

MINUTES

Tolsta Primary School - Bun-Sgoil Tholastaidh Parent Council

Tuesday 24th January 2017

In Attendance

Leigh Minion (Chair), John Maciver (Treasurer), Gavin Minion (Secretary), Kirsteen J Maclean (Headteacher), Cllr Catriona Stewart, Cllr John A Maciver, Norma Macritchie, Michelle Campbell.

Apologies: Cllr Donald Crichton, Anne Ramsey, Katherine Mackinnon, Rachel Craig.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Meeting held on the 8th of November 2016 were read and approved.

Matters Arising

New Headteacher - The chair extended a welcome to the new Headteacher Kirsteen Maclean.

School Governance Review. The chair gave a short statement regarding the end of the period for sending comments on the School Governance Review. The chair reported that the language used was difficult for some parents to follow. Catriona Stewart stated that the Comhairle had responded to the review and with the opinion that the existing 'Northern Alliance' would better serve the islands than a change to a regional boards system. There was a discussion regarding local and national opinions towards the proposed changes which differs depending on the group involved. The School is now waiting for an announcement on the subject from the Scottish Government.

Drainage Works, the Headteacher reported that, contrary to the previous minuted information (matters arising Tuesday 13th September 2016) the go-ahead has *not* been given for improvements to the drainage and access works to the school entrance. The chair indicated that this matter affects health and safety on the school premises and has "Been ongoing for several years now". The chair also pointed out that a parent had previously had to carry their child over a large puddle which often blocks the access route as their child was wearing a plaster cast which could not be allowed to get wet. After a suggestion from the Treasurer, it was agreed that the Parent Council would write a letter to the Comhairle highlighting the situation at Tolsta School and asking for works to be expedited.

Canteen Mural painting. The Headteacher reported that work on the design of the mural has been delayed due to staff illness. As this delay was likely to continue, Katherine Macritchie had suggested that the mural could be painted on a board which the school possesses and the board be mounted on the canteen wall. This board is approximately 5' (1.5m) x 10' (3.0m). This would make the design easier. It was agreed that Katherine should go ahead with the initial design work based on the designs submitted by pupils in May 2016. It was also agreed that the Parent council would be involved in the painting and would supply the paint.

School website, the Headteacher clarified the situation at present with the school website. Currently, the site is back online with a limited amount of information but is still showing an 'under construction' banner. The Website will be slowly rebuilt, but there is a possibility that it may move to a WordPress site in the Glow environment.

Polytunnel – A letter has been sent to TCDL regarding a visit to the school. We are waiting for a response from TCDL.

Headteachers Report

The Headteacher began by saying she was “Very pleased to be here” and followed with an inaugural report regarding her introduction to the school and priorities for the coming year.

School Improvement Plan – comprises three main projects, two of which are in conjunction with Back school.

1. The first one involves interschool moderation activities in literacy and numeracy. Local Quality assurance groups are assisting in these moderation activities. At the national level evidence of work has been submitted to Education Scotland.
2. Health and wellbeing project is also shared with Back. Donna Macdonald undertook the 360 audit about Internet Safety to keep the children safe in school. Report completed and now the school is looking to secure a way of reaching the benchmarks. One aspect of this is safety online.
3. Curriculum development is an ongoing project. Looking at making things more straightforward and less bureaucratic. Back and Tolsta will refresh child protection. Anti-bullying policy will be revisited.

Enrolments, enrolment week will give the school a better idea of numbers enrolling into P1.

Headteachers across the western isles have been spilt into groups, each group will look at an aspect of teaching and learning. This includes curricular transitions (P7 to S1) and other priorities. This best practice will be shared among schools. JM asked how this success will be measured. KM stated that they were at the beginning of the project in terms of attainment including standardized assessment and the attainment of the CfE levels.

There is an allocation of money given to schools will be given to raise attainment. It will be based pro rata on a criteria relating to free school meals. It is important that parents do uptake the offer of free school meals if their child is eligible and register with the council. This money will reduce barriers to learning for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

LM requested to be emailed by KM about information to put on Facebook about free school meals when they are issued in March.

Treasurers report

The bank balance currently stands at. £1806 (minus pied piper expenditure and sports strips TCDL funding that is ringfenced (about £400).

It was agreed that the signatories of the bank account for the parent council be changed to the following: “This resolution has been passed and agreed that the following change of signatory has taken place. Mrs Leigh Minion (Chair) has replaced Fiona Black as signatory.”

LM to meet with pupils to arrange what they would like to spend the fab fashion Friday fundraiser on.

School uniforms supplier (Leonard and Hudson) had excess knitwear in Tolsta colours and there was an opportunity to purchase it one time and would the parent council facilitate a loan to the school to purchase the school uniform so that it is on site all year round. £500 was made payable to the school to purchase the knitwear.

Any other business

Cllr Catriona Stewart asked that the date of the next Parent Council meeting be discussed with the other parent councils as the date of this meeting had coincided with the next meeting is to be held on January 24th 2017.

Cllr JAM praised pupils and staff for a fantastic rendition of the Pied Piper.

Meeting of the Community Chairs to take place 1st of Feb to discuss breakfast and afterschool club provision.

Date of next meeting: Provisionally Monday 24th of April,