

Kirkhill Primary School Parent Council

PARENT COUNCIL MEETING (incl. EGM)

DATE: 12th NOVEMBER 2019

LOCATION: MEARNS CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

MINUTES OF MEETING

ATTENDEES

Sidra Hasan Ahmed (Acting Chair), Lorraine Fleming (Treasurer), Mark Carter (Secretary), Amanda Farquhar, Corin Gilhespie, Victoria Taylor, Carly Mason, Emma Love, Nadine Freeman, Jane Barbary, Jenny Simpson, Sanjeev Patil, Fiona Byrne, Helen Wilson, Laura Moir, Lisa Sarkar, Brinda Fowdar, Jan Coyle, Lindsay Reekie, Wendy Espie, Mudi Raja, Jenna Cowan, Lynn Greenwell, Dianne McCartney, Hazel Aitken, Kathryn Chisholm, Shona Melrose, Victoria Shore, Liz Edmonstone, Karen Cumming, Gordon Edge, Shabana Hussain, Lorna MacGregor, Cllr Caroline Bamforth, Corin Ling

Extraordinary General Meeting Agenda Items

1. **Appointment of Chairperson**
2. **Appointment of Vice-Chairperson**
3. **Appointment of Co-Treasurer**
4. **Adoption of New Constitution**

Parent Council Meeting Agenda Items

1. **Welcome**
 2. **Apologies**
 3. **Matters Arising from Previous Meeting and Approval of Minutes**
 4. **Parent Council Matters**
 5. **Finance Report**
 6. **Fundraising Report**
 7. **Head Teacher's Report**
 8. **Any Other Business**
 9. **Date of Next Meeting**
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EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

1. Appointment of Chairperson

Following the AGM, Sidra Hasan Ahmed stepped forward for the role of Chairperson, has been Acting Chair and now needs to be appointed formally.

Proposed: Emma Love
Seconded: Jane Barbary

Appointment approved.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairperson

Following the AGM, Laura Hutton noted interest in the role of Vice Chairperson and therefore needs to be appointed formally.

Proposed: Emma Love
Seconded: Wendy Espie

Appointment approved.

3. Appointment of Co-Treasurer

Following Lorraine's appointment as Treasurer at the AGM, Jenny Simpson agreed to share this workload and responsibility with Lorraine as Co-Treasurer.

Proposed: Emma Love
Seconded: Helen Wilson

Appointment approved.

4. Adoption of New Constitution

In conjunction with Connect, the Scottish Parent Council governing body, Sidra and Mark revised and updated the Constitution (last updated in 2012) to be more fit for purpose and less restrictive. The draft version was circulated prior to this meeting which was also publicised in advance to the parent forum.

The new version of the Constitution was approved by majority vote, with no votes against.

PARENT COUNCIL MEETING

1. Welcome

Sidra welcomed all present to the meeting, her first as Chair!

2. Apologies

Lisa Ferguson, Lindsay Brown, Susan Mackay, Hilary Houston, Lucie Shaw, Morag Moffett, Cllr Barbara Grant, Cllr Jim Swift, Rev Jim Boag.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting and Approval of Minutes

No issues/comments were raised from the minutes of the AGM (our last meeting) on 3rd September 2019, approval of which was proposed by Jane Barbary and seconded by Emma Love.

4. Parent Council Matters

- i. Class Representative Vacancies - Shona Drewett has stepped forward for P4c as Jenny has moved to Co-Treasurer. We still have vacancies in P1a, P4a, P5a and P7c
- ii. Parent Council Chairs Meeting - at the most recent meeting, the focus was on Empowerment. There is a nationally-adopted framework for empowerment with all interested parties - children, parents and carers, teachers and support staff, local and central government - all responsible for and contributing to empowerment. Observation - greater engagement and involvement at primary level than secondary. ERC has set up a steering group with meetings in December, March and June, to gather views and inputs to develop regional framework. There was also discussion on mental health with the first meeting today at Williamwood - how to connect in-school support with outside school such as CAMHS, bereavement councillors, etc.
- iii. Equalities Forum - Gender Balance and how to challenge gender stereotypes. Karen Cumming added that staff have also had workshops on how to combat gender stereotypes with a push in high school which hopefully will also benefit primaries
- iv. Connect - online training, and workshops, offered for Parent Council members and volunteers. We have also used their templates for the Constitution and for additional policies (Diversity & Inclusion, Social Media). Wendy Espie volunteered to help with the PC Facebook page/social media presence

