

Braco Primary School Parent Council

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 11th May 2022 6.30pm

Braco Village Hall & Microsoft Teams

Attendance: Becca MacRae (Chair), Dominic Edward (Secretary), Gillian Nixon (Committee Member), Steven Carr (Councillor), Rachel Beaton, Dee Campbell, Louise Gill (Teams), Iain Howie, Jill Johnston, Rhona Nuttall

Apologies: Susan Ross (Headteacher), Jenni Allardyce (Treasurer), Fiona Kerr

1. Head Teacher Report & Covid Update

SR was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting, but we are grateful for a copy of her headteacher's report that was read out by BM. Queries raised during the meeting were passed on to SR we are grateful for her reply on these matters post-meeting that are highlighted in **red text**.

SR thanked all parents for their continued support, this is much appreciated by all staff.

COVID 19 UPDATE

From April 2022, there is a continued move towards the relaxation of mitigations, and schools move to a model which links to the wider community and workplace covid guidance.

Pupils will not be required to maintain physical distancing within the classroom, but employees will continue to be required to maintain the distance advised in the Scottish Government guidance for safer business and workplaces .

Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education setting.

Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare, and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.

Adults who have symptoms of COVID-19 and who have a fever or are too unwell to carry out normal activities will be asked to 'stay at home' while they are unwell or have a fever. They will no longer be advised to take a PCR test.

Hand hygiene will continue to be a focus. Masks will not be asked to be worn, however if people wish to wear masks they will be supported. Ventilation: CO2 monitors are present in all classrooms and are closely monitored by class teachers.

WIFI CONNECTION

IT have looked at the current wireless provision in the School and made the following changes.

- Revised the balance and power levels on the individual Wireless Access Points (WAPs) and moved more of the traffic from the 2.4Ghz bandwidth to the 5Ghz bandwidth; thus allowing the use of the greater number of available channels and balancing options on 5Ghz.
- Made changes to the network switch, to simplify the sites WAP setup and the wired network data traffic, identifying changes in the Schools layout made over the past few of years.
- Visited the School (02/03/22) and completed a wireless survey of all of the areas used by Staff and Pupils in the provision of Teaching and Learning, including transit corridors and “breakout areas” with particular emphasis on the high “Tech” use areas used by the School pupils. Updated the site plan which will also allow us to “tweek” the system after a period of monitoring the site’s data traffic.
- Installed a new WAP in the central area of the School to improve cover in that area – Nursery, P4-5 Classroom, transit areas and the Staffroom
- Replaced all WAP feed cables with CAT6 cables (greater throughput) as some of those in-situ were CAT5 and were showing signs of wear.
- Moved all the WAP’s to a more prominent, unobstructed position to ensure a better distribution of signal – avoiding shelves, walls etc
- Will return to the School W/C 07/03/22 and configure and instal a new WAP in the P4-5 Classroom.
- Will collate the onsite WAPs details then deliver to site, new wall mounting brackets for all of them, this will ensure the best use and coverage of the wireless signal throughout the building. The School will need to arrange with Property or the Janitorial services the fitting of the mounting brackets and as such the WAPs on the walls, at a height of between 2m and 2.4 m in their current facing position, i.e. above where they are now, unobstructed and facing the same way they are currently facing.
- Will be available to advise the School’s Staff and Management at any point, should they need any details of the ongoing changes.

Since fitting, configuration, and activation of the two new WAP’s the following improvements have been noted:

- Room 3 the P3/4/5 classroom now has a local wireless strength level of -40 Db (from the original -58Db) achieved in the room, this was also complemented by access to 2 other WAP’s in nearby locations creating the connectivity levels that we were looking for.
- The P 6-7 classroom also benefitted with wireless strength levels of -40DB from the room WAP and, -42Db and -58Db from 2 other WAP’s in nearby locations, again improving connectivity.
- The changes made to the whole system improves the core coverage in the School, as well as providing a valuable overlap when there is a peak usage in one of the Classroom areas.

DE noted that improvements to the wireless internet provision followed a communication for Parent Council committee to the school. The committee is grateful to the IT department for these improvements.

QIP 2022 2023:

Areas being developed next session will most probably be

- RAISING ATTAINMENT IN WRITING
- INCLUSIVE PRACTICE
- BEHAVIOUR AND RESPECT

This is decided upon through Self Evaluation exercises including,

- Parent, learner and staff feedback (conversations/ questionnaires etc...)
- Attainment Tracking
- Use of HGIOS (How good in our School) and HGIOELC (how Good is our Early Learning and Childcare) to evaluate our practice

Once the QIP has been completed and Quality Approved, Miss Binnie will complete the Action Plans for each Section and will share in Term 2022/23. Thank you to those who completed the School Improvement Questionnaire. Sadly, there was a limited response. Next time we will offer paper and digital copies.

A number of parents (FK/BM/DC/RB/JJ) suggested improvements to the school improvement questionnaire that might encourage more and improved responses. These suggestions included having a comments field so that responses could be clarified, having a don't know/NA response option for each question and that some parents didn't feel confident putting their name and child's class – preferring to submit anonymously. Would it also be possible to share the results of this questionnaire as was done last year.

SR - Thank you for the feedback. It's really useful. Having an extra box for clarification and a 'don't know/ NA' is not a problem. The reason for having the responses we have is they are the ones on the HMIE questionnaire. But happy to alter. Parents can still hand in questionnaire anonymously, they just don't put their name on. Having their name on however would be useful so I can contact them directly to discuss in more detail any of their answers and offer a further discussion. Happy to share responses.

