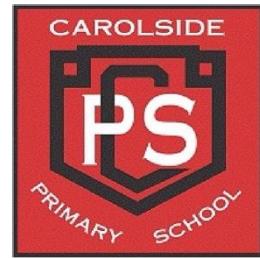


Carolside Parent Council

Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 25th September 2018

Place: Carolside Primary School.



Present:

Name	Initials	Year Group
Jacqui McIntosh	JM	Nursery (am)
Nicola Edgar	NE	Nursery (pm)
Pamela Graham	PG	P1
Alison Young	AY	P1
Fiona McKenna	FM	P2
Jonathan Black	JB	P2
Christine Carswell	CC	P3
Gillian Cox	GC	P4
Lesley Watson	LW	P4
Rebecca Nicholson	RN	P5 (Chair)
Judith Currie	JC	P6 (Vice Chair)
Christine Kiltie	CL	P7
Lorraine Jenkins	LJ	P7
Stevie Greer	SG	Traffic subgroup
Bryan McLachlan	BM	Head Teacher
Jacqueline Dunn	JD	Depute Head Teacher
Gayle McDonald	GM	Depute Head Teacher
Annette Ireland	AI	ERC Councillor
Alan Lafferty	AL	ERC Councillor

Apologies: Sharon Henderson (P5), Deborah Wilson (P3), Vanessa Taylor (no longer on PC)

1. General Welcome & Apologies

RN welcomed new and existing members to the meeting, as well as staff, local councillors and Stevie Greer whose child has now moved on to High School but who has stayed to see the traffic matters through.

2. Introductions

Each person present introduced themselves in turn.

3. Previous meeting Minutes Approval

The previous meeting's Minutes were approved.

4. Traffic sub-group update

SG explained that he had been asked by East Renfrewshire Council (ERC) to continue to liaise on traffic improvements, which he is happy to do. He showed a video, made by the JRSOs and his son, highlighting the traffic dangers and benefits of walking to school. He also summarised previous discussions with ERC and concerns from parents. (Report attached).

A wide-ranging TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) is now planned by ERC. A survey is in progress and detailed consultation will follow. This project is a “proof of concept” for potential future roll-out to other schools.

AI had hoped for more info but more will be available later in the week.

5. Head Teacher's report

See attached report from BM, including staffing update, parent consultations, the Digital Schools Award and Maths Week Scotland.

FM raised question on social media content from the school and its accessibility by all. BM confirmed that Glow Blogs are not in public domain.

6. Actions from Previous Minutes.

PTA to be asked by GC about possibility of ordering the P7 hoodies earlier.

FM suggested future PC guests to present on language provision, science learning, Active Schools, Daily Mile or music instrumental learning provision, which was interesting last year.

A question was raised about the process for deciding which buildings to use as polling stations, as Carolside is constantly used in favour of other schools of community buildings. **AI to find out.** GC said the last decision was made in 2014.

7. PTA Update

GC supplied update. PTA foresees a good mutual relationship with the Parent Council. They are reinvigorated and have already introduced Digital Newsletters, remote members, and shadowing roles for better continuity and smaller burdens on individuals. Upcoming events include P1 Fun Night, Discos, P6 and P7 Movie evenings, Family Photo Day and the Christmas Fair. Spending is earmarked for Foyer improvements as well as the usual PTA funding commitments.

8. Toilets

RN outlined the background. In May the planned and much-needed P1 and P6/7 toilet improvements were announced by ERC. In early June, without any form of consultation, it was announced that they would be “gender-neutral”. Funding had become available shortly before the holiday during which the work would have to take place, hence the short time frame in the toilet renovations . Now, ERC are stepping back and relinquishing the gender-neutral decision-making to Head Teachers, presumably until such time as a change in Scottish law requires them (which could be this year). As far as the Carolside new toilets are concerned, they are already operating successfully as mixed provision and will remain so. Any future renovation of the *other* toilets will be subject to some sort of consultation within the school, should funding be assigned.

RN, JC, FM and BM had met with ERC Quality manager, but they declined to attend this meeting. Staff and PC members have spent a great deal of time communicating information to parents, in the absence of consultation or available facts. FM circulated her “Areas of Concern” document to help analyse and address various concerns that people might have (attached).

