Minutes – PTA Meeting 1/3/22

Apologies – Mr Preston, Councillor Cowie, Councillor Brown, Gemma Johnson

Thanks to Fr Charles for hosting the first in person PTA in over two years.

Headteacher update –

Thanks to PTA for the hard work they have put in, especially over the Christmas period. The Christmas T-shirt campaign to provide every child with a festive T-shirt was very much appreciated and children were excited to receive them. Discussion about possibility of doing this on a yearly basis and the problems that have been encountered these two years. Fr Charles offered to store T-shirt’s, allowing them to potentially be bought earlier and has offered to help in any other way he can.

HMIe have recently re-engaged with the school as a follow up from their pre COVID visit. Mrs O’Donnell advised this was a positive exercise and the inspectors are pleased with the response from the school since their last visit.

A letter has been issued and is now on the school website for parents to view.

Mrs O’Donnell gave an update on staffing. Mrs Lockhart has left the school after 28 years and the school and PTA want to thank her for her dedication to the school and pupils.

Mrs Livingston is now Principal teacher for 2days a week in place of Mrs Lockhart. As Mrs Livingston’s role has changed, Mr Preston will take her place within P3 until June to allow for consistency. Mrs Hughes and Mrs Sutherland have also taken on additional days to support staffing.

Mrs Welsh retired in December and both the PTA and Mrs O’Donnell want to wish her every happiness and thanks for the work she did in the school office.

Mrs McPhee has been appointed the new support staff Team Leader.

There is still a position to be filled within the teaching staff. Interviews had been scheduled for this, however due to the snow, they had to be rescheduled.

There are now no staggered start or finish times and no class bubbles within the playground. Whole school Assemblies have recommenced.

Within the playground, there are different areas for children to choose to play. This includes a dance area with disco lights and speakers.this has been well received by the children. Further consultation on the re-zoning of the playground will take place with the children. There is also an additional speaker due to budgeting and this will be used for assemblies amongst other things.

PTA commented on the trim trail and asked about possibility of getting it fixed. Mrs O’Donnell advised that there is an annual safety check within the school which is why is it cordoned off. There is an audit due in the coming weeks, where the school will find out how much it will be to repair. This is likely to be quite an expense however children are keen to have it fixed so there is potential to look at fundraising opportunities through both the children and the PTA.

Mrs Livingston has started St Marks Way group. The behaviour whole school behaviour policy has now got an additional warning stage added to it.

Children will attend a whole school mass tomorrow for Ash Wednesday. This will take place within the school. The following mass will be in the church without a congregation and then after that it will resume as normal.

There are enrolment masses taking place for those children receiving the sacraments. The school have been given a donation of First Communion dresses and veils through a parishioner and these are available for people to view and use if required.

P7 – Dates for a residential trip at Ardentinny had been provisionally booked. However due to a recent meeting at council level, looking at the cost of the school day, the school have been advised they cannot ask parents within SIMD 1 and 2 for money towards any event or excursion going forward due to pupil equity and cost of the school day. As a result, other options have been looked at as it is too late to find funding that would cover the cost of Ardentinny.

In a recent whole school vote, it was decided that the Participatory Budget should be used for school trips. This money has to be used by the end of March, so this year it will be used for P7. Mrs O’Donnell advised that South Lanarkshire leisure can provide whole days of activities such as orienteering and canoeing which could be an option. The other option could be days similar to this with an additional night of camping which would ensure the children would still have some form of residential trip. Mrs O’Donnell said the children would be consulted and the money from the Participatory budget would cover the cost of the activities for all P7’s.

In future years, it is hoped additional government funding and fundraising can be used to pay for this. Fr Charles has also offered help through parish funds if required.

There will also be an end of year fun day organised for P7 which will be discussed at a later date.

There will be a leavers mass on 21st June and Mrs O’Donnell is hopeful there will be a leavers assembly also.

Donations of uniform should continue to be handed in to the school office. Discussion about a uniform ‘bin’ been situated outside the office for easy access which would minimise disruption to office staff.

After school clubs will be restarting after Easter. There will be a multi sports club running for lower staged classes and dance for the upper school. Mrs O’Donnell is also waiting for a parental disclosure so the football club can resume.

P7 hoodies are ordered and will be picked up soon. P1 ties will be ordered for new intake.

Discussion about potential fundraising opportunities in the coming months as due to COVID, PTA funds are limited. The bonus ball is popular with parents and the PTA are looking to host a car wash after mass (date to be confirmed). There is also a possibility to host tea and donut mornings for parishioners and Fr Charles is keen to support this as much as he can.

Fr Charles has offered to do a regular bucket collection after mass on behalf of the PTA which will also be extremely helpful in providing additional funds, especially in light of recent council meeting (mentioned above).

Account balance - £702.51