

Minute of Meeting of Whalsay Parent Council

Tuesday 21 February 2023 at 5.30pm in the Primary School

Present: Marie Manson
Zoe Williamson
Louise Laurensen
June Thomson
Maria Kay
Amanda Williamson
Marie Polson
Heather Williamson
Margaret Leask
Gina Sandison

Staff: Garry Spence
Lynsey Irvine
Elizabeth Patterson

Apologies: Julie Reid
Secondary Representative
Caroline Kay

Welcome

Marie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minute of Last Meeting

The minute of the meeting held on 29 November 2022 was approved by Louise and seconded by June.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer was not present so Marie provided an update to the meeting. Our balance stands at £5475.92. We got a £500 donation from the Zephyr Fishing Company, which was included in that total. Thanks to them for the very welcome donation.

Head Teacher's Report

Attached

As part of the head teacher's report, Garry advised that he would be leaving his post at the end of this academic year. Marie thanked him for all he had done for the school and wished him well.

It was noted that Thursday is world book day, reps can remind their classes through their chat groups.

Class Rep Questions/Issues

Nursey

Marie asked when the transition to primary one would start. It was advised anyone deferring will be known by the end of March. The main transition will begin after the easter break.

Marie asked if a pupil doesn't like a certain meal, can they take a packed lunch that day. Lynsey advised that nursery pupils opt in for or out for the term, as school pupils do.

Primary 1

No issues

Primary 2

Some parents would like if pupils could have more time together as an entire P2 class. Marie questioned how much time pupils are spending at the nursery and felt it was perhaps too much and that it could mean that pupils are not coming on as well as they could be. Lynsey stated how valuable play is and the benefits of the links with nursery to cover the early level curriculum. Marie asked if all P2 pupils are doing the same work. Lynsey advised that the same curriculum is being covered.

A parent had raised that there is too much traffic when they drop their child off at school in the morning. Garry asked Marie to advise the parent to contact him with the specific issue.

Primary 3

Amanda raised a similar issue to Marie (nursery), about pupils having to opt in or out of school meals. Garry agreed to discuss this with Neil Beattie, as it would be a decision to come from him and not one to be made for Whalsay alone. Some reps felt that due to how parent pay works and how you don't have to pay for a day your child has not been at school, this could easily be used to manage certain days that pupils could bring in a packed lunch, but have school lunches the other days.

Primary 4

No issues

Primary 5

No issues

Primary 6

Louise represented Julie. A parent had asked if there was any chance of a breakfast club or after school club being arranged. Garry said it could be looked in to if anyone would run it.

Could there be a school trip arranged in Primary 7.

Primary 7

It was advised that Friday fun choices would be swapped after the long weekend.

Margaret asked if play leaders could be optional or less often, as some pupils felt they weren't getting to enjoy their break because of it. Elizabeth explained that as part of the curriculum, pupils should do leadership activities. She has discussed this with pupils. Pupils are encouraged to organise and run clubs independently. They needed more support and that has been provided. Primary one and two will be told what is on offer and it could improve attendance at these sessions. If no one comes to the sessions, P7 pupils can have their break as normal. Some pupils had even mentioned play leaders in their speech for house captain. Pupils can also raise any issues at pupil council meetings.

Secondary 1

Zoe asked that given the change in how people communicate, could the snow rota be ceased, and we could communicate closures through parent council chat groups.

Secondary 2

Anita said that a parent has questioned where the money was that had been raised by this class when they were in P7. It was roughly £800. Garry advised that due to lockdown they had not been able to use the money as planned. Pupils will be consulted on how they want to use the money.

Secondary 3

As with secondary 2, pupils will be consulted on how the use money they had raised that they had not been able to use as originally planned.

Secondary 4

No issues

Pupil Access to School Upon Arrival

A discussion took place on the morning arrangements where Anita spoke on behalf of the parent council reps asking for the pupils to be allowed into the school in the morning. Garry explained that the school management team were acting on the advice from Central Services and the current arrangements would remain with pupils

being allowed to shelter in the porch and class doors being opened from 8:50am on poor weather. Garry explained a consultation would be carried out with the parent forum by the end of term. Anita asked for clarity on who is responsible for pupils upon their arrival at school. Teachers are contracted from 8:55am and Garry would check the parent council question with Central Services. Given this response, Anita said the parent council would be taking further action.

Funding Requests

Lynsey was the only staff member present, following the parent council discussing funding requests in private.

A request from Denise Johnson for 2 ipads and covers was approved. £620 approx
A request from Audrey Polson for various food items for preparing health snacks was approved. £96

A request was approved for items for the King's coronation celebrations. £598.20

AOCB

The actual cost of a previous funding request for bins should be checked.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was schedule for 16 May 2023.