

Aberdour Primary School Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Monday 17th January 2022 7.00pm via Zoom

Minutes by Linsay McDonald

1. **Present:** Gareth Williams (Chair and P6 Rep), Alison Johnson (Nursery Rep), Linsay McDonald (P1 Rep), Jo Eacott (P2 Rep), Ellen Stewart (P3 Rep), Colin Sykes (P4 Rep), Janine Muldoon (P7 Rep), Louise Wood (Head Teacher), Gillian Cormack (Principal Teacher), Leanne Sweaton (Acting Principal Teacher), Councillor Dave Dempsey, Councillor Dave Coleman, Gabi Sweeney (P1 and P3 Parent)

Apologies: Lottie Ritchie (P5 Rep)

2. Minutes from the last meeting were confirmed and have been emailed to Parent Council members and shared on the Parent Council Facebook page.

3. PC Priority 1- School Covid Response Plan

CS reported that P4 parents had asked whether the staggered start and finish times need to continue as it often leaves parents/carers with children in more than one class waiting in the playground between drop offs/pickups. LW acknowledged this was undesirable but replied that this continues to be line with current Covid guidance due to the geography of the school, with multiple classes using the same door. She had hoped it would be removed before Christmas (along with staggered lunch and break times) but with the emergence of the Omicron variant it continues to be a requirement. She has a duty to offer every child the equivalent of 9-3 in school so doing start and finish times by family wouldn't be possible and would also be difficult staffing wise. LW said that if individual families wished to contact her to ask for children to be let out early at the same time as their siblings, she could organise this with their class teacher. GW asked for confirmation that a change in the guidance from the Scottish Government would be required for the end of staggered starts and finishes and LW said that this was the case.

JE reported that some parents of P2 children still felt too many platforms were being used to share information with parents and that they had missed important emails from the school. LW said that it is only really the app and email that are used to share information (and emails only go to the first listed contact, so the app is beneficial for other family members to use). Seesaw and Teams are only used for the children's home learning. She suggested checking filters and junk settings on email if messages are being missed and JM added that filters on the app can be used so that you only get the messages relevant to your child's class. LW said she would remind office staff to send an alert on the app when an important email is sent out. JE said another parent felt that the school sent too much information and that it should be more concise. LW replied that she only sends the newsletter out every 3-4 weeks so there is a lot to include and she felt that most parents wanted to see detailed updates from the school. GW, LM and JM all added that they appreciated the information sent by the school, particularly the weekly class updates on the app.

ES reported that the P3 parents really appreciated the children's jotters coming home before Christmas, and requested that they be sent home again before the next parents' evening. LW and GC said it is also good for the children to know their work is being sent home and that they will organise for this before parents' evenings in the future.

JM raised the subject of high school transitions for the P7s. LW highlighted that this is the first year that parents have had to apply to their catchment high school. She said that the transitions for Inverkeithing and Balwearie are slightly different, and that schools are being slightly more cautious this year after a lot of transition plans had to be cancelled last year. However, there are already some transition activities for children on teams including opportunities to connect with kids from other cluster schools and on Wednesday 2nd February there will be a meeting on teams with the IHS senior management team for parents and children. If the Covid situation continues to improve there should be a week's transition offered sometime at the end of June.

4. Head Teacher Update

Covid Response: LW reported that staff absences have been minimal and manageable so far, and that hopefully the mitigations in place are reducing spread. She said the school appreciates that families are being understanding with regards to testing and keeping kids off when they are unwell. She is grateful to families for their measured and mindful response to reducing the spread. There are home learning grids available if children are isolating but feeling well and looking for something to do.

ES asked if there is a better solution for reuniting lost property with its owners now that parents can't come into the school. LW replied that if it is labelled with the correct name it will be returned and agreed that putting lost property boxes out into the playground on a Friday afternoon for parents to look through should be reinstated by class.

JM asked when the P7 sweatshirts will arrive; LW hoped this would be within the next couple of weeks.

School Improvement Plan: Before Christmas, the school hosted in person meetings with other headteachers and managers, who visited the children in all classes and the nursery. Their feedback was that the children were good at talking about their learning, and they were impressed with the levels of engagement, opportunities for collaboration and relevance of learning. Things to work on included learning walls in the nursery, getting pupils involved in success criteria and more opportunities for free learning (as requested by the pupils). The school also plans to find out what parents and children think about the school improvement plan and learning through play and will carry out surveys and focus groups on this subject.

In terms of curriculum rationale, LS has been working with the children on developing sustainability goals, what they think they need to/want to learn, and thinking about what makes APS unique.

The children will be consulted on which books to buy for the reading and library area and be involved in a fundraiser to raise some money for this. Kids will be able to borrow books from this area and junior librarians have been appointed.

P1 Enrolments: Since the window for deferral has been extended this year, LW asked whether running a P1 curriculum information evening including information on play pedagogy, similar to that normally held in August, before the deadlines for P1/nursery application would be useful to help parents make the decision on whether to defer their nursery age children this year or not. AJ said this would be a good idea and also suggested some videos of the P1 environment and written information be shared with the nursery parents. LW, GC and LS agreed that the meeting should go ahead as proposed.

GW asked if there was any indication on P1 numbers and classes yet, LW said it was still too early as the deadline for P1 applications had not passed yet. ES said she had some feedback that children were still talking about the potential for composite classes next year and LW said children should be encouraged to think about enjoying this year and not worrying about the next session's arrangements yet.

5. PC Priority 2- Safer Routes to School

GW raised a concern regarding traffic on Main Street after the commencement of building works on the CALA site and the instatement of traffic control measures. LW said they do now have a lollypop person in position on the High Street but still can't fill the one on Main Street. She has had no information from CALA on the roadworks but they have said they hope the first occupancy will be in November 2022. DD said any traffic concerns can be sent to the local councillors and they will be investigated. He is pretty sure that the zebra crossing on Main Street will be upgraded to one with lights in the next financial year. However, the chances of filling the lollypop post are low as it is very hard to recruit.

LW reported that the junior road safety officers are working on a travel plan and mapping the safest routes to school.

6. PC Priority 3- Improving Diversity at Aberdour

Eco Schools: Mrs Templeman couldn't attend the meeting but LW reported that brown bins have arrived for the playground so that pupils can add food waste that will be composted for the garden. They also now have a mixed plastics recycling bin for the kids to use. The Eco committee have been working on a junk modelling drive, a campaign to reduce paper towel use and a litter picking rota in the playground.

7. AOB

On behalf of a parent, LM asked whether there will be any after school sports clubs for P1s. LW said she wasn't sure there would be but that the P7s want to set up lunch time clubs for games and activities so she will ask them to consider the junior school as well.

The next meeting of the Parent Council will be on Monday 14th March 2022.