BM had asked the Pupil Council broad questions regarding the toilets. They made many comments about the improved cleanliness, privacy and accessibility of the facilities themselves. When prompted, the negative comments were that the taps stopped too quickly and that the paper towels needn’t be available as well as the popular Dyson hand dryers. **Action: Pupil Council members will now consult their classmates.**

Staff are reporting easier monitoring due to them being open to the corridor and accessible regardless of gender. CL reported that girls are feeling safer now. PC members viewed the new

toilets during the meeting. LJ feels that changes are positive now that sanitary bins are now in all cubicles. BM confirmed that they are cleaned twice in the school day. LJ, JC and others felt that use of the term “gender- neutral” was unhelpful.

JB aired strong concerns, however, that have been raised by a number of P2 parents. There is a strong feeling that the switch to gender-neutral toilets and the lack of consultation has been motivated by a certain political agenda and that the improved condition of the facilities in no way justify the way things have been handled. Parents with genuine concerns have not had the opportunity to raise them appropriately during any consultation process and as a result the debate among parents has instead been vigorous and highly emotive on social media. Consensus at the meeting (parents and local councillors) was that there has been a “deeply regrettable” lack of consultation and facts from ERC were largely to blame. BM confirmed that any parent contacting him has been heard sensitively and their concerns have been recognised, and mitigated where possible. He also reported that there has been similar numbers of messages of support and of concern.

Action: RN to write to Mairi Shaw of ERC on behalf of the Carolside Parents voicing disappointment in the handling of the issue and asking for improved involvement in future.

9. Items for discussion

RN asked whether we want to change or improve communicating as a Parent Council. Consider a Facebook page, but who would monitor/moderate that and how? LW suggested more expedient issuing of meeting minutes, with frequent update of the website and links from the school. School to communicate who the reps for each year group are. Could send PC minutes to all parents via Sway?

Action: JD to invite Active Schools co-ordinator to next PC meeting.

Action: Anybody interested in Connect training session on Parent Councils, on 6th November 7pm, should submit their name to RN.

Action: If any parent has a particular question to suggest for Depute Head interviews on Friday 5th October, email JC on judynaismith@hotmail.com.

AI confirmed that on Friday 28/9/18 the planning applications for the new Nurseries will be available to view.

10. AOCB

No further points.

11. Next Meeting

7pm Tuesday 23rd October 2018. Cake welcome.

Appendices:

Traffic Group Update

Head Teacher's Report

Areas of Concern (Gender-Neutral Toilets)

Carolside Parent Council 25.09.18 - Traffic Sub Group Report

- JRSO “Our Walk To School” video presentation
- to highlight the positive benefits of walking to school, the problems kids face due to the volume of traffic/road behaviour and demonstrate how the environment around the school is vastly improved by having fewer cars.
- *Proposed TRO by ERC*
- how did we get to where we are?
- having reviewed the work previously done by the Parent Council, PTA and the school in creating ‘awareness’ initiatives, also the Edinburgh Urban Schools pilot scheme I decided in May 2017 to focus on the most complained about issue, i.e. the Bus Bay on Greenfield Road.
- This meant trying to press ERC for a TRO or some kind of regulation to prohibit the use of the Bus Bay as a de facto drop-off facility
- I wrote to ERC on 16th May 2017, highlighting the problems and need for action.
- 23rd June 2017 First onsite meeting with the new School Travel Coordinator at ERC, Barima Ahenkan on
- 3rd October 2017 Meeting with Barima, John Marley and Bryan McLachlan at ERC - discussed the range of traffic issues around the school, park and stride, walk to school, Red Zone. Requested that they look at, the very least, creating a regulation to enforce the ‘school buses only’ status of Bus Bay
- 17th November Onsite “school run meeting” with John Marley, Michel Morgenthaler, Stevie Greer
- 26th June ‘Proposed TRO Meeting’ at Carolside Saj Sadiq (Kirkhill PS) Michael Morgenthaler, Bryan McLachlan, John Marley, Barima Ahenkan, Malcolm Matheson, Ruth Adams, Stevie Greer - John Marley presented proposal for wide-ranging TRO to limit traffic, improve school environs for pedestrians and promote walking. Carolside and Kirkhill PS to be used as proof-of-concept for possible roll-out to all schools in East Renfrewshire
- 11th September email from Barima (attached)

Hi Stevie,

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you.

