

Braco School Parent Council Meeting

Monday 13th November 2017

6pm – Braco School

Attendance: Jo Speed (Chair), Fiona Kerr (Treasurer), Dom Edward (Secretary), Susan Ross (Head), Anna Black, Helena Carey, Claire Crossley-Bell, Adrian Davidson, Claire Janse, Susan Johnstone

Apologies: None

1. Headteacher Report

The Parent Council and the School have received a communication from the Scottish Government about a consultation on a new Education Bill (see letter attached). SR has read through the consultation and informed the Parent Council that the proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact on the school as many suggestions are already being implemented – e.g. getting local schools to work together; ensuring headteachers spend Pupil Equity Fund money appropriately; encouraging parent/community engagement; encouraging pupil participation and peer relationships. Braco tends to benefit from being a small school as teachers are more regularly discussing and spending time in each other's classes, relative to larger schools where classes can be more insular. Due to the time it would take to provide a formal response it was decided that the Parent Council will not respond as an organisation. However, parents are encouraged to read the consultation and respond as individuals if they choose.

Staffing – Mrs Dawson will remain at Balhousie until the end of term. At present it is understood that she will return to Braco as headteacher in January. SR will then return to being principal teacher and P3/4/5 class teacher and Mr Lee will return to teaching 1 day per week. Shona Digance will return to P3/4/5 and will continue to be our Pupil Support Teacher covering Linda Black. Miss Watson will be with us until 22nd December.

The allocated level of support staff varies according to the school roll and child support needs. Mrs Gillies continues to be full time and Miss Lamb on the same hours as last year. Mrs Baxter will be with us until the end of term where her hours will be reviewed. At this stage it has been indicated that her hours will not be renewed. Mrs Watson will continue to cover lunch daily.

The school is also grateful to regular volunteer support. Hazel has been helping out in P1/2 three mornings a week, Mr Howie in the forest and baking, Rev. Mhairi Perkins on Monday afternoons and Miss Anderson once a week in different classes. The school is always happy to have volunteers come in to support the school.

2. Childcare Update

AD has been further investigating all the possibilities for childcare provision. (See attached table of childcare options). Susan Johnstone, from the PKC Childcare Strategy Team, also attended to talk through some of the options available to us.

One of the options tabled was after school clubs, though AB noted that after school clubs provided by volunteers should not always be thought of as 'childcare'. Rather, these sessions are often put on by other parents for the benefit of the children, to help them experience or learn something new. When children who are not interested in the activity are signed up to help out busy parents, this can be a significant burden on the organisers.

There was general interest in the nanny option, as regulations for this appear less onerous. Susan Johnstone explained that this is defined as childcare provided by someone in the child's own home. A list of nanny agencies is available from PKC.

JS asked if PKC would be able to employ someone on our behalf to manage childcare arrangements. Susan Johnstone said that it was not possible because of financial constraints within the Council. However, they are prepared to help us setup a management committee. The Council are not obliged to provide or arrange childcare, but are able to provide advice, education and some start up grants for childminders. AD asked whether in the longer term, particularly to meet the Council's presumed goal of maintaining healthy rural schools, that we should keep pushing for PKC to take a more active role in organising and funding childcare services. The representatives from PKC said that budget cuts within the Council makes this option highly unlikely.

JS asked if there was any more news on the potential private after school club being set up at Blackford. Susan Johnstone said that it has all gone quite and would appear to have fallen through. JS also mentioned there were other issues as to why the organisation concerned would not be taking this forward, so we should not be thinking of this as a possible option.

AD/JS, both on the board of the Ardoch Development Trust (ADT), noted that the ADT would consider a proposal for some financial support to help a childcare provider set up a facility for before/after school care within the local community.

JS asked Susan Johnstone if they knew anything about the proposal Mindstretchers (who used to run Whistlebrae Nature Kindergarten, just outside Braco, and still run Aucholone Nature Kindergarten near Crieff) had put forward to PKC. Whistlebrae informed JS they had put forward a proposal to PKC at the School Estate Consultation Event which may include help with the provision of before/after school care in the local community. Susan Johnstone informed us that her team were not aware of any such proposal.

JS has previously spoken to the manager at Dunblane Kids Club regarding a possible satellite service in Braco or taxi service to Dunblane Kids Club. However, they are presently at capacity and wouldn't be able to accommodate this. Following recent conversations with Dunblane Kids Club, FK and PKC said Dunblane Kids Club can presently take children on Fridays and ad hoc during the week if there are any cancellations, although transport would still be an issue. There is also availability for childcare during the school holidays.

It was agreed that it would be a good idea to advertise for nannies/childminders on the Braco & Greenloaning Facebook page and within Dunblane; go through the list of nanny agencies available from PKC, and check in with Blackford School on the current status of their proposed after school club and invite them to a future meeting outwith the main Parent Council meetings for those parents needing to look at childcare.

Action: JS/AD

3. Transformation of the School Estate Update

Parent Council has still not received a summary of the responses to the PKC consultation that was promised for around the end of October. The explanation we have been given is that PKC wants to send out all the information to all the schools at the same time, but only held the final meeting for Abernethy School on 26th October.

