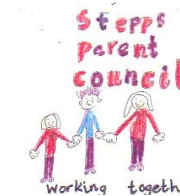




STEPS PRIMARY PARENT COUNCIL
PARENT COUNCIL MEETING (1)



Monday 24th October 2022

Agenda item	Detail	Decision	Action	COMPLETED?
Welcome and attendees	<p>Welcome from Lorraine, especially to the newest parent council members joining for this new term.</p> <p>Lorraine Kerr, Chairperson Diane Delaney, Secretary Lynne Blair, Treasurer and Parent Council Member Suzanne Ryan, Parent Council Member Emma Dalziel, Parent Council Member Louise Laing, Parent Council Member Corrine Booth, Parent Council Member</p> <p>Mr McKeever, Head Teacher, Co-opted Member</p>			N/A
Apologies Absent	<p>Heidi Stoujesdyk, Parent Council Member Angela Power, Parent Council Member</p> <p>Holly Uprichard, Parent Council Member Thipnatee Sansawatt, Parent Council Member Mrs Jeffreys, Deputy Head Teacher Cllr McLaren Cllr Williams Cllr Cairns</p>			N/A

<p>Headteacher's report – Mr McKeever</p>	<p>STAFFING</p> <p>Ms Davidson off on maternity leave now. A new teacher (Ms Goh) has joined the team from today to cover this maternity leave.</p> <p>Mrs Allan retired on 14th October. A vacant PT position has arisen from this. This vacancy is currently being job sized and it is expected to be advertised in the next 2 weeks. Timescales likely to be Christmas/ New Year for this new appointment. Mr McKeever has enquired about an acting Principal Teacher however there is no update yet from NLC.</p> <p>Emma enquired to Mr McKeever about Mrs Jeffreys position given the school roll now. Mr McKeever confirmed that work is in progress to offer Mrs Jeffreys the permanent role of Depute Head Teacher.</p> <p>At the end of Aug/ September Mr McKeever submits all staffing and school roll numbers to the Council headquarters, and then the ratio of staffing levels is reassessed given the confirmed pupil roll and staffing numbers.</p> <p>Mr McKeever hasn't heard anything back from the Council yet about any changes to the current staffing numbers/ ratios. As a result of this there may be an opportunity for Mrs Allan to return to the school one day per week to do some targeted work (German lessons).</p> <p>Mr McKeever has spoken to the High School about the possibility of accessing someone to take language lessons in the school, but it is unclear whether this will be possible.</p>		<p><i>Mr McKeever will provide updates whenever he receives them about changes to staffing</i></p>	
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	<p>A question was asked to Mr McKeever about after school activities, Mr McKeever confirmed that all after school activities are taken up on a voluntary basis by staff (unpaid) and now given increasing workload priorities, it is unlikely that staff will be able to offer this now.</p> <p>Unanimous agreement of the obvious gaps in the Stepps Community of offers of activities from North Lanarkshire Councils that primary school children can access within the local area that doesn't require use of a car or public transport. This will be exacerbated by more house building.</p> <p>Lorraine informed the meeting that the issue of NLC teacher recruitment process has been discussed in the wider NLC Parent Consultative meeting with NLC advising there was to be a review with the aim to improve the existing process. There has been no feedback or update on this yet.</p> <p>In response to an enquiry to Mr McKeever about parent volunteers coming into the school, Mr McKeever confirmed that parent volunteers are very welcome and there are already a couple helping in the school since the start of this new term.</p> <p>A question was asked about staffing numbers and the ability of the school to utilise the AstroTurf/pitch area at any time during the school day. Mr McKeever advised due to staffing difficulties, getting outside, and using the AstroTurf at any time is a challenge. This is because the school requires sufficient staffing to both supervise pupils on the turf as well as supervise and support any pupil requiring to leave the turf (toilet/ accident). At present there is insufficient staffing numbers to permit</p>		<p><i>Parents who wish to volunteer to help with tasks/ activities within the school should contact Mr McKeever for more information</i></p>	
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	<p>the school to use the AstroTurf as much as they would like to. In the past Mr McKeever has tried to utilise resources via Active Schools but this isn't a longer-term solution. Everyone agreed that this is such a wasted opportunity and resource for the children, especially given the size of the AstroTurf/ pitch. All parents in agreement that under no circumstances should a child be permitted to walk alone from the school building to the turf area given that the school gates remain open and that members of the public will be using the community facilities. Thus, emphasising the need for a risk management plan in place for the safety and wellbeing of the children. This ultimately equates to having enough staff. This issue has been raised by Mr McKeever and the parent council, despite this the response from senior managers in the Council never addresses this issue. Diane advised that the issue has also been raised with local councillors, but they have not taken any action yet (that we know of) to challenge Council management on their decision making around the supply of sufficient staff to use this resource.</p> <p>Lynne asked about whether the Choir would continue in the absence of Mrs Allan. Mr McKeever confirmed that it will require another staff member to volunteer for this roll.</p> <p>CLUSTER SUPPORT</p> <p>Mr McKeever advised that the Council did provide some extra funding for staffing due to Covid-19 impacts. This year the focus has been on cluster level support. SIMD data has been used to determine allocation of this. Our cluster meant that we were allocated 1.3 Full Time Equivalent as a cluster for 5 schools. Queries from parents about how this decision was made. Mr</p>		<p><i>The parent council will continue to raise the issue of capacity, lack of play space and outdoor space, inability to utilise the AstroTurf/pitch to its full potential to local and regional Councillors and MSPs.</i></p> <p><i>Mr McKeever will provide an update on whether the choir can continue</i></p>	<p>DONE – ANOTHER EMAIL SENT TO ALL COUNCILLORS DECEMBER 2022</p> <p>DONE. THE CHOIR WAS FORMED & RUN BY 2 TEACHERS. THE CHILDREN PERFORMED AT THE CHRISTMAS SERVICE.</p>
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McKeever advised that this cluster does not have lots of areas of deprivation, thus resulting in the cluster receiving a small amount of funding for staffing compared with schools where there are higher levels of deprivation and the assumption being that there are more detrimental impacts.

