

Crookfur Primary School Parent Council

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Minutes

DATE: Wednesday 21st October 2020 at 1900 hrs

LOCATION: Zoom Call

CHAIR: Mrs Denny Henderson

PURPOSE OF PARENT COUNCIL: The School Boards (Scotland Act) Act 1988 and subsequently the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 established partnership bodies of parents, school staff and co-opted members involved in the running of the school. They have a number of specific statutory rights and obligations. The main function is to promote contact and the exchange of information between the school, parents, and the wider community. They should help to improve parents' understanding of what the school is trying to achieve, and they should carry out all their functions with a view to raising the standard of education at the school.

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Lisa Selman is moving out of the area, so has handed in her notice as a P4 Rep with immediate effect. She will be missed as will her 3 boys.

2. Present and Apologies

Role	Name	Present	Apologies	Role	Name	Present	Apologies
FC	Catherine McLatchie	x		P5	Kari Gillies	x	
FC	Krys Kujawa	x		P5	David O'Gorman	x	
P1	Maaham Ahmad	x		P5	Allyson Gilchrist		x
P1	Sarah Penny	x			Denny		
P1	Amna Munir	x		P6	Henderson	x	
P2	Lynsey Williams		x	P6	Gillian Plews	x	
P2	Melanie McPhail-Smith	x		P6	Fraser Strachan	x	
P2	Ailsa Munro	x		P7	Wendy Durie	x	
P3	Conor Murphy		x		Karen McGrady-		
P3	Dawn Jamieson		x	P7	Parker	x	
P3	Jenny Andrew	x		Co-			
P4	Michelle Wilson	x		opted	Alistair Gibb	x	
P4	Beverly Stoner	x			Sheena		
				HT	McGuigan	x	
					Kimberley		
				DHT	Slorach	x	
				DHT	Claire Jamieson	x	
				DHT	Lisa David	x	

3. Minutes from Previous Parent Council Meetings

3.1 Approval of the previous minutes

Minutes approved.

3.2 Actions arising from the previous minutes

- Gillian Plews is still to meet with the school about the budget. Gillian would like to make decisions about how best to redistribute spending based on annual expenditure that won't be required due to COVID restrictions. She will email the school to confirm these suggestions.
- Can there be more than one email address linked to each child? Mrs McGuigan will be able to provide an answer to this shortly.
- Johnathan Hull has responded to Mrs McGuigan's enquiry about which tablet is best to use for Google Classroom/home learning. His unofficial response was that he likes Chrome book as they do everything that is needed at school level. They aren't perfect and do have limitations, but his opinion is that they do the job required whilst being more affordable than some other options.
- Eastwood High complaint regarding parents waiting in school grounds for Crookfur children. Mrs Slorach confirmed that the carpark can still be used for pickups, but it would be appreciated if parents could wait in cars in between collection times. The same message applies as to Crookfur surroundings, i.e., try not to congregate, especially in groups. Crookfur has asked for some tolerance and understanding from Eastwood.
- Karen McGrady Parker raised a Crookfur parent complaint to Eastwood Parent Council regarding high school children not socially distancing with the public on local pavements (Harvie Avenue). The school will make more tannoid announcements about this. They were sympathetic but pressed that they only have so much power and do not have the option for staff to patrol out of school areas. However, they will keep reminding the children to be conscientious regarding the community.

4. Recent Meetings and Events

Allyson Gilchrist attended the most recent online Equalities Forum on 30th September. She will forward on a summary from this meeting in due course. The theme was about anti-racism - Black Lives Matter, decolonising the curriculum, an urgency to ensure all races are equally valued in the school.

Mrs McGuigan advised that East Renfrewshire Council has developed a strategy to promote diversity. Part of this would be establishing parent volunteer Diversity Champions in each school to:

- offer insight, advice, and support to school equalities coordinators and Parent Councils as they work to reduce barriers to parental involvement.
- identify and liaise with under-represented groups of parents.
- inform and engage with schools as they further develop inclusive practice in their local context.

The authority will seek to supporting and challenge establishments to increase the diversity of Parent Councils through dialogue and engagement with parents and community groups, in partnership with Diversity Champions and Parent Councils and support and challenge establishments to increase the diversity of parental participation in school planning and decision making.

ACTION – Allyson to forward her report from the Equalities forum

5. Financial Report

- Balance at last meeting (8th Sept) £5649.40
- Paid out cheque for autograph books -£242.64
- Refund from Ladies night DJ +£170.00
- Nursery ties to be paid still -£614.00
- Balance today on 21st October £5576.76
- Mrs Nesbit collection will go through the account but won't affect the balance.

6. Social Media Communications Policy

Some parents have felt like the Parent Council use social media a lot for communication and they are potentially missing out on information if they are not on Facebook, or that the PC is putting info on social media before the school is. Denny has reviewed this policy and sent out her amended copy to the Parent Council. The Parent Council uses the following social media platforms:

- Parent Council Facebook page
- Fundraising Committee Facebook page
- Twitter

Denny has helped set up year group Facebook pages, but the Parent Council doesn't run these pages and they are for parents to communicate with each other. However, Parent Council members may use them to remind people of events or to share information that has been issued by the school or Parent Council.

