**Aberdour Primary School Parent Council Meeting Minutes**

**14th November 2022 7.00pm at Aberdour Primary School**

Minutes by Alison Johnson (standing in for secretary Linsay McDonald in her absence)

1. Present: Louise Wood (Head Teacher), Leanne Sweaton (Acting Principal Teacher), Gareth Williams (Chair and P7 rep), Claire Stewart (P1 rep), Claire Matthews (P4 rep), Ariyanna Johnson (P3 rep), Alison Johnson (Nursery rep), Councillor David Dempster

Apologies: Linsay McDonald (Secretary and P2 rep), Lottie Ritchie (P6 rep), Wendy Hutchison (P5 rep), Gillian Cormack (Principal teacher)

1. Actions arising from last meeting:
   1. Gareth to advertise AGM for next planned meeting (January 16th 2023) and to contact parents regarding planned priorities for parent council moving forward.
   2. When submitting agenda points, could reps please add more detail to give Mrs Wood a chance to investigate before parent council meetings.
   3. Drainage in playground has been addressed and no further issues are anticipated.
   4. Fibre broadband – update from DD. Reported that he has had an email exchange with a member of the IT team at Fife council. The access to broadband at school should be adequate as it has a 10 GB connection with a designated link to the network, and changing this would result in slower access than at present. The contact of DD has offered to come out to school to talk to someone directly, not felt to be necessary at this time.
2. Head teacher update
   1. School improvement plan - creating a culture of reading in school. Three professional learning sessions have been carried out for all staff (including nursery). This comprised mechanics of learning, phonics, understanding and comprehension when reading. Staff carried out self-evaluation at the end of the inset days and children will also be consulted to gather their views and opinions. Parent questionnaires to be sent out regarding reading, and Mrs Wood is hoping to create a focus group regarding the school’s approach to reading. The Scottish Book Trust have an audit tool to evaluate reading and school plan to use this. Mrs Sweaton and Mrs Wood have been working to increase the library offerings and secured some book boxes being sold from a from local library resource to add more selection. (Further information about the library covered in pupil leadership update, below.) There is also a push to increase the digital work that children can access, with universal IT supports being promoted in school for all children but particularly those with literacy challenges. Call Scotland website suggested by AJ as a good resource.
   2. Nursery learning environment. Audit to take place of the nursery environment and how the space is being used by the children. This will include parent and children’s views and aims to promote a supportive learning environment that is lead by the children’s interests and learning needs.
   3. Pupil leadership update:
      1. Pupil council group are leading on playground improvements. This has been shared at assembly and ideas have been discussed. Pupils have been made aware that this won’t be a quick project but is important, nonetheless.
      2. Eco group have met, and targets have been set. Garden clear up organised for Thursday 17th November with all eco committee members to attend with parent volunteers. Update from Mrs Templeman re priorities to be confirmed.
      3. Road safety: form has been sent to parents regarding the walking bus. Feedback that more information about what this might look like would be helpful, before asking parents to commit to using and/or helping. Parent council have offered to help promote this with parents if useful. Fife council have launched a competition with a prize of £500 toward road safety equipment/investment. Children are to create a road safety rap in their class groups.
      4. House captains: looking at wellbeing indicators in assembly each week and taking a lead on presenting. Going well so far.
      5. Rights Respecting School reps: equality and diversity audit tool has been carried out by Mrs Cormack and a group of parents. Results to be shared with parent group.
      6. Junior librarians have been working hard! The new bookshelves have arrived, and the library is being rearranged and restocked to improve the offerings to pupils. Junior librarians had a visit to Aberdour Library to find out how to organise and check in/out books, promote reading etc. Junior librarians are thinking of a system that will work for the school library; possibly working on a rota for when classes visit the library. Mrs Sweaton talked about creating a chart with colour coding to help children chose their books based on the genre, theme, reading level etc. Mrs Wood has kept the pegs on the wall to try and create book bags/ book of the week. Suggestion made about placing a book box on school ground for children to exchange their own books once they have read them (like that found on the avenue).
3. Parent council priorities
   1. AGM to be advertised more than 2 weeks prior to next meeting on 16th January 2023. Gareth to send out invitation to all parents and will give a short presentation about what the PC have achieved since the last AGM.
   2. Discussed whether sending out a parent questionnaire would add value to setting priorities or whether we should set them within the group to compliment the school improvement plan (as is the remit of the PC).
   3. Discussed the proposal that priorities moving forward for the PC will be: Outdoor learning, creating a culture of reading in school and promoting the play pedagogy in school. To be confirmed at AGM.
4. AOB.
   1. Outdoor learning. Suggestion that parent council may be able to support outdoor learning with organising parent support. Suggested as a school improvement project for next school year. CM raised concerns from P4 parents that outdoor learning is on the timetable but doesn’t seem to be being carried out. LW and LS reported that they will look into this, and if it is on the timetable it should be happening. Acknowledged that outdoor learning may be happening on school grounds but that pupils might not see this as outdoor learning, associating it with trips to the beach, woods or further afield. Suggestion that more pictures and/or covering outdoor learning in the weekly teaching roundup or on seesaw may help. LW confirmed that outdoor learning follows guidelines from Natural Connections (P1-P5) and John Muir (P6-P7).
   2. Play-based learning. P3 rep, Ariyanna, reported that some parents would like clarity on what play based learning looks like further up the school. Raised questions about effectiveness and if evaluation of the benefits could be shared. LS and LW reported their feelings that the benefits of play-based learning were widely supported and understood by parents. LS explained that when HMIE inspected school they recommended that the play-based approach should be used throughout the whole school and not just in early years as it was felt to be so effective. Teachers are currently being upskilled in play-based approach to learning. The biggest benefit has been the children’s motivation and engagement to learn, and attainment has improved since play-based learning was introduced to the school. Key questions have been sent out on sway regarding play-based learning before, LS to reshare the results of this evaluation of parent opinions. As children progress further up the school the amount of play-based learning will reduce naturally and will for example maybe take place on one afternoon instead of throughout the day. Lovely example of P5 children deciding to put on a play of Little Women because of play-based learning. Suggestion that a curriculum evening, like that offered in P1, would be of benefit as a refresher and also for older classes for parents to see how play-based learning will change throughout the years. LS offered to hold a curriculum evening re play based learning for parents if helpful.
   3. PE – AJ raised that P3 children do not seem to be getting PE on Thursdays. LW to look into this.
   4. Mental health and wellbeing. Raised by CM as feedback from P4 parents asking for information around what is happening to support health and wellbeing in APS. LW explained that this was not raised as an item for the school improvement plan when questionnaires went out at the end of the last school year. This showed that children reported feeling safe in school; LW to re-share with CM for information. There is always a health and wellbeing target for each class throughout the year and children will be aware of this through setting learning intentions at the start of each learning task. LW explained that there are various resources in use throughout the school – Edinburgh resilience pack, kitbag, restorative practice. In general, LW reported that the school values also cover dignity and respect, and she would not anticipate the need for a ‘no shouting policy’ as this should be incorporated in school values.
   5. Nut free school reminder – request that school share this message again with parents and remind them that Nutella is a nut-based product and should not be brought to school. There are severe nut allergies associated with school and help to keep the school a nut-free environment is appreciated.
   6. Remembrance day – could the school be involved in Remembrance day next year. Suggestion that this will be a good link with community. LS to contact community council regarding this.
   7. School lunches. There have been some inconsistencies with staffing while a replacement cook has been found. New manager has now been recruited and is starting soon, so hopefully lunches will become more consistent moving forward.