



Minutes of the Dunrossness Parent Council Meeting

23rd October 2023

Dunrossness Primary School



Present

Sam Adamson (Chair)
Louise Leslie (Acting Head Teacher)
Brenda Smith
Catherine Puxley
Judith Fenton

1. Welcome and Apologies:

Apologies – Jolene Johnson, Kathryn Lomax (Vice-Chair)

Sam Adamson welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared that the Parent Council has two vacancies for Secretary and Treasurer.

2. Approved Minutes of Last Meeting:

The previous minute was not circulated or shared and therefore it was proposed that it would be approved at the next Parent Council Meeting.

3. Head Teacher Report – copy attached.

Funding: The PEF Funding of £11,025 is used to fund additional Classroom Support hours.

School Roll: There are currently 84 children at the school, this includes 35 children in the nursery.

Staffing: Louise Leslie advised that her acting up role to Head Teacher has been extended to 7th January 2024. She also shared that the back fill for her role will become more settled from 13th November when the school will welcome a new teacher on a temporary basis, covering three days per week. Finally, Louise Leslie shared that the planned music specialist was now no longer available for this term. The school has a legal obligation to provide teachers with non-contact time and therefore the school partly relies on specialist teachers to fulfil this. Louise Leslie shared that there was a teacher's meeting next week where this would be discussed more fully but, in the interim, was keen to highlight that the school would be open to parental support and involvement in music – particularly with this being the run up to Christmas where the school plans to have a Christmas Concert.

Nurture Status: Louise Leslie shared her passion and commitment to this area of work and highlighted her keenness to promote this more actively, acknowledging that there are pupils and parents who are not aware of what it means. She has updated the Nurture Leaflet, and this will be shared with everyone and is looking to restart the Focus Friday sessions which had stopped. The nurture status is set to be reviewed in May 2024 and is within the School Improvement Plan.



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Reading, writing and maths in improvement plan and are part of staff development.

Parental engagement and nurture status are a priority area for Louise and as part of this she is keen to identify and realise parent / carer volunteering opportunities. One is within the school library where she is keen to pilot a parent / carer rota for tidying and organising the school library which has become cluttered and difficult for pupils to navigate – some dated books within the stock need removing and there is some funding to purchase new books.

Agreement to trial a small pilot approach with Louise seeking volunteers from the parent / carer body and Catherine Puxley volunteered to be involved.

4. Accountants Report

Sam Adamson shared that this had been provided in advance by Richard Lomax who has taken on some Treasurer duties to support the Parent Council since the previous Treasurer stepped down. The full report is attached, the summary provided as follows:

Bank balance at end of August 2023 is £6704.74 (this is the last bank statement received)

Cash on 23rd October 2023 is: £975.

Fundraising this financial year:

- 2 teas raising a total of £3000.
- Coffee morning raised £68.
- bingo evening raised £263.

Donations:

- A donation from CASE Shetland of £500

We paid out for:

- Gina's welcome gift
- Bread for morning toast.
- Sample school uniform (currently all at the school)
- Johns leaving gift and card £160.

Earmarked for projects are:

- £2000 for playground funds school agreed to match find £2000.
- £2200 for hall panels for sound treatment

Amount available after this would be £3229.74.

There are still some expenses to come out from the Sunday Teas.



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The full accounts are available as circulated with the minute.

5. Chairs Report:

Sam highlighted the successful fundraising over the previous 12 months and thanked those who has supported with the teas and other fundraisers.

Sam shared that the priority for the Parent Council was to attract more parents and carers to get involved with the Parent Council. The reality is that, without the support of parents, it is not feasible to put on events and host fundraisers like Sunday Teas.

Sam reflected that the understanding of what a parent council is, and the purpose of a parent council is something that may not be well understood by all parents and carers.

Judith acknowledged this and reflected on her own experience of joining the parent council with very little understanding of what it was about or how it works and shared that the parent council is partly about being a collective voice for all parents and carers.