Posts on Social Media from the Parent Council about school announcements should come after the school has communicated this information publicly and not before.

There are still some parents who feel like the Parent Council doesn't communicate well enough, however Facebook is the easiest way to get info out quickly and to the widest group. As well as using social media, the Parent Council also has a page on the school website and important matters are included in the school newsletters. Mrs McGuigan said there should be some reassurance that the Parent Council is usually just reiterating what the school has already announced or if it's Parent Council business, then that will be put on the website or in the Weekly roundup.

The Social Media Communications Policy will get finalised and will go on the school website.

Denny would like to remind the Parent Council that if a parent reaches out with a question and the Rep knows the answer, they should feel free to answer on behalf of the Parent Council (if it's not an important matter that needs to be brought to the School or Parent Council).

ACTION – Denny to finalise Social Media Communications Policy and forward to the school to be put on the website

7. Head Teacher's Report from Mrs McGuigan

7.1 School Roll

There are currently 490 children attending the school.

7.2 News

The next school newsletter will have dates for your diary including the Photographer visit next week (a different background will be as requested by several parents following last year's photos).

7.3 Events

Spooky Mini-Mudder is the next big event. Reminders will be sent out. Beat the Street is ongoing. Flu vaccinations and parents' evenings are coming up (Mrs McGuigan is still hoping parents' evening will be on the days previously stated. This will hopefully be in a video conferencing manner, but that is still up to be confirmed. A phone call would be more reliable. Potentially video might be an option for March as it would give more time to find the best and most reliable platform). [Update: since the meeting Mrs McGuigan has confirmed meetings will be by telephone.]

7.4 Budget

No non-essential spending is planned. Outdoor storage that was bought by Fundraising Committee was delivered last week and installed. The other delivery of large tub was delivered today.

7.5 Staffing

Thanks from the school to the parents for everything they did to say goodbye to Mrs Nisbett, it meant a great deal to her.

Katy McKee has just started her new position in the school to help with school recovery. She has started in P3 and has settled in well.

7.6 COVID-19 responses update

There is an increase in positive cases in the local community and an increase in the number of children in the school having to isolate. No further positive cases in the school but probably only a matter of time until we do have one again.

The school is working out the right amount of work to send out to a child who is required to learn from home. There are some procedures in place already, but there is no real guidance from the Authority regarding this. The school will continue to work out the best plan to ensure the children's learning isn't affected but has a balance with what is achievable at home with no teacher to help them.

Protocols for responding to positive cases in children or adults in the school remain unchanged. Please email the school to let them know if there are any positive cases in your household. Schools are exempt from the latest government guidance regarding masks in the workplace. Mrs McGuigan has encouraged staff to wear them if moving around the building or in the staff room/communal rooms, but it's not a requirement and the staff have the choice. Catering staff are all wearing them as per an instruction from their line manager. Mrs McGuigan has suggested that members of staff only use the staff room to prepare their lunch or hot drink, then return to their classroom, to reduce the number of households in the staffroom at any one time.

Parent Questions:

- Will the white background be an issue in photos if the kids were wearing white shirts?
The school will have a look at the background options on Tempests website.
- What will happen with the classes who have a PE day for photos?
Mrs McGuigan will put something in her weekly communication regarding the photographers visit.
- Parents' evening - what will the provision be for multiple children? If appointments are back-to-back, there is a risk that they may still be on the phone to one teacher when the next teacher calls?
The suggestion will be to leave a space between siblings calls to give a sufficient window of time or they could be booked onto different evenings.

ACTION – Mrs McGuigan will add into her correspondence about parents' evenings, to allow for plenty of time between siblings calls. She will also insert guidance into this correspondence regarding PE day clothing.
ACTION – Management will have a look at the Tempest backgrounds available and choose a more modern one. They will check with Tempest regarding how the white shirts read against a white background.

8. Heartstone Odyssey

Primary 5 is involved in this project. It is based on a novel aimed at 8- to 11-year-olds. A letter to parents of primary 5 will be sent out. The project has been running in some other local authority areas. It's based on racism, intolerance, hate crimes. It was supposed to run last year but has been delayed due to the school closure.

9. Family Centre

- Most of the staff have now had a visit to the Family Centre. The last group of staff will visit on Friday, then everyone will have visited.
- HT and DHTs are due to go again soon.
- Mrs Walker and Miss Adair had a meeting with management to come up with their traffic light action plan.
- Head of Centre and Deputy Head positions have now been advertised, closes on Sunday.
- No update on date, but hopefully the next meeting on Tuesday will provide that.
- The sways have been going out every 2 weeks to keep all the parents updated. These are being included in the weekly roundups, put on Twitter, and shared on the Family Centre Facebook page.

- Staff are looking forward to moving in.
- Mrs McGuigan is aware that when they open, it needs to also be COVID compliant, which adds another level of work in preparing for the Centre opening.

