

West Kilbride Primary School

Parent Council Meeting

18th March 2024, 7pm

The Barony (upstairs)

In attendance: Emma Clark (Chair), Judith Spence (Vice Chair), Karen Harkins (Secretary), Kaleigh Maxwell (Treasurer), Gemma Carson (Head Teacher), Jacqui Park (Deputy Head Teacher), Lisa Mitchell, Penny McKnight, Jenny Clark, Laura Turner, Pamela Couper, Kate Matthews, Louise Meeke, Anil Chundoo, Susan Rankin, Christopher Fernie, Sonia Nunn, Nicole Adam, Vicky Ramage, Carolyn Shelley, Claire Edgar, Nicole Adam, David Atkinson.

Apologies: Ainsley Simpson, Catriona Moran, Deborah Matchett, Gillian Burns, Jennifer Wood, Jennifer Smith, Kate Fox, Michelle Murray, Kirsty Rolfe (Deputy Head Teacher).

1. Welcome and introduction

EC welcomed all attendees to the meeting and introduced and welcomed new members Nicole Adam and Sarah Fleming (Sarah was not in attendance).

2. Previous minutes, matters arising, and parent council constitution.

It was confirmed that the previous minutes were accurate.

Parent Council constitution:

EC reiterated the PC constitution. A copy of this is available on the West Kilbride Parent Council Facebook page and is available on request to anyone who wishes to view it.

Matters arising:

Treasurer: EC expressed gratitude to Kate Matthews (outgoing treasurer) for her dedicated service and contributions during her tenure. EC also welcomed new treasurer Kaleigh Maxwell to her first meeting as an office bearer and thanked her for volunteering to join the group in this new capacity.

Parking: JS provided an update. She has spoken with NAC and they responded that no further road markings are necessary. JS will contact NAC again regarding road marking on the roundabout and the bus bay. GC updated that Police Scotland has informed the school that parking is now a civil matter and the responsibility of NAC. As of next week, the school's JRSO group will have a visible presence to survey where parents are parking. The children will do this from the playground. DA suggested that cones be put where cars are parking illegally, however GC confirmed again that this would not be allowed.

ACTION: JS to email NAC regarding the road markings and bus bay.

Music tuition: EC updated that Mr Watson, Head of North Ayrshire Music Service has responded regarding the queries of music tuition at WKPS. He is aware of the demand and will keep WK in mind if additional spaces become available.

3. Finance Update

KM provided a finance update.

A total of £6779.99 of Parent Council funds have been given to the school covering costs of the Christmas panto, maths resources, parties, outdoor clothing, P7 leavers hoodies, transport, etc.

Incoming funds include:

- Easy fundraising £155.20 (receiving approximately £75 per quarter)
- £640 from Clarke Grotto
- £1400 from NAC
- £130 from Largs Printing
- Bank balance as at 18.03.2024 is £4873.15

The upcoming Spring Fayre is expected to generate more funds.

4. Funding Update

EC updated on funding.

An application has been sent to the Greggs Breakfast Club – hopefully have a response by August.

An application has been sent to Spar for sports equipment.

£327 was generated from the bonus ball for the Auchrannie trip. Members are currently looking at ways to continue the bonus ball as an ongoing fundraising initiative.

ACTION: EC, JS, and KM update on the bonus ball initiative at the next meeting.

5. Events

EC updated the group on the upcoming Spring Fayre which will take place on 18th May 2024. Many volunteers are required to run the fayre. If anyone wishes to volunteer, please let EC know. Also, the group welcomes any new ideas or activities for the event. An additional Spring Fayre meeting will be scheduled before the next meeting.

6. Update from West Kilbride Primary School

Gemma Carson, Head Teacher, provided an update (see attachments).

- STAFFING

GC informed the group that Mrs Rolfe remains absent, and they are in the process of advertising for an Interim Acting Deputy Head Teacher. Interviews will hopefully take place next week. Mrs Davidson, an office staff member, is also absent and GC asked that parents/carers be cognizant of this when calling the school or making requests.

NAC has requested a staffing restructure particularly with Classroom Assistants and EYC staff. Again, GC requested that parents be aware that this is a sensitive time for staff. GC will provide an update at the next meeting.

- LOCAL AUTHORITY VISITS

Pamela McCallum, Senior Manager recently visited the school for a focused visit on HGIOS 2.3 Learning and Teaching. GC informed the group that the school rated themselves a 3 – satisfactory and this was aligned with Mrs McCallum's assessments and observations. Improvement plans were supported.

