**Carolside Parent Council meeting via Zoom  
27 May 2020, 7pm**

**Present: Melissa Coll (MC), Emma Williamson (EW), Lise Fisher (LF), Deborah Wilson (DW), Gillian Cox (GC), Ali Preston (AP), David Clubley (DC), Claire Reid (CR), Jacqui McIntosh (JMc), Sally Wilkie (SW), Gordon Bell (GB), Fiona McKenna (FMcK), Rebecca Nicholson (RN), Gill Christianson (PTA) (GCh),  Bryan McLachlan (BMcL), Jo McGregor (JMcG), Rosie Welsh (PTA) (RW), Sophie Maudsley (PTA) (SM)**

**Apologies: Cllr Lafferty, Christine Carswell**

* RN apologised for password problems accessing the call tonight and for any issues caused by the fraudulent email last week. Thanks to all for attending. GB offered apologies for the April meeting.
* Headteacher update

**Carolside Primary School and Nursery Class**

**Head Teacher’s Diary**

**25th May 2020**

I trust that you and your families are well at this time. My thanks to you all for making time to join the meeting this evening - I trust that this update will be a helpful one. Things are moving very quickly, as you will imagine, so I’ll try to keep to the highest level messages in this report and you may wish to ask questions as it unfolds.

Tonight I want to update you with regard to three aspects of our work currently:

1. Staffing
2. Classification for session 2020/21
3. Recovery

Before I do cover these issues, just a quick update with regard to the ongoing circumstances around the school closure. As we discussed last time, learning is taking place online for all children, with a small group of children joining us at the hub school in Netherlee. This continues to be the case and, further to our discussion last time, I hope that you have noticed the development of online learning to include the introduction of new learning. In addition to this, we have added assembly presentations by video and I hope that you all enjoyed the, once seen never forgotten, staff video the other week. Replicating school online is impossible, but I hope that our approach has developed over the last weeks. Online learning will be a feature of the children's educational experience for some time yet, so we’ll continue to invest as much as we can in developing our approaches in this area.

**Staffing**

One or two items of staff news to share at this point. Our complete staffing for next session is still to be confirmed, but I can confirm one or two items of staffing news that has been confirmed. I believe that we will have five Newly Qualified Teachers next session, so they will replace the five outgoing NQTs that we have enjoyed having with us this year. All five have done a great job and we congratulate them on the completion of their NQT year, in slightly unexpected circumstances.

There are one or two members of staff who will be leaving Carlside at the end of the session, so I thought it appropriate to mention them in this report. Sarah-Jane Lawrie and Lewis Milligan have both been successful in gaining permanent employment at another East Renfrewshire school, so they will leave us over the summer. I am very grateful to them both for their commitment and hard work while here at Carolside - both will be an asset in their new schools.

It has been indicated to me that Pamela Watson, our office manager who has been seconded to the center for a couple of years will not be returning to Carolsdie as her post has been made permanent. We will advertise the post of Office Manager on the other side of the pandemic. I’d like to thank Pamela for all of her hard work as Office Manager over six years in Carolside.

Eileen Friel, one of our long-serving PSAs left us just after we locked down to move to a new life in Ireland, where her family is based. We thank Eileen for her service to the school and wish her well for the future. Eileen has been replaced by Donna Stevenson, who has taken post as a 25 hour per week PSA this month. We’ll meet her properly soon - welcome Donna.

Finally, for now, we’ll be saying goodbye to Fiona Cartwright at the end of the term. Fiona has been a PSA and member of the clerical team in Carolside for 16 years but the time has come for her to retire in spite of me pleading that she doesn’t. She has been an exceptionally committed and loyal member of the team and we wish her a long and happy retirement when it comes. She’s just found out that she’s going to be a grannie for the first time, so these are exciting days for Fiona.

**Classification and Staffing for Session 20/21**

Amongst the developing news regarding staffing for next session, it has been made known to us that we have been staffed to form 27 classes, instead of the usual 28 classes next session. The job of allocating teachers to classes has begun today and we’ll be in a position to share this information with you as we reach the end of term. As is the case every year, this information may come quite late in the term because, although we know our permanent staffing and our NQT allocation, I await confirmation of which temporary staff we’ll be welcoming to Carolside next session. Once this has been confirmed we can match teachers to classes and let you know these arrangements.