10. Correspondence with Parents/Carers

Weekly roundup is really appreciated and provides a lot of info to parents.

There were only two queries, these were Homework and Non-Class Contact Time. Mrs McGuigan has issued responses to these and the Parent Council Reps can feedback to parents who raised the questions below;

- There hasn't been much homework so far this session. Will this increase now?
(Refer to weekly round up 28/08/20) As much as we are delighted to have enjoyed a full return to school, we do recognise that we are establishing a "new normal." Teachers are working closely with the children to identify where they are in their learning and planning next steps. We believe that homework should provide the opportunity for children to practice and apply taught skills. Usually, we begin to issue homework to P2- P7 at the beginning of September and P1 after the September weekend. In light of all that has happened in the past few months we have decided that homework will begin to be issued across the school from week beginning 28th Sept. Please do not be concerned that we are not beginning to issue homework just yet. We do not wish to over assess the children and understand that children and families need time to adjust to the routine of being back in school. The day at school can be tiring enough without adding further learning tasks at this time.
- Will you be issuing more homework as a way of closing any gap in learning due to the lockdown?
We have an established homework policy which details how much homework will be given and how often. Guidance regarding this was issued to parents 29/09/20. We are considering a range of approaches address learning loss. Some additional homework for particular groups or individuals might be a possibility but not the only solution or an automatic action. Additional home learning may not suit all children and families.
- If a child forgets their password, or gets locked out, what is the best way to get the password reset?
Contact the school for any password issues.
- Why do the children have non-class contact days?
As part of teachers' contracts, they have time built into the school week when they do not teach. This is referred to as non-class contact time or NCC. This session we have changed how teachers' non-class contact time is organised. To minimise the number of adults working in different classes across the school day, we have arranged for non-contact time to be taken in a single block, rather than different lessons across the week. The NCC teacher will teach your child for one day every two weeks.
- Some children have reported "playing with a robot all day" as well as not doing the usual numeracy/literacy on these days. Can you give parents a little more information about how non-class contact days' work?
This year NCC teachers will plan project based interdisciplinary learning. Again, due to current restrictions, we are unable to continue with our Skills Academy model and so we have agreed that NCC teachers will base their planning around the Skills Academy experiences within a context relevant and interesting to the children. The class teacher rather than NCC teacher delivers core literacy and numeracy, however skills in both literacy and numeracy will be developed and applied during NCC days. NCC time is organised slightly differently in P2A, P3A and P7B as newly qualified teachers have a different class contact commitment. In these instances, children will experience a thematic afternoon every week as opposed to a whole day every two weeks. The experience for all children will be the same over the two-week period. Parents should not be concerned that children are "missing out" on learning and teaching of literacy and numeracy. The balance of our recovery curriculum is weighted towards these curricular areas and NCC time in total has not changed. It is just aggregated. I believe children are being given high quality opportunities to apply and extend skills in these areas in new and different contexts.

11. Looking ahead to 2020/21

11.1 Parent Council Health Check

Denny and Kari to go through this paperwork provided by Connect and will feedback at next meeting.

11.2 Parent Resources

Getting to know our school and glossary of terms

This comes from the Connect session that Denny attended. Points such as: Do new attendees know who the Janitor are? What Deputy Head does? Perhaps a parent version of the School Handbook could be created by parents for parents to help parents settle into their new school. Denny will share the slides from this meeting for everyone to look at and we can discuss further at the next meeting. Are there areas where we can make communication clearer for parents moving into the school?

11.3 Parent Friendly School Policies

ACTION Denny and Kari to work through the checklist of the Parent Council Checklist

ACTION – Denny to share the slides from the Connect Workshop

12. Subcommittee Updates

Fundraising Committee

Mini Mudder and present room will be the main fundraising events for the year. They are the only ones which can happen safely around the rules. A reminder that donations of pumpkins in the lead up to the Mini Mudder will be appreciated. No dressing up will be required. It's not a Halloween costume event, the theme is spooky.

Other Comments

- There won't be an actual Halloween activity in the school such as dressing up, but teachers are allowed to do a Halloween craft if they choose to.
- A parent commented that his nieces/nephews have been making tea towels to sell and wondered whether Crookfur could do this as well?
The school are already looking into this and are planning on doing it as an Activity for Primary 1.
- Is there still an option to do a book sale to raise money for the school considering they can't do it in person at the parents' evening as usual?
Mrs McGuigan suggests that maybe we could use Easy Fundraising to get extra money for the school for books. There is the option to have an online book fayre through the same company as usual. The Fundraising Committee is considering this.
Pushing sponsorship for mini mudder is the best way to bring in money for fundraising at the moment.

Diversity Group

The next meeting is on Tuesday night – topics will include action plan for Authority, talk about Heartstone project, check the curriculum reflects diversity in the school, not just add on events, but imbedded in to school learning.

13. Any Other Business?

None.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Diversity – Tuesday 27 October 7pm

Fundraising – Thursday 29 October 8pm

Parent Council Chairs – Wednesday 25 November

Parent Council – Monday 7 December 7pm