Head Teacher Colleagues from Beith/Gateside and Whitehirt Primaries will visit the school on 21st March. GC will provide an update on this at the next meeting.

Andrew McLelland, Head of Service is due to visit the school in an informal capacity on 28th March.

- P7 AWARDS

GC provided an update on the surveys that were carried out amongst the parent/carer body and pupils in school.

There were 159 respondents to the parent/carer survey. 73% stated that they did not want the Dux Award to remain as it was and 67% stated that they did not think the Dux Award had a place in today's schools. Parent/carer feedback showed the need to celebrate individual achievements with all children being recognised for their successes.

The pupil survey was issued to all P6 and P7 children with a total of 60 respondents. 57% of pupils want to celebrate their achievements differently. 57% of respondents also do not think that one pupil should be awarded for overall best academic or sporting achievement. See GC's report for further details.

Moving forward the school leadership team has decided to no longer award the Dux but will take a bespoke individual approach to P7 awards. Every child will be recognised for their individual achievements and their successes celebrated, this will include new awards linked to the Curriculum for Excellence, the Arts and sporting effort. Pupils will also be involved in setting their own targets and the new model will be more in line with GIRFEC.

Discussion took place amongst the group regarding the removal of the Dux Award and questions were raised about the improvement plans and how this links to awards. GC assured the group that these are not competing priorities and that the pupils will be at the centre of the improvement.

AC raised the question about the survey and if it was fit for purpose. EC explained that this was a pragmatic survey that was designed by her with best intentions in mind which also a free text box to capture the in-depth views that people wished to express on the matter.

Further questions were raised regarding the types of awards that would be given and the reasons why the Dux Award in particular was being removed. GC assured the group that awards for academic achievement will be continued and the new model will be focused on inclusivity.

- ACTIVE SCHOOLS CO-ORDINATOR VACANCY

GC explained that the Active Schools Co-ordinator vacancy has been filled by Jordan Stewart. He is currently in a 2 week induction period and following this will be working with the school. Jordan will attend the next parent council meeting.

Discussion took place around the Ayrshire Girls Football team. VR expressed that some pupils had missed out on the opportunity to be involved. GC will put the names forward of those who missed out this time round.

There was a recent Active Schools dance competition, however, because WK does not have a dance group, we were unable to participate. GC asked for any volunteers who wished to run a dance club after school to speak to her about volunteering.

GC explained that the recent Beat the Street initiative is run by the Active Travel Team and it is not an educational initiative. GC suggested that anyone who wishes to raise any opinions on this, do so with the local councillor.

GC was pleased to announce that the Active Schools team has part-funded transport for the P4s to attend a tennis festival at St Matthews on the 21st of March. Rory Couper, Junior Convenor for WK Tennis Club has very kindly donated the remaining half of the money required from the tennis club's funds.

VR suggested that events run by the Active Schools Team are communicated to parents/carers when they are issued. GC explained that not all events are included in the initial event plan issued, and it is continuously added to throughout the year, on occasion at short notice.

PC suggested that WK be a host school. GC explained that WK is going to be a host school for the upcoming Rotary Quiz. However, other cluster schools generally find it difficult to travel to WK due to our location.

AC suggested this his employer may have a mini-bus that could be used by the school. He will speak with them and let us know.

- **ATTAINMENT UPDATE**

GC provided an update on attainment and interventions. See report for full details. Predicted figures were provided on writing attainment, which is predicted to rise from 50% across P1,4 and 7 to 68%. Numeracy attainment is predicted to rise from 55% to 72%.

Questions were raised regarding narrowing the gap and GC explained that she has a very robust plan in place to continue with the intervention work to narrow the gap further in the next year.

CF expressed concerns about how the attainment information has been communicated to parents and carers as this was only recently brought to their attention at a recent parent workshop and they did not feel that this was an appropriate setting. GC and office bearers reiterated that updates regarding attainment are communicated to parents and carers regularly across various channels including: the minutes of the parent council meetings including the Head Teacher reports; the Xpressions app; school newsletters; and on the WKPC Facebook Group. The reason for the update at the parent workshop was to provide that information to anyone who may have missed it via other channels. GC explained that transparency is a priority, and that the information has been available since she came into post in August 2023.

DA initiated further discussion around the reasons for the drop in attainment. GC was not able to comment on the exact reasons, given she only took up the post in August 2023.

