



Thornliebank Primary School & ELCC Parent Council
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Minute of Parent Council Meeting

Held on 18th May 2023 at 7.00pm online via Zoom

Attendees: Andrea Shaarani (Chair), Nageen Khan (Vice Chair), Suzanne Murray (Secretary), Joanne Kelly (Treasurer/Signatory), Kirsty McLaren (Treasurer/Signatory), Gayle McDonald (Head Teacher), Sarah Longfield, Jackie Borthwick, Elaine Fleming, Janey Lennon, Lianne Fyfe, Michael O'Malley, Kirsty Vadon, Cllr Colm Merrick, Provost Mary Montague.

Apologies: Sara Dow, Mike Gargrave, Ruth Coyle

Agenda Item and Discussion	Actions
<p>1. Head teacher's update: Report attached to end of minute (APPENDIX 1: HEADTEACHER'S REPORT).</p> <p><u>Additional points from HTs update</u></p> <p>GMPE: Now will only be a P1 class, not a composite class as originally planned. Original applicants for the introduction of GMPE to ERC are not intending to use the school. Numbers to be finalised after placing requests are decided.</p> <p>Budget and impact on staffing: Teaching numbers confirmed but its not clear how many probation year teachers and/or Pupil Support Assistants the school will have. Once confirmed over the next week or so, HT will update with plans for next year's class teachers.</p> <p>School Improvement Plan: Sarah thanked the P7 teacher for the minimal stress and disruption around the standardised testing.</p>	<p>HT will update with staffing and details of next year's class teachers</p>

Acting Head Teacher: Gayle McDonald
Chairperson: Andrea Shaarani

<p>Diversity/Eid Celebrations: Some discussion around impact of losing Mrs Ayaz, Bilingual Support Worker, who participated in coordinating the Eid celebration day in school. HT is hoping to set up a pupil diversity group next year which may filter through to families.</p> <p>Reporting to Parents: HT asked the PC's views on having an additional parents evening in lieu of a final year report. Several parents advised that more regular updates on their child's learning is more beneficial than an end-of-year report; Joanne and Andrea both noted that an end-of-year report isn't helpful because time is wasted on updates on what projects children have completed in class etc when this is communicated throughout the year. PC members felt that updates via Seesaw were more helpful and engaged parents more in their child's learning. HT advised that the school plans to extend use of Seesaw, currently piloted in P2 and P3.</p>	
<p>2. Chair's Update Andrea advised that her update is mainly covered by agenda items.</p> <p>Andrea thanked Sarah Longfield and Janey Lennon for their contributions to the PC and the school over the years. This will be Sarah and Janey's last PC meeting as their children move on to high school next term. These sentiments were echoed by Provost Montague and Councillor Merrick, who thanked Janey and Sarah for their hard work and dedication.</p> <p>Andrea also thanked Joanne Kelly, who has been working to set up a new bank account and to develop our use of online platforms for banking, tickets, and event promotion.</p>	
<p>3. Treasurer's Report Kirsty Mc shared the screen showing the current PC balance sheet. The current total sits at £18,226.75, mainly comprised of funds received from Participatory Budgeting and the Humanitarian Fund for specific projects – approximately £8,000 is to be deducted for the loose parts play hub, and a further £2,000 for the sensory garden project. There are also deductions to be made in respect of buses for class trips (as agreed, the PC are funding these).</p> <p>Joanne has set up Stripe payments for online raffles, disco tickets, entry fees. She has set up a page on the PTA Events website and will utilise and promote this more when we have further events.</p> <p>In respect of the bank account, Joanne has set up an account with Virgin Money (also used by other PCs locally). There is the facility to make direct payments and the account can have logins for three users. Agreed that this is acceptable from an audit point of view, as the responsibility is shared and there is a clear record of payments issued this way.</p> <p>Some discussion regarding payments and the most efficient way to do this. Mandy Macaskill has been purchasing items for the sensory garden however is trying to avoid asking the PC for small sums. Discussion and subsequent agreement by show</p>	

