**Carolside Parent Council Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday 17th September 2019, Carolside Primary School

Attendees:

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| Nicola Edgar | NE | Nursery (morning) |
| Melissa Coll  | MC | Nursery (afternoon) |
| Jacqui McIntosh | JMc | P1 |
| Emma Williamson  | EW | P1 |
| Pamela Graham | PG | P2 |
| Claire Reid  | CR | P2 |
| Lise Fisher  | LF | P3 |
| Gordon Bell  | GB | P3 |
| Deborah Wilson | DW | P4 |
| Gillian Cox | GC | P5 |
| Sally Wilkie | SW | P5 |
| Lorraine Jenkins | LJ | P6 |
| Ali Preston  | AP | P6 |
| Helena Almeida  | HA | P7 |
| David Clubley | DC | P7 |
| Rebecca Nicholson | RN | Chair |
| Fiona McKenna | FMc | Vice Chair |
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| Bryan McLachlan | BMcL | Head Teacher |
| Jacqueline Dunn | JD | School |
| Jo McGregor | JMcG | School |
| Gayle McDonald | GMcD | School |
| Annette Ireland | AI | Councillor |

**Apologies:**  Christine Carswell - P4, Cllr A Lafferty

**1.Actions outstanding from previous minutes/Intro to the new term:**

Welcome to all by RN, and a quick intro from all those present. RN asks everyone to inform her in regard to sharing of personal emails, within the Parent Council, for communication purposes.

Confirmation following AGM that RN is remaining as Chair for a second year – nominated by Gillian Cox and seconded by Jacqui McIntosh. Fiona McKenna nominated for Vice Chair by Deborah Wilson and seconded by Ali Preston.

RN reminds all present of recruitment training. We require 3 people to be trained to allow members of the Parent Council to sit on the panel when senior appointments are being made at CPS. Dates will be forwarded. Brief chat about some of the things that could be discussed this term; the new House System and Teacher Gifting are muted. All PC Members invited to submit areas of interest for the year ahead.

Minutes from last meeting in May are approved.

**2. Head Teacher’s Diary**

**Carolside Primary School and Nursery Class**

**Head Teacher’s Diary**

**17th September 2019**

It’s been a busy, yet successful, start to the school session. I trust that this brief update is useful to you.

**Staffing**

A few items to report this month:

* Welcome back to school Mrs Lisa McCandlish from maternity leave.
* Welcome to several new members of staff: Mrs Parhar (P2), Miss Lawrie (P5), Mr Fulton (P6) and Miss Connelly (P7).
* Welcome back to Mrs Fishwick, permanent supply 0.5 until she goes on maternity leave.
* Congratulations to Mrs Ross and Mrs Calderhead, previously Miss Thomson and Miss Whyte, who were married over the summer break.
* Congratulations on Mrs Sarah Bruce, successfully appointed to the post of Acting PT until the end of the December. Mrs Lindsey Gillian is now replacing Miss Rutherford, and Mrs Bruce replacing Mrs Giles, who will return from maternity leave at the end of the year.
* Congratulations to Miss Rutherford on the birth of her daughter.
* Thanks to Mrs Sue Leggate for her service as Office Manager last session. Sue has moved on over the summer. Miss Lisa Turner has taken over as temporary Office Manager over these last few weeks. We have also welcome Joyce Simpson and Susan Haw to the clerical team.
* Finally, there will be a reduction of PSA hours in this, and all schools, this session. This has been managed in the following way:
	+ 245 hrs reduced to 97.5 hrs
	+ PSAs without permanent contracts did not have their contract renewed (five members of our staff)
	+ PSAs with a permanent contract were retained here at Carolside.
	+ Cheryl Irvine was appointed to a permanent position in ELCC.
	+ June Mack appointed to permanent position in another school’s clerical team.
	+ Graeme Campbell appointed to permanent position in ELCC.
	+ This movement meant that all permanent PSA remained in post here in Carolside: Eillen Friel (25 hrs), Fiona Cartwright (25 hrs), Maryam Forrester (17.5 hrs), Katy Gallagher (15 hrs) - leaves 15 hours in the allocation.
	+ School has recruited and paid for Taz Javed (20 hrs), Carole Barber (20 hrs) and Helen James (25 hrs)
	+ Total now of 147.5, 50 hrs a week funded by school.
	+ Confident that we can manage with this allocation. We were able to retain all former members of the support staff, except those who went to other ‘positive’ destinations across the council.
	+ Special mention for Frances Magee who is volunteering a further 10 hours to help staff the lunch hall.
* Recruitment in ELCC at this point in time. Possibility of quite a significant recruitment in order to ensure that we are staffed ahead of time for 1140 hours. Will report the outcome of this recruitment exercise over the coming weeks.

