

Draft Minutes of the Dunrossness Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday 7th November 2017

Dunrossness School

Present: Janine Johnson (Chair)
Emma Graydon,
Andrea Henderson (Head Teacher)
Kerry Shorrocks
Cheryl Geldenhuys (Vice-Chair)
Pippa Summers
Gary Harris
Sally Ritch

In Attendance: Gary Cape (Clerk)

The meeting began at 7.01pm

1. Apologies

Janette Budge, Margaret Birrell, Jayne Anderson, Anna Mainland, Councillor George Smith

2. Minutes from the meeting on 5th September 2017

Proposed by Sally Ritch, seconded by Emma Graydon.

3. Matters Arising/ Action Points

a. Playground – Janine reported that her attempts to organise a volunteer group for maintenance work had been scuppered by the weather. After speaking to the manufacturer, and after being given some advice from the painter, Janine thought that it may be a good idea to allow the playground equipment to weather for one winter. The Pirate Galley can be left in situ - without sail - for now. The shelter is almost finished but costs have yet to be confirmed. The original estimate was £1500. The painting may come at additional cost, but the structure seems very robust. Janine has emailed The Bridges Project to see if they would be interested in painting the equipment. The Arbour Seat, due to the type of structure and location, must be fixed. The fact that it is on Council property dictates that somebody must be employed to do the work.

b. The newsletter was sent out at the start of last term. Janine has delayed the publication of the newsletter this term to accommodate all the Christmas goings-on.

Actions

Janine to feedback costs of the shelter and report on the outcome of application to The Bridges Project.

c. The Parents' Night crèche worked well with two volunteers on duty.

d. Recycling - Janine has contacted the Council, but has been advised that it might be prudent to wait until the domestic recycling scheme has been implemented before attempting anything. Andrea advised that Brian Sinclair is coming to do an assembly soon, so more information may be forthcoming.

Janine to report back on arrangements for a date for the event.

e. Internet Safety Event – Nothing has been heard yet from Kate Gabb and Rona Arthur. Janine will monitor and report in due course

4. Head-Teacher's Report

See attached report - School has invested in the Junior Librarian software system. Parent helper volunteers may be of use in running the library/ system. Emma suggested that a book sale may help to pay the ongoing costs of subscription.

School meals seem to be an issue. There have been complaints of a lack of balance and no account being taken of pupil preferences. Council members asked if complaints could be made. Andrea said that she could pass on the concerns of parents. Andre also acknowledged that this is a new menu which has only been in place for two weeks. Feedback from pupils and parents could be valuable in deciding next steps. Janine said that it would be useful to see the figures showing school meal take-up before and after the introduction of the new menu, and the amount of waste from meals that are left uneaten.

Andrea to provide figures on school meal take-up and waste.

5. Financial Report

Deferred due to Jayne's absence.

6. Christmas Party

Janine confirmed the date of the party as Wednesday 20th December. The food bags will be continued as they worked so well. Class splits were still an issue, although having separate parties for P1-4 and p5-7 makes the most sense in ensuring an even split. Concerns over splitting P4/5 class over two parties were acknowledged but had to be put to one side.

The P1-4 party will be held between 6pm and 7.30pm and P5-7 between 7.30pm and 9pm.

Janine will organise the food bags. Diluting juice also to be provided. Parent council members will be required to help. Rota to be drawn up by Emma.

Janine to organise food bags. Emma to draw up rota.

Emma will also put up a music playlist request form and will create an iPod playlist. Janine has a party playlist for reference. Games were suggested as an option but it was decided that there wouldn't be time for much more than an odd game of Corners.

Emma to gather music requests and create playlists.

7. A.O.C.B.

Advent giving calendar for the Trussell Trust will be run again after last year's success.

Janine has met with active schools to discuss after-school activities, but didn't feel very encouraged. Louise Johnson is happy to come and talk to the sub-group, but anything organised will need to be funded by the school/ Parent Council. Andrea was keen to see activities that were not sport focussed. Sally agreed as there are plenty of opportunities for sports in the isles. Janine stressed that, between transport issues and work, some parents struggle to make those activities available to their kids. Suggestions for activities included music, drama and cooking. Janine highlighted the health and safety issues. Andrea said that risk assessments could be done.

Gary raised a concern about nursery book-keeping, which seems somewhat haphazard. He stressed that it was only minor issue, but payments are being missed and confusion caused. He suggested that most of the problems could be caused by issuing receipts at the time of payment. Andrea will investigate.

Andrea to investigate early years billing.

Gary also asked what the financial implications of losing recycling to the council would be. Andrea advised that the existing recycling initiatives could continue, but with more organisation and publicity.

Easy fundraising – Pippa extolled the virtues of the scheme. It was agreed that it needs promoting again as people are unclear of the process and benefits. Andrea suggested that a video could be made for the school blog.

