

Minutes

Darvel Primary School Parent Council 2021/2022

Date of meeting: 7 June 2022 **Time:** 7.00 pm

Location: Saxen Boardroom, Newmilns

Attendees: Louise Smith (LS), Laura Emery (LE), Joanna Wilks (JW), Gillian Harman (GH), Laura Hodge (LH), Kari Fulford (KF), Heather Jones (HJ), Nicola Quigley (NQ), Sarah Riley (SR), Moira Stephenson (MS), Kirsty Doncaster (KD), Siobhan Sloan (SS)

Apologies for absence: Claire Douglas (CD), Stephen O'Neill (SO), Laura Dodds (LD), Jacqueline McNally (JM), Kylie Cassels (KC)

Distribution: All in attendance, those absent, the wider parent forum and school colleagues.

Welcome

- LS thanked everyone for attending.

Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

School Crossing

- EAC have reviewed the advice previously given, but still consider that the crossing outside the Sports Centre an "informal crossing" and as such it would not meet the criteria for a manned crossing point.

School uniform

- KD confirmed that she would put out a message on the app before the end of term to confirm expectations around school uniform.

Action – KD: to confirm expectations regarding school uniform on app.

Steering Group

- LS provided an updated following the recent EAC Parent Council Steering Group.
- **Parent Helpers** - LS asked if there was likely to be any upcoming change to EAC guidance on the use of parent helpers given the relaxing of restrictions elsewhere. Linda McAulay Griffiths (LMG) acknowledged that EAC has taken a more cautious approach than some other councils, but this was due to the very high rates of Covid in East Ayrshire. Advice was that there would not be any change to guidance until after the summer holidays.
- **Breakfast Clubs** – It was noted that Breakfast Clubs are now permitted across EA, but it was at the discretion of the school as to whether they had the capacity to run these. LMG wanted to emphasise that Breakfast Clubs are provided for the provision of food rather than extended childcare. There would be no restriction on who could access a breakfast club, but they should not be considered as an alternative for childcare. KD explained that at this stage the school is not in a position to offer a breakfast club but would look at this again after the holidays.

- **Parents Evenings** – LMG explained that during the pandemic schools saw the highest ‘turnout’ for parents engaging with the parent/teacher meeting. As a result, EAC will be issuing a survey to parents and to schools to establish what model for parent/teacher meetings would work best going forward.
- **Chair Email Group** – An email group between chairs of parent councils is going to be set up to allow the exchange of information/ideas/best practice etc.

Petting Zoo

- It was noted that the petting zoo was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by the children. KD thanked the PC for arranging.

Lotto/Tesco Funding

- SS explained that various items/equipment had now been delivered to the school including a metal shed for storage and tyres to paint for plants.
- Sections of the playground will be painted (therma-plastic) in the coming week e.g. with a rocket and hopscotch for children to play on.
- Around £1,000 left from funds to spend on plants, equipment etc.
- Tesco blue token funding – LS explained that given a lot of work already underway on garden areas for children we will work together to establish best use of any funding received. LH thought a sensory garden could be really beneficial, which it was agreed was a really good idea.
- Outdoor play area – LS asked if it would be possible to get a name at the council to establish if this area could potentially be cleared to use for garden/sensory nature area, given that the play area could no longer be used.

Action – KD/LS: to establish who would be best person to speak with at EAC regarding the removal of play area and make contact.

Head Teacher Update

Classes for Next Year

- KD advised that notification regarding classes and teachers for next year would be issued soon. SR commented that parents were keen to find out as soon as possible so that if there were any concerns they could be dealt with before the end of term. It would also give children time to meet their new teacher.
- KD understood this and would aim to issue as soon as they could once last-minute finalising was complete.

Move Up Day

- The move up day for the P1s was taking place as planned and parents have also been invited to the P1 meeting and the P1 ‘come dine with me’. JW would provide a Parent Council update at the P1 parent meeting.
- The P7s transition days at Loudoun have been taking place as planned and are going well.
- The move up days for all other pupils had to be put on hold due to timing of receiving final staffing allocation from EAC – once teachers are confirmed pupils will get the chance to meet their teacher before the end of term.

Action – LS: To arrange for a parent council flier to be provided to school for new P1 parents at the start of term.

Clothing Sale

The Eco clothing sale and school uniform sale will be taking place on Friday 10th June.

P7 Fun Week

- SS provided an update on the fun activities and events that would be taking place for the P7s on week of the 13th June – the pupils aren't aware of the plans as of yet.
- The P7 day trip to Millport would be taking place on Monday 20 June. This is now being fully funded due to the number of donation received which the school is hugely grateful for: Saxen Security (£200), Flame Church (£500), the Parent Council (£200), Loudoun Rotary (£750).

Sports day

- Sports day will take place on the morning Tuesday 21st outdoors at the Sports Centre, starting at 9.45am.
- Children are encouraged to wear a T-shirt etc in their house colour – pupils will be notified of their house and the colour over the course of the next week or so.
- The PC have provided crisps and juice for sports day.

Fun Day (P6)

- Mrs McGregor and Miss Taggart /P6 are organising a fun day for children in P1 to P6 (P7 busy with their own activities). The event/activities will take place over the full day.

