



Minutes of Meeting held 28th January 2021

Agenda Items:

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Approval of Minutes from previous meeting (17th November 2020)
3. Head Teacher Report
4. Treasurer Update
5. Fundraising Group Update
6. Classroom & Library - Breaking down barriers to reading
7. Remote Learning
8. Remembrance Garden / Anniversary
9. Project Playground / Outdoor Equipment / Grant Funding
10. Dates of Future Meetings

1. Welcome & Apologies

Present:

David Williams (Chair)

Anneli Spence (Secretary)

Susan Henderson (Treasurer)

Andrew Buchanan (Vice-Chair)

Alison Webster (Member)

Kirsten Rodger (Member)

Morag Sorbie (Member)

Mhairi Bowley

Brydie Mclearnon

Kerry Morrison

Anne Marie Neilson

Emma Carter (Member)

Rona Lockyer (Member)

Jo Falconer (Member)

Lorraine Slabbert (Head)

Ruth Allan (Depute)

Shirley Gallivan (Depute)

Alison Bonner

Nicola Macleod

Laura Whyte

Joanne Gudgeon

Apologies:

Diane Jack (Member)

David welcomed everyone to the meeting (held as a virtual meeting over Google Meet due to the current social distancing rules). David noted that it was great to see so many people attending the meeting. Hopefully the remote access made the meeting more accessible and easier for more people to join.

2. Approval of Minutes: Minutes approved by all.

3. Head Teacher Report:

See Appendix I.

4. Treasurer Update:

Since the last meeting, we have received £1,000 from the Tesco fund and £560 from the fundraising team. £27 has also been received from Caledonian Christmas Trees, with thanks.

There is currently £12,002 in the bank account. However, two cheques, for £470 in total, have been written but remain uncashed. Also, £1,089 will be paid into the account next week, from the fundraising teams online account. Taking those items into account, the available balance is £12,621.

5. Fundraising Group Update

Morag advised that, in the current circumstances, the fundraisers felt that a really good amount had been raised for the school over the last few months. The “sleigh of booze” raffle had been very successful. There was just over £1000 in the Just Giving account to be paid to the school, from the raffle tickets and other winter activities which had been run on a donation basis. The Group had not had another meeting since Christmas but would be meeting soon and would update at the next PC meeting about future plans.

6. Classroom & Library - Breaking down barriers to reading

Anneli advised that Jo Falconer had emailed and asked for this item to be added to the agenda.

Jo explained that her daughter has dyslexia and receives support from Mrs Stevenson. Jo and Mrs Stevenson had been discussing the school reading resources for children who need additional support. Jo wanted to ask for PC funding to purchase an additional stock of books from Barrington Stoke.

Jo explained that Barrington Stoke books look very similar to regular books (with well known authors, chapters, appealing covers etc) but they are specially designed for children with dyslexia or who need additional support with reading. For example they are printed with dyslexia friendly fonts, better word spacing and they are edited to remove unnecessary additional words.

Lorraine advised that the school does already have a stock of books and resources that are similar to this that Mrs Stevenson already uses, but does not have these particular books. Jo explained that she felt that the Barrington Stoke books were more focussed on the side of reading for pleasure and as a leisure activity. Lorraine agreed that these books could also be helpful for reluctant readers who don't necessarily have a particular support need. The latest evidence noted that 22% of 2nd level readers at DPS have dyslexia / dyslexic tendencies / reading issues so there are a significant number of children who could be helped by these books.

Jo and Mrs Stevenson have researched costs and the price would be £512 for:

- 65 book pack for ages 8-12
- favourite authors pack
- primary starters pack for ages 5-12.

Lorraine advised that the school would support this but would suggest not a huge spend to start with, until the impact of the first books had been assessed.

This was generally discussed and all were supportive of the PC funding this. Lorraine will discuss this further with Jo and Mrs Stevenson to decide on which books would be the best packs to purchase.

7. Remote Learning

Lorraine advised that a brief survey of parents/carers had been sent out at the end of week 2 of remote learning to get a basic picture of where we were, as everyone began to settle in to the situation. Staff and pupils were also surveyed. Overall the responses were very positive, although there was some learning for the school that had come out of that too.

The main themes that had come out of the survey that parents/carers were looking for were:

- More feedback
- More video instructions
- Smaller Google meets
- More guidance from teachers as to the appropriate level of work for each child
- More live lessons.

Overall the school was happy with the feedback. Things are continuing to change and develop all the time in terms of the guidance that the school gets for remote learning for example. The school will be working on this survey feedback and trialling some new things, for example a new digital app to give feedback to children on their work via voice notes.

Lorraine particularly wanted to point out and thank staff for the very long hours that they are working at the moment to get everything done and to support parents/carers and children remotely.

The children have also been surveyed. Shirley reported on the results of the early years survey. There had been a very good response rate. Some key points were:

- 91% highly agree/agree that they are happy with the online learning
- 98% highly agree/agree that they have enough to do.

The survey also showed that the children had a good balance of work and play and were happy with the communication with their teachers. Parents/carers had suggested some more specific teaching would be helpful on the Google meets, to give more structure. The feedback from the nursery had also been very positive. Google meets had not yet been done there but were going to be trialled now as they were already working very well with P1. The P1 transition work would also be starting soon.

