

# **MINUTE OF MEETING OF ST JAMES' PARENT GROUP**

**Monday 11th November 2024 at 18:00**

**Committee Members: Christina Waltham, Marie Prior, Claire Ferguson, LeeAnn Nelson and Sari Cabrera Valdivia**

**Chair – Claire McLaughlin and Michelle Martinson**

## **1. Welcome**

Claire McLaughlin welcomed all to the meeting and introduced herself and Michelle Martinson as co-chairs of the parent group.

## **2. Apologies**

Apologies were given from Father John.

## **3. Minute/Note of previous EGM, 16th September 2024**

Minutes were issued from the previous meeting (held on 16th September 2024), these were accepted with no revisions.

## **4. Treasurer / Finance Update – Marie Prior**

Marie advised that the account was in a stable state and sitting at roughly £6000. The Renfrewshire Council – Local Partnership Funding was approved and money has been received to the Parent Group bank account,

The Disney License for the P6 show and the sound system have been paid.

Halloween disco took place on 30th October and made a £800 profit.

The Christmas Fayre is coming up on 21st November and it's expected to bring in additional funds.

## **5. Parental Engagement Parent Group**

Claire outlined that the parent committee had met with Mrs Fitzsimmons and it was agreed that the main focus for this year will be on parental engagement.

One part of this is the idea to have year group reps and a plea has been sent for this.

The year group reps would help by sharing their views and opinions, to see what works well and what can be improved on. So far we only have five volunteers with no reps for P4, P5 and P6 (apart from existing committee members with children in those years). We would be keen to hear from anyone who would be interested in this. We would also like to hear from parents who feel like they aren't heard as much (for example with children that have support needs, speak a different language etc).

Michelle and Claire are taking part in a Connect training for Renfrewshire regarding best practices for parent groups.

We are also working on an equality policy and have reinstated the uniform exchange (with parents being invited to come into school on a more informal basis on Mondays and Fridays).

Claire also asked if anyone had any other ideas that could help parental engagement, with no responses.

## **6. Parking and Road Safety (Pupil Update included)**

Some of the Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs) showed a road safety video the pupils have created which discusses the importance of road safety and promotes a 'Park and Stride' initiative. This video will be shared on the school's social media.

Miss McCallum outlined that it was the pupils who came up with the ideas for the video and that the JRSO committee meets every month and discusses how to encourage safety on the roads. They also have a road safety calendar competition, where everyone is invited to create a poster regarding road safety with a chance that their poster will be part of the calendar. The week commencing 18th November is Safety awareness week and the JRSOs will use this to promote park and stride.

It was discussed how children and parents will be able to travel to school safely.

The 'Not Far? Leave the Car Campaign' which the school has emailed parents about gives the chance to the individual and the school to earn £150. Each time someone travels in by walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport or car share, they will get a ticket into a weekly prize draw for a total of £25 per week. This campaign is now live and runs until Christmas.

Mrs Fitzsimmons referred to the statistics she shared in the last meeting from the Hands Up Survey stating that our school's numbers are amongst the lowest in the whole council for walking.

Gerry Hannah, the Head of Climate, Public Protection and Roads for Renfrewshire discussed parking congestion and road safety concerns. Some issues with infrastructure have been identified - McGregor Ave does not have double yellow lines on the kerb, which means there is a 10 minute grace period before fines can be issued and in the drop-off area in front of the school the lines have faded. The size of the school and the amount of cars are an issue and we need to try and encourage more people to walk or park further away. He also mentioned that the pavement parking ban is now enacted and the council is checking which roads will be exempt, from January fines can then be issued on non-exempt roads.

The school has asked to be in partnership and wardens have been out to identify issues. The road safety team comes out regularly to speak to the school but they will not manage the process, the school has therefore been encouraged to make an action plan. Inconsiderate behaviours cause issues, especially in the afternoon at drop off. It is important to cut the amount of cars coming into school. Initiatives like 'Not far leave the car' and 'Hands up' were discussed as well as the importance of promoting and incentivizing walking or cycling.

