Friends of Portmoak Primary School

Minutes: Monday 9th March. 7:30pm.
Virtual – teams link

Parents/Carers	Present	School staff	Present
Chair: Shona Matthews (SM)	Yes	Anna Nesbitt (AN)	Yes
Vice Chair: Susan Baxter (SB)	Yes	Sean Dowling (SD)	Yes
Treasurer: Lucia Lowrey (LL)	*Apologies*		
Secretary: Kath Johnston (KaJ)	Yes		
Dannii Roberts (DR)	*Apologies*	**Community representatives**	**Present**
Georgina Smythe (GS)	Yes	Norma Smith (NS)	Yes
Hannah Dalgety (HDa)	*Apologies*		
Hannah Duncan (HDu)	*Apologies*		
Katrina Macpherson (KM)	Yes	**Guests**	**Present**
Kirsty Johnston (KiJ)	Yes		
Lucia Craig (LC)	*Apologies*		
Lucy Johnson (LJ)	Yes		
Milda Pupsyte (MP)	*Apologies*		
Nicola Aitken (NA)	*Apologies*		
Nicola Cassidy (NC)	Yes		
Stu Byers (SB)	*Apologies*		

Minutes

1. Welcome and Chair Update

SM welcomed attendees to the meeting.

SM advised that she would be attending the Perth & Kinross Council Chairs' meeting later this week and would provide any relevant updates following this.

The Christmas Movie Night was confirmed as a significant success, with positive feedback from pupils and the film club. SM recorded thanks to Georgina for her considerable support and hard work organising the Christmas hampers.

Members were asked to begin considering succession planning for the Chair role for the next academic year. It was suggested that anyone interested could attend the next PKC Chairs' meeting to gain a better understanding of the role.

SM highlighted 'Connect' and encouraged members to join and use this.

SM confirmed that an application has been submitted to reapply for the Perth & Kinross Council grant. No changes to the financial position were reported at this meeting.

Actions:

- Consider Chair succession planning for the next academic year, including identifying potential future Chairs and opportunities for shadowing (Shona)

2. Headteacher Update

AN thanked the Parent Council for its continued support, particularly with Christmas activities.

The school continues to engage in numeracy initiatives and has invested in new maths resources, including teacher planning support and new textbooks.

There is an ongoing focus on writing approaches, with Mr Dowling leading work on writing progression.

Teachers have been completing reports, and a pilot is underway whereby parents will receive reports to read in advance of parent meetings.

Painting works across the school are nearing completion.

A whole-school spring assembly will take place on 1 April.

KiJ raised a question on the approach to homework, following an earlier parent council discussion. AN confirmed she is happy to support a parent survey on homework. It was agreed that the survey should be carefully framed and include context on PKC guidelines and expectations, rather than simply gathering opinions. The aim is to ensure homework is impactful for pupils and manageable for families and teachers.

Actions:

- Complete a review of approach to Homework:
    - Draft and circulate high-level homework survey questions to parent council, with feedback to be provided by 13/03 (Shona)
    - Engage the Pupil Council on homework (Anna)
    - Issue homework survey to parents before Easter break (Anna)
    - Update and next steps discussion to be scheduled on next Parent Council meeting agenda (Kath)

3. Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Update

LJ provided an update on Active Schools coordination, highlighting opportunities for parental involvement in supporting pupils' physical and mental wellbeing. It was noted that there is support available through Perth & Kinross Council. AN will include a note in the school newsletter encouraging parents/carers to get involved, for example with running lunchtime sports clubs.

LJ also highlighted the issue of "masking" in younger children, including the exhaustion and anxiety that can result, and noted the limited training available for education staff in this area.

LJ updates on progress following the 2020 ASL review. LJ will share a link to a booklet created by children in Scotland, to be circulated to parents/carers.

Actions:

- Include message on Active Schools and encouragement for parent/carer involvement in the school newsletter (Anna)
- Share ASL review booklet created by children in Scotland to include in School newsletter and via Parent council to WhatsApp groups (Lucy)

4. <u>Community Update</u>

NS advised that community planting will begin on 24 March.

Community artwork projects are progressing well. NS requested support for putting up artwork on the Friday evening before the gala, and for helping to organise the raffle.

Actions:

- Arrange volunteer support for artwork installation before the gala, and for organising the gala raffle (Norma/Shona)

5. <u>Raising Awareness of the Parent Council</u>

SM raised the need to increase awareness and membership of the Parent Council.

The group supported this, with ideas including producing a short flyer for distribution in school bags, sending on short appeal messages via a school email and class WhatsApp groups, and creating a short video introducing the Parent Council.

LJ and KM confirmed that they would attend a school coffee morning and the new P1 parent intake meeting next term, to encourage engagement. AN noted that an additional coffee morning could be arranged to focus on parent council.