Mr McKeever advised that there is a variety of different types of support available to the cluster including:

- Attainment
- Health and wellbeing
- Literacy support
- Additional cluster staff

Cluster leads are responsible for overseeing allocation of these resources. All schools will have an allocation of each of these resources throughout the year. The person taking on this role may change. Lorraine highlighted a concern about changing roles in terms of impacts to children in building relationships with staff members and conveyed a hope that there wouldn't be too many changes to allow children to build trust and security with staff.

A question was asked about the permanency of the wellbeing cluster and whether Stepps PS has a hub for children and families to access. Mr McKeever confirmed that there is no information about the long-term ability to maintain the cluster wellbeing support. He also advised that there is no space in any school across the cluster for a hub for families to access. There was unanimous agreement that this is not good for families. Again, this emphasises the detriment to the children and families of

the Stepps community and wider areas where there is lots of house building but no room for essential/ critical education resources. Concern was raised amongst parents about this given the ongoing issues facing Stepps primary school regarding lack of space.

All parents in agreement that the idea of the cluster health and wellbeing support is great, however the lack of hub and the fraction of teaching resource on offer to our school is a disappointment given that the school community are aware of the wider Covid-19 impacts that are not necessarily identified via SIMD data.

Diane advised that it's sad that all the rhetoric around having the community resource attached to the school, yet the children who are both part of the school community and wider Stepps community are struggling to benefit from having this resource which is physically attached to the school. There is so much potential in having the community space, yet it doesn't seem that it possible for this to be achieved for the children in terms of their social, emotional, physical health and wellbeing.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Parents evenings coming up in November – booking system will open next week. Dates set for 15th and 17th November after school.

Parents will be invited into the school, will have an opportunity to look at their child's schoolwork and chat to the teacher. Everyone responded with enthusiasm and delight at this news. The parent opening evening was viewed a success by both parents and teachers. There was an exciting buzz about the school with everyone

getting in. For many parents this would have been the first opportunity to get into the school in 3yrs.

Unanimous agreement that this sort of engagement is important for trust, relationships and partnership working. Mr McKeever advising that there are approx. 300 families connected to Stepps PS. Whole school events are important for the wellbeing of the school community.

SCHOOL APP/ COMMUNICATION

Mr McKeever had issued a survey on whether parents would be interested in using an APP as a form of communication. Response was low however most parents said yes.

Mr McKeever is exploring different types of APP but concluded that the school team are committed to moving forward and adopting a different style/ format of communicating. Text messaging is not a cost-effective method although it can be convenient. Twitter isn't reaching all parents and although email is good a method, it is thought that the APP will offer multiple opportunities for different types of communication and engagement.

