

MINUTES

Tolsta Primary School - Bun-Sgoil Tholastaidh Parent Council

Monday 2nd October 2017 7:00PM

In Attendance

Leigh Minion (Chair), John Maciver (Treasurer), Gavin Minion (Secretary), Kirsteen J Maclean (Headteacher), Lynette Wemyss, Paula Greenstock, Rachel Craig, Andy Craig.

Apologies: Donald Macleod (Senior Education Officer), Cllr Calum Maclean, Moira Macdonald, Emma Macrae, Anne Ramsay

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Meeting held on the 24th of April 2017 were read. The headteacher pointed out that, with regards to playground supervision, supervision is now in place during morning and afternoon breaktimes. The headteacher asked that the minutes be changed to reflect this. This change was agreed, and the minutes were approved.

Matters Arising

School Garden – Some fantastic work has been done on the garden, the grass has been strimmed and the pupils are working at breaktimes on the beds. The parent council suggested that funds would be available both from the council and from the Fab Fashion Friday money to support this work.

The Parent Council noted their thanks to Gordon Macleod for the strimming effort around the school, garden.

Lynette Wemyss agreed that the school's Eco-Committee could write a letter to the parent council asking for funds.

Other sources of funding, including TCDL, Macaulay College and The Woodland Trust, were also discussed.

The secretary agreed to attend a pupil council meeting in the future to listen to their views on progress of the garden.

School days out – some parents have asked that there be more educational trips and days out by the school. The Head Teacher stated that she and the staff were supportive of educational visits and tried to take pupils out as often as they could. If classes were going on a class trip transport was not an issue but availability of a MIDAS trained driver was. In the event of school trips being organised cost was always an issue as a bigger bus was required. Possible destinations for future trips could include Scaladale. Currently the Head Teacher was also consulting with parents about the possibility of a joint excursion with Back School to Alltnacriche.

With regards to other day trips, a limitation on the school currently is the number of MIDAS drivers for the minibus. At this Paula Greenstock indicated that she was MIDAS qualified and could drive the bus on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Gavin Minion suggested that the recently opened Museum nan Eilean at Lews Castle was excellent and well worth a school visit.

Another offer suggested by Rachel Craig was that Outdoor Learning Manager Tim Pickering was willing to visit the school and take children to local sites for outdoor education.

The headteacher added that parental support was very useful when planning days out. To gauge the level of support available, the school is planning to put out a letter asking parents to indicate where they would be willing to help the school.

Head Teacher Hubs - The Head Teachers operating within the Hubs are looking to consult with parents about the particular projects they are involved in. The Head Teacher explained to those present a little about the Head Teacher Hubs and stated that the project Hub A were looking at was "to develop new methodologies to enhance parental engagement in children and young people's learning and the life of the school." Gavin Minion agreed to put his name down for this.

Scottish Schools Parental Involvement Act 2006. Leigh Minion told the meeting that a review of this act has now been published and available from the National Parent Forum of Scotland website. The chair indicated that she would post a link on Facebook regarding this. The Headteacher suggested that this was worth reading for parent council members.

Headteachers Report

The headteacher begun by drawing the councils attention to Circular No 2017/03 .

As part of last year's Health and Well-being Project, school staff have produced draft anti-bullying guidelines. The head teacher distributed copies to those present and suggested these be read and shared by parents and that an item be added to the agenda of the next meeting to discuss.

Health and wellbeing – the school has recently completed a 360 audit. One action from that was to produce an e-safety policy for the school. Staff are working on this and it is nearing completion. The school is planning an open evening regarding e-safety and will notify parents of the date soon.

Attainment Advisors – Education Scotland has created posts for attainment advisors who are linked to all the Local Authorities as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Maeve MacKinnon is the Attainment Advisor linked to the Western Isles. She is to meet with the Head Teacher next week to discuss attainment across the school and in particular will focus on any pupils who are considered to be underachieving. The school is required to report back to Education Scotland on progress within five areas. These are:

Attainment, Attendance, Inclusion/Exclusion, Participation and Engagement

The outcome of a recent focus on engagement was that the school would like to improve the level of parental engagement. In particular by encouraging more communication through the homework diary. Currently the parent section in many of the homework diaries is left empty. Gavin Minion raised that often the school entries in the diary were repetitive and that this did not encourage feedback. Gavin suggested that more variation in homework would encourage parents to become more involved.

School events – events currently in progress include regular swimming sessions for P4 pupils. The annual Unihoc competition for primary pupils was also recently held. Upcoming events include the Christmas performance, and also P6 and P7 pupils will be visiting Back School for a performance of Jason and the Argonauts from The Scottish National Theatre's Outreach to Schools team.

Health and Safety – The headteacher informed the parent council of a recent incident involving children climbing on to the roof of the school. This is a serious matter and the headteacher spoke to the pupils concerned sternly regarding their behavior. The chair agreed and will be posting a message on the parent council website regarding this.

Treasurers report

At this point, the Parent council have £998 in the bank.

Any other business

The Chair agreed to write a letter of thanks to TCDL for the donation towards the school strips and goalposts.

Date of next meeting: Provisionally Monday 13th of November.