**Balmalloch Primary School and Nursery Class**

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**Parent Council Meeting 6th November, 2019**

**Head Teacher’s Report**

1. **School Budget**

-£8.00 (November, 2019 – April, 2020)

**August to November, 2019**

**Materials Purchased:**

Glue Sticks/Clay/Wiggly Eyes/White Card/Photocopy Paper/Paint/Crayons/Envelopes/Erasers/ Laminating Pouches/White Boards/Freezer – Ice Packs/Clear Wallets & Poly Pockets/STEM Topic Boxes/Prefect, Vice-Captain & Captain Badges/Red Chairs – Infant Department/HT Certificates/Popper Wallets/Lever Arch Files/Lapboards/Teacher Diaries/Rulers/Scissors/Blu Tack/Shallow Trays/ Staples/Laptop – DHT/Magnetic Board Letters/PPR Files/Pencils/Jotters/Waste Bin – External/Cleansing Wipes/Plasters/Disposable Bags/First Aid Refills/First Aid Kit/Toilet Rolls/Refuse Sacks/Hand Towel Rolls/Soap/Epson Projector Lamp – P7

**Services**

Sanitary Bins Changed/Photocopier Rental & copies/ Piano Tuning x2/Active Schools/ICT School Service/Shredding/Annual PE Equipment Inspection/Lets - £24.70/Hour

**Licences**

Christmas Show Licence

**Courses for Staff**

 Active Literacy – Writing – P2, P2/1, P1a and P1b, P4/5, P4/3

 Active Literacy – Spelling – P6, P1b

 Active Literacy – Reading – P6, P1b, P4/3

Leadership Festival

1. **Gold Schools Sports Scotland Award**

The school have recently been awarded Gold Status for sports in school, following the hard work by Mrs Chambers and the Sports Committee. The logo will feature on any letters to show this achievement. A celebration will take place in the school hall on the 20th November, 2019 with children, staff and invited guests.

1. **Mrs Convery – HGIOS? Survey – Responses**
* 91 parents out of 354 responded - roughly 25% of parents.

Most responses were collected at Parents’ Night/Afternoon – there was also a text sent to parents with the links but this did not have a big uptake. Twitter linked also.

How can we encourage more parents/carers to be actively involved in school improvement?

**General findings**

* Almost all (87 respondents) were happy with partnerships.
* In terms of creating policies, 29 wanted to be more involved, 34 did not wish to be involved – and 28 did not know. How would parents/carers like this to be done? Parent Council could survey parents/carers to ask how to take this forward.
* 43 respondents felt the Parent Council fairly represented all parents/carers, 5 said no but 43 did not know. Parent Council to contact parents/carers to find out more to enable this to be addressed.
* Parents responded very positively about staff supporting learning, attainment and achievement.
* Most parents (66) felt the school curriculum provided opportunities for children to learn in the local community. Only 2 said no. (Colzium House/Library/Kilsyth Swimming/Woodland Walks/Leisure Facility – Kilsyth Academy/Transition Visits – Kilsyth Academy including P6 Science Transition Day/Civic Week/Choir – Tesco/Co-op/Craig-en-goyne Care Home/Church Services/Grandparents Afternoon – Concert/Christmas Fayre – Enterprise/Performance/Local Church Visits/ECO Community Clean-up – P4/5/Festivals – Netball, Cross-Country, Sportshall Athletics/Kilbowie/P5 Swimming). In what other ways would parents/carers like children to learn in their local community?

**Text answer data from the survey:**

**Are partnerships with parents based on mutual respect and trust? If not, why not? Please include your name beside any comments.**

 **RESPONSES**

* I think there are some areas within parent council that should be looked at. Other than that I think that relationships between nursery and parents are fantastic. What areas? The Parent Council would need to look into this to ensure we are meeting the needs of our families.
* What school policies are you aware of?

(New policies can be found on the School Website – Policies. Some policies will need **to be**

reviewed and updated but will be uploaded when this has been completed)

**RESPONSES:**

* Anti-bullying x 14 (15%)
* None x34 (37%)
* Only the ones giving in the information pack for starting P1
* Child Protection and Raising Attainment.
* Child Welfare
* Raising Attainment, Child Protection
* Rights of the child
* Eco
* I know there are lots but don’t know what each individual one is
* Policies in school handbook
* Inclusion/Bullying/Rights Respecting
* Wearing school uniform
* Positive Behaviour Policy, Homework Policy and Child Protection Policy.
* Most of them via being a previous Parent Council member for 7 years.
* Equal Opportunities, Healthy Eating, GIRFEC, Inclusion, Attainment, Promoting Positive Behaviour
* I need learn more about it.
* None, but I know to go to website if I wanted to know anything.

How can we ensure ALL parents/carers are aware of updated policies and where to find them?

**What would be the best way for you to be involved in creating/shaping school policies?**

* Most answered email/electronic responses – including surveys and questionnaires. However, only 25% responded to the recent survey through Parents’ Night.
* Some suggested PTA/Parent Council. How do the Parent Council feel about this suggestion? If the Parent Council wish to be involved in shaping school policies, how could we approach this, keeping in mind the number of Parent Council meetings in the session?