The initial costs of setting up the App is about £500 and there will be subsequent annual fees. Mr McKeever may speak to the PTA about the possibility of contributing some funds to this. Everyone agreed that this would be a good use of parent raised funds that has been sitting for some time now due to Covid/ building works.

	<p>Louise advised that a one stop shop of communication would be good as many parents are drowning in emails, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and text message. It can be hard to manage.</p> <p>Lorraine advised that she has contacted other schools via their headteacher discuss their use of an APP and there has been a lot of positive feedback. Emma also advised that there are some schools in NLC using APPs that Mr McKeever could speak to for advice/ information and recommendations.</p> <p>The was a query about whether Twitter would be removed with the introduction of an APP. Mr McKeever advised that all forms of communication would be reviewed but there is a possibility that one Twitter account would remain for sending out information.</p> <p>P7 RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>Mr McKeever advised that planning is underway with a parental information meeting on 27th October. Most of the children are attending, but some children simply don't want to go.</p> <p>Finances were considered – taking SIMD data into consideration – with PEF money being used to subsidise any family/child who required financial support. This ensures all children can have access.</p> <p>Inverclyde residential centre is being used.</p> <p>Everyone happy to hear this is going ahead relaying the importance of children accessing this type of experience (if they want it).</p> <p>SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHY - NOVEMBER</p>		<p><i>Mr McKeever will provide an update on further progress on the purchase of a school app for communication and other activities</i></p> <p><i>Mr McKeever will continue to liaise with the P7 Group and their parents about forthcoming plans for residential</i></p> <p><i>Mr McKeever will explore options for full class photos to be taken by year groups P2 – P6</i></p>	
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	<p>Individuals or sibling groups Class photo is normally only P1 + P7 Diane had asked about class photos for other year groups. Cost is sometimes a factor in this which is why it wasn't routinely offered but the photographer could be invited back in May. Diane suggesting that even if the class teacher could take a whole class photo and post on Twitter this would be good</p> <p>SCHOOL HALL</p> <p>Mr McKeever updated that following much discussion about the safety and ability of the school/ children to access the Community Hall, a decision was taken for the afterschool care group to move their belongings into the 2 community rooms adjacent to the hall.</p> <p>This means the school are now able to book the hall for class use, mainly PE activities two days per week – all day until 2.45pm. Aftercare require access from 2.45pm. This time is fine because the school needs to be organised for children leaving on the school bus before 3pm.</p> <p>This is a more positive situation now than at the end of last school term. However as with everything else in relation to the community facilities, it is unclear what the long-term plans will be, and this means that there is an ongoing position of uncertainty.</p> <p>Everyone in agreement that the school community needs to be able to come together for full school events in order that parents and the wider school community can support one another. There must be an opportunity</p>		<p><i>The Community Hall can be utilised twice per week by the school for education activities now</i></p>	
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	<p>for social events for parents to build relationships, networks, supports and to connect with one another. This is even more critical given the cost-of-living crisis and other difficult challenges that families are now facing.</p> <p>PLAYGROUND</p> <p>Mr McKeever advised that after many discussions and concerns being raised via his senior management team about the state of the playground, including the fact that it is at times it is unsafe for the children to access the playground following prolonged periods of rain, an assessment of the playground was undertaken w/c 10th October. The person responsible for liaising with TSNL visited after substantial rain and although it had stopped raining, some puddles had not fully drained reflecting the extent of how bad the situation can be.</p> <p>Mr McKeever escorted the worker around the playground highlighting the multiple areas where flooding occurs after rain creating risk for children in accessing these areas.</p> <p>Mr McKeever advised that the outcome of the assessment was a consideration to put some drains into some of the areas which has helped previously in other areas.</p> <p>However, of concern, Mr McKeever was advised that due to vandalism, the school would be charged for some of the work to reduce flooding. Mr McKeever asked for clarity on the vandalism and was informed because the children are playing on the grass, and this has caused</p>		<p><i>Mr McKeever is awaiting further update/ response from his most recent complaint about the state of the school playground in terms of water gathering due to dips in the ground after long periods of rain.</i></p> <p><i>The parent council will continue to try and elicit further information from the Council on the details of the playground assessment re size and how the decision was made</i></p> <p><i>The Parent Council will request a meeting with Fulton MacGregor MSP because no local councillor attending the meeting tonight to help to rectify the</i></p>	<p><i>DONE</i></p>
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	<p>the grass to wear down and it is no longer able to drain as effectively.</p> <p>Mr McKeever has escalated his concern to his senior manager in relation to this statement given that the children need to be able to play outside. Everyone agreed that this is a major concern and an unacceptable assessment to state that children playing on their own school estate equates to vandalism.</p> <p>Lorraine also updated the meeting that the response the Parent Council have received from the Council on the playground issues referred to an independent company reviewing the size of playground and apparently the company said it is a sufficient size. No details were provided on how this was decision was determined</p> <p>The suggestion by the Council that the school has access to the AstroTurf is misleading. This space cannot be used without appropriate staffing levels (as discussed earlier). This has been raised by the parent council and Mr McKeever many times and remains an unresolved issue.</p> <p>Parents are identifying a concern that the Council continue to repeat information that is inaccurate re 1. Use of AstroTurf., 2. That the flooding in the playground is not an issue, and Mr McKeever has not raised it as an issue. Two complaints were not upheld and therefore it is unclear where else to go in relation to these concerns.</p> <p>Parents are hugely concerned to hear that NLC has a policy of one teaching staff to supervise children in the playground even if this means that the one teacher cannot see all the children (due to the layout of the school).</p>		<p><i>ongoing problems with the playground (and wider issues)</i></p> <p><i>Diane will contact Barrie Shepherd – National Parent Forum Scotland NLC Rep to discuss ongoing issues with the Council and wider Local Authority issues as noted in this minute</i></p> <p><i>Mr McKeever will liaise with the PTA regarding potential access to funds to secure the basketball stand to the ground as insisted by TSNL</i></p>	<p><i>DONE</i></p> <p><i>DONE</i></p>
