



St Mary's Parent Partnership – Online Meeting, October 25th 2021

Present:

Mrs Guthrie (HT)	J McCabe
Mrs Blincow (DHT)	V Bonnar
Mrs MacDonald (DHT)	J Boyd
G Forbes (Active Schools)	C Burrows
Councillor G Brookes	J McCafferty
E Fitzharris (Church Rep)	L Medinelli
M Cassidy (Chairperson)	H McGivern
D McLaughlin (Chairperson)	J Ferrie
V Pollard (Treasurer)	L Nelis
G Henry (Secretary)	C Burrows
J Sheridan (Vice Secretary) – minutes	K Ferrie
L Owens (Graphics)	S Varese

Apologies:

S O'Brien (Vice Treasurer)	M Purdue
S McBride	S O'Brien
J Campbell	C McCorkindale
D McGlashan	L Brown

Welcome & Apologies – M Cassidy welcomed everyone to our online meeting. The meeting was then opened with a prayer from St Mary's Church representative Mrs Fitzharris.

Head Teacher's Update – Mrs Guthrie updated us on a number of items:

Covid – Mrs Guthrie reported that on the 25th October the school did not have any positive cases in school, although a few children were going for tests because of family members testing positive.

Free Show at the Beacon (now passed) - P7A and P7B have been working with musicians over the past few weeks and presented a show at the Beacon on Saturday 30th October.

Hallowe'en Parties (now passed) -Hallowe'en Parties took place on Friday afternoon. Children came dressed up but were not allowed props.

Ragbag (now passed) - Bags of clothes were to be dropped off on Monday morning 1/11/21.

Parent Phone calls – these will take place from Monday 8th – Friday 12th November. The school will organise meeting times for parents this week.

Christmas Events - Primary One Nativity will take place again in the church. It will be livestreamed but parents may also be allowed to attend since it is in the church. P4 will lead our Advent Service again this year – this will be livestreamed as well.*

**Update: The P1 and P4 Nativity/Prayer Service will now be combined and livestreamed through the parish website on Thursday 16th December. Unfortunately, parents are unable to attend this service.*

Christmas parties and Christmas lunch will take place – dates have still to be agreed.

Update: Christmas Lunch will take place on Friday 18th December.

P5-7 Parties will take place on Monday 20th December

P1-4 parties will take place on Tuesday 21st December

A question had been asked about classes doing their usual school show and recording it for parents. The main attraction of doing the shows is to have a live audience and to be able to perform in front of family and friends. It just would not be the same for the children.

Sacraments - Dates for Sacraments have now been confirmed. 7/05/22 for P4 First Holy Communions and 31/05/22 & 02/06/22* for P7 Confirmations.

**Update: 2nd June is a public holiday, therefore this Confirmation date will need to be rearranged.*

Playground- Eddie Montgomery could not attend this evening's meeting but passed on information. The grounds are not quite ready to hand over – they are still waiting for some trees to be planted. The school asked why there was so much greenery and could this not have been additional playground space – this was a requirement in order to comply with government policy on green spaces for learning. The large steps are meant as seating as well as climbing, which is why they are so high. It seems that many of the local schools have them and children enjoy jumping off them. In terms of disabled access, Eddie highlighted that the land at Kelly Street Nursery was much lower than the old school pitch, which meant there had to be steps and slopes. If it had been a new build, it might have been easier to ensure better access for disabled children.

Reception Area - B&Q in Port Glasgow has very kindly given the school a voucher for £100 to landscape the corner of the reception area playground.

P7 Residential Trip - Parentpay will be set up this week for parents to pay towards the trip. This money will be refunded if the trip cannot go ahead. Rather than trying to send two groups of children on a residential trip this year, our current P6s will go in P7. This is possibly better anyway, as some P6 children still find it difficult to be away from home.

School Improvement Plan

Learning for Sustainability - Whole school focus on COP26/Laudato Si and Catholic Education Week throughout November.

Digital Literacy – The school have been advised not to order new laptops just now because there is such a long waiting time for delivery and set up. The school are also still waiting to see what happens about government funding. Mrs McGlashan is currently working from home and is reviewing our current Computing Science programme. Staff also attended a range of training events on the in-service day to improve their skill in teaching Digital Literacy. This was very well received as they were able to choose what to focus on, rather than just attending the same course as everyone else.

Play Pedagogy - Mrs Combe and Mrs Grant have visited two nurseries (Glenpark and Glenbrae) and St Ninian's Primary to observe their practice and find out about suitable resources. They also attended training on the in-service day and further opportunities for P1 teachers to share practice will continue throughout the year. They are already implementing play in their classes but are continuing to balance this with direct teaching and teacher led activities. We have bought 4 tuff trays (£239.96) – if the PP could help.