**How do staff support you to actively engage in your children’s learning, attainment and achievement?**

**\*Very positive feedback RE this question**

 **RESPONSES:**

* Twitter feedback is excellent
* Parents evening/star pupils/star writers
* Meet teacher afternoon
* Good communication from the school
* There is little feedback from teachers other than Parents Night and Learning Logs (Latest & Best Jotters). It’s often difficult to know how to reinforce what has been taught at school on a daily/weekly basis.
* I know that teachers are available should I need to discuss anything. I feel there could be more engagement through homework - don’t feel connected to things being covered in class or know if my child is struggling or excelling.
* Updated class newsletter – consistent approach to this will be devised on the November In-service day.
* Workshop – SMT (e.g.) teaching phonics & spelling through the Active Literacy Programme.
* Consultation on homework highlighted that the majority of families liked the element of choice and were happy about 20 minutes reading per night, as reading impacts on all areas of the curriculum.

**Do you feel the Parent Council fairly represents all parents/carers, seeking views and dealing with complaints in an effective and timely manner? If not, why not? Please include your name beside any comments.**

 **RESPONSES:**

* I’ve not seen any Parent Council information or feedback regarding any issues.
* I asked to join the Parent Council but I have not been able to due to joining the PTA before the time was changed to allow the meeting to be run at the same time. I believe this excludes people who wish to be part of both.
* Not sure that a lot of parents are aware of what the Parent Council role is and how it differs from PTA. Not sure if parents know how to access Parent Council.
* Not enough input from all parents.
* I’ve never had any contact with the Parent Council.
* Little engagement between parents and PTA.
* Not aware of Parent Council communication methods.
* Parents don’t get to see minutes of PTA meetings.
* Feel there could be more communication / engagement prior to issues being discussed at PC.
* Don’t ever hear anything from the Parent Council.

How can we make the Parent Council more accessible to ALL our families?

**In what other ways would you like the school to get you involved to promote partnerships further? Please include your name beside any comments.**

**RESPONSES:**

* Happy with things at moment/ Continue to keep up with all the ways you communicate already.
* Parent learning evenings.
* I often don’t the best way, or the way used in class, to teach a new math or English task, therefore it’s hard to practise this at home. Perhaps something parents could refer too - either a hand out or a short video that would be watched, to know the correct language teach method to use at home. Members of staff in school do not wish to take part in a video recording which would then be uploaded on social media for families. Please see below for alternative.
* Family learning events should be in the evening when most working parents are able to attend. They should provide ways of supporting parents and encouraging involvement in their child’s education (e.g.) strategies. The Head Teacher will look at a date when working parents could attend a workshop around the teaching of Active Literacy using a video to develop knowledge and understanding. This will also depend on cover for school lets, taking into account the new role of the janitor (Facilities Officer) and the impact on the school budget to pay for any future lets.
* Continue sending home updates on progress and items to assist us with supporting our children’s learning. Latest and Best jotters will show progress made by each individual child and also targets to support children’s learning.
* More email contact. In relation to what? The Parent Council could ask parents this question and update the school with the responses.
* Maybe with local businesses. As a school we are engaging with STEM activities this session as part of school improvement, with Mrs Convery leading this priority. A World of Work Day/Week will be arranged in Term 3 supporting children to engage with businesses linking to the Scottish Government’s Policy to Develop the Young Workforce. Bam Ritchies Contractors work with Kilsyth Academy as a Business Partner and Mrs Convery is making connections with them to establish a partnership.
* Letting us know if we could help (being specific about it). Parents were asked if they would like to volunteer and the days/times when they could do this. Parents/carers require PVG to work with children in Balmalloch Primary School and Nursery. If parents/carers were interested in supporting children in school and wanted to see this in action before committing to this, the management team would be happy to arrange a date/time when it would be suitable to visit the school and observe.
* School newsletter. The school now uses Twitter and Dates for Your Diary which replaced the School Newsletter due to the information included, avoiding duplication. Class Newsletters issued, which will be reviewed this session to improve consistency across the school and Family Learning.
* Asking parents how best they feel their children could be supported and encouraged to support others. Parent Council were going to do this. Parent Council Chairperson to feedback to the school.
* More school events such as assemblies and concerts. All classes prepare an assembly on an area of learning throughout the session. It would not be possible to prepare additional class assemblies due to Star Pupil assemblies, the time taken to plan, prepare and implement Class Assemblies by the class and teacher, use of the hall – impacting on Physical Education and the 2 hours each child should have access to.

The DHT and Mrs Morris run an after school club for a number of weeks prior to the Christmas Show. It takes a great deal of time to organise this. To arrange further concerts would take away from other vital aspects of teaching and learning.

* Continue to Encourage parents to help out in the school. Bring your parent to school day. Parents coming in talking about their jobs. (See above – World of Work Week)
* Maybe have a platform were parents can have easier contact with the teacher directly.