Catherine reflected that, with such a low number of parents on the council, we cannot say that we are a collective voice for parents - we do not know what parents are thinking or what their concerns are as there are only a few of us who are active.

Sam went on to propose that the Parent Council seeks opportunities to promote the role of the Parent Council to attract more folk to join.

Louise shared that SMUHA 2024 may be an opportunity to do this as there is an understanding that Dunrossness Primary School is a focus for the Jarl this year and that there are initial discussions underway as to how this might look.

Brenda suggested that the Learner Led Events and Parents Evenings are also a place where the Parent Council can have a presence.

Louise reminded parents that there is a Parent Council space in the entrance to the school and Sam suggested we make more use of this.

Sam is also collating a newsletter to share with parents where existing members have shared a bit about themselves and why they joined the parent council.

Sam reflected on the fundraising efforts and the money within the parent council. There is a frustration within the parent council that these monies have not yet been spent – specific reference was made to the school playground as follows:

- Parent Council agreed to contribute £2000 towards some new equipment, and school agreed to match this, and did some research on potential options (including costs from local trades firms for such things as a shelter, raised beds, and picnic tables).



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- Counter proposals were shared by Gina Finch at our last parent council meeting, and the understanding is that these were shared with the Pupil Council and that class groups had the opportunity to vote for their favourites.
- No update on this has been provided to the parent council.

Louise shared her recollection of class voting but stated she was unsure where the results were stored and would follow this up internally and get back to the parent council.

More generally, the parent council propose that the teachers (with pupil input) advise the parent council on spending priorities annually – things like a P7 trip or end of year meal, for example, are things the parent council would be happy to support.

Louise and Brenda supported this idea and suggested that July / August each year would be the point to have these discussions.

Sam shared that as a parent council it is uncomfortable to have funds donated by the community, parents and carers that are 'waiting' to be spent on the school.

In relation to the playground developments, all committed to confirming a plan for the playground early in the new year to allow for improvements and items to be purchased and put in place for the summer term. There was some discussion on whether a parent and carer 'day of action' could be organised where parents could come into the school to help brighten up the play areas (painting, tidying, planting, etc.). Agreed to resume these discussions at the next parent council meeting.

Discussion on the sound treatment options for the school hall. Louise advised that there may be scope to source funding for this from existing funding and that she would discuss this further with Magnus Malcolmson, SIC at their next meeting. If this is the case, agreement that CASE Shetland should be notified – their donation was explicitly for this so the offer would be to return these funds. Judith agreed to follow up.

6. Amendments to Constitution

Sam shared a copy of the current Dunrossness Primary School Parent Council Constitution, and some discussion was had on potential amendments to this.

Agreed that Sam would circulate with the proposed amendments with a view to confirming changes at the next PC meeting in January 2024.

7. Breakfast Club

Judith shared that last term, parents had taken part in a survey to assess the interest in restarting a breakfast club at the school. Whilst toast is now provided from 0845 for kids, this is not the same as a breakfast club. Reflection that many families do not have wider family or grandparents who can support them, and many parents and



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carers are not able to amend start times for work – in reality, it is not possible to start work in Lerwick before 0930 with a school drop off of 0845. Finally, the class sizes for the nursery are large, and as these children move up to primary 1, this may increase the demand for a breakfast club (nursery runs from 0800).

Louise shared that the breakfast club was run fairly informally so resuming it would not be feasible.

Some discussion on potential options.

Judith shared that the parent council had approached the local authority regarding the feasibility of a parent led breakfast club from the NOOSC building but the response had been that, to do so, the parent council would be required to set up a formal constitution, service level agreement with the local authority, and questions were asked on data protection – i.e. there would be a requirement for a registration process for children who were accessing the breakfast club. This was not considered feasible or sustainable by the parent council which is low in numbers. Other buildings were available to the parent council – the local hall and local Baptist kirk were willing to be the hosts, but the issue of transporting or escorting kids from these buildings to the school was problematic.

