

Head Teacher Report – Parent Council

In Balmalloch Primary School and Nursery Class we are transparent about our PEF spending and School Fund. We consult staff and the Parent Council about the PEF (Pupil Equity Fund) spend each year. Each year we have funded additional teachers to keep class sizes smaller than they would be without this, with the aim of improving children’s educational experience and attainment. This information is outlined in the Head Teacher’s Report which is written termly and can be found on our website in the Parents section:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/nl/balmalloch/>

I would ask that parents/carers access this prior to contacting the school, as your questions may be answered within the report.

Unacceptable Actions Policy – Education and Families – NLC

- **Unreasonable demands**

We recently sent out the above policy from North Lanarkshire Council and would ask that our families read the section entitled ‘Unreasonable demands’.

“We believe a demand becomes unacceptable when it starts to (or when complying with the demand would) impact substantially on the work of our schools and offices. Examples include:

- Repeatedly demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale
- Insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff when that is not possible

Some of our teaching staff have been approached by parents/carers at the door or in the lines in the morning which impacts on the health and safety of our children, as they will be unsupervised for the duration of time the member of teaching staff is engaged in conversation. This can also add to stress experienced by members of staff, impacting on their wellbeing. We understand that our parents/carers may want to quickly clarify something or pass on a piece of essential information however, teachers cannot engage in lengthy conversations answering a range of questions that would be better addressed through an appointment. Appointments can be made at the school office if you wish to discuss anything in detail. We appreciate your support with this.

At present, we have staff absent and this has resulted in members of management covering classes. We would ask that you work with us if you require an appointment as it is not always possible to give an appointment in the same week it is asked for but we will always do our utmost to see our parents/carers at our earliest convenience.

- **Unreasonable levels of contact**

The policy states:

“Sometimes the volume and duration of contact made to us by an individual causes problems. This can occur over a short period, e.g. the number of calls or emails in one day or one hour.

We consider that the level of contact has become unacceptable when the amount of time spent talking to a complainant on the telephone or responding to/reviewing emails or written correspondence impacts on our ability to deal with that complaint or other people's complaints or deliver our services effectively."

We will always do our utmost to respond to emails and telephone calls in a timely manner but it may not always be possible to do this as quickly as we would when we are fully staffed. We will always prioritise 'serious' concerns or child protection. We appreciate your understanding at this time when we are not at full capacity. Staff always put the needs of our children first and work extremely hard to meet their needs, providing a range of experiences where children can learn in a variety of ways, developing not only knowledge and understanding but key skills.

- **Aggressive or abusive behaviour**

It has been brought to the attention of myself and staff that there is inaccurate information being shared through Groupchats which can, at times, lead to inappropriate comments being made in relation to staff members. We have been shown 'screenshots' of conversations which other parents or colleagues in other establishments feel are unacceptable. In the North Lanarkshire Policy, in the section 'Aggressive or abusive behaviour, it states:

"We understand that complainants may be angry about the issues they have raised in their complaint. If that anger escalates into aggression towards our staff, we will consider that as unacceptable. Any violence or abuse towards staff will not be tolerated. Violence is not restricted to acts of aggression that may result in physical harm.

It also includes behaviour or language (whether verbal or written) that may cause staff to feel offended, afraid, threatened or abused. Language (including via email, phone calls, in person or social media) which is designed to insult or degrade, is racist, sexist or homophobic or which makes serious allegations that individuals have committed criminal, corrupt or perverse conduct without any evidence is unacceptable. We may also decide that comments aimed at third parties are unacceptable if listening to them or reading them may have a detrimental effect on our staff."

We would ask that parents/carers contact the school if they are unsure of procedures or information that has been shared with them through another source, allowing staff to reassure our families and provide reliable information that can be acted upon.