

WEST KILBRIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Parent Council Meeting- Monday 18th March 2024



Head Teacher Report- Mrs Carson

- Staffing

We are experiencing ongoing staffing difficulties at present. Mrs Rolfe remains absent and as a result, Mrs Park and I are covering all three remits at present. We are in the process of advertising for an interim Acting DHT to support with the fullness of our current workload. Similarly, Mrs Davidson is absent from the main office. We ask that parents/carers are cognizant of this when making requests or calling into school. This term and next are historically particularly busy for leadership and office staff.

Additionally, we have been directed by NAC to restructure some elements of our staffing, particularly Classroom Assistant and ELC personnel. This may mean staff being offered changes to working hours or offered redeployment opportunities. I will update you on the outcome of this when the landscape has settled.

- Local Authority Visits

We were visited by our Senior Manager, Pamela McCallum on Wednesday 28th February for a visit focused on HGIOS 2.3 'Learning and Teaching'. As a school, we rated ourselves as a '3' which suggests we are 'satisfactory'. A satisfactory rating suggests our, "strengths just outweigh the weaknesses". Although we await the formal written feedback, Mrs McCallum was in agreement with this assessment following a summary of evidence and observations of learning and teaching. We also presented our plans for improvement and these were supported.

We welcome a further Local Authority visit on Thursday 21st March, this time from Head Teacher colleagues from Beith/Gateside and Whitehirst Primaries. I will update you on the outcome of this in due course.

Finally, we will be visited by Andrew McClelland, Head of Service, in an informal capacity on Thursday 28th March. Although this is not a formal visit, I look forward to showcasing our hard-work and the improvements being made across the school.

- P7 Awards

As you will know, we recently surveyed parents/carers and pupils regarding the continuation of our DUX award.

Within the parental survey, there were 159 respondents. 73% stated they did not want the Dux Award to remain as it was and 67% stated they did not think the Dux Award had a place in today's schools. Parental feedback shared a need to celebrate individual achievements with all children being recognised for their achievements.

The pupil survey was issued to all P6 and 7 pupils, with a total of 60 respondents. 57% of pupils would like to celebrate children's achievements in a different way. 57% of respondents also do not think that only one pupil should be awarded for overall best academic or sporting achievement. Suggested improvements from pupils included, "to let them say what they achieved" and to have awards for kindness, hard work, leadership, most improved and different sporting awards. They aligned with the parental view that they would like achievements celebrated at an individual level that is meaningful to each recipient.

Moving forward, we will no longer award the Dux, instead taking a pupil-centred approach in line with GIRFEC principles. All children will be celebrated for achievements individual to them, incorporating a variety of new awards linked to the Curriculum for Excellence, the Arts and sporting effort.

- Active Schools Co-ordinator Vacancy

Whilst we are disappointed to have had a gap in our Active Schools provision, we are delighted that Jordan Stewart has been appointed and commenced his post on 11th March. Jordan is known to the school and will be an asset to our community. Jordan is currently undertaking a two-week induction period and will be visiting the school to introduce himself shortly thereafter.

Invitations to join the Ayrshire Schools Girls Football team were distributed to our female school footballer team members in February. Although, three pupils were initially keen to try out for the team, all three later declined.

Whilst we were aware of the recent Active Schools Dance competition, we do not currently offer an after-school dance club and therefore do not have a team in place. If this is something you or someone you know could offer, please get in touch with the school. We are keen to broaden our after-school provision as much as possible. This is also something I will be speaking to Jordan about once he has settled in.

It has been brought to my attention that the West Kilbride community has missed out on participation in the Beat the Street initiative. Whilst this would have been great for the community, decisions made around this did not involve schools or Active Schools and were made by the Active Travel team. This is not an Educational initiative, although it has been embraced by schools in the chosen pilot areas.

Whilst Active Schools do not typically fund transportation to events, we have benefitted from £100 budget surplus to support the P4 Tennis Festival. Thank you to the Parent Council for supporting with this.

- Update on Attainment/Interventions

As previously discussed, we have been tracking attainment progress at an individual pupil level and seeing improvements for some time. However, I had not anticipated seeing

improvements in our ACEL data this academic year, given that many of our learners were significantly off-track. At the start of the year, concerns were raised that our data may dip due to the introduction of more accurate assessment processes.

As you know, our strategy this year has been to complete baseline assessments for all pupils to get an accurate picture of knowledge/skills gaps, plugging these gaps using targeted teaching approaches and robust intervention programmes. This strategy is paying off and our ACEL predictions for June show an increase across Literacy and Numeracy within all assessed stages (P1, 4 and 7). For example, Writing attainment, supported by the introduction of PM Writing and staff training around this, is predicted to rise from 50% across P1, 4 AND 7 to 68%. Numeracy attainment we are optimistic will rise from 55% to 72%

Whilst these are predictions at this stage, they are informed by robust data and I am confident in the progress we are making. We have been sharing this success with pupils and opening up conversations about their learning- they are all very proud to have made these achievements this year.

- P7 Leavers Hoodies & Arran Trip

We are grateful to the Parent Council for subsidising the cost of our Leaver's Hoodies by £10 per pupil this year. We are not requesting support towards our Arran trip at present- the cost is reduced this year due to a change in the allocation model and the St. Vincent de Paul Society have offered to provide funding for any families who are experiencing a shortfall. We are looking at new playground markings in the next academic year and so would value a contribution for this once we have researched and costed this further as this will be an expensive outlay.

- Easter

Our EYC have asked the Parent Council to provide Easter eggs for the nursery. We do not require eggs for the whole school given that we are a Health Promoting School and would prefer to use this funding in an alternative way, to support pupils to cook healthy meals in class with our new food stations etc.

- What's New?

Our 'Smarties for Smartys' fundraising campaign was very successful, raising a huge £1364.82. As a result we have been able to order 14 planters, one for each class, alongside 4 planting tables. We have also ordered compost and a variety of gardening equipment to fully embrace their use. Kay Hall and her community team will be working with us to get this up and running. Hopefully, we'll be growing and cooking in no time!

Kay will also be supporting our P4 classes to undertake visits to the Quarry over the next term with a focus on art and outdoor learning.