

MEETING OF ST JAMES' PARENT GROUP

MONDAY 11th January 2023 at 18:45

Minutes

Committee Members: Kelly Nugent, Marie Prior, Claire McLaughlin, Caroline O'Neill, Claire Ferguson,

Chair: Alison Allan

Attendees: P. Connery, Mr Healy, Mr Moran, Mrs Pacitti, Mrs Fitzsimmons, Mrs Gillies, S..Nugent,

1. Welcome

2. Apologies - E. Bradford, K. Nugent, C. Waltham,

3. Minute of previous meeting on 7th November 2022 agreed.

4. Treasurer / Finance Update – Marie Prior

M. Prior gave the finance update. Profits from 50/50; Halloween Disco and £1800 profit from the Christmas Fayre amount to approximately £3500. A significant proportion of these profits will be spent on P7 Hoodies and the Party Buses for P7 Prom. Around £700 from the Tesco grant has been allocated. The cheques for the Tesco Grant and the Christmas Fayre let have still to clear.

N. Fitzsimmons mentioned an issue with lets and will discuss with F. Kerr and A. Allan after the meeting and streamline the process for booking school lets.

5. Events – Christmas Fayre

The Parent Group were delighted with the turn out for the Christmas Fayre. The Christmas Fayre was very well attended and well supported by parents and staff. Anecdotal feedback from the evening was very positive.

The Valentine's disco let is booked for 16th February 2023. A. Allan will be unable to attend due to family commitments, however Vice Chair K. Nugent will lead the event in A. Allan's absence. A. Allan will contact parent helpers in the coming week.

7. P7 Prom/ Hoodies/Events

P7 Prom will be held on 23rd June at St. Columba's Church Hall, Renfrew.

The church, party buses, LED numbers and DJ have all been provisionally booked. This includes the deposit for the buses which is the largest expense. The cost of prom will be approximately £27-£30 per pupil. The cost covers food and drink, DJ, decorations and the party bus. The parent group asked that this goes on to parent pay as soon as possible and for it to be split into payment instalments to allow parents to pay smaller amounts over a longer period of time. A. Allan will liaise with F. Kerr about setting this up on Parent Pay. A.

Allan will create a Microsoft Form including information about the cost of both Prom and P7 Hoodies.

S. Nugent raised concerns around cost of the prom which both the parent group and the school recognise and agree with. There was discussion around creating a form and consultation with parents on changing the format. However, given the late stage in the year it was agreed that the prom would follow a similar format to previous years. Points of consideration included, the bus is the most expensive outlay, however, for many pupils, it is the most enjoyable part of the evening and, more importantly, it ensures that we are as inclusive as possible and ensures that all pupils travel together. Church hall cost will be waived by Father Eagers due to the cost-of-living crisis. Families needing financial assistance will be appropriately supported by the school and the parent group.

It was agreed that planning for 2024 end of year event needs to begin in term 3 of 2023. Planning will involve a consultation with parents, carers and current P6 pupils. Depute Head Teacher responsible for Primary 7 and A. Allan will lead the consultation process.

P7 Hoodies – A. Allan will contact supplier about ordering as soon as possible. Parents will then be contacted about sizing and payment. C. Ferguson will complete any cost analysis required. It was agreed that the cost of P7 hoodies will be split equally between the Parent Group and the school.

6. 1st Communion /Prom Dress Exchange

The parent group proposed an exchange programme for prom and first communion outfits. S. Nugent suggested expanding this to accessories and this was agreed. C. McLaughlin will create a Microsoft form that can be used to survey parental interest in this event.

The Parent Group will set up uniform exchange for Parents Evening on 22nd and 23rd March 2023.

9. Bikeability

C. McLaughlin gave an update on Bikeability. R. Campbell has agreed he will be available for a full day of bikeability training for the entire four-week block. M. McLaughlin has completed the training. C. McLaughlin will contact parents again to ask for two more volunteers. C. Dalziel has agreed that bikes can be borrowed and will confirm February training dates. C. McLaughlin will liaise with M. Pacitti around potential dates for P5 to complete Bikeability.