<p>of hands that we can transfer the money to the school account for them to use for the gardening project. The school can issue an invoice to the PC for this sum, allowing Mandy to use the budget appropriately. Gayle reiterated that all receipts would be kept anyway for their own audit purposes in case Participatory Budgeting were ever to check how funding was used.</p> <p>Further discussion about releasing funds for bus trips etc, as Andrea noted that some payments have gone overdue. Joanne advised that a direct way of going to the treasurers would be easier. Gayle advised that she could email the treasurer directly and copy in the PC for record-keeping, or can ask the office to text the treasurer when a payment is due.</p> <p>Andrea will set up a request form for suggestions of how to best use our fundraising.</p> <p>Nageen asked about email access – Suzanne has the two-step authentication set up on her device so asked Nageen to let her know when she intends to log in and she will authorise the login at the time (this only needs to happen once for new devices).</p>	
<p>4. Road Safety</p> <p>No major updates regarding road safety from previous meeting. Gayle advised that the JRSO coordinator is now Ms Grant, taking over from Ms Maclean who is on maternity leave. So far, Ms Grant has facilitated the travel tracker, encouraged active travel, and promoted road safety.</p> <p>Gayle has been in contact with Ross Macdowall from ERC, following Mary passing on contact details at the last meeting. Gayle had been trying to source the most up-to-date school travel plan and now has a copy, although the focus is more about active and safe travel rather than road safety/driver behaviour.</p> <p>Discussion regarding purchasing of safety bollards to be placed on Bangorshill Street to try to cut down on the dangerous and inconsiderate parking that goes on at the top next to (and alongside) the fence belonging to the house on the corner. These are expensive, costing over £700 for four.</p> <p>With regard to the banner, Gayle was corresponding with Ian Benson regarding suitable dates to meet but admits that she has dropped the ball on this and will get back in touch with him.</p> <p>Andrea stated that she will raise the issue in the next PC newsletter. There was also some discussion about designing a flyer to be placed on offending car windscreens.</p>	<p>HT to look at school travel plan and organise banner.</p>
<p>5. P7 Leavers – request for funding</p> <p>Andrea has received a request from Lynsey in the school kitchen for £100 towards party food for a P7 leavers party. Majority vote agreed to support this. Treasurers will organise payment.</p>	<p>Treasurer pay £100 to kitchen</p>

<p>6. Cupboard clear-out Mrs McGarvey has requested volunteers to move the PC stuff from the resource room over to the infant building. Suzanne and Andrea will do this and organise it between themselves.</p>	<p>Suzanne and Andrea will move PC boxes</p>
<p>7. Fundraising <u>Disco:</u> Andrea advised that the tuck shop element of the disco is proving quite difficult to plan and manage on the night and is promoting unhealthy eating. New guidance has come out about food/snacks in schools and Gayle advised that sugary snacks are only deemed acceptable on a small number of “high days and holidays” which would include things like Easter, Christmas, Eid, etc. Some parents felt that there needs to be some element of a treat at the disco. Andrea suggested goodie bags containing crisps, a Freddo, and a drink. Agreed to discuss further in the PC WhatsApp chat.</p> <p>Discussed length/timing of discos. Some felt that the earlier disco was too long and too much for the youngest children. Gayle advised that other schools have three discos split by age group, with the shortest and earliest disco for the wee ones. However, after some discussion parents felt this wasn’t likely to work at Thornliebank due to the small school roll and numbers who typically attend, which would mean that for example the senior disco would potentially have less than 30 children present. It was also thought to be more difficult to organise timing-wise, as parents typically help for this own child’s year group. Agreed to stick to two discos:</p> <p>Thursday 1st June Primary 1-4: 6-7pm Primary 5-7: 7.15-8.45pm</p> <p>Andrea will send out a WhatsApp notification for class reps to forward to their respective classes.</p> <p><u>Thornliebank Community Council Launch Event 26/8/23</u> Andrea has had a bit of difficulty getting the let confirmed because ERC aren’t yet taking bookings for the next term, but we need the let confirmed because Thornliebank Community Council have a lot of different entertainers etc booked. Gayle will speak to ERC. Nageen and Andrea went to the first planning meeting for the fun day and it’s a packed schedule. Suggestions to have a home baking stall - volunteers nearer the time.</p>	<p>PC to discuss snacks on WhatsApp.</p> <p>Andrea send out save-the-date. Class reps forward to classes.</p> <p>HT assist with school let.</p>
<p>8. Meeting Format Discussion regarding whether to continue online meetings versus a return to face-to-face. There was a mix of opinions as some people wouldn’t be able to attend face-to-face due to childcare, while others preferred it. Andrea pointed out that with the</p>	

