

St. Joseph's Primary School Parent Council



St Ninian's High School

Parent Council Minutes – 7.2.17



Attendees:

Parents: Brian Kelly (Chair) , Joanne Bastable (Secretary), Martin Morris, Maureen Wright, Carlos Varon-Lopez, Katrina Adams, Mary Theresa Sweeney, Andrew Mackie, O Ndulue,

St Joseph's School Representatives: Carlyn Hill, K.Wynne, J.Lavery, F.Quinn, F. Cunning, A Thomson, C.Leddy,

Church Representative: John Hutcheson.

Apologies :K. Wynne, Caroline Gray, T.Gordon.

- Previous minutes reviewed and accepted.

Opening Prayer

Brian began by referring to the passing of Kay Reilly who was such a significant figure - both visibly and behind the scenes. She quietly supported so many families in the school - even when severely ill herself. She was a tremendous inspiration to so many. Parent council asked to consider ways in which we could mark her contribution to the school.

School role - Miss Hill imagines it will be capped at two stream.

- The middle sinks in the base are being removed to make more space. It is an ongoing issue in the Base as it is badly designed in terms of education -with supports in the middle of the room, often too hot or too cold. The ventilation has been slightly improved. We are continuing to agitate about this. Is a feeling that so many other local schools are so much better in terms of the estate.Brian believes we need to continue to raise this issue. Miss Hill pointed out that the local councillors are always invited but rarely attend the meetings. There appears to be no plans for a big capital spend on St. Joseph's. Brian pointed out that we do write every year but only smaller jobs are tackled and the school is looking tired. It was acknowledged that schools with better facilities also see a corresponding improvement in the pupils' sense of ownership. Maureen suggested inviting the Councillors to the the next meeting, Brian recognised the financial constraints on ERC but felt we need to maintain our position.
- Trisha Gordon has not yet had any response from Scottish Water.

Head Teacher's report

- Scottish Government Pupil Equity Funding. Funding to address issues of poorer areas and attainment. Huge amount of money being invested. St. Joseph's is not entitled to a huge amount of money but are getting £12,000 and this will possibly continue for 4 years. Idea is that schools find different ways of helping pupils overcome barriers and therefore attainment of these pupils will be raised. £12,000 not a huge amount of money but there is a possibility that the cluster schools may invest in something together. One idea that Miss Hill is considering is resilience education - the ability to take risks, see failure as an opportunity to grow etc. Staff are wondering about outdoor education. Experience/research has shown that very young children are already fearful that they cannot do things. This filters into all areas so that they cannot cope with natural disagreements with friends, losing a football game etc. A small scale survey in school suggested that pupils worry about a huge variety of topics but need the resilience to cope. One idea is to take lessons out of the sanitised classrooms and encourage problem solving. Might be a way for teachers to be supported to create lessons like this .
- Mrs Thomson has secured School of Food For Thought Funding to establish a school garden with raised beds. Pupils picked the sites, explained what they wanted it to be like etc. This involved many skills: sector analysis; existing features; measurements; garden design competition etc. Funding application was submitted in August. Last Saturday a team of parents came to school and there are now 10 raised beds. Pupils are now ready to start Lasagna Gardening - layering effect - the kitchen staff are going to contribute food waste for composting. Now starting to sow seeds indoors so that they can be planted out in the Spring. Children created mood boards. The next stage is laying paths - will dig and line them themselves. Not yet been successful in securing funding but will keep trying . Hoping to get donations and do some fundraising. Children would like somewhere to sit. Hoping to secure cable drums from a subsidiary of Scottish Power. One pupil suggested archway - going to create a tunnel effect with archways but this will take 3-5 years to establish. Children also discussed risks of eg. vandalism. There are 3 security cameras in the area and they have also discussed the possibility of light sensors in the area. The garden will provide opportunities for outdoor learning eg. planting, crop rotation etc.
- Health and Wellbeing Review in March. The children are already familiar with many of the relevant topics - the five food groups, mental health strategies etc but not necessarily the practical application of these issues.

The Parent Council expressed a desire to support the school garden. The committee was thinking of sourcing various things like bark for the garden. The P.C. agreed to contribute £1000 to the garden fund.

- Miss Hill thought that next year's Improvement Plan might suggest the creation of a sub group encouraging parents to join for a set period of time - maybe a year. Mr. Hogg was especially helpful in organising the gardening group.
- Catholic Education Week. Week of 19th March - St. Joseph's will be contributing to the liturgy at 10 o'clock mass. The school is now too big for whole school services so P6 and P7 will go the church on Ash Wednesday while the rest of the pupils will attend a service in school.

Social Committee

1. Katrina reported that a few P1 parents were unhappy that the P1 pupils were not included in the disco.

2. Christmas Fayre raised £2,500. New Stall - Human Fruit Machine very successful. Main issue - only three parents helped move furniture on the Friday evening.
3. Family Night was cancelled because of the refurbishment of the church hall.
4. Social Committee cancelled because of illness.
5. Sponsored Bounce is on 22nd February.
6. Book People have asked if the book sale could be reinstated but the issue is where this could be set up.
7. P7 Leavers Disco. Has been an email from a parent asking for more decorations and a photo booth. Brian agreed that there could perhaps be more decorations provided but the parents did not want the night to become like a prom. Discussed the possibility of removing table/chairs and additional entertainment. Katrina going to discuss these possibilities with David at St. Joseph's.
8. Busby Hotel Fundraiser - 94 tickets sold, hoping to reach 100. Local businesses have been approached for raffle prizes.
9. Uniforms - Leavers' Hoodies need to be organised. Assuming cost will be £14.95. Option of June delivery but will need parent volunteers to distribute them. There has been a price increase in jumpers and jackets. No desire to alter uniform. Recognised that job is too much for one parent to distribute the new uniforms on the inservice days - a rota staffed by volunteers was suggested.

A question was asked about free lunches - what happens to the money if lunch is not taken? The money briefly goes into the child's account but parents can block/put in place specific restrictions.

Stephen Nugent wants to step down as vice chair. Brian asked for volunteers to fill the post of the Chair of the Parent Council. The Chair of the Social Committee also needs to be filled. Brian is prepared to continue in the role until the next AGM. Andrew Mackie is happy to step into the Vice chair position on a temporary basis.

Martin pointed out that the toys that are like "caps" - they make a loud noise when thrown - have a age restriction on them and therefore should not be sold at the Christmas Fayre.

Brian thanked everyone for attending.