

**Minutes of Bell's Brae Primary School Parent Council
Held on Microsoft Teams
On Wednesday 10th February 2021 at 6.30pm**

Present

David Thomson	Chairperson
Louise Sandison	Vice Chair
Katrina Nicolson	Parent Member
Sarah Moore	Parent Member
Caroline Henderson	Parent Member

In Attendance

Jennifer Wadley	Head Teacher
Dawn Ratter	Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Kerri Redfern, Frances Tait, Rebecca Sim, Cllr Stephen Flaws and Cllr Cecil Smith.

2. Matters from previous minutes and questions regarding the treasurer's report

- Previous minutes approved by Louise Sandison.
- Treasurer's Report (attached) – no questions raised. Sarah has emailed APS regarding income from the Christmas cards. Dawn will email Sarah the bank details to forward to APS.

ACTION: Dawn/Sarah

Matters from previous minutes

- Communication with Pupil Council – this is ongoing. Jennifer will keep the Parent Council informed.
- Parent Volunteers – there was a discussion at the last meeting regarding the need for more volunteers to help with fundraising and social events. David advised to keep this as an ongoing action for when events are organised.
- Christmas Gift Donation – A donation of £349.00 was made to the school towards Christmas gifts for pupils. These were well received by the pupils.
- Correspondence – all correspondence is put on the Facebook page. David might look to add some more Parent Members as admins on the Facebook page to allow more people to be able to post and keep the content updated.
- Prodigy – Jennifer tried to look into the query regarding Prodigy and she spoke with some other parents but no one came forward with any concerns. Jennifer said they would keep an eye on it and if any parents have further issues with the game, she advised them to contact the school office.

3. Health Check

This item was added to the agenda as a quick mental health check of all parent members to see how everyone is coping under the current restrictions and home schooling. David asked Jennifer how she felt the mental health of the staff is at the moment, with the remote learning contingency and the issues with trying to deliver education remotely and have the school function normally as well. Jennifer said the staff are champions, they are absolutely

fantastic but they are all exhausted as it is a time of constant change. There are up to 112 pupils who can access the school at the moment, but the most they have seen is 78. There are support staff in the school supporting these pupils. All the teaching staff are at home supporting the home learning. She is very proud of how staff have handled the changes lately. There are 26 members of staff who have been vaccinated. These are members of staff who are supporting pupils who receive clinical support and pupils with severe and complex needs. The self-testing for staff should start from next week which will hopefully ease some anxiety for staff. There are still a number of long term absences related to COVID anxiety. David asked Jennifer to pass on a note to teachers and support staff to let them know how grateful, thankful and proud the Parent Council is of them for all the effort they are putting in.

4. Mrs Wadley's official issues including remote learning

Staffing Vacancies

- PE Teacher (re-advertised) – Kerri Redfern has taken up her secondment at the AHS. Support is being received from Sport and Leisure colleagues for the remainder of this term. They will be in school providing PE for P1-3 when they hopefully return after the long weekend.
- Teacher of Primary (temporary) – A teacher has been successful in a secondment to Cullivoe Primary School which has left a vacancy in the upper primary classes. Jennifer said they have been successful in appointing to this post.
- Learning Support Worker (30 hours) – Interviews have been scheduled for this post.
- ELC Practitioner – Bethany Best has been appointed and took up post on 7th January. She is still to meet everyone as ELC staff are working on a rota system.
- ELC Support Worker (part time) – This post is due to be advertised shortly.
- ASN Teacher (temporary) – An ASN teacher has requested to temporarily reduce their hours. Interviews will be scheduled shortly for this post.
- ELC Practitioner (temporary) – Dawn Paton has been appointed to this post.

There are a number of staff on long term sickness due to COVID anxiety and it is extremely difficult to arrange supply cover. Jennifer said they have managed due to the current situation with fewer children in the school, however, should all pupils return to school and those staff still be absent the school will be short staffed.

Remote Learning

Jennifer provided an update on remote learning and the return to school. There are currently 112 pupils eligible to be in school. The pupils that are coming in to school seem really happy to be there. Some of the support staff that are in supporting those pupils are Early Learning and Childcare staff and they are bringing different skills and talents into the mainstream school which has been really positive. It's good for the staff in school to see how the pupils are coping with the work on Teams which is good from a quality assurance point of view as well.

