



## St Mary's Parent Partnership – Online Meeting, December 6<sup>th</sup> 2021, 7pm

### Present:

Mrs Guthrie (HT)	Mrs MacDonald (DHT)
Councillor G Brookes	V Bonnar
Councillor E Robertson	J Boyd
E Fitzharris (Church Rep)	C Burrows
M Cassidy (Chairperson)	J McCafferty
D McLaughlin (Chairperson)	C O'Donnell
V Pollard (Treasurer)	D Purdue
J Sheridan (Vice Secretary) – minutes	K Ferrie
S O'Brien	S Hastings
J McGuire	

### Apologies:

G Henry (Secretary)	L Owens (Graphics)
S McBride	D McGlashan
J McCabe	

### Welcome & Apologies

M Cassidy welcomed everyone and especially Councillors Liz Robertson and Graeme Brooks to the meeting. Mrs Fitzharris opened the meeting with a prayer.

### Head Teacher's Update

- Thank you to the PP for the Hallowe'en treats for the children – the children really enjoyed their parties.
- Thank you also to everyone who contributed to P3 and P6's appeal for presents for the residents of the Little Sisters. This has been extremely well supported. They are planning to deliver them next Monday.
- During the Month of November there was a whole school focus on COP26, Laudato Si and Catholic Education Week (Caring for God's World). A school video was made for the parish for Catholic Education Sunday and also sent out to parents with some of the messages the children had learned.
- Feedback from the survey re home learning was sent out to parents today. We had 67 replies – almost all parents said they found the new grids helpful and that their children had engaged well with them. Overall, parents are happy with the new system as it gives more flexibility and is easier to manage around other commitments. A few people mentioned that they preferred the old style of homework but not that many.

- Our new play area is now in use and children are really enjoying it. There are a few things still to be finished e.g. trees planted but nothing major. For safety reasons, the area is timetabled.
- The P7 Enrolment Service will be rescheduled – I can ask Father Tom about having it on a Sunday.  
\*Update – Following discussion with Father Tom, it was agreed that the Enrolment Mass would take place on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 1.30pm. We did not want to leave it until after Christmas due to concerns about the new variant of Covid and the possibility of further restrictions.
- First Friday Mass – the children can't attend if there are parishioners there (Inverclyde guidelines). We're also not allowed to take the whole school to Mass, even if there are no parishioners present as this constitutes a large gathering.
- During wet plays, the children can move to sit with their friends before the teacher leaves but must stay there until he/she returns. We don't have enough support staff to have one in each class.

## **Fundraising**

### **Christmas Cards**

The school Christmas Cards have been ordered and were delivered 7/12/21. The PP (Parent Partnership) and school have arranged distribution. Approximately 1,700 cards in total were ordered (the PP was receiving some late orders). Thank you to all who ordered the cards. This fundraising attempt was very well supported and this is very much appreciated. M Cassidy thanked Mrs Guthrie and all the school staff for their support in filming pupils, organising singing and the Christmas dressing up.

### **Kelly Street Playground**

M Cassidy said that it was great to see the Kelly Street playground being used so fully. He asked Mrs Guthrie how the PP could help develop this area as we are keen for the school take full advantage of the funds we have raised.

### **Santa Quest**

V Bonnar said the Santa Quest has been organised and letters and sponsor forms have been sent out. Arrangements were made for the PP to purchase supplies for the day and to process any sponsor monies raised.

### **Statement of Accounts**

M Cassidy said that the PP would provide a statement of accounts for the next PP meeting in January to provide an update on the current fundraising activities and to then discuss how best to use PP to support the school and the pupils.

### **Parent Partnership Questions**

V Pollard asked if the PP could raise concerns with Inverclyde Council about pupils not being able to attend Mass in the church during the school day. She noted that this was an important part of their Catholic education and asked if arrangements could be made to make attendance by the pupils safer, such as social distancing from other parishioners and staggered entry and exit times. V Pollard also asked whether the P7 Enrolment Mass, could be held on a Sunday to allow parents to attend. Mrs Guthrie added the school works closely with Father Tom on the scheduling of activities involving the Church and pupils, and that she would continue to do that.

C Burrows asked about the involvement of St. Mary's pupils at the Education Sunday Mass and said that she felt that children should be encouraged to go to church. Mrs Guthrie said she was looking forward to getting pupils back to Mass and that the school is very committed to the children's faith. M Cassidy acknowledged that these arrangements are difficult at the present time due to ongoing and changing Covid guidance but would ask Michael Roach for clarification about church attendance by pupils during the school day.

Mrs Fitzharris said she would share some of the feedback from the meeting with Father Tom and would speak to him about the P7 Enrolment Mass, and whether it would be possible for it to be rescheduled to a Sunday, to allow parents and family members to attend.

#### **Diocesan Parent Forum**

Mrs Fitzharris attended the Diocesan Parent Forum recently. This was organised by Neil Roarty, Director of Schools for the Paisley Diocese. There were 16 schools represented. The Diocesan Parent Forum hope to further develop a relationship between schools in the Diocese and their churches. The forum noted that the recovery from lockdown was important for schools and pupils but so was the pupils' spiritual recovery. Mrs Fitzharris said that Anne Marie Mullan, Paisley Diocese RE Advisor, attended the meeting and that she hoped the new Primary School RE curriculum would be ready for August 2022. The next meeting of the forum will be in March.

#### **Breakfast Club**

V Pollard asked for an update on Breakfast Clubs. Mrs Guthrie said there had been no progress from Inverclyde Council and that staff were still to be recruited. S. O'Brien noted that Kilmacolm Primary and St Mary's Primary are the only schools in Inverclyde who do not have Breakfast Clubs. E. Robertson noted that St Mary's lack of breakfast club was due in the past (before the refit) to the school not having proper access to a hall that could house the club.

M Cassidy will ask Michael Roach for clarification about breakfast club arrangements at St Mary's.

#### **Thanks and Christmas Best Wishes**

M Cassidy noted that the PP very much appreciates the support that Mrs Guthrie and the school staff have given to our fundraising. He thanked everyone involved and sent the PP and the school staff best wishes for Christmas.

**Next online meeting date – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022**