small groups, etc.

Pupil Groups

We have elected House and Vice-Captains who are responsible for a rota of playground games. We hope to reinstate our Pupil Council, Health Group, Eco-Schools Group and Blogging Group after the holidays.

Reporting to Parents

Teachers will be sending an email to all parents/ carers before the October holidays with a brief update of how your child is getting on since returning to school in August. Please contact your child’s teacher via email if you wish to find out more information.

Discussion was had around the £400 funding. Shani will look at the finances and once we have a clearer idea of full costs of the outdoor earning shelter we will be in a better position to decide.

1. **Teatowel and Halloween Anagrams fundraising activities –**

Tea towels – options discussed and decisions agreed = Colour – Royal Blue, Border – Plain, Price £5, Quantities – 300? Mary will do a Microsoft form asking Parents re uptake required. Self-portraits being organised by Kim and staff team and Mary has liaised with the company about scanning the completed images and school logo and sending vie email so no time delay in sending away. Gilli will create a letter for parents with order details etc. Thanks to everyone involved in sorting this out.

Halloween Anagrams – Thanks to Sarah for creating that fun activity in time for the holidays! Parents have received it via email so can print out and give to friends, family, colleagues, neighbours...then place completed anagrams in an envelope, along with a donation, and send into school or village shop (they are also for sale in the shop).

1. **Update on Outdoor Learning Shelter** – Work has begun, looking good already! Application form has been received from Crossmichael Community Council (CCC) for up to £500 – Shani will complete this and liaise with Iain Hall and Lucy Wilson re ideas around path to woodland, storage area... Application needs to be back with CCC before 1st week of November (for next CCC mtg).
2. **School Transport / Grace and Favour places –** Mary has received a spreadsheet from the Council saying all children who applied for a grace and favour place have not got a place. However, Mary noted some information is missing so will chase this with them. We should have received direct letter to parents – none at the meeting had heard. Gilli and Mary to contact council again.
3. **Safer Routes to School** – Lindsey Smith (Parent and Secretary of CCC) – raised this issue at the last CCC meeting (Thank you Lindsey) following our discussion at the last Parent Council meeting and she is happy to write a letter to Peter McCormick – who is the Council’s Active Traffic Officer. Discussion about what we would wish to be raised with him followed and the main points included a Pedestrian Crossing across main street, which would benefit pupils from Primary and secondary who need to cross the often busy main road, but also older members of the local community who need more time to cross safely. In addition to this some markings at the roads just outside the school would be useful to highlight to children and families where they should cross, which would benefit those on foot but also those driving, decreasing the variety of places people cross the roads around school. It was felt that parking away from the school where possible was working well and should continue to be encouraged to reduce congestion and improve safety. The topic of road safety education was raised and Mary reported that the children themselves have suggested roles of Junior Road Safety Officers – Mary will look into this and the packs that might be available to school and pupils to enhance their learning re Road Safety.
4. **In School Activities – PE, Art, Halloween & Christmas**

Questions were raised regarding PE, the curriculum to be covered and the frequency of PE during the week. Pupils continue to ned to come to school dressed ready for PE but that the session is towards end of day. Guidelines continue in terms of Outdoor sessions, which activities are allowed and social distance to continue with adults in PE. Delivery 2 hours per week, is weather dependant and pre-portacabin there were obstacles and barriers to avoid. Using low impact options for indoor wellbeing sessions, such as Cosmic kids Yoga have been useful when weather has been wet. What is the Curriculum for PE? Increasing knowledge and basic experience of Team Sports/Running to prepare for ongoing education and life skills would be welcome. Some activities usually done might not be able to e.g. rugby/interschool sports. Older children are also creating games, with the aim of teaching younger children how to play them too. Some children have expressed some frustration regarding the repetition of activities.

Also hearing from children that not getting as much of the activities that they like is hard and appreciation of the challenges mentioned before regarding staff movement and current guidelines were given. Reduced activities such as singing, art, music, drama is challenging, but reassurance was offered that the PE curriculum gives transferrable skills e.g. ball skills, that although not taught as one sport type can be used throughout the education journey.

Christmas discussion have yet to be had within the staff but for Halloween, Children can come to school in their outfit, for the day and there will be Halloween themed activities for the afternoon. More details will come from School.

1. **Community Woodlands Upkeep –** Lindsey asked for this to be on the agenda following the CCC meeting – they require parents/carers/family of children at school to volunteer to help maintain the new community woodland paths etc periodically, or letting CC use any equipment available to help with this process.

Mary to add to newsletter/blog asking parents to help – offers of help please send to Lindsey - [lindsey@catstrand.com](mailto:lindsey@catstrand.com)

It was also noted that the Youth Club took an active role in maintaining paths before the recent upgrade so children from the school have been involved before and it was also suggested that learning about maintaining and caring for our woodland could be part of the outdoor learning also.

Parent Helpers are now able to help when groups are off-site so e.g. during visits to the woodland – (following Test and Protect detail guidance) – Mary to develop this next term

1. **AOB** Direct payments for lunches – would be great – Mary to ask council if this is possible
2. **Thank you to everyone for attending. Date of Next Meeting Monday 16th November – 7pm**