All teachers are happy to respond to parental concerns through a telephone conversation/informal or formal meetings. To ask teachers to be available at all times through, for example, Class Dojo, would add to workload which is an area currently being debated by the Scottish Government and the teaching unions.

* Give us more paperwork info we don’t all have computer access.

The school are happy to provide parents/carers with no computer access a paper copy of information on request. The school, being an ECO school, actively tries to reduce waste and save the environment.

* Closer relationship with the local churches/churches together group.

We work very closely with Anderson Church and Rev. Vint. If parents and carers can advise of other churches/organisations in the community who wish to work with the school, we would be more than happy to discuss this further. Parents/carers to contact the school to make an appointment with the Senior Management Team to discuss.

* Meetings surveys questionnaires – We will continue to survey parents/carers to ensure we gather as many views as possible.
* Additional out of school activity linked to community – Please see above response.
* More involvement with outside organisations maybe bringing them in the talk to the children. Such as the Rotary, Community Council etc. We are always happy to meet with local partners, including the Rotary Club and the list outlined above. From our Twitter page you can clearly see the work classes have been involved in with organisations (e.g.) Brain Tumour Research – Wear a Hat Day/Christmas Jumper Day/Water Aid/Harvest/Baby & Uniform Bank – Tackling Poverty/Rotary Club).
* If the school need us, just call. We will be happy to help in everything the school needs.
* Happy with the balance of what is on offer lots of consultation with parents
1. **Dates for Your Diary – Term 2**

Dates of events for parents/carers to participate in the wider life of the school

Dates of events/activities children throughout the stages will be involved in over the term. This encourages parents/carers to engage with their child’s learning through dialogue.

1. **Contact List**

Parent Council Members/Confirmation of Roles

Miss McCarthy provided a format for the Parent Council Chairperson containing a list of those parents who wished to be part of the Parent Council.

 Parent Members pictures/names to be uploaded on the website when they are decided.

 Parent Council members will supply a picture for the school to upload on the website.

1. **Swimming – P5**

Swimming has been booked for term 3 for Primary 5 pupils, a letter was sent out to parents/carers last week. Complete payment due by 11th March, 2019 to enable the school to pay for all pupils/sessions. Parents/carers advised payment cards can be provided if required. To continue to tackle poverty and the impact on children, those children in receipt of Free School Meals will pay half the amount, which will be subsidised by the PTA funds donated at their request.

1. **Nurture**

Due to staff absence, we have not been able to run the nurture rooms for P1-3 and P4-7. When staffing improves, we will focus on establishment of nurture groups.

Lindsey McGuire – Barclays Bank – Appointment/communication with Mrs Patrick. Dates for the bank to work with children to teach life skills and look at mental health. She can bring her skills from work to the school through the involvement of the bank. Stages/Dates to be agreed.

1. **ASNA Interview**

This will take place on 11th November, 2019. This will be a part-time position with the hours from 9.30-12.15pm daily. This will allow another member of staff to be present in the playground at playtime and lunch time in addition to providing support for pupils.

1. **Transport**

Mrs Young (Parent) had highlighted at the last Parent Council Meeting that it may be better to rent a minibus for the session but was unaware of the cost for this. However, this would not solve the problem of whole school trips, as a minibus would be too small to transport 353 pupils to, for example, the theatre. Moreover, a driver for the minibus would need to be appointed, which may incur additional costs. We also do not have the funds to pay for a school minibus, this would be extremely expensive.

Another suggestion was to speak to Kids’ Club and ask them if their buses could be used to assist in taking children to events. Business insurance is required to allow children to travel in any form of transport. The Parent Council can speak to Kids’ Club in relation to this and advise at the next meeting.

The Parent Council were also going to ask parents/carers what support they could offer the school. Information to be shared at meeting.

1. Parent Council/PTA Meetings

The HT discussed the proposal with the DHT and the CIO team for the North area. An increase of lets would be required, increasing from 4 to 8, again impacting on the school budget, as highlighted above, which is not feasible. In addition, it would require a janitor to cover 8 lets instead of 4 and at present, this is becoming extremely difficult to arrange with the new janitor role (Facilities Officer) – Christmas Fayre. A suggestion was made to combine the PTA and Parent Council, as there is only a requirement to have one parent body. Another alternative would be those wishing to be on both would choose one and keep up to date with what is happening on the other through the minutes. Anyone on the PTA wishing to raise anything at the Parent Council meeting could still do this through the Parent Council Chairperson or one of the other members. Members of the Parent Council wishing to participate in events organised by the PTA can still do this by advising Janice Campbell – PTA Chairperson.

1. **Active Literacy/Curriculum Afternoon/Parent Workshop**

The HT has spoken to the member of staff responsible for Literacy and Numeracy within NLC to discuss the prospect of using the Active Literacy DVD to show parents how literacy is taught in the early stages primarily. This would support working parents, as SMT would organise a workshop to allow parents/carers to come along in the evening.

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R. McCarthy

Head Teacher