

WOODHEAD PARENTS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – 3rd November 2020

Conducted virtually using Zoom

Parent Council meeting

PRESENT: Scott Jasnosz-Clark (SC), Elaine Ferguson (EF), Sheila Moore (SM), Scott Lindsay (SL), Freya Kennedy (FK), Pamela Shearer (PS), Colette Watson (CW), Claire Fox (CF), Rachel Miller (RM), Alison Yim (AY), Helen Paterson (HP), Karen Mulholland (KM), Matt Hooper (MH), Stephen Lennox (SL), Councillor John Ross, Lauren Stewart (LS)

APOLOGIES: Kelly Paxton, Cllr Josh Wilson, Cllr Lynne Nailon (tried to join but had technical difficulties)

Matters arising from last minutes

EF has done an AGM report, shown to PC and will be circulated for comment before being shared with the wider parent body to show what the PC does.

Parking in Balmore drive, Freya emailed Cllr Ross, received a reply saying Balmore drive will be looked at as part of a wider School Transport Plan, encouraging less use of cars and a potential reduced speed limit around the school. PS brought up issue of parking by non nursery parents in the school grounds, SC will remind parents not to do this.

SC also mentioned school had received a letter from our MSP with resident complaints re Skylands Drive which also needs to be looked at.

The spikey bush has been cut back.

Members and waiting list – Kelly Paxton does not have the time to commit to the PC so her space will be offered to the parent who has been waiting for a space to become free.

HEADTEACHERS REPORT

Nursery and Outdoor Learning.

This stems from concerns expressed by the nursery parents via the PC members who have children at the nursery (SL & PS).

SLC have issued guidance that the nursery Pods are changed to 8 children to allow for isolation of Pods. Up until 3 weeks ago this was Pods of 16 but this then meant 16 families have to isolate if any child tests positive. The only way to have Pods of 8 is to alternate between 1 week indoors and 1 week outdoors, utilising the outdoor space, model for nursery education is that outdoor learning is appropriate. Last week representatives of the PC contacted the school to raise concerns about the children being outdoors in extreme weather and children coming home soaking. The school are now issuing a separate nursery newsletter which will continue to allow the school to answer nursery specific questions. SC, its come from the authority guidance that it must be Pods of 8 and must be outdoors, the authority expects the school to minimise the impact of isolation.

PS asking at what point do the children come in during bad weather, children outside are soaked through. SC says school using dynamic risk assessment with judgement call on a daily basis. Mixing Pods even for 10 minutes means they are outwith the public health warnings. SC, every decision is made with the childrens best interests but highest risk is currently

Covid. This is the model the authority are wanting and it's the authority forcing the guidance. Authority looking at potential shelters in these situations.

SL, states he is disappointed in the communication, parents didn't get much notice to these changes and why. SL states parents are choosing to not to send their children to nursery on outdoor weeks. SC explains that the school and himself under enormous pressure to follow guidance which is why everything changed very quickly.

SL asking for clarification on how long the children are outside in the day, are they getting breaks apart from their lunch break. PS also asking for improved communication, parents are concerned, especially those parents who don't want their children to spend that much time outside.

SC disappointed as this is why the newsletter was created to specifically for the nursery parents and to answer their questions. PS asking for nursery staff to have the same information so there is no conflict and clarification to prevent Chinese whispers.

EF saying this is the first she's heard about this as no child in nursery, she does agree that if her child came home soaking wet she would not be happy. MH asking who this could be raised with as the decisions are outside the schools hands.

Cllr Ross saying public health is making the decisions but that the risks should be argued to public health that children should not be soaking wet over keeping the Pod ratios. Cllr Ross says he will talk to the authority and NHS Lanarkshire, decisions made on a day to day basis. Schools weren't built with Covid in mind and Cllr Ross will report back to the PC.

SL asking why the nursery cant use spare space in the school? SC saying there is no space in school, spare space used for visiting specialists, classroom assistants and storage of excess furniture. Also safety, nursery needs safety door, safe toilets etc.

EF asking should PE be outside? SC says teachers make decision, limited by what they can do as no active indoor PE allowed. Dynamic risk assessment used to make sure kids get some active time but the reality is its going to prove more difficult to provide 2hrs PE each week.

Halloween

Only 1 actual complaint from a parent that there were no opportunities for the children to dress up in costumes. There were a few comments on Twitter but the school do not respond to social media complaints to avoid misrepresentation. SC felt it went counter to restrictions on toys etc coming into school. SC also said he couldn't justify asking parents to pay for costumes at a time when some parents might be struggling. The school has never done dress up for Halloween, the Halloween disco has only ever been a PTA fundraiser, not a school event. Also some younger children find it scary.

KM questioned why no mention of Halloween, why nothing was said to new parents who wouldn't know school, SC apologised that it was assumption made as never do it so didn't feel need to say they weren't doing it this year.

Poppy Appeal

This year P7s cant sell poppies in class, no money coming in allowed. School set up ParentPay donation link now set up, school will pay any fees charged by parentpay.

Non Uniform Days

Started 2 years ago to raise funds for the school to use for buses etc. Pupil council had silly

themes that don't cost anything for parents. P1 parents are asking about reintroducing them as kids are missing out. SC asking what PC think...general consensus is yes, reintroduce them but keep it simple so no extra items like hats etc.

Christmas

Thinking currently that it will be Christmas party days so that children aren't going home to get changed but wearing a Christmas tshirt or jumper and then spending the day in their classroom doing Christmas activities, movie, sweets...managed around the restrictions.

Nativity, no parents in school and no singing but the school planning to record a nativity video, green screen, mixed singing using computer technology. Filming over a number of days to allow for nursery Pods etc.

There will be a Christmas song for the school using a combination of videos sent in and filmed in school.

Christmas cards will still be happening, parent pay to pay and handed in and quarantined safely.

SLC Guidance for PC meetings

New guidance from SLC saying PC meetings via Zoom, invite parents, keep it secure etc. Woodhead been doing this and its been working well. SC thought nothing needing actioned, EF going to forward for info.

AOB

MH belated apologies for last meeting, could SC confirm dates for reports.

SC said dates were in newsletter but to confirm reports 30Nov, replacing first parents night.

March parent consult will be the phone call with a booked in slot.

Normal report card on 1st Friday in June.

KM not getting emails, can SC and FK check she gets the email and if not use works email.

HP thanks all staff for the work they are doing

KM agrees, comparing the communication and measures at Woodhead with other schools. SC says ultimately he does listen and tries to react to feedback, he does appreciate how the PC support his work. SC also confirms that best thing is to contact the school directly with concerns and encourage parents to do this instead of waiting for a PC meeting.

Cllr Ross will pass on information he gets as soon as he hears and wont wait for the next meeting. As leader of the council he likes to hear the concerns of parents and their concerns, again parents can email his office directly with SLC concerns. He thanks the PC for the invite and he in turn is thanked for attending.

Is next meeting in December required?

everyone feels full meeting probably not required but a short update meeting probably a good idea.

Agreed that 1st December will be update on points raised without full HT report and Sheila can Chair as EF has plans. This can be cancelled at short notice if not required but cant be planned at short notice.

