

Minutes of Meeting, Balfron Primary School Parent Council, 7 September 2023

Present:


Anita Crozier (Chair); Amii Anderson (Chair), Angus Black (Head Teacher); Gillian Macmillan (Depute Head Teacher); Claire McIlvenna (Minutes), Michelle Montague, Ainsley Berry, Claire Cattrell, Emma Patrick, Rachel Moir, Katie Graham, Sarah Catnach, Joanne Brown, Moyra Coull, Emma Sutherland, Diane McTavish, Nichola Hardie (online).

Apologies: Michelle Conway (Treasurer)

1.	Welcome and apologies	Action
	Attendees welcomed and apologies noted.	
2.	Note of previous meeting on 5 June 2023	Action
	Minutes accepted and actions have been completed.	
3.	Treasure's Report	Action
	It was reported that the current bank balance is in credit. An up-to-date figure will be provided at the next meeting.	Treasurer to provide Bank Balance information at the next meeting.
4.	Head Teachers Report by Angus Black	Action
	<p>School newsletter was issued out on 29 August 2023.</p> <p>Additional Updates:</p> <p><u>Meet the Teacher</u> This was held on 6 September and there was a good turn out by parents. For those that didn't make it, there will be a follow up via the class newsletter.</p> <p><u>Validated Self Evaluation Visit</u> Balfron Primary School will take part in a validated self evaluation (VSE).</p> <p>This involves schools across the authority who work in partnership to team up. The partnership schools with Balfron Primary School are Braehead Primary School (Stirling) and Deanston Primary School. The Headteachers within these schools along with the Head Teacher from Drymen (as the local school) will come to Balfron Primary School on 3rd and 4th October to help validate the school's self-evaluation.</p> <p>Balfron Primary will list the things that are going well based on self-evaluation and the external Head Teachers will engage in conversations with pupils, view classrooms and draw partnership comparisons. They will also speak with partners, agencies and a parent group. The VSE happens every 3 to 4 years.</p> <p>Balfron Primary School VSE will focus on two areas: (1) learning, teaching and assessment, (2) wellbeing, equality and inclusion.</p> <p>Focus groups for parents will be available on Wednesday 4th October at 9am for 45 minutes. Parent council attendees were invited to attend also.</p> <p><u>Christmas Cards</u> This will be spoken about later in the meeting.</p> <p><u>Fundraising</u> The working time agreement this academic year, requires teachers to volunteer in relation to helping at school fundraisers and school activities as there is no set time aside for teacher involvement. The teacher working time agreement is about</p>	

	<p>how teachers manage additional time and commit certain hours to certain activities.</p> <p>Resultantly, teachers' participation at future PC events will be on a volunteer, rather than required, basis.</p>	
5.	School Security / Safety	Action
	<p>It was reported that observations had been raised with regards to the security within the school. This was in relation to the Primary School being very open rather than having security fencing around the perimeter.</p> <p>There was also concern raised with regards to children who are flight risks and the ability they have to flee the school grounds easily.</p> <p>The segregation of the High School and Primary School grounds were brought into question in relation to pupil safety due to a recent incident within the grounds of Balfron High School.</p> <p>AB confirmed that schools within Stirling Council do not have additional high perimeter fencing.</p> <p>Within the playground, GM and AB are key playground monitors. AB confirmed that there are a good number of adults within the playground during breaks. Support staff also assist in the playground on a rotational basis. Guidance is issued to support staff which outlines the policy with regards to how the division within the playground should look. AB talked the parent council through the "Support Staff Guidance for Balfron Primary School" document.</p> <p>There are different areas within the playground identified. Members of staff are allocated to each area however, they are never stationary. Staff rotate between the areas – planet garden; P7 areas; astro and veg planters. School staff wear high viz jackets so they can be easily identified by pupils.</p> <p>There is a high ratio of staff to children within the playground at any one time. AB confirmed that there is no set number for teacher pupil ratio within the playground and this is done on a school-by-school basis by taking into consideration the school size, layout and number of pupils. There are usually 6/7 members of staff in the playground at any one time.</p> <p>The campus can bring challenges as well as positives for the school. Children benefit from the links from nursery through to primary then on to high school. Lunch for the children is within Balfron High School.</p> <p>AB confirmed that if High school pupils come into the playground, Mr Slaven, Depute Head Teacher, is contacted and any problems are reported immediately. To date there have been no issues reported.</p> <p>AB confirmed that the school has a mixed playground and that all levels of primary children know and acknowledge where they are/aren't allowed to go. Currently each P1 pupil has a P7 buddy in place. The feedback from this experience for the P7's has been positive. P1/2s are guided towards the quiet areas and the playground to play. They are not allowed in the area with the low wall.</p> <p>Overall, the shared campus is a happy positive environment for the children and there have been no negative incidents reported.</p> <p>AB and GM confirmed that there are individual risk assessments in place along with strategies for flight children to reduce any unforeseen issues.</p> <p>As the campus is shared this is also reflected in risk assessments. Playground equipment is also covered within the risk assessments. AB reported that the</p>	<p>Parent Council rep to arrange a meeting with AB to review the current Risk Assessments in place.</p>

