

Kirkhill Primary School Parent Council

PARENT COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DATE: 7th MARCH 2023

LOCATION: MEARNS CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDEES

Sidra Hasan Ahmed (Chair), Laura Hutton (Vice Chair), Jago Brown (Treasurer), Lynsey Hamilton (Treasurer), Mark Carter (Secretary), Laura Moir, Lisa Sarkar, Dianne McCartney, Lynda Donaldson, Jan Coyle, Lynsey Jackson, Janine Anderson, Gillian McClinton, Sally Castledine, Gillian Henderson, Liz Matthews, Lesley Menzies, Shabana Hussain, Scott Russell, Lorna Gray, Cllr Andrew Anderson, Stephanie Fry

MINUTES OF MEETING

Parent Council Annual General Meeting Agenda Items

1. Welcome
 2. Apologies
 3. Parent Council Matters
 4. Finance Report
 5. Head Teacher's Report
 6. Any Other Business
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1. Welcome

Sidra welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Caryl Mason, Pujan Rai, Lorraine Fleming, Susan Mackay, Wendy Espie, Pete Kewin, Joanna Mathisen, Hazel Aitken, Shona Melrose, Pamela Cochrane, Karmin Sarwar, Hilary Scott, Cllr Paul Edlin

3. Parent Council Matters

The most recent PC Chairs meeting focused on the Parental Involvement & Engagement (PIE) Strategy, 3 Cs over next 3 years - Communication, Collaboration, Consultation. Successive Chairs meetings will cover different elements of the strategy, informed by the surveys and feedback from parents & families. PCs affected by PIE Strategy because they communicate with the parent forum. General consensus across ERC PCs - pre-Covid comms better than post-Covid and engagement found to be more difficult following Covid. PC Chairs have agreed principles of good communication which should lead to a uniform approach by PCs across the authority.

Additionally, the PIE intersects with National Improvement Framework with a biannual assessment of the success/impact of most recent changes.

Equalities Forum - Decolonisation of the Curriculum - to incorporate/widen learning beyond Britain/Empire and pull in world history/experience. Eg. Books at most recent literacy event which reflect diversity of the school community - this help children relate to and identify with the books and literature they are reading.

Tackling Racism - many children have experienced racist remarks within societal and school contexts, it is important to build children's confidence and help them see the richness and beauty in who they are. We should also allow children to have a say in the topics and issues discussed. It's important for us to tackle wider societal issues and to recognise that children are noticing these issues (race, racism, inequality, etc.).

At the same time, we need to recognise that there will be families/children who do not want to take part in these initiatives and it is important to remember compassion and respect their wishes.

A two-tiered approach should be adopted to celebrate the uniqueness of our own school community:

1. celebrations of events/holidays like International Day or religious days
2. embedding diverse learning in the curriculum

Defibrillator Update - local charity East Renfrewshire Good Causes have awarded us a grant of £500 to assist with the purchase and supply of a defibrillator, cost of which we estimate to be c. £1500. So far we've been quoted approximate ongoing maintenance costs of £400 per annum. While the Parent Council is prepared to purchase the unit, we don't feel comfortable with liability for ongoing maintenance costs remaining with the Parent Council so further investigation/research needs undertaken before progressing.

ERC Budget - details of the budget proposal which was formally approved last week are available on the council's website. The council has attempted to lessen the impact to education of the budget shortfall and associated cuts, with teaching staff numbers and pupil support staff numbers protected. The suggested removal of campus police officers and ASN support for high schools was rejected. There will likely be an effect on facilities management - cleaners & janitors - although the council have confirmed there will be no compulsory redundancies.

Cllr Anderson says the council needs to be responsible with services and with finances, so voluntary redundancy will be available to council staff who qualify, while other services such as school librarians and the Education Department will be redesigned.

Sidra noted that PCs across the authority did not support the reducing of the length of the school day to save costs and that the council has warned that there may need to be incremental increases to school meals across the budget term to offset/protect free school meal provision.

Cllr Anderson said that a wide range of options were considered and looked at, and the three year budget has been designed so that the changes the council really doesn't want to do are delayed until year three, in the hope/aim they can be averted.

Laura H asked what concerned teachers the most in the short-term - Lesley Menzies said the uncertainty - that while there have been similar situations in the past they have never amounted to such serious circumstances/consequences.

