

WHALSAY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held via Messenger on Tuesday 8th September, 2020 at 5.30pm.

Present:

Office Bearers

Carol Ann Reid (CAR) (Chair)
Natalie Constable (Vice Chair)
Moira Dally (MD) Clerk

Members

Sarah Anderson (SA)
Angela Cooper (AC)
Odette Anderson (OD)
Debbie Saunderson (DS)
Samantha Anderson (SA)
Elizabeth Nisbet (EN)
Jeni Polson (JP)
Leona Jamieson (LJ)

Staff

Garry Spence (GS) Head Teacher
Pauline Irvine (PI) DHT
Audrey Polson (AP)

Apologies

Kathleen Jamieson
Iain MacInnes

Welcome and Attendees

The Chair welcomed all attendees to another remote meeting and noted apologies. Saying that she had hoped that we would have been meeting together, by this time

Treasurer's Report

CAR advised that the available funds remain at £5,448.67.

Funding Requests

School Staff were requested to mute their microphones/leave the Meeting, while discussions took place.

Play Boat for Primary/Nursery use. Coming in at £3,199 approx CAR said that this was the biggest request received and at this time with no funding opportunities available to the PC her thoughts were that the PC should approach bigger businesses/boats in the Isle, to ask if they could make a donation, before our next Meeting, at which point the request could be considered again. With the School Inspection and Covid 19 CAR felt that it would be good to have something positive to give to the school and after much discussion this line of action was approved. Decision deferred until the next Meeting.

Requests Approved

Primary/Nursery Christmas Parties £690

Request for refreshments (£80) and a small gift (£5 max x 122 pupils £610). Due to Covid 19 the usual Christmas/Halloween Parties will be cancelled this year and it was suggested that it would be nice to give the children a party to look forward to in their class bubbles. OA asked what the gift might be and if we were once again in lockdown what would happen. The suggestion was perhaps pencils or similar and DS said if need be if a wee bag was made up then it could be delivered to their homes. Refreshments purchased could be returned to the shop.

Primary storage shed for Pri 1/2 £469.94 including storage boxes

DS wondered if there was already a storage shed available at the Pri but it was suggested that it was concreted down in place and couldn't be moved. After discussion this request was approved.

Apple Ipad and case – Miss Paterson/J Nairn - £343.96

For class use. Approved

HD Pro Camera – G Rainer £76.14

Approved

School Staff rejoined the Meeting and CAR explained the decisions made regarding the funding requests.

Approval of previous Minutes 02.07.2020

Minutes were approved by DS and seconded by LJ..

Matters Arising

CAR reminded the Meeting which Class Reps had served their time and also where there were vacancies, and it has been decided that we need to progress with an AGM. CAR, NC and SA will remain on for an extra year (coming off 2021), this will avoid losing all office bearers at the same time.

Parents/carers will be asked to vote for four new class reps – Nursery, Pri 2, Pri 7 and Sec 1, and staff will be looking for three new reps – Pri/Sec and Non teaching. These new Reps will serve until 2023. CAR and MD to organise.

Funding Ideas

With no Coffee Morning or Concert this year CAR advised the Meeting that we could cover what funding requests we have received, but they will cause a serious dent in the funds. CAR asked if anyone had any fundraising ideas.

The following were noted –

Online Auction/Raffle

Sunday Teas (but in a Box) – where you come and buy teas in a tub

Photo Competition with Age groups £1 per photo with prizes

Online Quiz with an entry fee

Cauliflower Cards will go ahead again this year

All of the above will be discussed further at the next meeting

CAR/
MD

HT/AHT Report (see separate sheet)

AOCB

CAR asked each Rep in turn if they had any questions –

Pri 1

Parents are wondering when hot meals will be offered again. GS advised that the Catering staff are going to trial hot meals in the smaller schools again in the next few weeks, and then it will be rolled out after that. No dates available, at this time.

GS

With the Leisure Centre opening next week parents are wondering about PE. GS said the school would be following Scottish Government guidelines which came out last night which stated that PE classes continue to be taken outside if possible, but GS to speak with Angela Williamson, at the Leisure Centre, to discuss what the school could do in our situation.

GS

The question asked was there any way that there could be a drop off/pick up point for Pri 1. Currently Pri 1 parents have to go through all the other classes queueing up outside at the front of the school. After discussion and various ideas, GS said that he would review the situation with PI and get back to parents.