AD attended a meeting in Perth on 4th October, organised by Pete Wishart MP (Perth & North Perthshire), and provided a summary of what was discussed (see attached).

4. Christmas Fundraising

JS reported that ADT are happy to merge a school Christmas fundraising event with the Braco Christmas Lights Switch On. On behalf of the ADT, Mike Boxer and Adrian Pryor will be organising the hall decorations, lights and tree. It was agreed that the best date for this event will now be Saturday 9th December.

The plan will be to arrange a lantern parade/carol singing round the village to encourage local residents to come down to the village hall for the switch on. After lights are switched on we will then go into the village

hall for drink (mulled wine/hot chocolate/tea/coffee); food (mince pies, stolen bites etc); tombola; Ardoch Strings etc.

Actions:

- FK will organise tombola.
- HC will organise lantern making craft sessions (CC-B/AB/CJ all offered to help with this too).
- JS will check with Fiona Chalamanda to see if she is free for Ardoch Strings to play on 9th Dec and ask about carol singing.
- JS will also organise a poster and Facebook posting for the event and a letter to go out to parents.
- Still need names to organise: food, drink, song sheets – JS will follow this up with the ADT and by setting up a Whats App group to coordinate with any parents happy to be involved.

A hamper raffle will also be organised during the nativity play. Letters will be sent to parents asking for specific items. There will be 3 different hampers – main hamper, pamper hamper and childrens' hamper.

Action: JS to speak to Jenni Allardyce to check how this was approached last year.

5. AOCB

FK highlighted concerns that the School road markings need to be redrawn. It was widely agreed that this needs doing as cars parking on the School side of Feddal Road between the pedestrian crossing and junction with Church St can present a hazard to children crossing. SR will follow this up with Mrs Dawson to confirm what has been arranged so far in this respect and contact PKC as necessary.

SR asked if the Parent Council could provide financial support to the Christmas disco. This was agreed.

AB asked if anything had been arranged for Christmas gifts this year for the children. Nothing has yet been purchased. Some suggestions put forward were for stationary, gloves and mini sledges. JS to look into cost of mini sledges through a contact who can source them wholesale. FK also asked for volunteers to help with the wrapping.

Action: JS/FK to liaise and get back to Parent Council through What's App..

Meeting close: 7:30pm



F/T: 0300 244 4000
E: dfmcse@gov.scot

To Parent Councils

7th November 2017

Dear Parent Council Chair

Today I have launched a consultation on the content of a new Education Bill which will empower schools and strengthen the role of parents. The reforms which the Bill will bring about will enable decisions about the education of those children to be taken by the people who know that child best – their parents, their teachers, their school and their community.

The Bill will give teachers and headteachers more power over decisions about learning and teaching, freeing them to make a real difference to the lives of children and young people. The Bill's key aims are to:

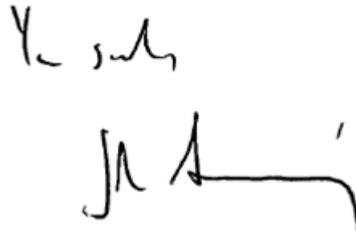
- Establish a Headteachers' Charter to define their responsibilities as leaders of learning in schools and set out the support they can expect.
- Provide the legislative underpinning for the establishment of Regional Improvement Collaboratives.
- Improve parental and community engagement in school life and learning.
- Strengthen the voice of children and young people, promoting and supporting pupil participation.
- Establish an Education Workforce Council to take on the responsibilities of the General Teaching Council for Scotland and the Community Learning and Development Standards Council and to register other education professionals.



The consultation will run from 7th November 2017 to 30th January 2018 and a full version of the paper can be found here:

<https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/education-scotland-bill/>

I would encourage you to draw this consultation to the attention of all parents of children at the school and I look forward to hearing their views on these proposals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Swinney', with a stylized flourish at the end.

JOHN SWINNEY

Braco / Greenloaning Before & After School Options

OPTIONS

Option	Description	Organisat'n	Registrat'ns	Qualificat'ns	Max No.	Insurance	Restrictions	Solut'n	Ease to Set-Up	Risk	Cost
Nannie(s)	Family(s) employ part-time nannie who comes to house and can be shared with max 2 families and takes children to school	n/a (private)			1=4+		Max 2 families (each)	Yes	M? – Avail'y?	M (sickness, numbers ...)	Braco – M Greenloaning – H? Tax Relief – NO Shared costs between parents.
Childcarer(s) at their base Childminder	Child carer would manage drop off/collection of children from school	Private Individual	Childcarer registered with the Care Inspectorate	None Required	1=4+	Childminders Insurance		Yes (unless no car)	M or H – Avail'y!	M (sickness)	H (currently as not local) Tax Relief – YES Promotion of childminding and start up incentives from P&K. Fees charged to parents.
Activity - Clubs – small, volunteer with back-up?	Eg nature club, chess-club, art club, music group	Private or social enterprise		PVG checks Appropriate experience (use parents community skills and expertise)	1=Up to ? (depends on activity)	Public Liability Each Activity	< 2 hrs If only 1, back-up. No mention of childcare.	Partial	M	M (sickness)	Needs a committee or co-ordinator. Fees for club
Activity-	Eg nature club, chess-club, art club, music group	Private, social enterprise,		PVG checks	2=Up to 20	Public Liability Each	No mention of childcare	Partial	M	M (sickness)	Needs a committee or a co-ordinator.