Prize Giving

- Prize giving will take place in the school over 2 mornings - Thursday 23rd June for P1 to P4, and Friday 24th June for P5 to P7.
- A lot of thought has gone into deciding how best to run Prize Giving this year due to the more limited amount of space for parents to attend.
- As maximum capacity is around 150 parents for each event, it was felt that the fairest way would be to allow parents/carers of all P1s and P7s to attend given this significant milestone, and then for parents of pupils who are receiving prizes to be given the opportunity to attend.
- Parents will be notified (by phone call) in advance to let them know if their child is receiving a prize.
- Two parents per child will be allowed to attend.

Cinema

- The cinema trip for all pupils will take place on 27th June.
- KD has requested a newer film. Given licencing issues etc the title of the film will not be released until approx. a week before the cinema trip.
- The PC is providing treats and a juice for the pupils – pupils will be encouraged to bring their own water bottle if they do not wish juice.

Trees and shrubs planted

- It was noted that the trees and flowering shrubs that have been planted on the grass slopes in front of the school are in remembrance of Mary Rutherford. Blair, Mary's son, chose a particular blossom tree which has taken time to find. A plaque would also be put in place.
- The plan is to have a viewing evening where people can come along to view the remembrance garden for Mary.

Downstairs Refurb

- All downstairs classes will be getting refreshed/refurbished over the summer holidays - new floors, walls painted, new blinds etc. Blackboards are to be removed and replaced with white boards.
- The small gym hall would also be re-floored.
- It is hoped that the refurb will be completed for children returning to school in August.

Finance Update

- Current funds in the bank account - £1,991.91
- Funds in cash - £68.61
- Funds still to be deducted - mini zoo (£340), snacks for cinema and sports day, hoodies and P7 trip donation.

- JW reminded the group that we would need to start thinking about fundraising events when we return after summer particularly if we are going to be able to fund the likes of Christmas panto buses etc.

Items Raised by Parent Forum

PEF / 1:1 / Classroom Assistants

- The group wanted to understand the criteria for allocating 1:1 support / classroom assistants, and how this is determined due to some queries that parents had around this.
- KD explained that all schools have an ASN log, which is reviewed when classroom assistants are allocated to a school. KD reviews support required for individual children with teachers and the management team.
- KD explained that the school has been sent its allocation for next year, but that they were in the process of submitting an additional request for support.
- The group noted that depending on the needs of the school/children, a classroom assistant would often provide 1:1 support which helps the teacher to continue delivering the curriculum for all pupils.
- If additional classroom assistants are required, PEF funding can be used for this.
- EAST support (Mrs Bell) works with groups of children and across the school to provide additional support.

Behaviour Policy / Survey

- It was noted that some parents had raised concerns about the behaviour survey, particularly in terms of taking individual needs/challenges of pupils into account. One of the key challenges was that parents didn't understand the full context of the survey and how this sat with the policy.
- KD explained that a lot of work had gone into the policy, and that the full inservice day and been spent on developing the staged approach to behaviours and consequences.
- It was noted that this section was only a small part of the new Relationships policy that the school was seeking feedback on. It was acknowledged that there is no 'one size fits all' approach, and that the individual needs of the pupil would always be taken into account when considering the consequences of behaviour.
- More details on the full policy would be issued in due course to the PC and parents.

School Improvement Plan Survey

- It was noted that number of parents found the language and types of questions asked in the survey difficult to answer e.g. closing attainment gaps etc. Some parents remarked that they did not submit a response because they were unsure of the types of answers that the school was looking for.
- KD explained that the same questions were asked each year and that no issues had been raised previously, but did acknowledge that the response rate was quite low.
- It was agreed that the survey would be issued to the PC group in advance next year so that input and feedback on the questions could be provided.

Action – KD: to liaise with PC group regarding school improvement plan survey in advance of issue next June.

Daily Assemblies

- It was noted that a number of parents had raised concerns about the amount of time children were spending in assembly each week. It was felt by some that this was lost learning time.
- KD explained that the assemblies are educational and very focused, and cover matters such as health and wellbeing, achievements, reinforcing values, music lessons, safety issues etc.
- During this time teachers get their non-teaching contact time (NTCT) – with each teacher being entitled to 2.5hrs per week.
- Previously virtual assemblies were provided in 1hr/1hr/0.5hr slots over the course of the week, but it was felt that it was too much to ask children to sit for an hour at a time at this stage.
- Given staffing levels/requirements, KD explained that assemblies would continue in this format until the end of term.
- Assemblies and the provision of NTCT would be reviewed at the start of next term.

Community Police Visit

- It was noted that there had been reports of anti-social behaviour in the local community. Whilst this tended to involve older children and children from other areas, it was agreed that a visit from the Community Police at the start of term would be beneficial to cover, amongst other things, matters relating to behaviours, the impact of certain behaviours on others, as well as knowing who to go for help etc.
- KD explained that the community police had been in this year delivering a talk to upper primary pupils.

Action – KD: to arrange for the Community Police to visit the children at the start of term.

AOBSkate Park

- It was noted that a boy had received a bad cut when falling on broken glass at the skate park – the School would be raising awareness of this at assembly.

School Meals

- It was noted that pupils coming to the second sitting of lunch, at times, did not get their meal choice.
- KD explained that the school is aware of this and had raised the matter with catering.

Pupil Council

- MS asked if the school had a pupil council. KD explained that they have had this in the past and it was a useful way of ensuring pupils views and thoughts were taken into account when decisions were being made.
- To be raised at a future PC meeting.

Date & Time of Next Meeting

- The next meeting of the Parent Council will take place in September (date to be confirmed) and will include the Parent Council AGM.
- A reminder and request for matters to be raised will be issued in advance.