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	<p>Other costs include being charged to install and secure a basketball stand to the playground at a cost of £300 (TSNL insisting that a qualified person installs the frame and not the school janitor).</p> <p>Mr McKeever confirmed in response to the question from Lorraine that the Council via the Education Officers are fully up to date with all the concerns raised by Mr McKeever about the state of the school playground.</p> <p>Lorraine asked this question due to the Parent Council (via Diane) receiving communication from Mr McLaughlin (Director of Education) today. The original email sent by Diane was addressed to Stepps three elected Local Councillors (Cllr McLaren, Cllr Cairns, and Cllr Williams). It appears one of the councillors forwarded the email to the Director. The email didn't contain any questions, rather the email (see appendices for attached email) was a statement reminding the Councillors of the ongoing concerns of the Parent Council. However, Mr McLaughlin has responded to the email.</p> <p>After reading the response, there was unanimous agreement from members that the tone and content of the email was appalling.</p> <p>Parents are very concerned that Mr McLaughlin, as the Director of Education is conveying to parents in Stepps that our children are in a high-quality school and any money spent on our school means that this money is not spent on a school of lower quality or within a deprived area.</p>		<p><i>Diane and Lorraine will raise our concerns with Fulton MacGregor.</i></p>	<p><i>DONE</i></p>
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	<p>Questions arising for this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are all children in NLC viewed as equal? - Are children's rights universal or not - Are some children deemed more important than others <p>Agreement by all members that the concerns of the parent forum are about children and families within Stepps Primary School community, and we will continue to raise matters as required. We are shocked to see assumptions and judgements being conveyed in this email in this manner</p> <p>Another example is about the spending/ money available to pay for school building works. As far as we are aware money was provided from TSNL to pay for these works/ repairs. Therefore, this is not coming out of a central budget.</p> <p>The parent council have suggested solutions to the challenges/ issues, but they have not been taken on board.</p> <p>There was much discussion amongst members about what further action to take. It appears that the main response of Local Councillors is to forward emails to Council employees. This is confusing because the request is for them to represent the parent forum to at local council meetings. It is unclear what else we can do to emphasise the need for their support as our political representatives.</p> <p>Diane will reply to the Local Councillors outlining the issue in only ever forwarding emails to the Director.</p>		<p><i>Diane will consider how/if to respond to Gerard McLaughlin's email and also to Cllrs about their error/ misinterpretation of the email sent to them about the outstanding issues with regards to our request for representing our concerns and supporting our requests for partnership, effective two-way communication, and representation in the Council</i></p>	<p>NO DIRECT RESPONSE SENT TO COUNCILLORS OR THE DIRECTOR – INSTEAD DISCUSSION WITH FULTON MACGREGOR MSP WHO AGREED TO WRITE TO THE DIRECTOR TO REQUEST A MEETING. NO RESPONSE FROM THE DIRECTOR.</p>
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	<p>Overall, there was an agreement that the situation is dire in terms of the relationship with the local authority when these types of responses are received.</p> <p>DINING HALL</p> <p>The ongoing response from the council is that options are being considered regarding how to manage the lack of space in the dining room.</p> <p>Currently the dining room holds 112 children. The school roll is currently at 408 children. This means children are having their lunch in different sittings. Children with packed lunches are required to sit another area of the school completely. Despite the best efforts of Mr McKeever in managing this, it is parents view that children surely have a right to access safe, comfortable, appropriate space that is conducive to having a break, whilst eating lunch and chatting/ socialising with friends.</p> <p>A suggestion has been to create pods in the playground but there are major concerns about what this means for the actual space for children to play.</p> <p>The current stance of children and families is that the playground space is insufficient. This is due to the design of the school, the state of the playground (sinking and flooding in some areas), and the volume of children in the school and the number of children with additional support needs.</p> <p>There has been no real detail about the development of outdoor space whether this is pods or anything else.</p>		<p><i>Dining Hall is covered under 'Complaint' below.</i></p> <p><i>Mr McKeever will update the parent council whenever a response is received from Michelle</i></p>	
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	<p>COMPLAINT</p> <p>Lorraine updated the meeting that after two formal complaints to the Council that were not upheld despite the continuing evidence of our concerns being apparent, the council had suggested the parent council communicated directly with the head teacher regarding our queries/ concerns. This is even though we have regular contact and communication with the headteacher/</p> <p>However, given this instruction, the parent council composed a list of questions from the second complaint response and sent them to Mr McKeever. He was unable to answer the questions and therefore has sent them onto his line manager Michelle O'Halloran, yet there has been no response to these questions.</p> <p>Group members were unanimously agreed that the ongoing tone from the Director in relation to the concerns being raised by the parent council is a concern as it does not reflect a partnership relationship. Furthermore, the repeated emphasis from the Director that the parent council are taking up lots of the Council's time is confusing because, it is the lack of consistent, transparent, accurate and regular updates from the council that is resulting in the ongoing issues that are not being resolved. This is the issue that is creating unnecessary time. Two way effective, consistent, transparent, and accurate communication would equate to more effective use of the council's resources.</p> <p>The parent council have spoken to other parent groups in different local authorities, and it appears that working collaboratively using effective two-way communication processes is possible. For example, Glasgow City</p>		<p><i>O'Halloran regarding our questions.</i></p> <p><i>Diane will speak to Barrie Sheppard about the wider NLC parental engagement strategy/ policy especially regarding the lack of parent representation at the Education Committee and the ongoing difficulties for parent groups engaging at a wider local authority level</i></p> <p><i>Lorraine will follow up on the response to the issues/questions raised as a result of the stage 2 complaint</i></p>	<p><i>DONE - RESPONSE FROM BARRY TO THESE ISSUES THAT A PARENT ENGAGEMENT GROUP HAS COMMENCED</i></p>
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	<p>Council have included their parent group in their Education Committee. The Education Dept in Glasgow also consult with the parent council on any new policies, strategies, on research, concerns, improvements issues and areas. The parent group in Glasgow report that they feel well supported, their voices heard and represented. Given that Glasgow is the largest and one of the most diverse cities in. Glasgow, it provokes the question why NLC cannot do similar</p>			<p><i>DONE</i></p>
<p>School works update</p>	<p>Lorraine provided an update to the meeting of the ongoing collaboration the parent council have with Stepps Community council and the local authority regarding the building works (currently focused on the community hub and old library area/ modular units).</p> <p>A meeting was convened in September hosted by NLC Forward Planning Team, to present the plan for the reconfiguration of the library and community spaces. These plans were shared with parent council members and were available to the parent forum to access. NLC have invited the parent council and community council to feedback on the proposals. Parent members note that the promise of a consultation on the modular units has clearly disappeared.</p> <p>The conclusion of the joint meeting between Stepps PC and the Community Council included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The safety of the school children is paramount 2. Children should receive their education without disruption 3. The Community should have access to a space that is separate from the school building 4. The configuration of the library was not accepted 5. The CC have proposed an alternative plan for the set-up of the library 			