	<p>current situation is working and it is always under review and evaluation. Any concerns are raised and brought to the attention of all teachers.</p> <p>AB confirmed that the school and playground areas are monitored via CCTV. All openings and main corners are covered. To date there has not been any incidents noted. Bell Rock manage the security for the school.</p> <p>AC requested if the PC could view the current risk assessments for school safety/security. AB agreed with this.</p>	
6.	Lunch Menu	Action
	<p>It was noted that the lunch menu had been reduced significantly with regards to what was on offer for children. There was also a reduction in choices where children had allergies and where children were vegetarian and vegan. Portion sizes have gone down but prices have increased.</p> <p>It was felt that the younger children could do with more support as to what options are available for them and also provide help getting cutlery etc if needed. Children should also be encouraged to ask for items that might not be visible.</p> <p>AB confirmed that all choices are available for children and should be asked for if not visible. It was explained that lunch is done in three waves to allow time for all children to enjoy their lunch.</p> <p>AB shared with the group a poster which showed what a full red tray and green tray looks like. AC requested that this be uploaded onto the school website.</p> <p>AB confirmed that the layout of the kitchen had changed due to health and safety recommendations. It is a work in progress and the layout may change again to ensure that it is more efficient for the children.</p> <p>AB suggested that at the next assembly it would be beneficial to remind the children what the kitchen layout looks like and where everything is as well as sharing the poster which shows the red and green trays.</p> <p>Joanne Brown kindly agreed that she would lead on this item going forward.</p>	<p>Parents to contact Stirling Council directly to note that there is not enough choices for children with regards to the lunch menu.</p> <p>AB to upload the tray poster to the school website.</p> <p>AB will link in with the kitchen staff to ensure that they help the children with lunch choices.</p>
7.	School Uniform	Action
	<p>The recently updated School Uniform Policy is in place and being enforced. This is attached below for information.</p> <p>GM reported that since the beginning of the new term all children (with one or two exceptions) have been wearing school uniform. No complaints have been received with regards to the uniform policy.</p> <p>It was suggested that on Gym days children go to school wearing their PE kit rather than school uniform as some parents had noted that their children felt uncomfortable changing in front of others.</p> <p>GM reported that the P1, P2, P3 and P4 children get changed together in a classroom. P5, P6, P7 boys and girls are separated to change out of school uniform and into PE kit. It was agreed that the current arrangements addressed this issue and the policy of wearing uniform every day is to remain in place.</p> <p>Parents requested that the school use only water-based paints where possible to avoid school clothing getting damaged.</p> <p>GM reported that children have the opportunity to bring in an old top to use as a paint shirt during painting activities in the classroom. Teachers to remind parents to provide a paint shirt when class activities involve painting.</p>	<p>Parents to provide the school for their children with "Paint Shirts".</p>

