

Minutes of Knowetop Primary School Parent Council

Thursday 7th September 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Kelly Anderson	Shirley Bartynek
	Lynn Downey	Agnieszka Draminska
	Lynsey Hutchison	Lucy McCabe
	Mark McCulloch	Gail McBride
	Gail McFadyen	Carol-Anne McGinty
	Roberta McGuire	Amanda McLeod
	Morag Mollon	Julie-Anne Muir
	Sandra Murray	Laura Pettigrew
	Karen Rae	Carolyn Rankin
	Audrey Robertson	Pamela Smith

<u>Apologies:</u>	Jill Nicholls
	Neil Mitchell

1. Welcome

Everyone was welcomed to the first meeting of the Parent Council for the 2017-18 session by the Chairperson. A request was made for email addresses from any new parents attending and / or those that may have changed their details recently.

2. Accounts

Accounts for the 2016 – 17 session were distributed and it was noted that the Parent Council has a carry forward of £4375.14 into the new session.

3. Vice-Chair Vacany

As the post of Vice-Chair is now vacant due to the previous postholder moving out of the area A. McLeod proposed Lynn Downey. This was seconded by Shirley Bartynek and agreed by the parent body.

4. Lunch-Time Monitoring

AMc relayed that there had been discussion of issues regarding lunch time on the Knowetop Parents Facebook page. These were that older monitors had been rushing younger children to eat their lunch in order to get out to play and older children not happy to be doing the job of monitoring. Roberta McGuire explained that in the school P7 and P6 monitor the younger children during each of the lunch sittings. They pick their monitoring partners so are able to socialize with peers of their choice and monitoring is undertaken on a rota basis, usually 1 week in 3. Pupils monitor classes as part of the Responsible Citizen capacity of Curriculum for Excellence, outcomes in Health and Wellbeing and skills for learning, life and work. Support staff within the school also monitor classes so pupil monitors do not have overall responsibility for decisions regarding behaviour, health and safety etc. However, this is not on a one adult per class basis due to numbers.

Action

To help improve the process, the school will again explain the monitoring process and associated tasks to the monitors and include information on the monitoring process on the website to enhance parental understanding. They will continue to monitor and review provision and encourage any parent who encounters an issue to contact the school directly.

5. Parking

The recurrent issue of the selfish and dangerous parking on Knowetop Avenue before and after school was discussed. Lynn Downey told of having witnessed a child being struck with a car door recently and various parents also spoke of their concern. The recent campaign around the crossing at Manse Road has seen a marked improvement with vans and other traffic using the shops there parking to allow safe access for the children. It was noted that the Parent Council regularly discuss this issue and whether there was any more as a Parent Council we can do?

RMcG explained that this is a recurring problem for a lot of schools. The school issues reminders in Newsletters and at Parent workshops but ultimately has no legislative power in this area. Park and stride or ensuring children have appropriate waterproof clothing were encouraged by the school. Various ideas to ease congestion were discussed and suggestions of contacting police and bollards and cones were made. However, most agree that these are temporary measures and that the real action required is for parents, carers and friends who are dropping off or collecting children do not park around the school entrances or pavement opposite.

Action

The school will continue to do all it can to raise the issue of parking at meetings and within newsletters to reinforce the need to park safely. It will also invite concerned parents to be more involved in helping to find solutions by setting up a travel planning group including pupil, parents and staff members. A questionnaire will be sent to all parents regarding parking concerns / issues and information will be placed

on the school website to reinforce parental responsibilities regarding parking around the school. AMc will email the Parent Council to ask of parent volunteers to assist with this.

6. Suppliers of School Uniform

Issues regarding the supply of school uniform from local businesses were discussed. Parents spoke of their experience of the local business being unreliable and not being able to meet demand. It was also noted that there is currently only one supplier of the tartan skirt and school jumper and parents were under the impression that this was the responsibility of the school.

RMcG explained that school uniform can be purchased from a number of suppliers and that the school does not specify that the tartan skirts or jumpers must be worn. School staff present explained that the tartan skirts were introduced under the previous headteacher.

The P7 hoodies last year were a great success but there were complications with delivery and so this year they will be ordered earlier and other suppliers investigated to enable pupils to wear these throughout June (should P7s wish to).

Julie-Anne Muir spoke of the King's Church Uniform Swap Shop that has been established and encouraged all families to use it. It has been a great success so far and she explained that it is for anyone to use. It will be run again around Christmas time and the end of the school year.

Action

The school will check the availability of school uniform with current suppliers and advise them of the concerns raised by parents. It will also investigate possible additional suppliers of school uniform.

7. P.E. / School Trip Uniform

AMc spoke of the confusion for some parents regarding whether children wear or bring their P.E. uniform to school on gym days. RMcG confirmed that all children should come to school in their school uniform and bring P.E. kit with them. On gym days children should wear their polo shirt and sweatshirt to school but bring their shorts / jogging bottoms and shoes with them. For indoor P.E. the children are expected to wear shorts (which may be worn under their school uniform if they wish) and for outdoor P.E. the children can wear jogging bottoms or shorts (weather permitting). Children will be out in all weathers and so a sturdier pair of shoes / trainers may be brought for outdoor P.E.

On school trips pupils should wear their school polo shirt and sweatshirt and the issue of what is to be worn on the bottom was discussed.