10. Head Teacher Report – Mrs Fitzsimmons

School Improvement Plan Update

- We are making very good progress with team training on Talk for Writing. From observing practice as the Leadership move around the school and in speaking to our children it seems to be having a positive

impact on our pupil motivation and enthusiasm for writing. Teacher's will continue to collaborate to enhance the learning and teaching of Writing, which in turn it is predicted will lead to high quality experiences for our learners

- Excellent progress is being made in more effective teaching and learning of Mental Maths. Small tests of change have already shown very positive impact on learners, this practice continues to be developed across the school. We are delighted that our good practice within the school has been recognised and the school has been asked to present our 'Whole school approach to developing the use of Maths Journals' to other schools across Scotland at the West Partnership Annual Maths Conference on Saturday 21st January 2023
- We have been delighted to continue with our theme of Celebrating and Worshipping and been able to not only have Mass in school but also visit the Church for a number of occasions this session, we are very grateful to Father John for his Spiritual guidance and support every week
- We continue to develop our learning spaces and our active pedagogies across the school both indoors and outdoors. We have had our Rainbow Garden cleared by our friends at McTaggart's, they have done a fantastic job and are now waiting for Graham's the Builders to come and lay the ground and rocks etc to complete the job, we will keep you posted on this
- We had a very successful visit from our Quality Improvement Officer and received very positive feedback from all aspects of her visit

Staffing

- You will have seen in our recent communications that we said goodbye to Mrs Russell, one of our Additional Support Needs Assistants after 23 years. Her post has been sent off to recruitment for advertisement
- Our new Dining Hall Assistant has started and is doing a fantastic job

Pupils

- Our pupil numbers continue to change on a daily basis, we have pupils joining us from all over the world

11. Correspondence – N/A

12. AOCB

N. Fitzsimmons asked about appointing a church rep as requested by the diocese. Father John Eager has already agreed to this role and will continue to do so.

The group had a brief discussion around an early Pantomime booking to ensure a choice of dates and a discounted rate. Some concerns were raised about how well pupils could see this year's pantomime due to the layout.

P7 activity days – M. Pacitti updated the parent group on P7 Activity days. M. Pacitti has been working with R. Campbell (Active Schools Coordinator) to organise an activity day at the KGV playing fields in Renfrew. It is hoped that this will involve a climbing wall, den building, team building and a number of other activities on the 15th of June 2023. This will be in addition to the transition days at Trinity High School. Efforts to reduce the cost of the school day played a key role in the decision-making process and the school are keen to ensure the P7 activity day does not put any financial strain on parents. Options suggested in the previous meeting, including Go Ape and Castle Semple were looked into but would ultimately lead to higher costs for families. The pupil council were also involved in the decision-making process. Some concerns were raised about previous negative comments when a similar trip was arranged a number of years ago and how we as parents can encourage positive communications around this with our children.

Whole school trip – A. Allan requested an update on the 2023 whole school trip. Mr Moran and Mrs Gillies informed the group of the decision to have a Big Day In for 2023 in place of a whole school trip. This will involve a number of activities being organised within the school and the school playground. The cost of the school day played a key role in the decision-making process and the school are making every effort to reduce costs for all during the cost-of-living crises. Concerns were raised by C. McLaughlin about the limited opportunities pupils have had to go on trips due to covid and the disappointment some pupils may feel given how much they enjoyed the 2022 whole school trip to Finlaystone. The school suggested they would try and vary this year to year.

The Parent Group extended their thanks to school pupils and parents for their excellent Christmas Card Competition entries and thanked staff for their support in organising this competition. The standard was very high, and the cards were very well received by local business.

13. Date of next meeting – Monday 13th March