	<p>6. Major concerns by everyone about the use of a Fob system for security in terms of potential for human or technical error</p> <p>7. Another modular unit should be constructed in front of the current one allowing all the community space to be in the one place separate from the school estate.</p> <p>A joint letter has been sent from the Chair of Stepps PC and the Chair of Stepps CC to the council requesting a meeting given the above conclusions.</p> <p>Lorraine will also provide a written response stating that we have contributed to a joint response.</p> <p>Everyone in agreement that the current proposals don't make sense. It is not beneficial to anyone, the school or community to have facilities split amongst one another when the safety, security and education of the children is paramount. Parents are very frustrated at all the failed promises of consultation, engagement, and forthcoming information. Parents are of the view that if the Council had maintained communication with the parent council, community council and Mr McKeever, many of the current issues would not have arisen</p> <p>The previous set up with the shared community space only required the management and security of one set of double doors. The new proposal requires the management and security of at least 6 doors. The main corridor could never have any members of public with in it since it is required for the children and staff throughout the school day.</p>		<p><i>Lorraine will respond to the Forward Planning Team on behalf of the PC, she will also send a joint response with Stepps CC</i></p> <p><i>Await response from NLC Forward Planning Team</i></p>	<p><i>DONE</i></p> <p><i>RESPONSE RECEIVED – NO MEETING WILL BE CONVENED WITH THE PARENT COUNCIL/ COMMUNITY COUNCIL AT THE MOMENT</i></p>
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	<p>Everyone in agreement that the school estate isn't big enough for the number of children given their individual and sometimes additional support needs. There are real concerns about what will happen as the population in Stepps continues to grow and school capacity increases. The spaces within the bays despite meeting requirements do not feel big enough in comparison to the larger and newer classrooms with walls and doors.</p> <p>Everyone in agreement that more space in the school estate would allow some of the classes to be removed from the bays into classrooms with doors and windows. This would be more conducive to the varying needs of the children. This would also open opportunities for 'noisy', 'quiet', 'sensory' and other types of rooms specifically for groups of children. The school used to have these rooms but increasing capacity has meant these rooms became classrooms.</p> <p>A question was asked about risk assessment however no parent has been allowed to view a risk assessment in relation the new proposals to re-integrate the community facilities during school hours.</p> <p>It was noted the proposed completion date of the end of the year is very unlikely. The council did advise of a 6-week fit out for the library.</p>			
Homework	<p>Mr McKeever advised that overall, the new homework policy appears to be going well. He advised that some parents have asked for more homework but in general there hasn't been any issues.</p>		<p><i>Mr McKeever will continue to review/ monitor and feedback</i></p>	

