  

**St Augustine's Primary and Nursery Class Parent Council Meeting**

**Minutes of Meeting on 30th of March 2021**

**Parent Council Members Present:**

Stephen Kirley (Chair)

Amanda O'Dowd (Clerk)

Andrew Wilson

Iain Kinnear

John Glen

Njoki Sawaya-McLeish

**Others Present:**

Caroline Docherty (HT)

Tom Castles (Councillor)

**Apologies:**

Father Kane

Martin McWilliams

Camille McWilliams

**Agenda:**

**1. Chairperson Welcome and Apologies**

Meeting opened with a prayer led by Mr Kinnear.

Going forward meetings will be opened with a prayer. As with this meeting, if Father Kane not present, to be led by Mr Kinnear.

Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially councillor Mr Castles.

**2. Review of minutes & actions from last meeting**

The minutes from the last meeting have no proposed amendments so were therefore accepted. Mrs Docherty was asked to please post them to the school blog.

* As above meetings will now begin with a prayer as requested by Father Kane, which all members very happy with.
* Nursery Parking - As normal flow has now continued, Mr Kirley will contact NLC to find out when this will be assessed.
* MS Teams - No reply yet from letter sent to MSP. However, Hollyrood is now suspended until after the elections. However as already mentioned at previous meetings there was and is MS Teams help available and this should not be an issue in the future.
* Mr Kirley discussed with Mrs Docherty separately about the outstanding actions for the school grounds, all of which are already in the works.
* AGM Date - Mr Kirley discussed with the PTA bringing the date forward rather than having it in October. However, it was felt that it was already difficult to get new members and having the AGM earlier would discourage this further. Also, this year there is not a lot to discuss with fundraising under the circumstances, so it was felt October suited best. Mr Kirley gave this feedback to Maureen Moore of NLC who has no issue with this.

**3. Parent Council update on matters arising since last meeting**

* Parent Council Consultation Meeting

Meeting takes place tomorrow at 6pm, Mr Kirley will attend and feedback anything relevant.

* HUB Meeting

This took place on the 11th of March and a few members of the Parent Council attended. The meeting involved NLC presenting the program for what will be involved in the creating of the hubs, such as potential locations. The three locations considered are St Ambrose High School, St Andrews High School and Coatbridge High School, all of which have their own pros and cons. Mr Castles commented that this is only the very early stages of the consultation for these hubs, and there will be further presentations as it progresses. Mr Kirley will update when any discussions are upcoming.

The question was also raised in regards to primary schools linked to parishes. It was assured that schools next to their churches would remain linked to the parish.

**4. NLC Communications**

* Email invitation to the next Parent Council Consultation Meeting

However, this meeting has already taken place, and it was arranged for the same evening as the Hub meeting, therefore Mr Kirley sent his apologies.

* Nation Parent Forum of Scotland have issued a survey which they hope all parents will children in school will fill in. The feedback to this survey will be used to determine what the policy of education will be for the new government after elections. Mrs Docherty has already received this email and passed it on to parents.
* Email to explain that due to the number of parents who joined into the PCC meeting, there has now been a parent council Facebook group created for those members in NLC. So far Mr Kirley has no relevant feedback from this.

**5. Parent Council Communications**

There were 2 emails received from parents in regards to the difficulties experienced with the online booking system for parent's night. These have since been resolved, and Mrs Docherty will discuss in her HT Report.

**6. Head Teacher Report**

* **Current provision** - The school is now open for all pupils. Staff have been reminded about the importance of stringently following guidelines around social distancing to mitigate risk and to follow all noted points in the risk assessments. There is an increasing need to highlight the importance of staff not allowing themselves to become complacent due to an increase in positive cases in the community. Staff have additional measures in place to ensure a heightened cleaning regime within their class. Parents continue to receive regular reminders about mitigating risk and expectations around behaviours at drop off and pick up time – mandatory mask wearing, not standing in groups etc. Behaviours of parents and families, if they are not following guidelines and mixing indoors when they shouldn’t be, will have an impact on families/staff in the school if someone then tests positive.

We remain with two members of staff shielding – no supply teacher has been provided to date and this has meant the school has covered this post internally impacting on our capacity to provide additional support for learning. We have cover for an Early Years worker in the nursery.

* **Covid cases** – currently we have five positive cases in the school. Two adults and three children. 25 pupils isolating Pr. 1 and 18 isolating in the nursery. In total this means we have 8 staff members isolating.
* **Support around HWB** – staff have completed a strengths and difficulty questionnaire for all pupils. The results will be analysed and will provide staff with an overview of what further supports can be put in place to support children affected by the lockdown. Our counselling service The Exchange have completed their supports in the school for noted pupils. This primarily focused upon resilience. A new counselling service will commence in April – Teentalk. This is for pupils age 10 +, we already have a number of parents who have been in contact to confirm they would like their child to be part of this 1-1 counselling service based upon the needs of each child.

The school made a number of applications (20 in total) on behalf of families for a COVID payment that was provided by the Scottish Government. Parents were consulted and identified readily what difference additional money would make to their family and to their health and wellbeing.