I do recall that Roads promised, during our last meeting, to implement some of the proposed traffic measures in Kirkhill and Carolside Primary schools before the start of the term. Unfortunately, there’s been some slight delays. Currently, a contractor has been assigned to undertake both pedestrian and vehicular count surveys around the schools. The survey results would provide sufficient data to support and justify the need for the implementation of the proposed traffic measures in case objections are raised during the TRO process. The surveys would hopefully commence next week.

We hope to conduct another survey after all the proposed traffic measures have been implemented.

On another note, Friday would be my last day in ERC. Ross McDowall has taken over from me and will now be responsible for all of the stuff I do. Please find below his email Ross.McDowall@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

It has been a pleasure to working with you and I hope our paths cross some other time.

Best wishes,

Barima

Carolside Primary School and Nursery Class

Head Teacher's Diary

25th September 2018

Six weeks have passed since school resumed following the summer break. I'm delighted to report a very positive start to the new session – the children are working well and have settled well into routine once again. I'd like to extend a very warm welcome to all of our new P1 pupils and their families – 94 children have joined the P1 year group and have settled well. I'd also like to express my thanks to all of you for your support of and interest in the ongoing work of the Parent Council for this coming session.

Staffing

There are one or two updates with regard to staffing, so I hope that this information is helpful to you.

New Members of Staff

Welcome to five NQTs: Miss McBride (P1), Miss Muscat (P3), Miss Fox (P4), Miss Baillie (P5) and Miss Greenshields (P6).

Miss Wallet unable to return to work at this time due to ill health, so we have welcomed Mrs Devlin in her place.

Mrs Barber and Mrs Javed have joined the PSA team and Mrs Leggat has joined us as office manager in place of Mrs Watson, who has been seconded to the admissions team.

Welcome to all.

Recruitment

Recruiting for two DHT posts. Seven applicants, four have been leeted for interview and interviews take place a week on Friday.

Recruitment taking place for a vacant CDOs post. Post to be appointed before the October holiday.

Mrs McCandlish has gone on maternity leave – congratulations.

Mrs Sweeny to go on maternity leave soon – best wishes.

Mrs Gillian to return from maternity leave over the coming weeks.

School Improvement Planning

Session 18/19

Copies of the School Improvement Plan are available this evening. Happy to discuss any aspect of this at a future meeting. On the SIP this session:

- Embed the revised statement of Vision, Values, Aims and Curriculum;
- To work towards establishing a House System in the school (working party convening tomorrow);
- Opportunities for pupils to lead their own learning:
 - o Non Class Contact Time
 - o CLPL for staff;
- Continued focus on assessment, moderation and tracking pupil progress;
- Playful approaches in the early years;
- Equitable outcomes for pupils who require additional support in school;

- Use of technologies to allow pupils to record their progress in school and share this with parent/carers;
- and, working towards Family Centred accreditation.

Cluster Improvement Planning

Cluster Management Group have already met, with a focus this session on:

- Moderation of Standards;
- Sciences, Technologies, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects;
- Early Learning and Childcare;
- and, continuity of transition from aged three to eighteen.

I will report the progress of the school and cluster plans as the session progresses.

Other News

- Very settled and productive start to the session – very grateful for that.
- Successful ‘Meet the Teacher’ event.
- Thanks to all parents and carers who managed to attend the drop-in two weeks ago.
- P7 visit to Lockerbie Manor – very successful. Thanks to all who participated and to the 14 members of staff who staffed the event.
- Awarded the Digital Schools award – the assessment took place last week.

Next Month

- Parent Consultations
- Friendship assembly, organised by Primary 3.
- Inset Day 3.

Thanks and have an enjoyable mid-term break when it comes.