**School Improvement Planning**

* Plan now approved by the local authority and early actions have been around the issues of groupings and differentiation to help us meet the needs of all learners. Staff have engaged on collegiate professional reading and this is the issue that will feature during the upcoming October Inset Day.
* October Inset will also focus on continuous provision across all stages of the school.
* A copy of the finalised School Improvement Plan will be made available in the next school newsletter.

**Cluster Improvement Planning**

* Again,  the plan is approved and underway. This session’s focus will be around STEAM subjects. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) There is a continued focus on the continuity of provision for pupils, particularly at transition points; Early Years focus, with 1140 hours in mind; Art and Design skills development for teachers and pupils; and, Lesson Study across the senior stages of the school.
* Art and Design have made an active start with teachers from across all cluster school attending two hours of learning hosted and delivered by WWH staff. The focus is on drawing still life and an Art and Design teacher from WWH has already begun to work with our P5 classes,

**Other News**

Fabric of the Building

* Renovation of two sets of toilets upstairs, now operating as gender-specific.
* Every old internal and external fire door replaced.
* Eight classrooms painted.
* Reception area updated
	+ Fire panel moved
	+ Reception window widened
	+ Repainted
	+ Ceiling lights cleaned and rebulbed
	+ School vision and values banner now on display.
* Window refresh programme to continue during the October Week

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* Busy and successful start to the session, with pupils settling well into the routines of school.
* School roll now at 801, with 70 pupils in ELCC.
* Thanks to all who attended the P7 residential to Lockerbie Manor. The children were a true credit to the school, as were the 13 members of staff who helped staff the event. Particular thanks to Jac Dunn for coordinating.
* Thanks to all who were able to attend Meet the Teacher last week. We hope this was a useful opportunity to visit your children's classrooms.
* House captains and Vice Captains were elected today. Well done to all who were brave enough to stand for election.
* Thanks to the PTA for round one of their events, with P1 pupils and parents attending on Friday night.
* Thanks to all who attended the first HT drop-in session a couple of weeks ago.
* Latest plans for the nursery extension shared with us last week. Breaking ground in February of next year, with a completion date of July.
* We look forward to Maths Week Scotland, w/b 30th September.
* Parent Consultations on the last week before the October Break (8th and 9th October)
* Friendship Assembly on the last day of term, 11th October.

**3. Parental Engagement Survey**

Jo McG informed parents this would be sent out by email soon, and there was a discussion around parents with specific skill sets; whether that be baking, gardening, even teaching, getting involved more in school. This was linked to questions that had arisen from BMcL report (see also AOCB). It was raised that many parents may not see themselves as having appropriate skills or be confident in dealing with a class – it’s hoped the questionnaire will be specific about the level of skills needed and detailed around how this area will work.

**4. Soft Start**

P2 now can enjoy a ‘soft start’, meaning they can get into the school before 9am, and self-register etc. Very positive feedback from P1, who have been doing this for a while and some informal chat/ad hoc questions as to the nature of this from some parents.

RN raised that the first day back was chaotic in the P2 playground, with children and parents alike crammed into the area and not being clear on where they were to line up or what the teachers looked like etc. Hopefully this could be improved for next year with more advamce information.

GB asked about PC influence on school improvements, the nature of ‘capital funding’ and what the school had the authority to spend money on in terms of the playground and outside space for children. BMcL explained this is predominantly the local authority’s jurisdiction and the fabric of the building had been upgraded throughout the summer, including windows and painting of some areas.

**5. Parent Council Update**

RN encouraged members of the PC to access the ‘Connect’ (Scottish Parent Teacher Council body) information online and gave a quick recap about the role of the PC. Action: *RN will send out Connect info*

**6. Social Media**

FMc reported on the Social Media course she attended, run by Connect. Discussed appropriateness as a communication method for the P.C and suggested best practise. The question being asked is ‘How do we best engage with the Parent Community and obtain feedback?’ Ideas were sent out earlier in year but no action taken. There is a will to try and involve parents as much as possible, increase awareness of PC and gain input to allow all reps to represent their yeargroups as widely as possible.