	<p>Lorraine advised that there is a lot of positive feedback coming back from parents. There is a feeling of less pressure to engage in homework with the view that it is an option for children and families.</p>			
<p>Parent Council Communications</p>	<p>Lorraine highlighted that we were running out of time for this last section even though it is important, suggesting we may need to discuss this in more detail out with the current meeting.</p> <p>Diane had put this on the agenda to discuss the possibility of reviewing our current communication strategy. The reasons for this are that not one parent has ever asked to see the minutes. Therefore, perhaps having them available on the school website is better.</p> <p>Unanimous agreement of this and Mr McKeever is happy to facilitate this.</p> <p>Discussion about further engagement with the parent forum to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let them know who we are 2. What we do 3. How to represent their views and voices 4. Understand their priorities for their children re: education, learning, development, and health/wellbeing <p>Lots of ideas were suggested from members including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A survey - Using Twitter more - Using the school website more - Attending the upcoming parent's night and engaging directly with parents using either: 		<p><i>PC minutes will now be uploaded to the school website via Mr McKeever (Diane will send over)</i></p> <p><i>A copy of the PC presentations delivered at the AGM will also be uploaded (Lorraine will send)</i></p>	<p>DONE</p>

- a) a device to record survey result
- b) paper copies of a survey
- c) post it notes for ideas

Emma enquired about what the parent council have already done to engage with the parent forum. Diane and Lorraine advised that we have:

