

PARENT COUNCIL MINUTES 11th May 2021

PRESENT: Douglas Crews, Abigail Govan, Anne-Marie Greer, Stephen Humphries, Rhona Hynd, Alison Jennings, Pauline Rae, Sharon Saxton, Luisa Walker

APOLOGIES: Alan McKay, Kelly O'Reilly, Jo Reilly, Jen Wilkie

1. Approval of Minutes from meeting held 9th February 2021

Minutes were previously approved & published.

2. Outstanding Issues from Previous Meeting

Plastic Free Schools – defer to next meeting.

3. Headteacher's Report

This term is undoubtedly the busiest of the school year. There is work to be done for the Scottish government in providing attainment data by Friday 14th May, class structures and staffing to be organised for the next school year, pupil reports for 2020/21, budgets & funding to the finalised, school improvement plan work, standards & quality report work and P1 & P7 transitions.

Covid-19: In spite of society opening up more generally, schools will remain with current protocols e.g. minimal visitors in school. Across the Dunfermline High School Cluster, it has been agreed there will be no extra-curricular clubs before the summer break e.g. Pars Foundation.

A number of schools nearby have reported positive Covid cases. There is local concern that a number of pupils self-isolating have been seen out and about in the local community, so this message needs to be tightened.

This situation continues to impact planned transitional events across Fife (Nursery, P1 & P7) and for now all transitional events will remain virtual. There is ongoing discussion about a sporting event for P7 pupils as a transition event, however the mixing of pupils from different schools is currently a barrier. Only events involving current staff & pupils can proceed at this time. The Scottish government may take a decision on pupil transition events before the end of term to allow a physical visit, but we will need to wait for news.

In Service: – staff were not allowed in school for the recent In-Service day, but we did work as a staff on pupil profiling work (to be continued next term), which relates to our work on the school vision - looking at individual classrooms and pupils to unpick the learning in teaching within the class, common behaviours within a class and looking to matching teaching styles to individual pupils, how can styles be adapted where appropriate etc....

Staff also carried out a self-evaluation of 20/21, results of which are being collated.

The final element of the In Service day was an outdoor learning module, which was completed by all staff.

Parents Evening: The system seemed to work better than previously, on the whole. 3 failures in the first night (compared to 1 in 5 previously). On the second night, there appeared to be more broadband issues in the area (specific postcode), which impacted some appointments. Preference would always be face to face.

There was some discussion around frustrations with the strict 10min cut off, but it is a good tool that allowed a face-to-face element to the meeting. Could the system be a back-up solution for parents who can't make it into the school as part of a blended approach?

Anne-Marie asked about a parent evening each term if we need to continue virtually. This may not be possible contractually, but we should be able to get back to shared starts (1 per term), annual sharing our learning events, sports day, Masterton mile, Christmas shows etc... for the next school year.

4. School Extension Works

Almost complete – builders had been targeting exit end April so won't be long now. It looks really good, there are a couple of snagging items to be rectified. The fire officer has been in to review all paperwork, extension materials and appears to have given it a clean bill of health.

Not been officially handed over yet but nearly there. Fencing being taken away. Tour TBA.

5. 2021/22 Class Structure

The current plan is for 14 classes in 2021/22. 62 P1 pupils are expected. This means there will be pressure at some stages before we even start the next school year. Stephen will work on a couple of potential structure options and then allocate teachers. There will be some movement of teachers and potentially a couple of new staff. We will aim to identify P1 teachers as quickly as possible to share with new parents.

Looking at 360/370 pupils' total.

6. P7 Events & Transition Plans

Transition plans were covered during the Headteachers' report.

We have been instructed that only essential activities should be taking place at this time. However, we are looking at one event which may be possible – we are hoping to open the school up one evening at the end of term for the pupils to have a fun event (not to be shared with pupils at this time). The traditional clap out (socially distanced if necessary) will still go ahead and a P7 Virtual Show in progress. Hoodies have been very well received; in fact some parents would like to order a duplicate.

Parents are seeking transition information in terms of uniform, buses etc.... SH will discuss with the High School. Still hopeful of a physical visit.

7. Financial Update

Not covered during the meeting. *The following information was provided separately:*

Current bank balance is £6,490.68.

Recent expenditure has included P1 blue bags and flowers for departing parent council members. Small amounts of income in interest and FRoMPS cash.

8. FRoMPS Update

Not covered during the meeting.

Post meeting, Jo provided an email update. As expected, FRoMPS have no fundraising activities planned this term, but are keen to get back on track next term, Covid permitting.

Sadly, Jo has advised she will be resigning her post on the parent council. Thanks to Jo for her support. Debbie Rankine from the FRoMPS Committee will take over from Jo – Welcome Debbie!

9. Gala Update

Not covered.

10. Any Other Business

Protocol for Transferring Children into After School Club: It is the responsibility of the class teacher to check the OOSC list and ensure that pupils on the list are sent to the club.

All teachers have a list. The OOSC informs the office of any changes. Changes are posted on a bright pink sheet around the school as well as teachers being informed.

Teachers are told that even if a pupil says they are being picked up they have to go to OOSC if it they are on the list.

OOSC send staff down to the Infant Area to meet the youngest pupils and check that they have them.

Our procedures were reviewed by the Education Manager.

In discussion with the Out of School Club tonight both the school and the OOSC are in discussion with the Care Commission to ensure an incident like that reported in the local press last week does not happen again.

There is concern about the time taken to inform Stephen of such incidents – he wasn't advised about incident reported in the press until the following morning. Some parent council members described similar incidents, which Stephen was not aware of. Stephen will pick this up with OOSC. Communication to Stephen must be added to the protocol.

Stephen & Sharon cover the 2 main school entrance/exit points at the beginning and end of each school day.

What about cover for the gate(s) on the cycle path? Stephen will speak to janitorial staff to try and cover this.

We will revisit this topic next term.

Parent Communication / Increase in Parent Council Membership: How can we increase parent council membership? Can we use the website / twitter? This is something we do need to address. A number of the parent council will be leaving, as their children leave the school. This will be a focus come August/September, where we need recruitment drive. We need a Parent Council which reflects our current parental demographic. During the various lockdowns, we feel that relationships between parents / teachers / the school has suffered due to the lack of opportunities for parents to be in school.

Should we revisit a school communication app? We will come back to communication as a whole in August/September. We have the website, email, MS Teams, See-Saw etc.. and should look at the issue as a whole. Agenda item for the next meeting.

School Dinners: There has been a couple of comments about drinks – some pupils saying they only have access to milk at lunchtime? The is both milk and water available (milk is additional to pre-ordered milk). Due to Covid-19 guidelines jugs & cups cannot be provided (this is a Fife wide guideline) and pupils use the water fountains and their own bottles.

Departing PC Members: Luisa thanked Douglas, Abi, Allison & Pauline for their time on the parent council. As their youngest children head to High School, this will be their final meeting. Stephen & Sharon echoed Luisa's thanks and the importance of the parent council & school relationship.

11. Date of next Meeting(s)

Next Meeting: Tuesday 24th August at 6:30pm