<p>online meetings we tend to have lot of people popping into the meeting for a short while or not turning up, and it's possible that this would happen less if the meetings were in person because people would set aside the time for the meeting. Suzanne suggested having the AGM meeting and election of office bearers in person but keep the rest as online.</p>	
<p>9. Connect/Insurance Gayle confirmed that TPS will fund a Connect membership for the Parent Council, which provides the appropriate insurances.</p>	<p>HT organise PC insurance.</p>
<p>10. Next Meeting This is the last PC meeting of the 2022/2023 term. Andrea again thanked Sarah and Janey and wished them and their children all the very best settling into high school. Everyone also thanked Gayle McDonald for working in partnership with the PC this year. Gayle will be returning to Carolside Primary when Mrs Miller returns from maternity leave at the end of term.</p>	

APPENDIX 1: HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Thornliebank Parent Council

18th May 2023- Head Teacher Report

Welcome back into the final term of this session, and thank you for having me along to update you all the Parent Council meeting tonight.

Staffing Update

GMPE PT: Since our last meeting, we successfully appointed Adam McColgan- Smith as our new Gaelic Medium Principal Teacher. Adam was previously Principal Teacher in a Gaelic school, James Hamilton Primary School, in East Ayrshire. He joined the Thornliebank Team on Tuesday of last week, and is already fitting in very well. Our Gaelic-speaking class will be known as *Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank* and the families will work to develop this identity once they have started in August. There was a successful Early Years event on Saturday in our gym hall, organised by Comann nam Pàrant, to raise awareness of our new provision in the community.

GMPE- other staff: We are interviewing for a a Gaelic Medium Class Teacher (0.5FTE) on 25th May, and a Gaelic- speaking PSA later in the term. We hope that the successful candidates for these posts will start in August.

Head Teacher: Jenni Miller has been in school for a few Keeping in Touch days recently. This has given us the opportunity to work together when planning into next session, and it means that there will be a robust handover. She has been involved in the planning stages of the School Improvement Plan, and in meetings about the Gaelic Medium Provision. Mrs. Miller will return from her maternity leave during the final week of term.

ERC Budget

The council budget was announced at the beginning of last month, and the details can be found on the website:

<https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/article/5787/Council-sets-budget-for-2023-24>

The budget-saving measures protected teacher numbers and PSA numbers, which was a relief. Our school will be impacted, however, as Thornliebank Primary along with 7 other primary schools in ERC will lose the additional Equity funding we have received for a number of years to fund our Principal Teacher post. Our school is only entitled to a roll-related management team of a Head Teacher and a Depute Head. We have met with HR, and they have confirmed that we can use a different funding stream to keep our post of Principal Teacher for a minimum of the next two school sessions. Authority- wide cuts also included the provision of the Bilingual Support Worker team, so this may also have an impact on us.

Gaelic Medium Provision

We have met with the buildings department on a few occasions to firm up plans for the location of the Gaelic Medium classes within our school. The plans are for the current P4 and P6 classrooms to be used as GMPE classrooms from August (although there will initially only be one class in use.) Our current STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) room will be renovated and remain a STEM room which will be utilised by both Gaelic and English Medium classes. There are also plans to renovate the toilets, corridors and office/ meeting spaces to this side of the building, during the summer.