	<p>School Uniform Policy:</p>  <p>BPS-School-Uniform-2023-2024.pdf</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Primary 1 – First Day Feedback</p> <p>The School and the parents gave feedback with regards to the first day of school for primary 1s.</p> <p>It was noted that there was a lack of communication as to what the first day would look like prior to it commencing. It was felt that the morning lacked structure and parents didn't know what was happening or what should have been happening. Parents felt that the classroom environment was too busy for the P1 children and for some children this was very overwhelming.</p> <p>It was suggested that for future Primary 1 first day introductions, that the morning should be staggered to enable parents to come into the school in smaller groups. It was also suggested that a slightly later start time for the Primary 1 pupils would be beneficial to them.</p> <p>GM felt that the points noted above with regards to the feedback happened due to a change over of staff.</p> <p>AC proposed that a P1 Welcome Meeting could be arranged in the form of a coffee morning. This would allow the parents and parent council members to get to know each other and give feedback on their child's first day experience.</p> <p>AA to liaise with P1 parents to gauge interest for this and set up a date for the meeting if there is enough interest.</p>	<p>Action</p> <p>PC to arrange P1 Welcome Meeting for the parents (if there is enough interest).</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Fundraising Ideas / Event Calendar</p> <p>AB reported that the fundraising activities during term 2022/2023 were a huge success and it was hoped that this year would be the same.</p> <p>It was suggested that a separate Parent Council Fundraising / Event Group be setup to solely focus on this. There is a PC Volunteer Whatsapp Chat that parents can join if they are keen to help out at future events. Any parents who have expressed an interest in helping out have been added to the chat.</p> <p>AB reminded the Parent Council that Teachers won't automatically participate at additional events out with the school curriculum and will have to volunteer should teacher presence be required.</p> <p>Suggested Fundraising Ideas for 2023/2024 were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>September 2023</u> - P1 Welcome Coffee morning meeting with parents and to include Miss Mitchell. • Golfing Fundraiser (One for the Dad's) • <u>October 2023</u> – Halloween Disco (split into two discos, P1 to P4 (6.15pm to 7.15pm), P5 to P7 (7.30pm to 8.30pm)). • <u>November 2023</u> – School Children in Need Day/Donations/Dress Down Day • <u>December 2023</u> – <u>Christmas Activity Suggestions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas Fayre • Christmas Movie Night for P4 to P7 with raffle prize. • Mrs Claus P1 to P3 	<p>Action</p> <p>Fundraising / Event Facebook post to be created to recruit parent volunteers and gather interest for events.</p> <p>Moyra to progress Christmas Cards</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1 – Wear your Christmas Jumper and Christmas Jumper Swap • Christmas Hamper Raffle • Christmas Cards (See below) • Christmas Tea Towels • Christmas Pop Up Shop (Donations from parents given to the school and Parent Council dress ups as Elf's. Children choose a gift for their parent). • <u>March 2024</u> – Casino night / Race night / Murder mystery night. Save the date (Start of March). • <u>April 2024</u> – Easter Themed: HOP Movie Night within the School Fire Brigade and Easter Bunny handing out Easter eggs for the children. • Balfon 10k – Family Fun Run • <u>June 2024</u> – Sports Day (selling refreshments) • <u>July 2024</u> – End of Term Fun Day <p>Further Fundraising / Event Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday 17th November 2023 – Children in Need • Thursday 7th March 2024 - World Book Day 	
10.	Christmas Cards	Action
	<p>Moyra Coull organising the school Christmas cards again this year and has been liaising with AB.</p> <p>PC asked Moyra to look at other providers given the standard of cards/customer service from printing company so poor last year. Also suggested that other providers may be able to give better service/value for money. Moyra will look into this using other companies and what offerings in addition to cards are available ie. tea towels.</p> <p>Suggested that pupils take the cards home to do as a homework task and therefore parents could work on the designs with the children to ensure that the cards were how parents wanted them. Agreed that parents could be given the option of doing the Christmas cards at home or doing them in school – agreed there should be no pressure on parents to do the task at home. Discussed if teachers had the time to commit to doing the cards with pupils. Mr Black confirmed that the teachers make time to do the cards.</p> <p>Agreed that the PC would do the cards again this year. Moyra Coull to lead on this. PC to re-visit doing cards in the future.</p>	<p>MC to research other Christmas Card providers and additional items on offer.</p>
11.	AOB	Action
	The Parent Council will look at alternative ways for hybrid online meetings so that everyone can participate.	
12.	Date of next meeting	Action
	Parent Council – Wednesday 1 November at 7pm, in the school.	