Andrea to arrange publicity for Easy Fundraising.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 13th February 2018 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.07pm

Head teacher's Report to Parent Council - 7th November 2017

School Roll

Our roll remains at 113. 2 pupils are transferring to Sandwick at the end of November but 2 more are joining us. These pupils will be in the P5/6 class, bringing it to its maximum size of 25. P4/5 also has 25 pupils so if we have anyone else joining the school in these age groups it will mean re-compositing all classes!

Parents' Evenings

We were delighted to have 100% turnout at our October Parents' Evenings. This demonstrates an excellent partnership with our parents and the commitment they all have to supporting their children's learning. Our next parents' evening is in May and it is a learner led event where the children can invite a parent, family member or friend to come and share their learning.

Individual appointments can be made with class teachers if parents feel this is necessary. Ms Burr, Mrs J Smith and Mrs J Inkster will all attend this event for informal consultations about your child's learning in art, PE and Music. They will not contribute to the formal report which comes out in March. This is a change to our reporting, as discussed at previous meetings. We also report informally using the blog, assemblies, concerts, diaries and school events. We hope that all parents know we operate an open door policy and can be contacted at any time to discuss concerns.

The Book Fair was popular again and raised £230 for us to spend on books.

Assessments

The new Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) have been introduced and are now live. Shetland has chosen January to March for the assessment 'window' and all pupils in P1, P4 and P7 will complete assessments in reading, writing and numeracy. The assessments are conducted online and are responsive, so will adapt to the child's ability as they answer. These assessments are only part of a much bigger picture and are used to inform teacher judgements. They can also be used as a diagnostic tool and identify areas where a child needs some support or challenge.

Nursery

Our new setting is now open and is being enjoyed by the children. The space and freedom to move between both rooms and the outside area has enabled the children to access more play areas. We are now fully staffed and everyone is working hard to ensure the children have the best experiences when they are in the setting. The additional hours and flexibility is proving popular with people accessing what fits best for the child and the family. IKEA kindly donated £200 for furniture, Mark Donaldson has donated outdoor suits and wellies and we have approached the Memorial Hall Committee for some funding to help us furnish and update some of our resources to fit better with full day provision.

Vision, Values and Aims

Consultations at Parents Evenings and children are now complete so our updated Vision, Values and Aims are ready to be presented. We were delighted with the engagement with the consultation and we think our vision, values and aims really reflect our school community. We will be looking for further input from parents and the community as we develop our curriculum rationale.

Coffee Morning

This was a really successful event, bringing in a very welcome £1657.50 for our school funds.

This is an outstanding amount and again shows the support we have from our community.

Emergency Contacts

The emergency contacts have been distributed to the appropriate people in case of emergencies.

Flu Spray

The flu spray was administered in school on Monday 6th November to those children who had consent.

Junior Librarian

We have invested in Junior Librarian which updates our current system. This is a very powerful tool to support children and encourage good reading habits. Each child will have a profile where they can log the books they read, get recommendations and share reviews. They will also be able to chat to friends in a very safe online environment. We can see comments and anything untoward is reported to us as administrators. The initial cost was £2100 but the annual costs after that is in the region of £300. We think that this will be a very worthwhile investment as encouraging children to be keen readers has a huge impact on their attainment across the subjects.

Mrs Graydon will have a day on the 9th November to begin updating the system so we can get it in use as soon as possible. We also have a staff training day for 3 members of staff on the 26th November to enable us to make the most of the system. The upkeep of the library takes a lot of time so we would like to invite and train some parent helpers to work with us on this.

Northern Alliance

We are delighted to be part of the Northern Alliance Literacy and Numeracy projects. The emergent literacy project is well underway in P1/2 with Mrs Louise Leslie leading on this. Mrs Helen Moar and myself will attend the launch of the numeracy project in Aberdeen on the 29th November. This will be aimed at pupils in primaries 3 and 4.

Developing the Young Workforce

We are hoping to introduce some school jobs to the pupils in the older classes. Job profiles and person specification will be made and pupils will be invited to apply in writing for a variety of posts, including head teachers PA, library monitors, computer suite monitors, janitors assistants and office staff. We aim to make more links with the world of work and help our learners think about the skills they will need.

We are also introducing a 'Past Pupils' board where we will find out about career destinations of some of our ex pupils.

Forthcoming Events

13.11.17 - PC Chris Hardwick visiting to talk about winter road safety

15.11.17 - Dr Beth Mouat coming to talk to P5/6 about her work and also be interviewed for our past pupils board

Harry Rose continues to visit P5/6 to contribute to their animals project

22.11.17 - Brydon Sinclair is visiting to talk about recycling

14.12.17 - School Christmas Dinner

14.12.17 - Christmas Jumper Day

14.12.17 - Christmas Concert evening performance

15.12.17 - Christmas Concert Matinee performance

21.12.17 - School Christmas Parties

22.12.17 - Musical Assembly for staff and pupils

22.12.17 - 3.30pm close!

Andrea Henderson 7.11.17