



St Mary's Parent Partnership – Online Meeting
Monday 28th February 2022

Mrs Guthrie (HT)	H McGivern
Mrs Blincow (DHT)	J McCafferty
Mrs MacDonald (DHT)	V Bonnar
M Cassidy (Chairperson)	K Ferrie
G Henry (Secretary)	J Sheridan (Vice Secretary) - minutes
V Pollard (Treasurer)	

Apologies:

Councillor E Robertson	J McCabe
D McLaughlin (Vice Chairperson)	C Burrows
Z Bonnar	S McBride
L Owens	M Purdue
C O'Donnell	

Welcome & Apologies

M Cassidy welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Head Teacher's Update

Covid update

We have 9 cases across the school just now.

School Recovery Plan

This is going very well, with lots of our children now working ahead of expectation. We have really benefited from having additional staffing in school to help children get back on track after the two lockdowns.

Where children have not made the expected progress, this has, in many cases, been down to poor attendance. As expected, our attendance rate is lower this year than it was pre-covid, but what is holding back some of our children is the number of separate short term absences they have had over this session.

Pupil Equity Fund

We will soon be looking at our plans for next session. Over the past years, we have spent the majority of this fund on additional staffing (teaching and support staff) and this has had a very positive impact on attainment.

We would like to consider this again, if the Parent Partnership is in agreement.

Parents were in agreement. M. Cassidy asked what the alternative would be. Mrs Guthrie said the money could be spent on resources but the school was already well resourced.

Assemblies

These can go ahead again as long as we are careful – spreading classes out, opening windows etc.

Ash Wednesday 2nd March

We will have a service at 2pm in the church - this will also be live-streamed. This is the first time the whole school has been in the church since June 2018.

First Friday Mass 4th March

We won't be attending this Mass as Father Tom has advised us that the theme is not suitable for children.

P4 Enrolment Service 6th March

This will take place at 10am in St Mary's Church.

Lenten Stations Mass 10th March

This Mass is at 7pm in St Laurence's Church - it would be great to see as many parents and children as possible at the Mass.

First Friday Mass 1st April

We hope to be able to join the parish for this Mass. Our Health and Safety Team will provide further guidance about how this can be done safely.

Technology Equipment

We have recently spent quite a lot of money improving our Technology equipment and have had very positive feedback from staff and pupils about this.

Parents' Evening

At the moment, we are still not allowed to have parents in school.

I have spoken to the staff about this – they are keen to go ahead with phone calls before the end of this term. They think it will have more impact to speak to parents now, rather than waiting to see if things improve next term.

If parents are allowed into the school next term, we will look at having an open afternoon.

School Trip

We are looking at the possibility of organising a school trip in the final term.

Spending & Fundraising

M. Cassidy said the PP will provide gifts and party items for this year's leavers and first communicants.

The proposed St Mary's Cookbook was discussed. M. Cassidy asked if the school could send out a form to the pupils and their families to collect recipes and Mrs Guthrie agreed. He noted that dates need to be confirmed for this project and that L. Owens had costed an A5 wire bound book format for the cookbook

It was noted that we would not be planning any face to face fundraising any time soon. J. McGuire suggested a raffle and Mrs Guthrie approved this. The organisation of prizes was discussed and a timeline of around Easter was agreed. M. Cassidy suggested that funds raised from the raffle could help to pay for new playground resources.

M. Cassidy asked if there was anything in particular the school needed at present. Mrs Guthrie asked if the PP could fund some new playground resources such as picnic benches, chalkboards, a 100 square and a number trail. J. Sheridan asked how much money the school would need to purchase new playground resources. Mrs Guthrie stated maybe around £1000. It was agreed that Mrs Guthrie would advise M. Cassidy on costs with a view to purchasing said resources.

Update – Following the meeting Mrs Guthrie asked if the PP could fund the purchase of four picnic tables at the cost of £769.99 each. M. Cassidy consulted the wider PP Whatsapp group who widely supported the purchase. It was noted that the school may be able to claim back the VAT on these if purchased.

Parents' Questions

M. Cassidy asked if the parent phone calls would take place before the Easter holidays and Mrs Guthrie said they would.

M. Cassidy asked when the Bikeability Training would take place and Mrs Guthrie confirmed it would be after the Easter holidays.

V. Pollard asked if all pupils had access to bikes for the Bikeability Training. She wondered if the PP could help with bikes for pupils who did not have one. Mrs Blincow said Bikeability can provide bikes for those who do not have one for the training. She added that previously the school had bikes but they became rusty due to being stored outside.

M. Cassidy asked what group of pupils would take part in Bikeability. Mrs Guthrie said that it is normally P6, but this year it will be P7 due to lockdown.

V. Bonnar asked about P7 residential plans. Mrs Guthrie said the school had provisionally booked Ardentinny, but were considering other options. Locherbie and Dalguise Outdoor Centres are being considered. M. Cassidy asked why the trip happens in February. Mrs Guthrie said it is due to cost, as prices are higher closer to the summer. J. Sheridan asked the cost of the trip per pupil. Mrs Guthrie said it was £160. She added that St Vincent de Paul Society had helped in the past with funding and it was agreed that the PP could also help in future to ease the cost.

G. Henry asked if the school have enough Tabards for all the First Communicants. Mrs Guthrie said that Father Tom has purchased 35, so parents have the option to purchase Tabards or to borrow them. V. Pollard said that the email relating to First Holy Communion arrangements hadn't listed all the different options for Tabards, although when the link was followed the webpage gave the 3 options of 1) not requiring a Tabard due to having a family Tabard, 2) option to purchase a Tabard for £50 and 3) option to borrow a Tabard from the school. Tabards were discussed and J. Sheridan said she would ask parent members of the St Mary's Free Uniform Facebook page to consider donating any surplus Tabards back to the school so they can be reused.

J. McCafferty told everyone about the First Holy Communion outfit sale she is organising (Celtic Club, Greenock, Sunday 20th March 1-3pm) and asked if the school would distribute a leaflet to advertise the event. Mrs Guthrie agreed. The Celtic Club are also hosting an Easter Fayre (Saturday 26th March 12-4pm) and there will be a stall at it.

Mrs Guthrie asked if the parents on the call were happy with the proposed parents' night phone calls. Parents said they were. Mrs Guthrie said that if parents had any concerns they wished to discuss face to face with teachers, then this could be arranged. She added that the school hopes to have an 'open afternoon' once restrictions are fully lifted so parents can view the newly refurbished building.

M. Cassidy asked if the school have had any feedback yet from the recent Inverclyde Council parents' survey. Mrs Guthrie said she had not, but that she would share the results when she received them.

M. Cassidy thanked everyone for their time and the meeting was concluded

Next online meeting date – Tuesday 26th April