**Parent Council Meeting – 17.09.2024 at 5.45pm**

**Minutes**

**Welcome**

Apologies from Clare and Rebecca

Nothing raised from minutes of last meeting

**Finance**

Treasurer reports total before last fundraiser was £3933.51

Bingo night raised £1024

Float returned to bank £200

Total £5157.51

Cheques paid £4651.22

Total now £506.29

Tesco discs looking great, we can be expecting up to £1500

**Headteacher Report**

Mary covered a recap of school strengths from the recent inspection as noted on the Education Scotland website: [Kirkcudbright Primary School HMIE 17th June 2024](https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/find-an-inspection-report/details?id=3255)

Mary said that she was delighted with the hard work and dedication of the whole school community. We have a solid foundation to build upon.

In 2024/2025, we have identified the following school improvement priorities:

* We are revising our vision, values and aims to reflect our unique school context. Mary talked about global, national and local influences on education and related this to knowledge, skills and attributes that learners will need in the future.
* Our attainment data as reported by teachers is slightly lower that the data reported in the Scottish National Assessments completed by P1, P4 and P7 pupils. This is the case across Dumfries and Galloway. This session, we will be developing an assessment strategy to ensure that we are gathering assessment evidence appropriately and using this effectively to help inform teachers’ professional judgements. This should mean that learners’ achievements are being reported accurately to Scottish Government. It should also mean that learners experience appropriate pace and challenge in their learning.
* We will also be engaging in moderation activities where we discuss learning and agree on the standard required which shows that a child has achieved a curricular level.
* This year, we are focusing on improving the quality of learning and teaching by developing ‘Assessment is for Learning’ methodology in lessons. This has been proven to raise attainment over time.
* Schools in Kirkcudbright Academy Cluster are working together to develop a Digital Technologies Framework to ensure pupils have consistency in the breadth, depth and coverage of learning.

Mary thanked parents for contributing ideas to the survey on updating our vision, values and aims. Suggestions so far, included an artist’s palette where paints represent values. Motto suggestions included “we all paint this picture”. Words highlighted so far include ‘community’ and ‘ambition’.

Mary is introducing ‘A Wee Blether with Headteacher’ where she will introduce a topic and parents can have an informal discussion and offer ideas or ask questions. The first two sessions focus on developing our vision, values and aims and looking at how we support children who face barriers to learning.

Once a month each class will host an assembly and parents of those children will be invited to attend.

Parental workshops will be arranged in November with a focus on outdoor learning. This is called ‘Taking Maths Outdoors with Your Child’ and will focus on Nursery - P3.

Mr Flannighan explained that there is a national push to monitor attendance. The school is making an informal policy to chat to parents if levels reach below 90% as opposed to standard 85%. The aim is for the school attendance to be at least 94%. It is currently sitting at 96%.

Dumfries and Galloway Council needs to save money. The education sector makes up more than half of the overall council budget and has to save £6m/yr over the next three years. One of the main ways that we are being impacted is by a reduction in the amount of additional support hours. This year we were allocated 20.5hrs for P1-P7 (less than 4 days per week) and 14.5hrs in Nursery. We are finding creative ways of ensuring that pupils with additional support needs (ASN) are being supported but we cannot offer the same provision as in previous years.

Every year, Scottish Government provides school with a Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) budget that is allocated according to how many pupils claim free school meals. This money must be used to close the poverty related attainment gap. We have chosen to use our PEF budget to pay for Learning Assistant hours to support learners with ASN. Mary apologised for not having consulted with all stakeholders about this beforehand as it is best practice to do so.

**School Communication**

* Rainy day communications: P1 and P2 parents and grandparents/guardians require more info to clarify when to drop children in the front door rather than playground gate. Mary referred to the September newsletter but no everyone is reading this. It is available on the school website and is sent to parents via email.
* School car park - information required to be disseminated to all parents that nobody is allowed to park on school grounds, drop off only at the front of the school. Mary referred to the information that was included in the September newsletter.
* Communications made at end of last term re sports day, the text was sent too late. Apologies made.
* Suggestion made to communicate a welcome message of some sort from the school on first day back. On 23rd August, Mary had posted a ‘Welcome Back!’ message on Facebook but understands that not everyone had accessed this. This message also provided a brief summary of expectations for the year ahead and explained that the first newsletter would be published at the start of September.
* Suggestion of a parental representative per class / year group. Currently Parent Council naturally covers nearly all classes except P4(?)