The reduction of classes from the usual 28 to 27 will mean that we will reclassify our current P1 year group from four classes to three. You will no doubt be aware that we can only have 25 children in a P1 class, but this number rises to 30 in P2 and then 33 in P4. In order to staff the school as efficiently as possible, we can take the 88 current P1 children and create three classes in P2. This reclassification is necessary because we have 1 less teacher in our staffing allocation for next session.

I understand that this change of classification might be unexpected and cause some concern for families, particularly in light of the fact that the children are returning to school after a lengthy period of closure. We are happy that we have been able to reclassify the classes in a manner that assures that children are in a new class with some of their friends and we are happy that the mix of abilities is also appropriate across the classes. Tomorrow we will email all of our P1 families with this information and then, in the absence of being able to catch up with them in school, call each of the families, should they request al call, to give them some reassurance and allow them to ask questions.  Reclassification has been carried out on numerous occasions before as children have journeyed from P1 to P2 and I am quite convinced that this may be the norm in the coming years too. Our experience tells us that children cope well with this change and settle quickly into their new classes, so we are confident that we are in a position to support them with this in August. All other classes in the school will progress to their new year group and teacher without the need for reclassification.

**Recovery**

You will no doubt be aware of the latest guidance from the Scottish Government in relation to our progression out of lockdown in all aspects of our lives. Education is an area that has received much coverage over the last few days and I am now in a position to offer you some updates by way of our timeline. I must state that this is a very high-level message at this time and I would, therefore, welcome the chance to offer you a further, more detailed, update next month, if you feel it appropriate. This is a fast-moving aspect of the situation we are dealing with and the information from Scottish Government was received just last Thursday. As a local authority and a school we are seeking to translate this high-level guidance into a set of more detailed decisions that support our return to school. The important dates that we are working to at this time are as follows:

**1.6.20**  Facilities Management back into schools;

Leadership Teams back into own school;

Risk Assessments complete for each building;

Plans drafted for transition activities

**5.6.20**  School Hubs close

**From 8.6.20** Hub school children back to own schools;

School staff return to own schools to firm up recovery plans, redesign their own classrooms, prepare in school and out of school learning.

**From week beginning 15.6.20**

Targeted groups of children and young people (group size to be determined by HT) attend :

Pre-school children) for transition

Primary 7 children) purposes

Any other children who would benefit from transition activities

**29.6.20** Summer Programme for hub school children – ERCLT

**11.8.20** Schools return 11 August 2020 subject to SG guidance

The key aspects of this that we need to focus on are timelines and arrangements for new P1 and S1 transition and communicating the arrangements for August to all families prior to the close of school at the end of next month.

Following your feedback in the annual consultation last month, we are beginning to create a School Improvement Plan for next session. This will be a recovery plan, focussed entirely on the reintroduction of all children to school following the closure. All of the conventional priorities, that were notionally included in the plan for next session, will be carried forward to session 21/22. The two broad priorities for next session’s plan will be:

1. Recovery and Wellbeing (both emotional and physical)
2. Learning and Teaching (with a focus on ‘blended’ approaches to schooling)

We will continue to work on this plan and will share this with you, and the wider parent forum, next month.

Finally, my thanks, once more, to all of the families of Carolside for your continued support and understanding during these challenging days.  The road so far has been long and has involved a number of challenges, and it’s becoming increasingly clear that a long road lies ahead. The sense of school community remains and for this we are very grateful.