Clubs – bigger x2 volunteers		volunteer committee		Appropriate experience (as above)		Activity					Fees for the club
Activity-Clubs – small, paid staff	Eg nature club, chess-club, art club, music group	Private , social enterprise, voluntary management committee	HMRC	PVG checks (as above)	1=Up to ?	Public Liability	< 2 hrs No mention of childcare	Partial	M/H?	M? (sickness)	M Needs a committee or a coordinator Fees for the club
Activity Clubs – bigger, with paid staff	Eg nature club, chess-club, art club, music group	Private or Social Enterprise, Voluntary Management Committee	HMRC	PVG checks	2=Up to 20	Public liability Employer's Liability	< 2 hrs No mention of childcare	Partial	M/H?	M sickness?	M Tax Relief - ? No Fees charged to parents
Child care provision – private company	Childcare company that operates in village or transports children to/from school to location elsewhere	Private company	Company registered with HMRC Care Inspectorate Staff registered with SSSC	PVG checked Childcare qualifications HNC,SVQ and manager working towards a degree. PA working towards	2=Up to 20	Childcare company's		Yes If am & pm	L or M – contract ?	L/M?	H Tax Relief – YES Fees charged to parents It needs to be sustainable for a private individual to consider.

				HNC or SVQ							
Child care provision – managed by staff/volunteers	Volunteers setup company employing childcarers in village or manage transporting of children to/from school to location elsewhere	Mgmt Committee	Committee registered with HMRC Care Inspectorate. Staff registered with SSSC	Committee – PVG checks Volunteer staff – Paid staff - Childcare qualification	2=Up to 20	Public liability Employer’s liability		Yes	M/H	H	M Tax Relief – NO? Needs to be sustainable
Child care provision – LA	Transporting children to/from school to location elsewhere	Parents responsible for arranging taxi.	Care Inspectorate SSSC	PVG checked Childcare qualifications	2=Up to 20			Yes		L	M Tax Relief – YES? Cost of the taxi and cost of the childcare
Move School	Don’t use Braco school – use a child minder or club closer to another school						Bad for family, Braco school, community			Parent – L/M Braco - H	

Q. Basic school clubs, eg as nature club run by Anna & Julie – 2 volunteers? PVG checks? Insurance? School staff?

Q. Described as a ‘club’ and < 2 hours – does this really get round the definition of ‘childcare’ avoiding Care Inspectorate registration.....?

Q. Employment legislation and liability, eg:
- what if employee sickness?

- what if employee maternity or paternity leave?
- what if numbers drop and need to wind-up club? Notice period? Liability?
- pension provision?
- national insurance?

PK Schools Phase 1 Consultations

4th Oct '17 Mtg in Perth Facilitated by Pete Wishart, MP Perth & North Perthshire

- Phase 1 – schools having occupancies of < 60% or > 95% plus ranked C or under re. infrastructure issues? (think) – Phase 1&2 is an exceptionally large review
- Council's stated mission – to achieve occupancies > 80% and all A or B
- Abernyste, Balhousie, Blairingone, Braco, Forteviot, Greenloaning, Logiealmond, Methven, North Muirton and St Ninian's Episcopal Primary.
- Phase 1 consultations – Dec '16 to Dec '17, Phase 2 kicking off subsequently
- Meeting purpose – to encourage concerned school representatives to share their experiences and concerns, look at common themes together, discuss potential action/support going forward
- Meeting attendees – 7-8, schools represented, mostly ones that part of Phase 1 and mostly ones already having been consulted (deliberately no PKC representation)
- Common themes:
 - general distrust re. consultation process
 - belief that PKC mission is resolve a major financial issue and achieve the closure of a significant number of schools
 - frustration that PKC are not in possession of/using correct statistics, eg school attendance or capacity (and not listening/accepting corrections offered)
 - frustration that the process seemingly takes no account of the quality of education provision (and, in the case of some schools, unique or critical provisions)
 - concern that the process may not consider key aspects of the wider picture, eg future catchment numbers / occupancy of adjacent relevant schools
 - belief that, for rural communities, the school is often the heart of the community and closure would have a very detrimental impact on the community
 - majority of schools represented – small rural schools (one having just 4 children)
- Highlighted that, with the amendment of the 2010 schools act, in fact extremely hard to close a rural school (whilst children still in attendance)
- Small rural schools having issues with small or declining numbers:
 - clear evidence that any rumours / threat of closure has a negative impact on parents of existing and prospective attendees and typically accelerates a decline in numbers
 - lack of pre-school / after school care options a common issue and seen to have an adverse impact
- Proposed next steps:
 - PW to issue to all attendees an info pack/links to relevant documents (not received yet)
 - PW stated that he would like to arrange another meeting shortly after schools receive the conclusions coming out of Phase 1 (end Jan so in Feb '18?)