

**Minutes of Bell's Brae Primary School Parent Council  
Held in Bell's Brae Primary School  
On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 6.00pm**

**Present**

David Thomson	Chairperson
Louise Sandison	Vice-Chair
Kerri Redfern	Parent Member
Michael Tait	Parent Member
Jim Anderson	Parent Member
Frances Tait	Parent Member
Emma Williamson	Parent Member

**In Attendance**

Melvyn Clark	Depute Head Teacher
Dawn Ratter	Clerk/Treasurer
Jane Cluness	Data Sharing Manager

**1. Notice of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**

The notice of the meeting was held as read. Apologies for absence were received from Allan Wishart, Sarah Moore and Jennifer Wadley.

The Parent Members noted their sympathies to Jennifer on the passing of her Grandmother.

**2. Approval of the previous minutes (Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016)**

The minutes of the meeting were approved by Michael Tait and seconded by Kerri Redfern.

**3. Review of Matters Arising and Actions arising from previous minutes**

Consultations

The Parent Council did not submit a formal response to the consultations. It was a busy time of year and the Parent Members with the Christmas Card fundraiser which was a priority for the Parent Council. David did not want to put any additional pressure on the Parent Members to collate a response in December. David submitted a personal response to the consultations.

Parent Council Newsletter

This action is to be carried over. David will draft a newsletter to be issued to the Parent Forum.

**ACTION: David**

**4. Treasurer's Report**

The balance in the bank account is £4,768.28. The Christmas Card fundraiser has raised a total of £608.50.

**5. Staffing Update**

There are a number of posts currently in the recruitment process.

Nicola Sinclair, Art Teacher is due to return from maternity leave, however, she has requested to reduce her hours so she will be based at Sound Primary School. A 4 day Art Teacher post will be advertised.

Amanda Morrison is due to go on maternity leave at Easter. This 0.5 post has been advertised and short listed.

Margaret Birrell has been appointed a post at Hamnavoe Primary School. This full time post is due to be interviewed at the end of the week.

There is a 30 hour ASN Worker and a 6 hour ASN Worker post vacant. Melvyn and Julia will be interviewing for these posts this week.

Early Years Assistant, Elena is due to go on maternity leave in March. This post has been advertised but there was no successful candidate. This post is currently out for re-advertisement. There will not be someone in post in time for Elena leaving so this will need covered with supply.

Melvyn explained that it is currently very difficult to find supply cover for staff vacancies and absences. This problem has been brought to the attention of Jerry Edwards, QIO for the School. There is a supply list but a large number of the staff on the list already have commitments some days and are not available on ad hoc days. Melvyn stressed that it is becoming increasingly harder to find supply cover for posts in the primary and early years. This puts a lot of additional pressure on the school and the staff.

## **6. Pupil Equity Funding**

Bell's Brae Primary School has been awarded a total of £48,000 through the Pupil Equity Fund. This money is to be used to close the attainment gap. The staff are looking very carefully at what the gaps are in the school and how they can use the money to eliminate the gap. Melvyn said that Jennifer recently attended a Head Teachers event for schools that have been granted money. Anything the school decides to use the money for must be sustainable and will need to feed into the School Improvement Plan. Melvyn said this is a fantastic opportunity for the school to be a part of and it will benefit all the pupils in the long run.

Melvyn said they are currently looking at a P1 vocabulary gap. This is something that all various schools in Shetland will be looking into and monitoring. Schools will look into possible causes for the gap e.g. financial poverty, geographical circumstances etc. One of the big things they will be looking into is how they can promote family learning and ways to support families and help close the gap.

## **7. Christmas Disco**

The Parent Council noted thanks and congratulations to everyone who helped organise the Christmas Disco, this was a great success and was enjoyed by all.

## **8. Next Social Event**

The P7 class are organising a Dance next term with Peter Wood. The school Coffee Morning is due to be held in March.

Jim suggested offering teas and coffees at Parent's Evenings as a fundraiser. It was also suggested that the Parent Council could organise a raffle at the P7 Dance.

### **9. Parent Pay Pilot Review**

Jane explained that the response from the Parent Pay review was very negative and following this feedback the Project Board decided to trial Parent Pay as a payment system only. Jane has had very little feedback around the payment side of the trial but has received a couple of phone calls regarding the opting in/out part of the trial. Michael asked how long the new pilot will run. Jane said that it was her understanding that the pilot would last this term and may run into next term. The Project Board will then ask for feedback on how parents/staff have found Parent Pay for paying for meals this way and another review for the opting in and out per term option. Jim asked why the original pilot failed. Jane said there were a variety of reasons. She said she thought that booking meals in advance caused a problem for parents. She also said they couldn't seem to set a tight clear process in this school so it was decided to change the pilot. Melvyn said he thought the system was a lot slicker now and also links into the new register system the teachers are using. Frances asked who is responsible for chasing the outstanding payments. Jane confirmed that this responsibility lies with the school office. A reminder has been sent to all parents asking them to pay any outstanding balance on Parent Pay. David will put up a reminder to parents on the Facebook page.

**ACTION: David**

### **10. Parking**

It was decided to hold a separate, sole purpose meeting to discuss parking and traffic issues around the school. The meeting will be opened up to all parents. David will take on to convene this meeting. A date has been set for Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017.

**ACTION: David**

### **11. Correspondence**

All correspondence is on the Facebook page. This seems to be working well.

David said that Active Schools have asked to put up information on the Facebook Page on the After School Clubs on offer at the School.

### **12. AOCB**

#### Parent Evenings

David has how the new format for the Parents Evenings went. Melvyn said they went very well and were very well attended. He explained that they also used this as a chance to get parental feedback on the values, visions and aims of the school. This was last reviewed in 2009. There was wholly positive feedback on this. They are now at the stage of asking the staff to contribute and then they might take it to some focused groups of pupils. Melvyn said he didn't think the values would change much but some may be streamlined. When the second report goes out to pupils they will include a summary of what has happened through the year and ask for parental feedback.

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 at 6.00pm.