Agreed that the only option would be to establish a case for extending the NOOSC operating hours. Awareness that Sandwick has wraparound care in place within its out of school club and suggestion that we find out more about this and that an update on this situation is provided via the Facebook page.

8. School Lunches

Kathryn submitted a concern from a number of parents regarding school lunches. There are two concerns:

1. What the menu is on a daily basis:
Concern that the actual menu on the day varies from the rotating menu that is circulated and so parents are unsure what their children are eating and keen to avoid making the same thing at home.
2. Choices made:
Parents are concerned about healthy choices with reports of some children having chips or similar often.

General discussion on the topics and agreement that from November a staff person will photograph and share the menu – which is displayed in the school hall. Discussion on choices and a proposal to check the guidance on how children are supported to make healthy and balanced choices on a daily basis. Suggestion that the parent council in partnership with the school seek an appointment with XXX again to find out more about this. Finally, consensus that there is an awareness of an appreciation for the school canteen staff and their kindness and accommodating nature toward the pupils.



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Discussion on family lunches at school – there is a desire to run these again, hopefully in the new year. These provide families with the opportunity to experience school lunches and get an insight in to school life.

Further discussion on healthy eating and proposal to consider an opportunity for parental involvement in running awareness raising sessions with pupils around where food comes from and making good choices. Suggestion that this may be an option for the term when the Drumming Workshops end as there is a gap in specialist teaching sessions following the end of this.

Sam and Louise to discuss this further to establish a format, whether there are parents or carers willing to get involved, and what the requirement would be around PVG Registration and so on.

9. Communication

A broad discussion on communication from the school. Louise shared that this linked to parental involvement and her desire to improve opportunities for this. Reflection that the blog is not the best tool for interaction and input from parents and carers. General discussion on the school closures processes and changes last year and some concerns from parents around how closures are communicated, and decisions made.

Louise to flag and discuss school closure arrangements at next teachers meeting (Scheduled Wednesday 1st November).

Commitment to consider opportunities for parental involvement.

Discussion on communications platforms. Agreed that Sam would explore options that are DPIA assured and present at a later parent council meeting.

10. Date of Next Meeting

16th January 2024 at 7pm – commitment to offering the option to attend remotely.

ACTIONS TABLE

Agenda Item	Action	Person Responsible
3	Pilot School Library Volunteers Project with Catherine Puxley	Louise Leslie with Parent Council assisting with any PVG membership fee
5	Awareness raising and increasing members of parent council	Parent Council
5	Termly Newsletter from Parent Council	Parent Council



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5	Action Plan for Playground	Parent Council and Louise Leslie
5	Allocating Funds – annual prioritisation	Parent Council and Louise Leslie
5	Sound treatment in School Hall	Louise Leslie (Magnus Malcolmson)
5	Communication to CASE Shetland pending sound treatment funding confirmation	Judith Fenton
6	Proposed amendments to constitution – consultation via Facebook with view to approving in January 2024	Sam Adamson
7	Breakfast Club – extension of NOOSC feasibility and communication to parents/carers	Judith Fenton and Kathryn Lomax
8	School Lunches – photo of menu daily	School Staff (nominated by Louise Leslie)
8	Healthy Choices and Where Food Comes From Sessions - Feasibility	Sam Adamson and Louise Leslie
8	Healthy Choices – strategy and progress discussion with Neil Beattie	Parent Council and Louise Leslie
9	Emergency / Bad Weather Closures Protocol	Louise Leslie
9	Communication Tools – options appraisal	Sam Adamson



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AGM:

As required by the constitution of the parent council, the AGM was then held.

All members stepped down from their existing elected roles.

Sam Adamson was nominated as chairperson by Judith Fenton and seconded by Catherine Puxley.

Kathryn Lomax was nominated as vice chairperson by Sam Adamson and seconded by Catherine Puxley.

Judith Fenton was nominated as Secretary by Catherine Puxley and seconded by Brenda Smith.

Richard Lomax was nominated as Treasurer by Judith Fenton and seconded by Brenda Smith.