

Neilston Primary School
Minutes of Parent Council AGM
Tuesday 15th September 2020, 6pm

Present

Gerard Curley (HT)
Jane McDermott (DHT)
Andrew Howie (PT)
Victoria McCabe (PT)
Gillian Orr (PT)

Councillor Paul O’Kane

Parents:

Natalie McMillan
Joanne Gardner
Anna Kerr
Stacey Moffat
Rona Thompson
Karen Elrick
William McCulloch
Peter McLaren
Matyal Findlay
Jenny Macdonald
Joe Deary
Kenny Fulton

Apologies

Agenda Items

1. Election of Office Bearers

Appointed chairperson for session 2020/2021 – Natalie McMillan

Appointed Secretaries for session 2020/2021 – Rona Thompson and Anna Kerr

No treasurer required.

2. Constitution

All present were invited to share their thoughts on the constitution. Everyone is happy with the constitution as it is.

3. Integrated Children's Services Plan

Mr. Curley shared a review of the responses to the survey. A focus on mental health came out strongly as a priority. Face to face teacher meeting were highlighted as the preferred communication platform. Mainly in a formal setting but also informally at Meet the Teacher events. Formal parent-teacher meetings came out as the favoured communication method followed by written reports.

4. Head Teacher's Report

Current pupil roll – 292 in the Primary school, 132 in the nursery (this will be filled by February as enrolled children turn 3)

Staffing – full compliment of staff in place including those funded by Scottish Government recovery funding.

12 classes (14 groups for the purpose of moving to a blended/recovery model), average class size = 24. Largest class has 26 pupils.

Mrs Ness will take up the recovery teaching post from Monday.

2 additional members of support staff have been employed using PEF funding to enhance support and help with recovery and supporting children with returning to accessing the curriculum.

This gives a total of 7 SFLWs this session. | The focus will be on Health and Wellbeing, re-establishing connections, supporting adjustments to school routines. Kevin Cleary and Neil Collingham have already started in their roles. 2 more will start in the next weeks pending completed paperwork. All staff members have been able to return to establishment following school closures.

The children have settled well and quickly into new routines. A few children have found the transition back to school difficult and the school is working closely with the families of those children. All children are now back in school in person.

Lunches – up until this week the children have been eating lunch in the dinner hall but in order to maintain ‘bubbles’ more tightly lunches are now served in classrooms. This should ensure only a group/class should have to isolate should a positive case arise. The primary objective is to keep the school open as much and as safely as possible.

Action: Mr Curley to review use of bins in classes during lunch. Food bins should be available for use by the children and then removed at the end of lunch time. This may need to be clarified with children and staff as some children have reported having no access to bins during lunch time.

Assessment – baseline assessments are being carried out by staff (2nd September to September weekend) to provide robust data on where children are in their learning and to identify any gaps. This is not standardised testing and will be built into daily class work. Next steps in learning will be planned from these tests.

Recovery Plan – A modified and streamlines curriculum is being followed to embed any learning that was lost during lockdown. Focus just now is on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing (particularly mental health) Interdisciplinary learning will be reintroduced when appropriate followed by all other subject areas.

Attendance – There is normally a 6 weekly review of attendance. The target percentage for attendance is 96.3% across 3 years. Current attendance is 94.8% - only 1.41% down on targeted average.

Contingency Planning – Recovery Plan is available on the school website. If a class/zone is to isolate then Senior Leadership Team (3 Principal Teachers) will support home learning for the first 24 hours while the class teacher sets up.

After 24 hours the class teacher will resume control of teaching the class. As part of the West Partnership, the school has access to a Video Vault of lessons/learning experiences which children can be directed to if learning from home. Staff are now more confident and comfortable with using digital platforms and are in a good position to provide more physical content either live or pre-recorded. This is something that was felt to be missing during lockdown.

Parent's Evening – this is scheduled for 6th and 7th of October. SLT have discussed possible ways to facilitate this including Teams, Google Meet, YouTube clips etc. Concerns were raised about the reliability of the infrastructure. It was thought that the easiest and most reliable method of contact is a phone call. This will be by appointment. Electronic catalogues for the Book Fair will be sent out. This raises important funds for the school. P3 class libraries were recently updated through Scholastic.

Coffee and Chat – this cannot be done face to face but could be done virtually with Mr Curley present. Plans will be confirmed for this.

Diary Dates – these have not been sent out as events have to be planned 'as we go' and adapted as situations change.

New Campus – Mr Curley has met with the design team to discuss the key principles of the building and outside space.

Leadership teams from Neilston & Madras and St Thomas' will meet next week to share aspirations for the new school.

P7 pupils from both schools are involved in the Heartstone Project (themes – prejudice and intolerance) which will be delivered by class teachers.

5. New Campus

Representatives were introduced by Councillor O’Kane who also updated on the appointment of Mr Mark Ratter as new Director of Education for East Renfrewshire.

Representatives Present:

Lindsey Mitchell – Architect Director, Building Design Partnership (BDP)

Sandra Gallagher – Associate Architect, Building Design Partnership (BDP)

Ruth Adams - Education

Marie Mullen – Environment Department

Fiona Morrison - Head of Service

John

Ellen De Lombaerde – Project Team Leader for Learning Campus

BDP has designed many well known Glasgow buildings (Science Centre, Silverburn Shopping Centre, Kelvingrove Restoration) as well as 6 Nurseries, 6 Primary Schools, 10 High Schools. Notably – Calderwood Lodge and St Clare’s the Faith Schools Joint Campus, Newton Mearns; Marr

College, Troon; Waid Academy, Anstruther; Maidenhill Primary.

The site allocated for the joint campus is considered to be a great site with fantastic opportunities. Challenges include the slope of the site, the railway and proximity to neighbours. All of these affect the placing of the building. The current pinched access will need to be improved. The open area to the South will give opportunities to make good use of light. A tandem build is planned – the current school will operate while the new campus is built. The current building will then be demolished and used as appropriate. The space around the current building is considered a good space for building.

BDP like to provide a wide variety of types of spaces. They are aware that the building will have a wide range of users with a variety of needs. BDP promote movement and discovery both inside and outdoors. They plan to incorporate spaces that provide learning opportunities as well as classrooms. Sustainability will be a priority. All stakeholders will be consulted – staff, children, parents, community groups. At present the team are unable to be in school for consultations but will conduct these on line. Groups who are most relevant to particular spaces will be consulted. The consultation will consider – specialist spaces, active spaces, outdoor learning and play, quiet spaces, gathering spaces, shared spaces, individual school spaces.

The team will gather information on how spaces are used at present, what is important in our school, what we would change about our school. They will look for themes that arise from consultation. The team will then research these and bring ideas to the groups. Stakeholders will be asked to discuss which ideas they like/dislike. Appropriate mediums will be found to allow stakeholders to help to design eg drawing, creative writing.

The school will be bespoke. It will be designed particularly for the needs of the campus. It will retain the identities of the schools and bring their legacies while providing opportunities to share.

The campus will be fully digital with full WiFi access. Digital aspects will be a focus and will be consulted on.

Current anxiety around gathering on spaces will be taken into account.

The process is on track for a 2022 opening date.

6. Date of Next Meeting - TBC