**4 ½ Day Consultation**

* Drop on Wednesday evening 4:30 – 7pm at the academy
* Clarification made on proposal not being a cost-cutting exercise. It may help with teaching staff recruitment and retention. Alignment with the majority of areas in Scotland would make it fairer for secondary school children in terms of choice of subjects; aligning class timetables would allow for pupils to take online classes with other schools if needed.
* Parent Council agreed to write a letter in response to proposal after gauging whole school parents feeling on the matter via Facebook poll. 11th October is consultation deadline.

**School Trips**

* Some parents wondered why school trips varied in destination, adventurousness, interest etc. Mary explained that transport costs are very high so difficult decisions had to be made given that most trips were booked in Term 4. This academic year, trips are being booked by the October holidays to give us all time to raise funds for transport.
* Best practice would be to consult with pupils and families but teachers know coverage of curricular outcomes so often make the final decision. Suggestion to share travel solutions if possible by combining multiple classes? Class trips already in planning stage and will be finalised asap.
* Active Schools are choosing to host activities at our school to will help reduce the need for transport costs to outlying activities in other schools. Currently the school is having to reject invitations due to bus costs. E.g. £850 for a bus to rugby in CD for 50 x P4s!
* Light festival 2024 3rd to 5th October - with free activities on Thursday and Friday can there be school involvement - potentially as a school trip alternative? Potential to involve *community* aspect from Vision, Values and Aims. A day of light? KPS lights up their community?!
* Request to have dates term by term at least for all items of consideration for classes including dates proposed for school trips or days out.
* Ongoing discussion for requirement for more involvement between headteacher, teaching staff, pupils and parents. Method not established.

**Buddy system**

* Breakfast club buddy system requested.
* P2 buddy system still unofficially in place.

**Parking dangers**

* No zig zags are painted on the crossing after the resurfacing. Railing at school entrance crossing still needs to be replaced.
* Disabled badge holders unable to park because parents are parking in the disabled bays.
* Parents parking in the drop-off zone.
* Suggestion to ask children to produce a safety video for Facebook page etc. Also junior parking safety monitor idea.
* Pamela Paterson suggested to advise children and parents.
* Proposal of a school travel plan which would identify the options that are available to those who drive to school.
* Cones proposed as the easiest method of discouragement for those who persistently park at the ‘zebra’ crossing.
* Requesting Mark Bailie from Amey for press coverage to mark start of new initiative.

**Sub-committees**

* With so many pressing points to cover there is a proposal to look at setting up subcommittees. Fundraising, zebra crossing and parking dangers, communication and engagement?

**Playground equipment**

* Clarification required for who can use the castle and if not allowed what can they play on etc?
* Wintry rainy days play options, access given to MUGA and tarmac areas. Question asked as to whether House Captains could arrange rota of games to be played on tarmac court. There is a Tuesday lunchtime club with sports etc with Ross from Active Schools. Suggestions include optional activities for class groups or year groups which could be run by House Captains.
* Also is there outdoor playground games equipment for classes? Suggestions include asking for sponsorship for appropriate equipment ‘like a wedding list’. E.g. Parents may donate an item each such as a skipping rope.
* Also for access to books and quiet activities during break and lunch

**AOCB**

* HALLOWEEN: Parents will organise Halloween activity stations in the PE hall and school will arrange a timetable so P1 – P7 can attend. Pupils can donate £1 to wear a Halloween costume/ non-uniform to be given to Parent Council in order to recover losses from not having disco in the evening.
* Evening disco suggested for summertime?
* Movie night also remembered as successful fundraiser, Mary C and parents enough as evening activities team.
* Hall capacity trouble discussed; more parents would have liked to have been able to attend end of term assemblies but could not due to hall capacity. MC to check capacity and regulations.
* LEGOMAN -Proposal to discuss another time for that fundraiser.
* Defibrillator box still needs to be built for it to be fitted. PC Chair will contact Andy Campbell.
* Parental involvement and engagement - discussions ongoing on how to share the views of all parents at our PC meetings. E.g. Microsoft FORM sent out prior to meetings?