School staff have taken part in Gaelic Awareness Training during collegiate time, to learn more about Gaelic culture.

School Improvement Plan

We continue to monitor Raising Attainment as a priority for the School Improvement Plan. This is a priority likely to feature in next year's plan too, and we are continuing to see improvements in attainment and achievement through our classroom assessments and tracking meetings. The Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs) are underway, with our P1s, P4s and P7s participating in these. P3, P5 and P7 took part in East Renfrewshire's Standardised Assessments last term, although these are externally marked so we do not have the results of these yet. They will be shared, as usual, as part of the end-of-year summative reports.

Participatory Budgeting/ Humanitarian Fund Grant

Thank you to those of you who came along to Thorntree Hall on 18th March to support our bids for the participatory budgeting money. We bid for £2000 towards Operation Play Outdoors equipment, and £2000 develop the nursery boot area. We were awarded the full amount, which is fantastic!

Thank you also to the Parent Council, who put together a successful last-minute bid to the Humanitarian Fund. We were awarded £5000, also towards the purchase of the Operation Play Outdoors hub.



Here is what the hub will look like, and comes with over 1000 pieces of large loose parts equipment.

This is costing a little more than anticipated, as school doesn't usually pay VAT and we had assumed we wouldn't have to. However, because the money is coming from grant funding and not through our budget lines, we have discovered that we do have to pay VAT. Using money from other pots, we can cover the difference, so Mrs. Wilson is placing the order and we hope to have it in place soon.

The nursery now have a new 'rain porch' which serves as a shelter to get changed in and out of muddy boots and rain suits. This was the best we could get in terms of a boot room, working within our budget and also taking into account drainage and other obstacles around the nursery. We have also ordered sturdy wheeled storage units with some of the money we received from the PB funding. Now the weather is warmer, we would like to establish a group of parent and staff volunteers to help us to develop the sensory garden and green playground space. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered and who came along to help on our Big Tidy Up, and please encourage anyone who might be interested to get in touch.

Eid Celebration Day

Our celebration day for Eid was a huge success, and I would like to thank Mrs. McGarvey and Mrs. Ayaz, our Bilingual Support Assistant, for organising it all. Over 170 staff and pupils enjoyed getting Mendhi designs on their hands, by volunteers. There was a real buzz around the day, as the children played and did PE to traditional music. They also enjoyed making Eid cards and decorations, and learning more about what this celebration means to our Muslim families. In the afternoon, we were absolutely blown away by the generosity shown by families who shared food and music together at the Eid celebration. All pupils also had the chance to come along and taste food from different cultures. The feedback was brilliant, and it goes without saying that this will certainly be an annual celebration day at Thornliebank. Our next steps are to work with our families to make sure all major festivals and celebrations are marked together.

Reporting to Parents

As a cluster, we are looking to change the way we report to parents. At present, we have 2 Parents' Evenings (roughly October/ November and May) and a formal written end-of-year report. In our teachers' working time agreement, we have 47 hours set aside for writing these reports, and at a recent Cluster Management Team meeting we reflected that these hours could be spent differently to provide a different system of reporting, that could build better relationships with parents and improve communication. We propose that we will move to 3 Parents' Evenings in a year (roughly October, February and May) giving us more time to talk face-to-face with families. We also propose that we move to using the Seesaw profiling app to report to parents regularly all year round. We can use this app to share work, videos, achievements and comments, and parents and children can upload things too. All year, we will upload learning for you to see, and each term we will include a certain number of more detailed comments, with next steps- more like the type of thing you would see in a traditional report. As we move to a more inquiry-based and play based approach to teaching and learning, we feel that reporting this way will help you to share in your child's learning in real-time and for you to see more experiences from the classroom day-to-day. We are trialling the Seesaw app in P2 and P3 for the rest of this session, and all classes will be using it when we return in August.