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|  | **COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR**  **Sgoil An Toabh Siar**  **Lower Barvas** Isle of Lewis HS2 0RA | |
| To: All Parents/Carers | Telephone | 01851 701602 |
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| Our Reference |  |
| Your Reference |  |
| Date | Date as Postmark |

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Re: Parent Council Committee**

With the start of a new year your Parent Council have decided to make a few changes in the way we communicate with parents. We thought that it would be helpful to keep everyone up to date with events and also explain how the pupils are benefiting from the money you all work so hard to raise. We have decided to write a short newsletter each term to keep you informed and we will also send you the minutes from the Parent Council meetings so you can see what has been discussed. If there is anything you would like your Parent Council to put on the agenda please get in touch. If you would like to come to Parent Council meetings then please do. We would really welcome new ideas and viewpoints. The meetings are once a term at the school at 7pm on the second Tuesday of the new term. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 23rd April. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Changes to the Committee**

There have been some changes to the committee this academic year. Kathleen and Cathie Tina, after many years service, have decided to leave their posts as Chair and Treasurer. We thank them very warmly for all their efforts over the years. The new Chair is Joanne Havinden and Steven Graham will serve as Treasurer. Donna Morrison is continuing as Secretary. Ordinary members are Anne Macarthur, Alison Macleod, Murray Nelson, Mairi Macdonald, Louis Maciver, Alice Macmillan and Joni Morrison but we usually have other people there too. It is our intention to refresh the committee every couple of years so we can involve as many people as possible. We also have a sub-committee who are dedicated to organising fundraising events. This committee includes Donna Morrison, Alison Macleod, Murdo Campbell, Grace Macleod, Sarah Jane Graham and Maureen Macdonald.

**Review of 2018**

We had a really successful year in 2018 and it was great to see so many of you supporting the school and the pupils. We think that there was a bit too much financial pressure on parents in the last term and one of our aims this year is to organise the timing of events more carefully to avoid this in the future. To this end we have decided to scrap the request for "Pound a Week". This money has been used to maintain a good level in the bank account so that the school can afford to pay for school trips, computer programmes, books, buses and other important outgoings but we feel that the administration of it is becoming very difficult and we would like to reduce the financial pressure on parents. If we all sign up to easy fundraising (see below) then we don't need the Pound a week because that will give us a steady income.

This year the funds in our account have been used to purchase two computer programmes (Number Shark and Word Shark) and to contribute to the purchase of a set of Maths books. The school needs a new shredder in the office so we are discussing possible options for upgrading that equipment.

**Easy Fundraising**

It's FREE! This is a brilliant way of raising money for the school and if we all sign up then it easily replaces Pound a Week. All you need to do is log on to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and fill out the form then download the reminder. Every time you shop online the companies you use will donate a percentage of your spend to Sgoil an Taobh Siar. So far we have raised well over £200. It doesn't cost you anything at all and it only takes a couple of minutes to fill out the form. Lots of shops are partners of the scheme and so every time you use Tesco online, Next, John Lewis, Argos etc you will be earning the school money. Amazon and eBay ask you to go through the easyfundraising website but pretty much everyone else the "reminder to donate" will pop up as soon you log on. It's really straightforward. Please share this with your friends and family so your children can really benefit from the extra funds.

**Fundraising Activities 2019**

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the fundraising activities so far. Without your support we would not be able to run these events. We are hoping to run another Curry Night in conjunction with the Football Club as this was very successful last time. We will announce the date soon. There will be a Soup and Pudding lunch at the Clan MacQuarrie on Saturday, 16th February 12-2pm . We are looking for donations of soups, puddings, bread and cream as well as something for our bottle stall so if you can spare something it would be gratefully received. Both these events require helpers to prepare, cook, serve and tidy up. It's so much easier if we share the work load between all of us rather than just a few old hands so please don't be shy. Even an hour of your time would really make a difference. Please get in touch with the school with details of when you can help.

**Facebook Group**

Donna Morrison has set up Facebook groups for Sgoil Araich and Sgoil an Taobh Siar. These groups are great for keeping in touch with events and for seeing photos of special events at the school. Please join up and join in.

**Sgoil Araich**

There has been a big change at Sgoil Araich this year with the move to an extended service. They are now open 8.30-5.30 all year round so this has meant the appointment of a new manager. Chrismar Montgomery (formerly of Brue) will take up her post in August. She is currently on Maternity Leave and in the interim Alison Macleod is acting Manager. We hope that Sgoil Araich parents will take the opportunity to become more involved in the Parent Council and we aim to have more involvement from Sgoil Araich in the events we run. Sgoil Araich have put a suggestion box at the door and they are regularly updating the noticeboard and their Facebook group so make sure you take advantage of all the different ways of staying in touch. The staff are really keen for you to come and see what the children are doing so do come up to the door and take a look. The "Pound a Week" which was a fundraising initiative from the beginning has stopped and Sgoil Araich will now share funds with the school through the easy fundraising and the other events.

If anyone has any comments to make on anything above or would like to get more involved with the Parent Council please get in touch with Joanne Havinden on [seonag1980@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:seonag1980@hotmail.co.uk)

Best wishes,

Your Parent Council