Action

Information previously shared in newsletters regarding the wearing of uniform to school, P.E. kit and clothing for trips will be placed on the school website. Staff will work to reinforce this and the issue of what is to be worn on the bottom for trips will be discussed with Mrs Nicholls and parents advised of the outcome. The school would continue to encourage parents that where a difficulty arises they should contact the school immediately to address this.

8. Parent Council Goals

AMc spoke of the financial support the Parent Council gives the school from their fundraising efforts and asked for ideas of what to spend the money on this year. RMcG explained that the school would suggest the continued support in the provision of Santa presents for P1 and 2, House treats for pupils, the annual visiting pantomime and perhaps saving to provide a soft/sponge play area for the playground (costs would be considerable).

Action

A questionnaire to be sent to the parent forum asking for ideas of Parent Council spend and the Pupil Council to be involved also.

9. Communication between Parent Council and Parents

The issue of widening the communication between the Parent Council and the parent body was discussed, with it being noted that not everyone may be in a position to attend Parent Council meetings but should have access to the discussion. Pamela Smith spoke of using the school website to publish newsletters, agendas and minutes of meetings for all to access. Shirley Bartynek queried the use of twitter to facilitate this also. Issuing a Calendar of Events for the Parent Council and a letter to request details for parent helpers to attend these events was also discussed.

Action

Newsletters, agendas and minutes of the meetings to be regularly placed onto the school website in the Parent Council section of the page by the Secretary. A link to these to be shared on the school twitter feed also. A Calendar of Events issued to all parents and request for helpers letter to go out.

10. Interview Panel

AMc explained that as members of a Parent Council there is an opportunity to go on a training course to sit on an Interview Panel for senior promoted posts within the school. If no-one within the school is trained then the Parent Council would have no say in any new appointments.

Action

AMc to email for interested parties to be put forward for training.

11. Christmas Cards

A discussion of whether to use this fundraising opportunity took place and it was agreed that if so the cards would need to be coloured before the end of September and orders in by the October week to take advantage of the best deals.

Action

Lynn Downey to liase with Lesley Roger regarding the suppliers' details and an email to go out asking for help with this event.

12. Hallowe'en Disco

The upcoming disco was discussed and the help required to run the event, e.g. parents on the night, setting up in the afternoon and ticket sales. The amount of sugar consumed by the children and ways to reduce this was also discussed.

Action

AMc to update the letter that accompanies the tickets with a suggested amount for children to bring to spend at the tuck shop.

13. School Issues

Submitted by Jill Nicholls.

HT Information for Parent Council



7th September 2017

Finance

The Head Teacher will be meeting with the AFA next week to confirm finance and personnel statistics. At present there is a £15,006 total overspend showing across some spend lines, including materials, apparatus and equipment. This is a planned overspend, allowing purchasing of materials required for use at the start of the year, including £3,500 spent on additional Maths textbooks and workbooks. An expected carry forward of £21,750 to be transferred to school in September or October from central NLC budget will compensate for this current over spend. Other budget lines, some of which are ring-fenced, remain comfortably 'in the black'.

Planned future spend will include purchasing new desktops for the HT and DHT due to the age of machines and NLC identified refresh needs.

The Head Teacher has met with a representative of Canon reprographics to discuss photocopy and printer needs across the mainstream school and VI as NLC Corporate Procurement have now negotiated new contracts for these services and our current, high volume machines, being due for renewal. We are working to agree new provision at a similar or reduced cost to the school.

Staffing

We started the year fully staffed (minus 0.1 FTE = 1 person for half a day). We have had a number of short term absences due to illness, which SMT members and supply staff have been able to cover. In up-coming weeks we anticipate 2 notified time-limited absences and one longer term absence. The HT is working with NLC's Education Personnel Department to try to provide pre-planned cover. This work is on-going due to a lack of supply staff across education in general. SMT will continue to teach and oversee any temporary teaching arrangements to ensure continuity and progression of educational provision for our pupils. On a very rare occasion classes may have to be split for a short period of time but this will be minimised and avoided unless absolutely necessary. We await our 2 Principal Teacher posts going to advert and thank those who are filling the posts on a temporary basis for their hard work to date. The paperwork required for advertisement of the posts is with NLC and we await an update on progress.

Fabric of the School

Work should start in the next 8 weeks or so to improve the security of our grounds. The fence between the playground and car park will be heightened, new, lightweight gates will be fitted to the car park and locked at the end of the school day, a fence will be added to the top of the wall at the rear corner of the playground to deter entry by climbing over the wall and an additional gate will be added to the wall to allow the AstroTurf to be accessed without entering the school grounds. Our front railings will also be painted black to improve their appearance. Each of these measures is designed to try to minimise non-authorized entry to the school grounds and resultant vandalism. It should be noted however that where people are determined to gain entry they will find a way so if anyone sees inappropriate entry or behaviour outside of school hours they should report this to the police.

Concerns have been raised regarding health and safety issues around the very popular sandpit and so this has been closed to pupils in case of class, animal faeces or other unsafe materials perhaps lurking under the sand. The sand is checked daily and covers have been purchased in the past however these have quickly been vandalised. To ensure pupil safety we are looking at ways of removing the sandpit whilst maintaining an alternative play area for pupils to use.

The Head Teacher is arranging a meeting with a representative of Motherwell Football Club to discuss the continued use of the Astroturf and information will be shared with parents when arrangements are confirmed.

Any concerns with regard to the fabric of the school building or playground should be reported to the Head Teacher or a member of the SMT in the first instance.

14. AOB

None