P1/2 are working with a blog but are also set up on Teams and P3-7 are all on Teams. All classes are having live check-ins through Teams with their class teacher. There was an article in the Shetland Times last week about the school and the Virtual Classroom that the P5 teacher, Carly Cheyney set up and most other class teachers have adopted this

approach. Jennifer said they made a decision as a management team to make phone calls to all families at home dealing with home learning. This was to provide some reassurance to families that what they were doing was the best thing for their children and only do what they could manage and to see if we could offer them any other support. Jennifer said this was so worthwhile. Parents were really honest and appreciative for the call. Some calls were very hard and some people are in really difficult positions with the home learning and some are finding it really easy and managing it well. The information gathered was given to class teachers to help them with their planning for pupils. Through the phone calls, the school were able to issue more digital devices to families who didn't have access to a suitable laptop/tablet. More paper packs were issued to families who were finding the technology too hard and also offered some opportunities for some families to connect with a member of staff to talk them through how to work the Team.

Live Lessons

All classes have now had the opportunity to have a live check-in or lesson and some classes are having regular live lessons. The Local Authority are very keen to encourage online live teaching but it is also completely up to the discretion of each class teacher and how comfortable they are conducting a live lesson. Jennifer said they also have to bear in mind some teachers are at home with their own children so live teaching all the time wouldn't be possible for them. The feedback from parents and staff are that they like the videos that staff are producing because they can access these at a time that suits them and refer back to these videos at a later date if they need to.

Pupil Engagement

Jennifer said they have been really pleased with pupil engagement. P4-7 is between 85-90% which is really positive. The staff are really looking forward to having the pupils back.

Return to School

Jennifer said they met with P1-3 staff on Friday and there were quite a few questions on the practicalities of the return to school but everyone is hoping the First Minister confirms the return to school following the long weekend, in her announcement on Tuesday. Plans are in place for the phased reopening and further guidance is due from the Scottish Government on Friday. The school are planning for the ELC to run as normal, P1-3 pupils back to their classes and key worker pupils in P4-7 will continue in cohorts with 2 staff members in each cohort. Specialist staff will be in the school providing PE, Art and Music as normal to provide classes for the pupils in school.

Improvement Priorities - A Time of Recovery Questionnaire

Thinking ahead about how to move forward following the pandemic and to identify priorities for the school improvement plan, there are questionnaires ready to go to staff, pupils and parents with the things the school feel they need to focus on for the next school session. There will be focus on recovery and a need to be aware of health and wellbeing for some families and also the attainment gap. Everyone's experience of lockdown and remote learning will have been totally different so the staff will need to assess the pupils and find where they are on their learning journey. Jennifer added the draft questionnaire to the chat for parent members to check.

5. Fundraising and other PC issues

Donation towards P7 Leaver's

Due to the current restrictions there will be no P7 school trip this year. Last year P7 pupils were given hoodies which the Parent Council made a contribution towards. Jennifer said there has been no conversations on how they will mark the P7 pupils leaving so far as they

have no idea if pupils will be back in school or if parties will be able to take place or anything. This item is to be carried forward to the agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION: Dawn/David

Facebook

There was a discussion on utilising the Facebook page in a different way to include posts seeking more interaction from parents as a way of gathering intelligence and views on key areas. An example of this could be asking for feedback on everyone's experience of remote learning. Jennifer said she would have some concerns about asking for views on lockdown and remote learning as everyone's experience has been very different and Facebook can sometimes portray a false reality and could add more pressure to some families.

Fundraising Focus Ideas

There was a conversation on where to focus fundraising efforts. Jennifer said the main suggestions from the Pupil Council was to have more up to date ICT devices for use in the school. The previous priority was replacing the blinds in the school but the consensus is that this should be replaced with providing ICT equipment for the school. David and Jennifer will have a conversation around purchasing devices with a donation of around £1,000 from the Parent Council.

ACTION: David/Jennifer

David shared an initiative he has been looking into which carries on from the Road Safety campaign the Parent Council progressed over the last couple of years but also promotes health and fitness. [Beat the Street](#) is a health initiative which turns towns in to giant games. Small boxes/check-in points are put in places around a town which encourages people to walk, cycle, run from box to box to collect points. David suggested having boxes at key points as a pathway to the school. It would encourage and incentivise pupils to walk to school, following the path of boxes which along the safest route to school. There could be competitions to see who is doing the most walking to school. You could have various organisations supporting the scheme e.g. ZET Trans for traffic flow around regions, NHS Shetland for general supporting the community post COVID, general outdoor health activity and Parent Council objective would be road safety. David said he is aware of community benefit funds through Viking Energy who are looking for community schemes to support which may be able to support the costs of implementing the infrastructure for a similar system. David has made enquiries with the scheme around costs and infrastructure. David is going to approach the SIC Roads Department to see what developments there are with improving the roads around the school and he will approach the subject with them to see if they would be willing to provide some funding. Jennifer said it's a super idea, anything that gets pupils active. Louise offered to help with approaching NHS for funding.

ACTION: David

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 26th May 2021 at 6.30pm