STAFFING UPDATE 2022

Teaching Staff

P1/2 Mrs Champion (Mrs Rogers Friday PM)
P3/4/5 Mr Torrens (Mrs Rogers Thursday)
P6/7 Mrs Merchant (Mrs Rogers Friday AM)

Support Staff

Mrs Gillies
Miss Lamb (absent)
VACANCY (at present unable to find supply)
Mrs Speakman

Nursery Staff

Mrs Fridge EYP
Miss Carey EYP
Mrs Chapman PA

Visiting Teachers

Mrs Black (PPST)
Mr Bulley (Guitar Tutor)

Mrs Chalamanda (Violin Tutor)

COVID Recovery Staff

Miss Duncan (every second Monday)

Miss Scott (Monday and Tuesday)

Details of next years classes will be shared later in the term

RN asked if there was a replacement for Miss Lamb.

SR - I am in daily communication with HR to attempt to get supply to cover the vacancy and the absence. I hope Miss Lamb will return soon and is very much still a member of the Braco Team. Currently I am covering both break and lunch duty.

A number of parents queried who is 'Dave', as some children have come home talking about this additional staff member.

SR- Dave is Community Link Worker. He works with some children in the school that may need support with a range of things. Parents of children who Dave works with are aware of referrals.

EXCURSIONS/ VISITORS

Nursery: Wallace Monument & Vane Farm

P1/2: Edinburgh Museum & Vane farm

P3/4/5: Our Dynamic Earth

P6/7: Sky Academy

The violinists hope to attend a Benedetti foundation concert/ workshop (details to follow)

We have made good use of the Authority Mini Bus thanks to Mrs Fridge.

P7 have a day trip in June with Muthill and Madderty schools

There will be a Ski Trip in 2023.

VOLUNTEERS

We can now have parent volunteers. Thank you to Mr Edward and Mr Davidson who are helping with Bike Ability and to Hazel and Mrs Nuttall who have helped with Forest school sessions

ACTING HT

Miss Binnie will be present in my final week. This should give time for a quality handover. I finish on the 27th May. Miss Binnie starts on 30th May

DC asked if the website could be improved, noting in particular that parents who joined the school since covid may never have seen inside the school.

SR - Mrs Champion usually updates the website. We do however have a digital skills group run by Ms Carey. I will suggest that they could be involved in updating the website with some photos of the inside environment.

GN noted that among P7s there is a feeling that they have missed out this year, understandably, as they haven't got their own residential trip.

SR - I agree it is really disappointing. There will be a day trip in June and I hope this will soften the blow slightly.

3. Acting Head Teacher Appointment

As Parent Council representative, BM sat on the interview panel for the post of Acting Headteacher. Miss Binnie came across as enthusiastic and community minded, with experience working in a wide range of schools, large and small, in both England and Scotland. We are looking forward to her commencing this post.

4. School Estate

GN provided updates on the school estate since the last meeting. PKC are pushing ahead with the option of a new build school on land adjacent to the play park. They are continuing negotiations with the landowner and have recently conducted an archaeological survey. However, PKC has made parent council aware of significant hurdles to be overcome if planning permission is to be granted, without explaining how this will be achieved. PKC have most recently informed parent council that the timescale for completion will be 3 years and 3 months after concluding land negotiations.

BM noted that PKC have repeatedly change the timescales for these improvements, hence the new indication may not be reliable – there appears to be no impetus among the council team leading this project. It was further noted (DE/BM/GN) that the current school buildings remain inadequate in the meantime – most notably that P345 had to spend a week in the hall recently whilst leaks to the roof were repaired. The school buildings are also not accessible for all. DE suggested that we could ask PKC to reassess the suitability of the school building, last done in 2016, so that appropriate measures might be taken in the short term to improve provision at BPS – e.g. revising pupil capacities or provision of additional support staff.

SC listened to parents concerns and invited parents to contact him with any further information on this, or other issues after the meeting (StevenCarr(at)pkc.gov.uk). In the coming weeks he hopes to find out how he can get involved at the council level to progress this matter.

5. Fundraising

BM relayed a message from JA that parent council finances are in a healthy position. There is at least £1,000 in addition to the STEM money.

RB reminded that there had been talks of perhaps organising some kind of treasure hunt. DE noted that, given the funds available and planned spending, we should be careful not to raise more funds than are required. We could focus on organising events that are primarily fun for the school community and that may happen to raise funds on the side.

BM will put out a message to see what event people may be interested in organising.

6. AOCB

BM had a meeting with the community council recently re. jubilee celebrations on Sat 4th June. There are plans for a coffee morning, afternoon tea and barbecue with all costs being covered – as well as crafting competitions, violins performing and an open mic session. Watch out for further information.

BM reported that plans are being made for school photos this year. BM and SR have been working to find someone more local and affordable. DC suggested that having class photos would be good.

BM is still looking into the possibility of repairing the canvas on the 'pagodas' in the play ground.

There was discussion on whether a leavers gift had been arranged for P7 and if any support was needed from parent council towards this.

SR - Yes, we usually have a dictionary (perhaps maths/ science/ French) or a scientific calculator. This usually comes out of school fund but if PC wanted to contribute we could get something of better quality. I am happy to take ideas/ suggestions from parents.

DE thought to check that the school still has sufficient funds on the Aldi/Tesco voucher for staff to cover small expenses. Also, if staff feel this system is working well or if there might be an alternative way that PC could help support staff to cover small spending on resources.

SR - The card has been very useful. We still have some funds available, when it drops below £20 we will be in touch for a top up if PC are happy with that.

GN/RN had recently seen a very good example of a forest school site with excellent and innovative resources. It was suggested that this could be an item for a future agenda.

Close 1940.