PI

PI

Pri 2

Attendance Awards – could the school consider not having these awards this year as parents should not be influenced by the awards if they should be keeping their bairns at home, especially in the current climate. GS agreed.

Pri 3

Request for timetables - perhaps in front of their homework jotters. PI to email this information to parents.

PI

Are Water bottles allowed in class? PI to follow this up and also remind pupils to drink from their water bottles.

Pri 4

The question from Pri 4 was about homework but DS said it had been answered by an email sent from the school today. GS said that schools were waiting for guidance to come out from Hayfield House PI will update the School's home learning Blog page with ideas sent out by Scottish Gov.

Pri 5

No questions.

Pri 6

OA asked - was there a back up plan if there is a second lock down, and would the school provide worksheets as parents have had problems with internet connections and getting on to GLOW. GS said that in June the schools were planning for blended learning (half the pupils in school and half the pupils out) then there would be more scope for work going out/in from school. GS said

back in May/June he was uncomfortable asking staff to go in to school as no risk assessments were in place but now they had procedures in which allowed for more scope for that kind of thing to happen. GS said that we might end up in a more blended learning situation rather than what we have had.

School Website – when parents click on to the website it takes you to the old site. Can the old website be removed?. GS spoke to IT today who assured him that they could make it so that if you click on the first link then it would take you automatically to the blog. IT to make changes.

Lastly, the nine page email that came out from the School – not everyone noticed the Calendar of Events at the very end. GS said that there was lots to remind parents of, but said he could perhaps try to put the Calendar out separately but that would be another email!

Pri 7

No questions.

Secondary 1

JP asked if there was any guidance/teaching offered on the implications re social media to pupils, if not could there be. She felt it was very relevant considering what has been seen on TicTok (recent graphic images of suicide) GS reassured the Meeting that in Secondary in PSE and IT there is an ongoing focus on pupil Internet safety. Mrs Hughson is looking at the PSE being taught in Sec 1 and 'beefing' that up. All pupils in secondary sign an agreement on acceptable use of the computers. There is Open Peer Support Group coming in to the School in Term 3. Rape Crisis also come in Term 3 and focus on social media with Sec 2-4. In ICT they cover internet safety, risks and privacy with Sec 1 and 2. GS urged parents to keep an eye on what their children are doing and what they're using. GS said that PI could share some links to websites that would explain what the different social media platforms are as it's quite difficult to keep up on it. Also steer parents towards the age limits that are recommended for 'Messenger' etc. GS said that the School has been made aware that there are pupils using sites that they are younger than the recommended age. For Pri. PI recommended a website and also an App called 'netaware' which has every kind of social media app possible and tells you age limit, and what's good/bad about it from a parents' point of view. Peer pressure PI understands is a big thing but children do not fully understand the dangers of it. In Pri before lock down Internet Safety Week is round about Feb/March and most classes did something during lockdown on the subject, with some teachers doing lessons about staying safe on line. Pupils were made to understand that on TEAMS there was a Chat function which everybody could see and which was recorded. She continued that the Pri has a Health and Welbeing resource called 'SCARF'. All in all PI thought that there was quite a bit done on Internet Safety – more so now than there used to be.

Sec 2

No questions

Sec 3

AC asked about Parents' Night and whether there was any way parents could get information from the school. If parents couldn't get into the school could something like TEAMS be set up. GS said that this could be explored, but was waiting for guidance from Hayfield House. The 2nd Dec is date for S3 P Ev and GS thought if the school could run that as a normal Parents' Night, they would be doing well. He said that Sec 3 was getting their full report in November which was quite early in the year, compared with other classes. GS reiterated that if parents had concerns then they were to get in touch with the school, with staff also being asked to let him know of any concerns they had.

OA said that it would be a year and a half since parents would have had any communications with teachers.

PI said that the primary should be having their parents' evenings this term too but also waiting for Guidance from Hayfield House.

Sec 4

NC – pupils still concerned that they are falling behind and won't be able to catch up with their work. GS said that they have encouraged the teachers to keep their TEAMS going, and again reiterated that teachers also want the children to catch up.

The last question was about Counselling services being available for pupils. GS said that SIC had taken on Counsellors but had heard nothing further. He urged parents to 'watch this space' on when the service will start.

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for Tuesday 17th November, 5.30 pm in the Primary Dining Hall, which will be the Annual General Meeting.

This being the business the Meeting closed at 7.05pm.