

Parent Council AGM – Monday 11th September 2023

Present: Ashley Daly, Ashley weir, Emma Herries, Kerry O'Neill, Victoria Hastie, Danielle McNulty, David Robertson, Lee Syme, Kirsty Pearson, Lynne Shaw, Greg Black, Krystin Black, Steve Beattie, Jillian Hamilton, Margaret Welsh

Apologies: Alison White, Rosi McQuarrie Parks, Elli King, Gayle Zaidi

Previous minutes approved by David Robertson and seconded by Danielle McNulty

1. Welcome and Introductions

GB welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

2. Chair's Report

GB stated that the Parent Council had expanded its membership and it is now the largest Parent Council in the region.

He highlighted successes throughout the year such as the Summer Fete, Valentine's Disco, Riding of the Marches lorries and achieving funding for the sensory room. He thanked everyone for their contribution to each of these events.

3. Secretary's Report

Update on sensory room funding

Whiteside Hill awarded us the full amount applied for - £16254.28. Terms and conditions must be met before the funds are transferred. A third quote for the sensory room is required and also a management plan. The grant must be spent by 30th May 2024 and a monitoring report should be submitted by this date on the impact the grant has had.

ACTION – KB will liaise with AW and SB to write the management plan. AW will chase up the third quote.

Easyfundraising

KB will create a short video showing the school community how to use the site. There is currently £27 in the account and this gets paid out quarterly and the next payment date is around 14th Nov.

Education and Learning Parental Involvement

There are upcoming Connect information training sessions if anyone is interested in taking part in these online.

There are also resource packs for welcoming new families which contain some self-evaluation tools on 'how welcoming is our parent council?' and 'how welcoming is our school?'.

CAMHS

The CAMHS website has been updated and is now live. This has been co-designed by a working group made up of young people, parents, carers and staff.

Dumfries and Galloway Parent Forum

The next meeting is on Wed 20th Sept at 7pm.

The next Education and Learning Committee meeting is to be held on Thurs 14th Sept.

4. Treasurer's Report

GB suggested that we come up with ideas for the use of the Parent Council funding. KB asked if we are still planning to change the bank account to Bank of Scotland so that it is easier to put money into or take money out of the account. KP stated that the money for the Rag Bag collection had gone into the old PTA account which is with Bank of Scotland. She stated that we could possibly transfer everything from the RBS account into this account, to save opening a new one. VH said that Linda Anderson and Lisa Biggar should be signatures for this account.

ACTION – KP to enquire about transferring RBS account to Bank of Scotland account.

5. Election of Office Bearers

Greg Black was nominated as Chairperson by KP and seconded by EH.

Rosi McQuarrie Parks was nominated as Vice Chairperson by DMcN and seconded by GB.

Kirsty Pearson was nominated as Treasurer by GB and seconded by LS.

Krystin Black was nominated as Secretary by DMcN and seconded by LS.

Emma Herries was nominated as Social Committee Chairperson by DR and seconded by LS.

Margaret Welsh was nominated as Vice Social Committee Chairperson by GB and seconded by EH.

Kerry O'Neill, Ashley Weir, Elli King, Lynne Shaw, Lee Syme, Danielle McNulty, David Robertson, Jillian Hamilton, Gayle Zaidi and Hayley Elliot all indicated that they would like to continue in a non-office bearing role on the Parent Council. Stacey Beattie was also nominated as a new member of the Parent Council.

ACTION - GB stated that he would check with Daryl Moore, Ali White, Jessica Ryan-Sharpe and Jill Wright if they are happy to continue in their non-office bearing roles on the Parent Council.

6. Headteacher's Report

Successes

SB stated that it was good to have Mrs Hastie back after she took on an acting HT role at Kelloholm Primary School.

The new children in the nursery and P1 have settled in well.

The Pupil Council have elected new members and the House Captains and Vice Captains have been elected.

Staff Changes

SB stated that every Learning Centre in the region had been allocated an extra full time member of staff. Two teachers have been appointed to this role and will job share – Miss Robertson who taught in P1 last year and Mrs Jackson who taught in P2.

Miss Laird has made a good start in P1 and Mrs Burgess has been supporting her well.

Shona Black took early retirement after 31 years of service cleaning in the school. Lydia McNulty also retired after working in various roles such as lollipop lady, cleaner and playground supervisor. SB and the members of the Parent Council wished them well in their retirement. Both posts have been filled.

Education Officer

The Education Officer, Rachael Williams visited the school and was happy with what she had seen. She was also impressed with the School Improvement plan.