5. Finance Report

Lorraine Fleming delivered the Finance Report: at 21st October (date of most recent statement) our current bank balance was £2907. We have received several deposits since, totalling £2257.81 (P1 disco, Halloween discos, Rudolph fundraiser). There are outstanding cheques to clear of £1688.39 total which gives us a projected balance of £3477.17. Ringfencing the £1000 for damage to the playground equipment leaves us with an effective, working balance of £2477.17. However, we are expecting further expenses to be submitted ahead of the Christmas Fair.

P1 Disco: £321.48 net profit

Halloween Discos: £693.17 net profit

Rudolph Fundraiser: £320.60 from cash and cheques received - payments received online are still to be confirmed

6. Fundraising Report

As in previous years, we have sought to develop a Fundraising Team which initially and in the run up to the Christmas Fair has been meeting around once a week for about an hour (or more!). Currently, the team consists of Laura Hutton, Vicky Wallace and Helen Wilson with the office-bearers assisting/supporting.

We are in a good position on preparation for the Christmas Fair with just about 100% of stalls covered for parent helpers, with some teachers helping out too.

Please drop off donations for the Fair on the Friday beforehand, no earlier. Sidra has created some space in the Parent Council cupboards to store donations.

We need volunteers the day before to help with setup.

Liz Edmonstone passed two funding requests to us yesterday - one for playground equipment (Lorna McGregor has audited games and materials available) and the other is for atrium equipment, mainly for use by the P1 and P2 year groups. There's a lot of resources there which are quite tired or incomplete, etc. Across the two lists it makes for quite a substantial amount of money but it is composed of items which will have a real impact to the children's learning experience.

Following the Christmas Fair, when the Parent Council funds are healthier, we will be in a good position to address these requests.

Emma Love requested funding for Mrs Duffy's garden area which offers outdoor learning opportunities separate and apart from the Science Garden - in the region of £150 for raised beds, seeds, soil, for children to grow their own produce, etc and for more gardening equipment in general for classroom use.

Emma will research prices and submit accordingly.

7. Head Teacher's Report

Dyslexia Awareness Week - last week - assemblies held with one pupil sharing their experience with the rest of the school, a video presentation of which will be published on the school's website. Blue Day was held as part of Dyslexia Awareness Week, some high school pupils came along to share their experiences, also a dyslexic teacher on strategies to cope with and overcome dyslexia.

Learning Toolboxes - each class has one and they are available for anyone to use. They contain dictionaries, colour overlays, ear defenders, number lines, etc. They are a supply of learning aids and available to all, but also removes the stigma of additional support since they are not specifically for one child or a specific group of children.

Anti-Bullying Awareness Week - last term, parents, staff and pupils updated our Anti-Bullying policy with will be published in this week's Friday Bundle and we'll also have a stall at parents' evening. The schoolchildren will be creating a child-friendly version of the policy. We'll be taking time in assemblies and in class activities to learn about the policy and an external group, "Respect Me" are coming in at the end of the week.

Winter Weather - updates will be posted on Twitter and the school's website, with emails also issued with information. We will also send out information/advice ahead of any forecasted bad weather. Please also be aware that the path on the other side of the janitor's house is not gritted and therefore in icy/frosty weather, the main pavements into the school through the gates should be used.

Winter Bugs - we are focussing on hand-washing and good hygiene with the pupils, and we sent home information in last week's Friday Bundle - remember, there's a policy of a clear 48h before returning to school following any sickness bug. Please encourage the importance of hand washing. While we do have hand sanitisers in the school, these do not take the place of good hygiene habits and practice.