* RN expressed appreciation for the online assembly a few weeks ago and thanks to all staff for the video message which was positively received by parents and pupils. Belated welcome onto call for new PTA Chair RW and Vice SM – thanks for attending. PC members will join PTA online meeting to progress joint working and relationship-building
* RN asked BMcL to explain further how the reclassification process is carried out in regard to P1 moving to P2 and it was explained that staff use observations around friendship groups and other interactions, individual needs as well as class work. Query on places for those moving into catchment – a small number are protected for this purpose. EW asked if there is a way of knowing who will go into what class. BMc - Data protection doesn’t allow for class lists to be issued however parents are usually able to work out who is in which class through their own contact groups.
* Discussion around transitions – FMc will work with PTA and record Parent Council induction message for new P1 intake – planned for June.
* Further updates to follow, constantly evolving situation and possibility of direct comms from ERC to parents.
* Staff will liaise with HT at Williamwood High. Likelihood that children will return on part-time basis organised by family group – House system could help facilitate this as it’s set up this way. More guidance to follow, relatively short time to organise but commitment to update everyone on what the start of the new term will look like before summer recess commences. It will come down to schools to make decisions that best fit their own particular circumstances and facilities.
* Appreciate there are lots of questions – DW raised uniforms, printing and requested to collect items left at school pre-lockdown. FMc raised questions around PPe, reference to other countries experiences of return to school and general concerns. BMc stated he did not expect PPe to be used by staff. FMc requested earliest possible indication of likely pattern for school attendance.
* BMc reiterated that relationships and nurture are at the heart of the current recovery planning, a huge undertaking. Whilst academic process is crucial in a school context, it would never be pursued until children are emotionally ready. Smaller class groups will allow bonding and relationship building.
* CR – would be easier to home school one child rather than all at once. GC asked about friendship groups attending together and potential for staggered starts. BMc acknowledged difficulties and that arrangements will not suit all - but stressed family groups would be priority in aim to avoid as much confusion/difficulties for families as possible, including for working parents. Staggered starts being considered – playground large enough to accommodate social distancing.
* GC asked if children would be consulted. BMC will be holding assembly on Thursday and will directly address children and request their views and concerns – can be directed to teachers.
* GB asked about role of PC during the consultation and communications with class groups. RN stated not a consultation process to her knowledge and BMc confirmed the recovery plan will be shared and there is a logistical need to make timely decisions to meet the needs of families and communicate those. Advised the PC provides a sense of how the wider parent forum feel and allows him to update. RN – suggestion that members check in as far as possible with YG parents and encourage them to submit any queries or concerns to their reps, read the Minutes and make contact if required with school or ourselves.
* GB asked about assessing children’s progress against where they should be. BMc advised that children are where they are – staff will ascertain learning needs, acknowledgement that some parents have not used the home learning resources for a variety of reasons. Provision and support will be in place. JMcG advised of website distance learning guides and methodoly.
* End of year – DW asked about showing appreciation for staff. RN – tricky as parents are not encouraged to go into school for the foreseeable. Class groups could organise as they feel appropriate – perhaps evouchers? Ideas welcome. Conscious that families may have financial concerns.
* Parent Guides – to be distributed on blog as discussed. Other guides to be carried forward. FMcK voiced a request for PC members to share their thoughts on what has worked well in terms of communications etc to form a guide for future PC members. New term will not feature groups of parents chatting in playground in the same way and creative/innovative ways of capturing thoughts and encouraging involvement would be helpful
* Written reports will be out 19th June. No plans to replace the missed face to face consultations from March – schools generally will need to consider how to move forward with these
* RN- we will hold a June PC meeting for further recovery updates and AGM – date TBC – led by management team. Nominations required for posts of Chair and Vice Chair for new academic year please.
* GC – any update on P6 Lockerbie Manor trip. BMC advised it looks unlikely and we can’t rebook - however we have to wait for them to cancel in due course. GC asked if any option to split trip in half – BMc agreed outdoor activities are considered less of a risk and said we would await word from Lockerbie if this could be something they can safely accommodate.
* AP asked about SNSA results – BMc advised these tests weren’t carried out as the window was April for Carolside. March information from when children were present with teachers will be used as part of assessments on progression going forward
* Query on next year’s calendar – no expectation of parents being in school for events for the remainder of 2020
* RN thanked everyone for attending and all contributions – will be in contact with June meeting date
* \*Meeting over-ran and PTA update was missed – provided in writing as follows – thanks to PTA for recent playground improvement work

“P1 and P3 shelters painted as well as main one. 1 more tin of line paint sourced so we can finish junction 2 and 3. We will need to buy the rest and need about 6 tubs and at £80 a tin it’s a lot. A parent had sourced us approx £500 worth of paint and materials to date to get this far. What it means is hopefully from 8th June we can get new equipment in as soon as scotplay can do. We are one of first to get this done.”