There was also some discussion around support of the school fund as Liz noted the school has been assisting families facing financial hardship in the cost of living crisis... combined with being mindful of the pressure on families' budgets, the school has also been fundraising less, so the school fund balance isn't as healthy as it might otherwise have been. Lesley suggested that while the school has always previously sought to use PC funding for enhancements to school life, the financial picture may well be changing.

4. Finance Report

Jago provided an up-to-date report on finances:

- current bank balance is £15247.81
- Our 'standing items' (annual obligations: playground maintenance, gardening spend, uniform bank, P7 ties & leavers dance) amounts to £2650
- Projected funds available for discretionary spending therefore is £12597.81

The proposed defibrillator purchase and installation is not currently included in our financial figures or projections.

Our fundraising for this session to date amounts to £10121 income with costs of £1844 leading to £8277 profit, with the summer fair still to come.

Jago also issued a breakdown of winter fair activity by each of the stalls which is quite useful to analyse to show relative performance and which stalls bring in what sort of income. Sidra noted the stalls breakdown is also useful for the fundraising committee to balance number of external stalls which typically only pay a flat fee for the stall and then retain the money made on their stall.

Jago and Lynsey also suggested reviewing what we consider annual PC spending - Christmas party gifts, for example - in order to derive a more accurate picture of funds available and minimum fundraising requirements, etc.

Fundraising is led by our vice-chair, Laura, with a team of Shona, Steph, Debbie and Lynsey - following the last PC meeting, lots of people coming forward to support and get involved. Great support/volunteers for our recent discos and we've held a few meetings to develop plans, etc.

The social night is being replanned - this time venue will be Whitecraigs Tennis Club as holding them on school premises is no longer possible. We are looking at 13th May (Saturday evening, 7pm start) There will be more info in due course, please share and encourage participation.

Sidra noted that the last round of discos was really well attended and bucked the trend of progressively lower attendances at discos as the school year progresses. We also had much fewer incidents, we tailored approach for ages appropriately eg. Lights left on for P1s, and a party atmosphere across P1-P4 events, with the P5-7 disco properly a disco. Please canvas your classes to see if a 3rd disco would be well supported - or for alternative event ideas and suggestions.

5. Head Teacher's Report

Liz Matthews provided her Head Teacher's Report:

ERC Budget Update - please refer to ERC's website for information and details on the recently approved budget and how residents and schools will be affected.

Literacy Award obtained - Kirkhill is now a silver accredited Reading School. Pam King has led efforts in recent years to promote reading for enjoyment with our children with the establishment of Reader Leaders, who prompt conversations around reading (in class and playground), we also invite staff and guests to share their reading at assemblies and we have a good relationship with the local Waterstones.

Currently, banding is being applied to library books to highlight books relevant to specific reading ages. New reading areas in each classroom are finally being realised (thank you to the PC, for supplied funding pre-Covid) - with children in each class involved in planning. P7s and some of the other classes involved in all stages of researching/implementing their project.

Funding for new books has allowed us to make purchases which reflect the children in the school so they can see themselves in the books they read, and we have a group of parents working with Mrs King on the book/reading boxes.

Family Learning Event on Literacy - these events are always well-attended and it is great to see so many families back in the school and enables the children to show their learning.

In term three there will be a Health & Wellbeing event offering focus on what can be done at home to support H&WB and relaxation, etc.

Diversity Equality and Inclusion - ERC just released social justice strategy last week to be shared with PCs at next PC Chairs meet. The school will run a Pupil Group led by Lorna Grey and Shabana Hussain and we invite parents to join us to help us develop in this area.

In conjunction with this discussion, Sidra requested for a dedicated Diversity & Equality representative from the Parent Council and Nazia Akram volunteered for this role accordingly.

In relation to the 2023-24 session, the P1 intake has been formalised and along with the HT, Education Department and Business Manager, the entire school roll will be assessed against budgets etc to determine how best to move forward. It's possible that composite classes may be introduced, also current P1 into P2 may need some changes. Lesley Menzies noted that in these situations, the school is always mindful of friendship groups to minimise disruption and make the transition as smooth as possible - this is always the overriding factor in these planning decisions, that the children's best interests are the priority. Such planning is always undertaken in complete consultation and partnership with parents to seek the best outcomes possible for pupils. As always, please contact the school if you ever have questions or concerns.

6. Any Other Business

It was confirmed in response to query from P7 parents that Scott Russell will be leading/coordinating the Leavers' celebrations this session.