Transport/Road Safety Week - will be taking place next week with work in class and discussing road safety in assemblies. We feature Road Safety in our newsletters with dangerous driving and parking reported around the school quite regularly. The Roads Department has been in consultation for some time, an external company modelled traffic around the school and now working on developing an authority plan to mitigate traffic, working with police and Education Department in the coming weeks.

Bring Your Own Device - trialled with Shabana Hussain's P7s and remaining P7 and P6 classes next week. Also an opportunity for SeeSaw pilot within P7 before rollout to the rest of the school. For children that don't bring in a device, school laptops will be available.

Some concerns over children using their own devices in school were raised - Liz Edmonstone suggested Brendan Docherty, Digital QIO (Quality Improvement Officer) within ERC Education Department could run workshop to allay any anxieties or we could alternatively arrange for him to attend a Parent Council meeting in the future.

Poppy Scotland Bud Bus - a new initiative which Education Scotland brought to the school's attention. The bus is supplied by Poppy Scotland but it's not selling merchandise, it is an interactive museum for children to learn about the background and history of poppies, etc. It will be parked-up at Broom Church because it would take up more room in the school's car park than we can afford.

Uniform Bank - this initiative has been running for around a year now and has been really successful. If anyone is struggling to find uniform and nothing is available in the Uniform Bank, please speak to a member of the SMT as we aren't able to display all uniform we have 'in stock'.

Achievements - tweet us and we'll retweet and display on the plasma screens in school. If parents don't want their child on Twitter, please email us and clearly state it shouldn't go on Twitter and we'll keep it off social media platforms.

The school employs a range of communication channels to keep parents informed - Friday Bundle, the newsletter, the website (incl. class blogs) and Twitter. Please encourage parents to follow the school on Twitter as this is often the most up-to-date, real-time method of communication.

The Coffee with the Leadership which runs on the first Friday of every month in the afternoon hasn't been well attended so maybe it needs to be a different day/time - possibly first thing in the morning after drop-off and maybe a rolling day of the week rather than fixed? If you're unsure about anything or want to speak to someone, don't wait - please call/drop-in and speak to the office or the SMT.

Pam King, Literacy Lead, requested funding of £50 per classroom (£1200 total) to develop reading areas - inviting spaces to encourage children to read for pleasure - in each classroom, now that the school library is the Literacy Hub, there are class libraries.

We noted the request and thanked Pam for submitting and agreed to consider following the Christmas Fair.

8. Any Other Business

Ink - a query had been raised over whether the school uses non-permanent, washable ink pens and markers since there are reports of children with ink marks/stains on their uniform which doesn't come out when the clothes are washed. Liz Edmonstone confirmed that all school-supplied/provided pens are washable ink.

School Liaison - a single point of contact to arrange parent helpers for classes in the atrium or to assist with tasks in school, rather than going through the Parent Council and SMT we instead will have one parent and one school member of staff liaising directly - Hilary Houston and Saj Sadiq.

Single-use Plastic Bottles - in light of environmental impact of single-use plastics, it had been queried why the school still offers bottled water for sale. Liz Edmonstone contacted ERC Catering since this is not within individual school control. Reusable cups are used for drinking water in the canteen at lunchtime, but bottled water is available to buy at break time because a significant number of pupils come to school without a water bottle. Alternatives are being researched - for example each child bringing in a water bottle to be kept in school in case they forget their usual bottle - but the school would likely still need to retain some form of provision of bottled water.

Playground Drop-off/Collection - Brinda Fowdar queried whether parents dropping-off and collecting children within the playgrounds, rather than at the school gates, was permanent and whether it had been extended beyond the initial trial of P2 and P3 children. Liz Edmonstone explained that the change had been made as a stepping-stone for in particular P2 children who have come from P1 where they spend the year being directly handed-over to their parent/carer. There was some discussion over the perceived benefits/costs; Liz noted she had not received any feedback to date and suggested perhaps issuing a survey to parents to gain wider views & comments from the parent forum.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next Parent Council meeting will be held at 7:15pm on Tuesday 21st January 2020 at Mearns Castle High School.