Ruth reported on the survey results for P4-7. There had been 150 responses so far. Key points were:

- 96% have the resources that they need at home to get their school work done
- 96% can find their tasks easily on Google classroom
- 77% of children said they enjoyed the Google meets; 20% were more neutral about them. Some would like to see breakout rooms, some would prefer more time to chat with their friends on them
- 80% think the number of Google meets is just right
- 76% think the amount of work being posted is just right; 22% think there is too much
- 89% think the tasks are targeted well and they like the different options, such as the chilli challenges
- 80% find the instructional videos helpful.

Some changes that had been suggested were more group tasks via Google meet. There was also a common theme of suggesting more off-screen activities such as PE, art, outdoor activities etc. This was all very useful feedback and the school would be using it going forward.

Andrew advised that he really appreciated what the school was offering. He was also aware of another resource called West OS that was being used by lots of other councils but had apparently not been approved by Stirling Council yet, with video lessons, activities, worksheets etc. It could be helpful for the teachers as another resource. David confirmed he would raise this with the Council at the Stirling-wide PC meeting he is attending next week and report back.

8. Remembrance Garden / Anniversary

Discussion was had surrounding this year's anniversary of the events in DPS 25 years ago.

Mrs Slabbert advised that the school is planning to remember the day in the way they have been doing for a few years now, with a Spring reflection assembly, looking back and looking forward. They will also mark the occasion by placing flowers in the cemetery in remembrance of those who lost their lives.

In the past year the Remembrance Garden has been refurbished and we thank Mrs Gallivan's parents for helping the area stay tidy and refreshed throughout the year.

Mrs Slabbert and all of the staff are crucially aware of the sensitivities around the event 25 years ago and wish to ensure that if there are any thoughts regarding the anniversary and the marking of it by the school within the community that the PC becomes aware of, that those are directed to the school to discuss.

The PC was in full support of this approach to mark the day.

9. Project Playground / Outdoor Equipment / Grant Funding

It was noted that there has been no progress on this since the last meeting. Due to the Covid lockdown no work is possible. Hopefully this can be picked up in the Spring.

10. Dates of Future Meetings:

Tuesday 23rd March 2021

Thursday 27th May 2021

Appendix I

Parent Council Meeting
Head Teachers Report
January 2021

STAFFING UPDATE –

Teaching Staff

Mrs Tobin continues her maternity leave but we hope to see her return before the end of this session.

Mrs Paterson is now on maternity leave with Ms McAllister stepping into her shoes in the P2 class whilst she is absent.

Ms Anderson and Miss Hutton end temporary posts as Principal teachers here as of February. They have been marvellous and have led the school community extremely well both on digital and learning for sustainability work.

The permanent Principal Teacher post will be advertised next term to be filled for the beginning of session 21/22.

We have been joined this year by Mrs Collington who has a temporary post as a member of the authorities teaching pool. Her role is to cover the Dunblane Learning Community and any absences within.

SLA staff

Ms Lindsey is with us on supply at present as Mrs Fisher continues her career break. We do expect Mrs Fisher to be returning after the mid term break however.

Ms Lindsey hopefully will be continuing with us as Mrs McGregor's absence continues.

Throughout this turbulent year we have been very fortunate to have minimal staff absences and where there have been we have secured supply staff who are known to the school and children.

Online Learning

We are all hoping and wishing that this spell of lockdown ends far quicker than the previous one and that we can once again welcome our children back to school. However in the period between the announcement and the first two weeks of being back the school has:

- Established the In school provision for children of key workers and vulnerable children. We currently have in the region of 96 children enrolled for this. Their support is delivered within 7 separate classes in school where they undertake the same tasks as children at home are being set. Teaching staff and support staff are all involved in supporting these children as well as supporting online learning.
- Facilitated the delivery of online learning to those families who requested assistance by the distribution of 58 chrome books to support.
- Provided access to Wi-Fi and data to those in need in order that an equitable offer could be provided across our school community.
- For those families who were unable to engage digitally and did not wish chrome books staff are providing home learning packs which are delivered to families.

- For those families who access free school lunches information as to how to access payments was given and as of last week direct payment into accounts happened.
- Received a further 60 chrome books which we will begin to distribute to older children in order to support online learning.
- Received in total 32 laptops which are to be distributed for staff to use at home.
- Surveyed parents on their experience of online learning at this point.
- Surveyed the staff on their experience of online learning at this point.

Parent Survey Results in Brief

Our responses came from:

11% N-P1

36% P2-P4

53% P5-P7

99% of respondents have accessed online learning.

97% feel that the quality of online learning this time has improved.

88% feel that their children are benefitting from live check ins with staff.

88% are happy with the way the school has structured online learning and feel it is meeting their child's needs.

93% said that if they were having challenges with accessing online the school responded and of that initial 93% 88% percent report their issues have been solved.

30% of our families are accessing supplementary online learning through forums such as e-Sgoil, BBC and SPEC.

Careful consideration will be given to areas of the survey alongside the staff information from their survey going forward.

Environment

The Council has been very supportive and has given a substantial amount of money to improve our learning environment in the early years both in terms of practical flooring and painting but also resources. This has been part of the play and learning project the school has been part of but it is making an impact even wider than just the early years.

Newsletters

Since the beginning of the school session communication has been regular with HT updates going out every week in an attempt to ensure we keep connected but also to let everyone know information as soon as we have it. This is set to continue till the end of the session.

2 INSET days

In order to keep progressing with our school improvement plan this year we will be undertaking work on equality and diversity as well as self-assessment of the school. The parent focus group which inputs on this has moved to an online forum and we have more participants using this method and see this as a worthwhile "keep" from our lockdown experience.