CF questioned the school's vision for attainment and what parents can do to assist. GC explained that the focus for the next 5 years is to increase attainment. The school plans to collaboratively engage the pupils, pupil council, teaching staff, leadership team, and external partners to do this. The leadership team has a very optimistic outlook on achieving this. With regards to parental support, GC explained that parents can assist by volunteering with intervention support in the school; supporting their own children with homework in line with the school's new homework policy, and attending upcoming workshops (the next workshop will focus on dyslexia and reading) to understand the learning strategies that the children are pursuing.

CF expressed concerns about managing parents doing intervention work. GC explained that all parents who volunteer with intervention support are given appropriate training.

Discussion took place around technologies and GC explained that overall NAC is behind in its technology provision.

PC questioned intervention work with pupils who are on track. GC confirmed that challenge groups are continuing and teaching staff are excited about getting pupils on track and beyond.

- LEAVER'S HOODIES & ARRAN TRIP

GC expressed gratitude to the parent council for subsidising the cost of the Leaver's Hoodies by £10 per pupil this year.

The school does not require parent council funds for the Arran trip as the cost has been reduced this year and the St Vincent de Paul Society has offered to provide funding for any families who are experiencing a shortfall.

The leadership team is hoping to have new playground markings in place after summer and therefore any financial support for this from the parent council would be appreciated.

- EASTER

GC explained that the EYC has requested Easter eggs for the nursery children from the parent council. As WKPS is a Health Promoting School, eggs will not be required for the whole school. The alternative plan is to use the funding to support pupils to cook healthy meals with the new food stations.

- WHAT'S NEXT?

GC was delighted to inform the group that the 'Smarties for Smarty's' fundraising campaign raised £1364.82. This has purchased 14 planters, one for each class, and 4 planting tables. Compost and gardening equipment have also been purchased and Kay Hall and her community team will be leading this sustainable food-growing initiative, starting in May.

The P4s will also be visiting the Quarry over the next term, focussing on art and outdoor learning.

The Splishy Splashy Stomp has been cancelled this year.

The 'Break a Rule' Fundraising Day is in the planning stage and the pupils are excited about this day.

7. Young Carers Service

Unfortunately, Elizabeth Cain (young carers support officer) wasn't able to join the meeting tonight. GC reiterated the value of this service and explained that young people don't have to be full-time carers to be registered. The service provides a plethora of opportunities and support.

ACTION: Post the details of the young carers' service to the FB page and via Xpressions again.

8. Fuel Station

EC provided an update on the Fuel Station. The service is more settled now and being used by those who need it most. The running cost is approximately £12 per week with fruit mainly being on offer.

Branded school uniform is also available at the station for parents or children to help themselves.

GC raised the issue of lost property within the school. There is a huge amount of unlabelled property within the school. At the next coffee morning, all lost property will be laid out for anyone who wishes to come and claim their items. If after the coffee morning there are remaining items, any badged uniform will go to the uniform bank and the rest will go to charity.

9. Big Bairns' Book Club

PM provided information on the Big Bairn's Book Club. This is an online book club that is run by Miranda McDade, Faculty Head of English and Literacy at Auchendarvie Academy. It is open to all practitioners and parents/carers in North Ayrshire with a focus on reading children's and young adults' literature. The group aims to help parents and practitioners make more informed and tailored book recommendations, introduce pupils to a wide range of formats and genres, and create a supportive literacy community. A book is identified and is available on Borrowbox for attendees to read and come to the next meeting with their thoughts.

ACTION: PM will send the link to the next meeting and it will be added to the WKPC Facebook group.

10. AOB

- CF asked if there were any longer-term plans for the improvement of the school building. GC explained that new carpets have been laid in the upper school area, a new projector has been installed in the gym hall and external painting will be carried out over Easter. GC will raise concerns over the school layout with Andrew McLelland during his visit.

New murals are being painted and GC does require assistance with the internal painting of the school. She was quoted £10,000 from NAC to undertake the work. GC asked for anyone with contacts in this line of work to contact the school if they could provide any help with this matter.

- AC raised a concern about the quality of school lunches. GC explained that recently the catering manager had been absent and 2 new kitchen staff were employed. The catering manager Angela has now returned and is overseeing the prep of the meals. The quality issues were recognised and should be rectified going forward.

11. DONM: The next meeting will take place on 13th May 2024. Venue to be confirmed.

12. Close of meeting.

13. CLOSE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

EC thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting.

END OF MEETING

Draft minutes released: Karen Harkins	Approved: Emma Clark (Chair) Gemma Carson (HT)	Final release Karen Harkins
19/03/24	21/03/24	21/03/24