- Sent out a survey in March 2021 asking questions on the role and responsibilities of a parent council and best methods for communicating with the parent forum
- Set up a Twitter account in response to the survey
- Used Twitter to convey messages and information about the work of the PC/ school and wider issues impacting on children and families
- Presentation at the AGM on the role of the PC
- Created a leaflet which is included in the P1 handbook
- Communication between Education Management and parents re the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
- Attending the P1 transition event
- Mr McKeever includes communication about the PC in his newsletters
- PC members available on the playground to chat
- Chair liaises with the PTA Chair to share information and support each group
- Bio / pic and video of each PC member posted on Twitter
- Meetings/ correspondence with local councillors standing for election in May 2022
- Two years of engagement directly with Senior Education Management in NLC and local

	<p>Councillors about all of the issues mentioned above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with Minister for Ukrainian Settlement team regarding how Parent Councils can support Ukrainian families in NLC <p>Further activities of the Parent Council to extend community networks includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair and Secretary attend Steps Community Council on behalf of the parent council • Chair and Secretary attend the Northern Corridor Community Board meeting on behalf of the parent council • Meet with, and regular communications with local councillors/ MSPs • Attend NLC Parent Council Collaborative Meetings • Attend Connect Training Events <p>We ran out of time to finalise an agreement of a parent engagement plan/ review of communication. We did agree to send a short bio and picture to Lorraine to upload to Twitter and the school website.</p>		<p><i>All PC members to send Lorraine a photo and a short bio to be put on Twitter/ school website to introduce members</i></p> <p><i>A decision needs to be made about engaging with the parent forum re</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Communication</i> <i>2. Parent Forum priorities</i> 	
Minutes of the last meeting	Agreed			
Matters Arising	N/A			

<p>Treasurer's/ Financial Report</p>	<p>Lorraine advised that currently and for the last few years the Parent Council holds no funds. We don't fundraise however we could access funds from the Council that are part of the education budget.</p> <p>We don't have a bank account now</p> <p>There have been a few issues ongoing now about how to access Council money allocated to the parent council. Mr McKeever receives this money as part of his general budget. The parent council do not want Mr McKeever to manage the money as we are an independent statutory body with a right to access and manage this money ourselves. Lorraine has raised this issue with NLC parent involvement officer Willie Collum a few times but there is a blockage with the council releasing the money.</p> <p>Apparently Stepps PC did have a bank account previously, but we cannot track down where it is as there is no information about it.</p> <p>There have been a few issues for the parent council in not having access to our own funds including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inability to purchase Webex 2. Inability to print off leaflets/ information for the parent forum <p>We can ask Mr McKeever to do these things for us but the legislation (Parental Involvement Act 2006) states that we should not have to do this.</p> <p>This issue remains outstanding</p>		<p>Lorraine to follow up with William Collum.</p>	<p>RESPONSE RECEIVED OCT 22: THE PC BUDGET IS ALLOCATED VIA THE DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT (DSM) AGREED FORMULA AND AS SUCH IS MANAGED BY THE HT WITH THE SAME PROCUREMENT RULES. THIS INCLUDES GETTING BEST VALUE & USING NLC APPROVED SUPPLIERS AS THE REST OF THE DSM BUDGETS. THE PC BUDGET IS MADE UP OF AN ALLOWANCE FOR SCHOOL LET CHARGES FOR PC MEETINGS, CLERK FEES AS WELL AS AN ELEMENT FOR</p>

				ADMIN EXPENSES INCURRED BY PC. IT SHOULD BE THE CASE THAT ANY EXPENDITURE COMES WITH THE ASSURANCE THAT SPEND IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH DSM, COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS & CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS.
Correspondence (to Secretary)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Email from Director of Education – Mr McLaughlin (24th October)</i> 2. <i>Email Scottish Government (Ukraine Resettlement Team) 10th October)</i> 3. <i>Email from Cllr Cairns (5th October)</i> 4. <i>Email from Cllr McLaren (29th September)</i> 5. <i>Email from Peter McNally – Community Partnership Officer (20th September)</i> 6. <i>Emails from Douglas Holmes – Forward Planning Manager</i> 7. <i>Email from Cllr Cairns (1st September)</i> 8. <i>Email from Andrew McPherson – Community Champion (25th August)</i> 9. <i>Email from Cllr Williams (25th August)</i> 		<i>Most of these emails have already been responded to. Outstanding response to the most recent communication from the Director of Education on 24th October.</i>	<i>STILL AWAITING RESPONSE FROM THE DIRECTOR VIA MSP FULTON MACGREGOR</i>