Actions:

- Profile parent council to encourage new members to join:
    - Finalise and produce leaflet for distribution in school bags (Shona)
    - Draft short appeal messages to be sent by school email and class WhatsApp groups (Kirsty / Kath)
    - Attend new P1 parents' welcome meeting to promote the Parent Council (Lucy / Katrina)
    - Schedule/ attend school coffee morning to promote the Parent Council (Lucy / Katrina)

6. <u>Other Items</u>

<u>Music event / fundraising:</u>

It was suggested to hold a musical event involving all pupils, potentially linked to the next harvest assembly, with performances from the school choir. GS suggested that a hamper raffle could be linked to the event, particularly as there will be no pantomime next year.

<u>Outdoor classroom / covered area:</u>

KaJ provided an update on a potential project to support the school with creating an outdoor classroom / covered area. KaJ and GS met with AN last week to discuss options and potential sites within the school grounds. A small working group of parent council members has been formed. KaJ gained agreement from the parent council to move ahead with seeking quotes and advice for building the structure. Messages to go out via class WhatsApp groups for any local joiner / builder recommendations to engage. Once costs are understood, funding the project can be discussed. Regular updates to be provided via Parent Council meetings.

<u>Outdoor Education Act:</u>

KiJ raised the Outdoor Education Act and queried what the impact would be to current residential trips for children at the school. AN confirmed that to meet the extended commitments, consideration would be given

to either one longer residential trip, or 2 shorter trips. It was agreed to revisit this item at a future meeting for further discussion and updates.

Actions:

- Explore arranging a music event / concert as a fundraising opportunity, potentially linking to harvest assembly, and including a hamper raffle (Georgina/Anna)
- Capture outdoor classroom / covered area as a regular meeting update item from working group (Kath)
- Capture Outdoor Education Act impacts discussion on the log for future meeting topics (Kath)

7. Any Other Business

SM raised that we need to confirm whether the person who currently verifies our accounts is happy to continue when their child is no longer at the school. The person who verifies the accounts cannot be a parent council member. GS proposed an alternative option could be swapping with another parent council – GS could investigate this if needed, depending on response from current role holder.

KaJ raised the delivery and treatment of the new picnic benches. AN confirmed it would be ideal to have the benches in place and ready to use after the Easter break. SM suggested that we understand when the benches can be delivered, and then arrange volunteers to treat them. KaJ to check details with Milda and agree timeline / requirements.

AN noted that the Government had promised an expansion of breakfast club provision. AN doesn't have any details about implementation at the moment. Full funding roll out is due in August 2027, so there are no immediate plans for this to happen at Portmoak as far as AN is aware. AN noted that lack of after school club provision had been a key factor in losing some new P1 pupils this year. PKC, rather than the school / headteacher, establish/manage after school club provision, including deciding which schools this is provided in. AN is aware that Rosemount nursery is moving to a new local location in the near future. AN agreed that she would contact Rosemount nursery to understand if there would be an option to provide after-school care for Portmoak pupils when they move.

Actions:

- Confirm whether current person verifying FoPs accounts is willing to continue; explore alternative verification with another Parent Council if required (Shona / Lucia / Georgina)
- Agree delivery date and delivery location for benches, plus any treatment required (Milda/ Anna)
- Explore feasibility of after-school care provision with Rosemount (Anna)

Date of Next Meetings

- Thursday 30 April 2026 – 7:30pm (virtual)
- Tuesday 9 June 2026 – 6:00pm (in person, school)
- Tuesday 15 September 2026 – 6:00pm (AGM, in person, school)
- Monday 9 November 2026 – 7:30pm (virtual)

Log of potential future ideas for discussion / agenda items:

1. Explore generating a Top 10 list of short, medium and long term priorities/wish list items or projects. Could be generated from school improvement plan, parent and pupil feedback, role in the community. Ranging from small easy items to long term significant ones.

2. Explore establishing small working groups within the parent council to spread the load and focus on key themes, eg:
    - FoPs operations group
    - Comms & engagement group
    - Projects & events group
    - Fundraising group

3. Explore creating a parent handbook – what to expect in which years, like swimming lessons, learning to cycle, inter school quizzes, what happens in each term. Top tips for each year group and stage.

4. Explore potential of having a private Facebook page (or other forum) where we can share parent council information. Could add all new parents to the group on joining / remove on leaving. Kinross and Fossoway parent councils both seem to use facebook groups in this way.

5. Outdoor Education Act update / discussion (Kirsty)

6. Wrap around care – breakfast club and after school club (Chris McLaren request) – April meeting.

7. Outdoor classroom / covered area updates (Kath/Georgina/Milda/Hannah)

8. Update and next steps on approach to Homework (Anna) – April meeting.