* **Engagement levels online** - Mrs Elliott tracked engagement levels throughout the lockdown and weekly returns were made – a sample of engagement levels (provided). Mrs Elliott broke engagement levels down into each class with further scrutiny focusing upon who was not engaging or submitting work. Some figures could be explained as pupils preferred to work from paper learning packs. For other pupils it was the provision of appropriate technology. The school made submissions for laptops for noted pupils in the school. In total we applied for and received 65 laptops. During lockdown we also provided IT support and offered a place at school to support pupils and families if required. Teachers also tracked pupil engagement levels on software such as SUMDOG, IDL and Rising Stars.
* **Communicating with parents** – school blog, twitter and facebook are our platforms and are greatly used by parents. We are also using groupcall to e-mail parents – we have the e-mail addresses of all parents. Despite the school having an e-mail address for all parents – it is evident not all parents check their e-mails regularly. We will return to push notifications on the school app to remind parents to check the blog and their e-mails. The blog has been used for sign posting in regard of benefits, child grants, financial support, tips for home learning, looking after health and wellbeing etc. Our blog tracker indicates we have on average 900 + hits each week.
* **Reporting on Progress and Achievement** –– teaching staff will be in contact this week to provide a pupil report and to comment upon where the children are in their learning and to discuss parent/teacher concerns around the return to school. Parents went online to book an appointment. There was a technical issue at the beginning that the clerical staff had to address that must cause frustration for some parents. We will look into the efficacy of this system for next time as it did not cut down the level of phone calls to the school. Staff continue to review and update their tracking sheets to indicate how well children are on track to achieve Early, First and Second Level in Literacy and Numeracy and HWB. Attainment teachers were focusing on pupils who were at risk of not achieving and also pupils who work from more individualised learning programmes. Attainment teachers were deployed to Pr. 1 – 3 to assess all Pr.1 – 3 pupils, to identify gaps in learning and to plan programmes of support and intervention. This was targeted additional and intensive support. All support staff were deployed to Pr. 1 – 3 with a member of the support team deployed to provide support to current cohort of Pr. 4 – 7 pupils. This level of intervention has become impacted due to the need to cover the member of staff shielding and a number of absences. The staff team also have to respond to needs when they arise – such as staff members having to go for a test, required to self isolate etc.
* **PEF Money** – we are currently evaluating the impact of our PEF spends for this financial year. We always endeavour to secure additionality in our staffing allocation for each session. This is how the majority of our money is spent. This year has been an unprecedented year and the need to have additionality was central to making sure we could provide cover requirements when the need arose, however, our ability to sustain interventions has been impacted. We recognise this has the greatest impact on our learners and are fully aware of where the need is most evident within our school and what needs to be done to address noted concerns around attainment levels. This will all be factored in when we plan for PEF spends for the next financial year. We aim to continue to ensure additionality in our staffing with a continued focus on improving IT provision, purchase of more i-pad, the start of staged buys with the purchase of Promethean boards and assessment materials.
* **School infra structure/ school grounds update** –There still remains some outstanding repair work to school grounds that the Clerk of Works is chasing up – however contractors remain on furlough at present. We have contractors in school at present fitting new flooring. This has greatly enhanced the look of the school. New flooring was also put in Room 1 and 2, and also on the middle corridor on the 1st floor. Several leaks at the infant area – affecting toilets and Room 2 and 3 – awaiting drier weather before a programme of works to take place on the roof – the work has went out to tender.
* **Nursery Update** – nursery is operating at capacity with 45 children. There remains ongoing issues around the glass dome – leaks – however contractors are working on this at the moment. A programme of repair work will take place during the Easter break to address the nursery grounds – tarmacing, turfing and removal of a wall.
* Dates are set for First Reconciliation and First Communions. Parents have been informed.
* Virtual Assembly – Pr 7 house captains and vice captains continue to deliver virtual assemblies at the end of every month. The children love doing it and the whole school love watching them. End of month assembly provided updates to pupils, shout outs and presentation of pupil awards.
* The school is eternally grateful for the input from Jan and Father. The school is also making good use of Being Catholic – the parish online resource. Pr. 4 – 7 pupils celebrated Mass with Father Kane on a weekly basis on their return to school which was amazing. The school is most appreciative of Father’s commitment to coming into the school each morning during Lent. We have all enjoyed the services.

**7. Parish Update**

Mr Kinnear passed on from Father Kane that they are very grateful for the work being carried out by Jan. She has done a great job supporting the children, and also especially with the Easter Craft Packs which are still available for children to collect.

**8. Any Other Business**

* Mr Kirley asked question on behalf of Mrs McCaul of what will be possible for the Primary 1 induction.

Mrs Docherty replied that they are keen to operate with some sort of model in May. It will not be possible to gather all children and parents in the hall as normal, but potentially smaller groups of children, as well as an online coffee morning for the parents. For those children currently in the St Augustine's Nursery Class, there has been some small introductions, but obviously this is a very small amount of the children who will eventually attend Primary 1 in the school.

* There have been reports from parents and also pupils about an online hoax called Plague Man, who is said to be kidnapping children in parks. However, Police Scotland reassures that this is a complete fabrication.
* Due to the upcoming Easter holidays as well as two meetings this month, it was agreed that there would not be a Parent Council Meeting in April. Rather it would take place in May.

**Actions for Next Meeting**

* Mr Kirley will follow up on the flow of traffic being assessed at the nursery.
* It was confirmed that Mrs Docherty had shared the National Parent Forum survey with parents via email, but this will also be shared on social media.

**Next Meeting Date: Wednesday the 26th of May at 6pm.**