Pupil Voice – The school have re-introduced our Development Groups but only have two classes working on each project together, rather than mixing several classes. The groups are Fairtrade, Mini Vinnies, Eco, Health and Sports and Rights Respecting Groups.

The groups will be sharing their learning with the rest of the school and trying to involve parents and the local community where they can. For example, the Mini Vinnies group are planning to do some carol singing for the Little Sisters.

The school will also use pupil voice to help choose new novels for the upper school classes.

The school are going to meet with the new Pupil Council this week.

Finally, the school are planning to send out a short survey to gather parents' and pupils' views on our new home learning grids – hopefully, these are going well.

Parent Partnership Questions

M Cassidy asked how parents could get tickets for the show at the Beacon, Mrs Guthrie said she did not have the link yet.

V Pollard asked about how likely it was that school Christmas Concerts would not go ahead. She said that it was disappointing and perhaps could classes perform to one another instead of parents. Mrs Guthrie said the whole school focus would be on COP 26 over Christmas and that there would be no time now for concerts. She added that the focus was also on pupils' academic recovery from the pandemic. She also noted that since the Christmas Shows are very popular they would hopefully be reinstated when things improve in terms of Covid. M Cassidy asked if it was possible for a QR code to be added to the school Christmas Cards with a link to pupils singing a Christmas song as an alternative. Mrs Guthrie said she would ask the teachers if this was possible.

** Update: Each class will record a Christmas carol to be added to the Christmas cards through a QR code.*

J McCabe who works with 'Moneysense', Royal Bank of Scotland said that RBS were donating 20,000 plants to schools and would the school be interested? Mrs Guthrie said they would. J McCabe said she would liaise with Mrs Guthrie to apply. J McCabe also added that since 'Moneysense' haven't been able to visit schools in person recently they have created online resources that can be used in schools that are related to COP26.

C Burrows and D McGLashan asked for clarification about pupils bringing in props for Halloween. Mrs Guthrie said wigs were allowed as long as they stayed on the pupil's head. She added that due to Covid, props were discouraged and that if they were brought in they were not to be shared, but within reason could be brought as long as they were put away once in class.

G Henry asked if the dates for Sacraments could be shared with parents as soon as they were decided. Mrs Guthrie agreed.

V Pollard asked for an update on the provision of a St Mary's School Breakfast Club. Mrs Guthrie said no progress had been made as staffing was still to be arranged by Inverclyde Council. M Cassidy said he will email the Inverclyde Council Breakfast Club representative to ask when a Breakfast Club at St Mary's would be set up. It was noted that most other schools in Inverclyde have Breakfast Clubs and that many parents are keen for one to be set up as soon as possible.

Fundraising

M Cassidy asked that as other fundraising opportunities like the fete cannot happen, can school Christmas Cards and the Santa Quest go ahead as they did last year? Mrs Guthrie said yes and M Cassidy said her support is appreciated. Mrs Guthrie proposed the Santa Quest be on Friday 10th December. V Bonnar said her dad David Bryceland would be willing to be involved as he was last year with the Santa Quiz. Mrs Guthrie proposed that the class

photographs for the Christmas cards could all be taken before Friday 26th of November. M Cassidy said the Parent Partnership provided Christmas props last year and we could top these up as required. Mrs Boyd and Mrs MacDonald said they would check what is there and report back, to see if more items are required. J McGuire said that if teachers were able to film their classes singing a line each of a Christmas song or Carol, she would edit it together and that this could be a possible festive item to link from the school Christmas Card to a YouTube clip via a QR code. M Cassidy and L Owens noted that Christmas Card orders would need to be received by 29/30 November to allow time for printing and processing.

Gary Forbes - Active Schools Coordinator

Gary said that sports clubs had now started to return to schools. Primary 7 have sports leadership training, Primary 1 have sports multi skills training for the following 5 weeks, Primary 2 will have mini athletics, Primary 3 will have team games including basketball, football and netball. Primary 5 will have access to an after-school club starting this Thursday (letters have gone home regarding this). Mrs Coombes is also keen to restart athletics club. Gary hopes that every class will have access to some extra sports activity throughout the school year. He added that Sports Scotland's new focus is for sport to have a bigger impact in changing young people's lives for the better and also for changing communities for the better. He finished off by saying that this week was Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week 2021 and that if anyone had any good stories about inspirational women and girls in sport they could contact Gary and he would share it on Twitter.

Next online meeting date – Monday 6th December