Disruptions

The Unison strike action is set to take place on 26th, 27th & 28th September, unless an agreement is made beforehand.

School Improvement Plan

The three main priorities for this year are the curriculum, health and wellbeing and digital technology (this is a cluster priority).

There has been success in the rollout of interactive boards within the school. Every teaching space has a display/interactive space. Staff training will take place to make sure that boards are utilised to their full potential.

Curriculum

Staff have looked at the curriculum rationale. There will be engagement with pupils, the Parent Council and the wider parent forum to develop the curriculum.

Health and wellbeing – Mrs Hastie will be leading on many of these areas.

Upcoming events

Meet the teacher – Wed 20th September

There will be no stay and play for the time being. SB stated that staff were thinking of how they can make this more beneficial to parents and pupils.

EH checked with the group about potential dates for the Halloween Disco and the group agreed that Wed 1st November is the most suitable date.

7. Issues raised by the parent forum

A parent had raised a concern about supervision in the playground during breakfast club after their child had fell and hurt themselves and there was no adult supervising at the time. SB stated that there is no obligation on staff to supervise pupils during this time but Mr Beattie, Mrs Hastie and Ms Weir have been rotating supervision since the incident. He stated that this may not be sustainable long term. Mr Love, the janitor, supervises the playground from 8.45am.

ACTION – SB will ask the Council about the policy on this issue and will contact other schools to see what their policy is. He has also spoken to the pupils about this to say that if they are in the playground after going to breakfast club, the doors are always open should they need to come inside.

A parent also requested that the school bells should be discussed at the meeting. SB stated that the school bells had been switched off last year as the noise and anticipation of the bell causes a lot of anxiety within a number of children in the school. SB stated that he can justify this with papers and conveyed that he felt strongly that this is the right decision. SB stated that he had recently presented at the inclusion festival for D&G and the removal of school bells was highlighted as good practice. KP suggested that the school could incorporate a clock outside so that children know the time.

ACTION – VH and SB stated that they could possibly produce a short video with the pupils on why the school no longer has bells and the benefits of this.

8. Parent Council Matters

Sensory room funding – noting

KB gave an update on this in the Clerk's report.

Curriculum working group – noting

ACTION – GB to send out terms of reference to all Parent Council members. KB to arrange a meeting with everyone who expressed an interest in being part of the curriculum group.

Simplify budget approvals

A limit of £300 was set for budgets for an event. Any event supplies over the budget must be approved by the group.

Proposal to purchase ties for nursery kids going into P1

The group decided to come back to this decision nearer the time that these would be required.

Proposal to purchase Oxford Owl/Reading Eggs

SB had done some research on Reading Eggs and said that it would be very costly to purchase this. He suggested using Oxford reading buddy which is £475 for the year. This would mainly be used with P1-P3 and for some P4 and P5 pupils. The app can read to children and gives them a quiz at the end of a book. SB stated that there is also caper books and lots of resources in school to support children with reading.

ACTION – SB to pass on link for Oxford Reading Buddy to PC members to have a look at and perhaps trial.

After school clubs

It was stated that there are not many clubs in the community for P1-P3. SB stated that the school is providing a choice of activity to all pupils on a Friday afternoon. Active schools will be offering a triathalon for P4-P7.

ACTION - SB stated that he would ask if the Active Schools triathalon could be opened up to P1-P3.

Sports prizes champions

A parent asked if the sports prizes could be given to each year group to celebrate sporting achievement as well as academic achievement. SB stated that there are currently sports champion trophies for good sportsmanship, one for P1-P4 and P5-P7. These can be awarded to a pupil in any year group. He said that the staff would consider making more of sports day.

Play park funding

The Bell's Crescent play park planning is still in it's early stages but £120 000 has been awarded to update it.

ACTION – EH to speak to Jim Dempster about further funding required.

Ideas for Parent Council funds

GB asked if anyone had ideas for what the Parent Council funding could be spent on then it should be discussed in the Parent Council Whatsapp chat.

9. Social and fundraising

Upcoming events

The Halloween disco is planned for Wednesday 1st November. There will be a tuck shop, glow sticks and a haunted house.

VH stated that the Christmas light switch on would be on the last Saturday in November.

The school Christmas choir will perform at this. VH also said the school would be holding a candlelight tea and hoped that the Parent Council would be able to help at this event.

Stall at Kirkconnel Gala

The group decided to discuss this nearer the time

The meeting closed at 8.15pm and GB thanked everyone for coming.