Some ideas;

A stand at Parents’ Nights

A Drop Box for suggestions

More of a presence at the P1 induction

Standalone email publicising PC rather than a link at the bottom of a generic update or newsletter

Discussed how to try and ensure a decent response rate to a survey to request comms preferences from the parent community, given average response rates to school questionnaires etc is normally 20-30%.

RN suggests a sub-committee to deal with this issue. *Action: RN will forward proposed comms questionnaire for parents. OC members to volunteer if interested in sub group.*

**7. PTA**

Bank at just under £8k.

We have set a deadline of Nov meeting for a chair successor(s) to step forward or we will need to begin going through constitutional steps to close down PTA.

We have discussed with HT playground the design and we will move forward with planning ASAP- discussions with Kirkhill in best practice as well as being given protocol procedures from council to begin design and resource planning. This was by far the number 1 priority for parents in our poll.

Number 2 was art and expressive arts. We have already sourced and purchased niche items for Mrs Henderson to use in her planning and we have pledged up to £2k for the year in line with sport/science/asn in the recent years.

P1 fun night already held, with discos and movies for P2-P7 all lined up and we are going paperless for consent form.

Xmas Fayre is Sun 8th Dec and we will be looking for help as usual to man the stalls, and help with event prep.

Xmas cards are currently in classrooms being worked on by the children, and will go home for parents to review and hopefully order in first week of October.

Family photo day info should have gone home this week to parents, Sat 26th October.

As always, thanks to everyone who supports the PTA, parents and staff alike. We meet monthly, and are keen to welcome anyone who wishes to join, has an idea, would like to volunteer etc.

**8. Polling Places**

GC submitted an objection on behalf of the PC to the use of CPS as a polling place in the statutory review earlier this year - Carolside Nursery was proposed instead. This was refused and it was stated it cannot be used in its current form, due to the lack of furniture storage – however it may be a different situation after the nursery extension next year.

Cllr Ireland has asked for an interim review, so this can be reconsidered prior to the next statutory review in 4 years and this was welcomed.

**9. Cllr Complaint**

Complaint was raised to the Ethical Standards Committee in the last session by GC on behalf of the PC, after Cllr David Macdonald (Independent) made comments on social media in regard to his feelings on the PC’s handling of the introduction of gender-neutral toilets to the school. We have been advised that whilst the offence is appreciated, the complaint is not being upheld on the grounds of political expression.

Following this outcome Cllr Macdonald has been private messaging GC which is unwelcome and has caused her to feel uncomfortable. He has requested an unreserved, written apology from both her and RN (as PC Chair) – Ethical Standards have advised this is not required nor expected. Cllr Macdonald has been advised to attend next PC meeting if he wishes to discuss this any further.

**10. House System**

Update on House system from GM

This was introduced last year to replace ‘good to be Green’ and has been largely well received by pupils and parents.

There were discussions around some future events for pupils to gain points (eco fashion show, whole school quiz to foster teamwork) plus clarification on the other activities children could do to gain points, all tied in to school values.

GM thanked the parent who suggested that the prize was reviewed to ensure all houses were given a treat at the end of term. Badges will be reissued to children for the new school year. As this was a new initiative there have been the odd teething issues - allocation to each house per class etc - but staff are ensuring these are resolved.

Some suggestions as to how parents could be brought on board to support the house system were; could an explanation of how points are earned be put online, could specific examples of how children have earned points be published so parents and pupils knew what to work towards etc. More info to follow in future meetings.

**11. AOCB:**

CR asked a further question surrounding ASN provision in the school and other impact in regard to PSA cuts. BMcL stated although hours had been cut, CPS was using the remainder in a creative way, and topping up hours with their own money, to ensure children who needed assistance were getting the best possible service. Hours are still less, but workable. GMcD explained the services that had to be cut or reduced were mainly around special groups for P1, like Gross Motor Skills groups and early intervention for literacy. RN asked if parents could help support the school more with such areas, which links into JMcG’s Parental Engagement survey (out shortly), to encourage more parents with valuable skill sets to get involved to mitigate this drop in hours.

Uniform Bank – this has been very well used, and donations of washing powder are requested in exchange, so that clothes can be washed at no expense.

Music Provision – it was suggested a clarification of the school’s music lesson agenda/policy would be helpful. *Action: RN to arrange a presentation at future PC meeting*

Bullying Policy – CR asked about a school-specific policy, JD advised the ERC policy is currently in use and a school one is being worked on this year, with the involvement of children.

**12. Next Meeting: 7pm, Tuesday 29th October, P7 classroom**