Issues raised were the amount of dog fouling on the roads, limited alternatives for parking, lack of zebra crossings and road crossing patrollers, big HGVs coming from Westway using Porterfield Road, cars from the Garage parking on pavement and bin lorries and other council services near the school at peak times.

Councillors explained actions which have been put in for other schools: Newmains have got planters installed so that there is no through road and Kirklandneuk got a bus bay put in. They outlined that at Kirklandneuk the bus lane and double yellows are respected by drivers after continuously managing and reinforcing the message to all parents and carers.

Councillor also mentioned that a traffic regulation order for Brown Street is currently in progress. Additional traffic from Wright Street - Gerry outlines that they are not allowed to make Wright Street a through road but they will be moving the stop further up the road so that all businesses are included.

It was agreed that we will work on a travel action plan, which will outline the issues that have been identified as well as highlighting potential park and stride locations. Gerry's team and the councillors are happy to work together with the school on this. Mrs Fitzsimmons wants to organise meetings to create the action plan and invites any interested parents to come along.

### **7. Grant Funding – Claire Ferguson (Renfrewshire Partnership Funding, Disney Licence, Asda)**

We received £5000 from the Renfrewshire Partnership Funding. A new sound and lightning system for school productions has been bought and the Disney licence has been paid. The Asda cashpot is currently sitting at £311 and the money will be used for end of term activities. Remember to please set up the school in your Asda account if you shop with them.

'We grow stars' £1500 to be used for planters and equipment. One planter will be assigned to each year group for growing plants, fruit and vegetables.

### **8. Christmas Fayre Planning – Claire McLaughlin (key dates Monday 18th Nov and Thursday 21st Nov)**

Many pleas for help have gone out, we need 25-30 volunteers but currently only have 15. Especially looking for helpers with kids in the upper school as they will be old enough to go round the Christmas Fayre independently.

Claire outlined that this is one of the biggest fundraisers (helps to pay for Leavers event hoodies, Disney licence, etc.) and we really do not want to cancel it but it cannot run with the current number of volunteers.

Volunteers have agreed to help on Monday and Thursday for set up and preparations, just low on numbers for the actual night.

Thank you to all helpers at the Halloween Disco, we had many volunteers for this but Christmas Fayre is always more difficult to find helpers for. Ideas have been discussed like giving helpers half an hour before the Fayre officially opens to go around all the stalls or potentially splitting the evening into two shifts. Some of the P7s will help with the games on the night.

Please spread the word that there will be a stall with free Christmas jumpers you can browse through.

We are still looking for some stall holders and can maybe check with Father John for stall holders they use at their Christmas Fayre.

### **9. P7 – Leavers Event Planning (brief communication update)**

Communication has been sent to P7 parents with the plan for the leavers events. The buses have been booked, helpers to be on buses are needed.

There is a link on the bottom of the email - to run a beauty bar, so the children can all be there and get ready together at the same time.

#### **10. Correspondence**

No correspondence.

#### **11. AOCB**

Mr Healy mentioned that there will be no pantomime this year but a celebration concert within the school. This will be for the school only, without parents due to space constraints. The school are looking for some black and white tshirts (30 each) to be used as angel and star costumes in the Nativity. The Parent Group will buy these.

A huge thank you to all disco helpers, the Halloween disco went really well and we had a lot of helpers.

The starting time for the discos will be moved forward to 6pm start instead of 6.30.

Mrs Fitzsimmons thanked all the parents who came to the meeting, the education manager from head office and councillors.

The meeting was held in the gym and the layout was changed to having multiple separate tables. Feedback was generally good but with some difficulties to hear the speakers. Microphones will be used for next time

**12. Date of next meeting - 13th January 2024 (Teams - 6-8pm)**