Introduction of Gender-Neutral Toilets: Areas of Concern, Suggested Actions and Potential Benefits

The following concerns, suggested actions and potential benefits have been compiled based on the discussions at the Parent Council AGM, the P1 facebook page, individual discussions with P1 parents and carers, and a few individual discussions with some primary age pupils (at Carolside and elsewhere):

Area of Concern	Specific Issues	Suggested Actions – For Discussion
1. Disappointing Lack of consultation / information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No opportunity to consider and debate pros and cons, or to get positive and negative feedback, resulting in no opportunity to get parents, teachers and pupils on board with the change from the outset ▪ No indication of the rationale behind the decision or the potential benefits ▪ No opportunity to raise any concerns ▪ Little time to learn from existing schools where this is the practice ▪ Little time to implement the type of measures which might mitigate some of the concerns ▪ No clear information issued from the school, which has resulted in rumours, rather than facts (for example, re whether this represents an additional provision, or whether it is for use by all, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A more detailed communication should be issued from the school outlining exactly what is planned, why it is planned, when it will happen, and how it will be implemented ▪ Schools with existing gender-neutral provision should be contacted to learn lessons from existing practice (Lenzie Meadows, campus school in Largs, others?) ▪ Parents with concerns should be encouraged to contact the school directly ▪ The Parent Council should meet with the Council to find out more information (on rationale, and on lessons learned from existing practice) – in advance of implementation ▪ Council Representatives should be invited to Parent Council meeting in new session to discuss any implementation issues / lessons learned
2. Hygiene / cleanliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerns re wet toilet seats, floor etc ▪ Concerns re germs in terms of lifting / replacing toilet seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signage in toilets re rules re lifting/replacing toilet seat (similar to signs re handwashing) ▪ Appropriate products within cubicles for cleaning (eg. disinfectant wipes etc), and appropriate bins for both sanitary products and any wipes etc ▪ Education within classes regarding respectful toilet behaviour ▪ Regularity of cleaning to be reviewed and adapted if necessary
3. Privacy / comfort / wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comfort re shared facilities at a sensitive age (re puberty for both genders, re menstruation for girls, etc) ▪ Best practice in gender neutral toilets appears to be floor to ceiling individual cubicles with sink units within – but the plans for Carolside seem to have the sinks outside the cubicles, resulting in concerns re privacy etc (especially for older girls re menstruation etc) ▪ Locks will need to be well-maintained and safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specific “senior girls” toilet facilities in addition to gender neutral provision
4. Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Younger children potentially getting locked in toilets which are floor to ceiling, instead of current arrangement where they can be accessed above or below the toilet door 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy re attending the toilets in pairs? ▪ Request to see a copy of the Council's risk assessment and risk mitigation plans ▪ Get feedback from schools with

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervision of P1/P2 pupils who decide to use gender-specific toilets in other areas of the school building ▪ Inappropriate behaviour ▪ Bullying within cubicles which are floor to ceiling, so no witnesses to behaviour 	existing gender-neutral provision to find out how they have addressed such potential issues
5. Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of choice (in comparison to secondary schools within the Council area, which offer male / female / gender-neutral provision) ▪ Queues resulting from the removal of urinals ▪ While the majority of the older pupils are expected to self-segregate – what happens to those pupils who choose not to? 	
6. Toilet Avoidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some children may avoid drinking during the day in order to avoid the use of toilets altogether (although it should be noted that this is also a current issue as a result of the sub-standard toilet provision) 	

Potential Benefits	Points to Note
1. Clean, new toilets compared to existing sub-standard provision	
2. Gender-neutral provision is more inclusive / fair, and will teach young children to be respectful and tolerant of all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ But note the point above regarding concern re lack of fairness at lack of choice
3. Removing gender differences can result in improvements in aspiration, attainment and gender stereotypes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Although it should be noted that in order for this to have an impact, other gender differences within the school (eg. pink homework folders for girls and blue homework folders for boys) would also need to be identified and removed
4. Reduction in bullying as less people will congregate in the toilet area	
5. Reduction in vandalism within the toilets, as the area will be open to the corridor	
6. Less children eating lunch within the toilet areas	
7. No urinals resulting in more privacy for boys	
8. Shared facilities could result in less stigma surrounding puberty, periods, etc	