	<i>Correspondence from Catherine Sweeney and Willie Collum – Parent Involvement Team</i>			
AOCB (Any other competent business)	<p>1. LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT TO PARENT COUNCILS</p> <p>Diane highlighted that there are wider issues for parent councils across North Lanarkshire. This was established during the MELM campaign. Parent Council groups across the authority do not feel that there is enough parent engagement, collaboration, and partnership at a local authority level.</p> <p>The parent involvement officer currently offers an authority wide consultative group once per quarter; however, parent group members are unable to set agenda items and during a previous discussion on MELM, the parent involvement officer would not initially allow discussion on the topic as it was his view that this was a one school issue. He finally conceded that it wasn't given the number of schools stating the impact to them (more than one).</p> <p>We are aware that there are wider issues including support to children with additional support needs and transport.</p> <p>As a result of these issues a unanimous decision was taken to write to the National Parent Forum Scotland NLC rep Mr Sheppard to request a meeting. Diane is also wondering if Barrie will be able to support our individual group with our own going issues at local authority level.</p>		<i>Diane will write to Barrie Sheppard – NPFS</i>	DONE – UPDATE ABOVE

	<p>The next consultative group meeting is on Thursday 27th October. Willie is stipulating that only the Chair is permitted to attend. This a change of format which he did not explain or discuss with parent members and as a result there is some dissatisfaction about this. Lorraine will attend the meeting on Thursday and report back.</p> <p>2. PC MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Diane advised that there is one space remaining on the parent council because of a current member stepping down. Suggestion to everyone to spread the word about this to see if anyone else wants to join the group.</p> <p>Diane also suggesting that we spread the word to invite parents to attend as everyone is welcome. Suzanne advised that she often tries to encourage parents to come along to discuss issues or share ideas.</p>		<p><i>All members to spread the word on:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Vacancy</i> 2. <i>PC meetings – welcome to all</i> 3. <i>Twitter/ website for information</i> 	
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Minutes completed by Diane Delaney

25th October 2022

Secretary, Stepps Primary School Parent Council

Next Meeting Date: Monday 6th February 2023 7pm – Stepps Primary School

APPENDIX

EMAIL TO LOCAL COUNCILLORS



To: Chair of Licensing Board; Cairns.Jos@northlan.gov.uk; Claire - Louise Williams - Councillor; Cc: MacGregor F (Fulton), MSP; Lorraine Kerr; campbellang@northlan.gov.uk

Dear Councillors,

In advance of the first Education, Children and Families Committee meeting today, I want to remind you as our elected representatives of the **multiple** outstanding issues and concerns raised repeatedly over the last 2yrs from Stepps Primary School Parent Council. Not only are there substantial and concerning unaddressed issues in relation to the building works and modular units, but there are also outstanding issues about:

- Capacity / size of school (and the building of new houses nearby)
- Playground flooding during rain resulting in children being unable to access this space AFTER raining for several days sometimes
- Inadequate playground and outdoor learning space (exasperated by a school that is bursting at the seams with the increasing numbers of children accessing it)
- Inadequate dining space having substantial impact on experience for children and young people (100 children fit in this space with 400 children in the school)
- Major issues for the school, parent council, PTA in using the community space for school and family events thus having a major impact on inclusivity, equality and equity
- Road safety issues ongoing with no one taking lead responsibility to manage this with an accident highly likely

Stepps Primary School Parent Council and Parent, Teacher Association held our joint Annual General Meeting yesterday and there is growing frustration, discontent, and disbelief at the failure of the local authority to uphold two formal complaints based on factual events.

The communication and partnership working between the local authority, elected representatives and the Parent Council requires to be urgently reviewed.

I will be sending formal invitations to Stepps Primary School's first Parent Council Meeting next month and given the promises made by all Councillors during the election period, parents are looking for actions that are outstanding.

We are requesting your urgent attention to these issues and given that these emails have now being ongoing for 2yrs, we are asking for some resolution, which requires action on your part.

Kind regards

Diane Delaney
Stepps Primary Parent Council
Secretary

This template has been adapted from Connects information leaflet.

Website: www.connect.scot