

Minutes Parent Council Meeting

Monday 23rd January 2017 7pm

**Present:-** Sarah Henley, Domhnall Dods, Annette Barlass, Nikki Cooper, Pauline Bird, Gemma Gough, Ruth McMaster, Nadia Maqbool, Barney Todd, Martin Rutherford, Paul Keegan, Dawn Wilson

**Apologies**: Lorraine, Gillian Morrison, Christine Hay, John Reid, Lynne Currie, Linda Hennessey, Jackie Marra and Pauline Arnott.

Minutes: Domhnall apologies for having circulated the wrong minutes, the previous minutes had been prepared but then an old set had been saved with the new file name meaning a set of old minutes had been circulated.  The main items discussed at the previous meeting had been the Scottish government’s education governance consultation, road safety and the East meets West fundraising event all of which were on the agenda for this month.

Government Consultation:- John Reid had provided a short summary of what the parent council submitted to the Government – there had not been much input but John had drafted a response with what parents had given him.

**Headteacher’s Report**

Ruth McMaster gave a brief verbal report.

The main item was the requirement she had to report to parents on the education levels achieved. She will forward to the parent council a link to the results. In summary the school did well. The result covers numeracy and literacy and reflects both the testing of children and the teachers’ professional judgement (to verify the results of assessments).

As well as the link to be sent by Ruth WLC will be sending a leaflet out to parents.

The only other major item to report was on the parent council cash which had been spent. The ipads have arrived and are now being configured by Mr Todd. They have also ordered new laptops using the capital enhancement grant.

Martin Rutherford volunteered to come in and help with the configuration of the ipads.

**Action: Martin Rutherford and Barney Todd**

**Staff update**

Mrs Roy is still absent with no return date known so Mr Todd is covering P2.

Mrs Green is working Mondays to cover PE and Mrs Martin who retired is back on supply to cover art and tech on Tuesdays.

Mrs Smith is now teaching p3 on Monday and doing learning support Tues-Friday.

Mrs England is now back doing an extra morning on Thursdays to release staff for meetings and work Miss Hood is doing on profiling development etc

More info to come out on profiling on parents’ night - dates are about to be issued

There is to be a PATPAL (Pupils as teachers parents as learners) afternoon on 1st February. This will be led by Gillian Murray who is the numeracy coordinator for the cluster.

**On line safety**

Barney Todd reported a very good article recently in which a lawyer had simplified the instagram terms and conditions for children – this is a very good way of showing children what they are opening themselves up to on social media. Children have to be 13 to have an account according to the terms but as a US company there are certain legal assumptions which do not apply in the EU. They give sweeping control over personal data to Instagram (facebook etc have similar terms).

Barny said he would post a link to the article on the school blog. The issue is that these US companies assume the accounts are for children over the age of 13 whereas in the EU, children can have accounts under these ages. Parents and children do not understand fully the implications for the personal data of their children.

**Action: Barney Todd – place article on blog.**

Domhnall Dods also said there are useful magazines / booklets about online safety available from Vodafone stores which are very easy to read and contain good information.

There is already information on the blog about snapchat.

In response to a question from Nikki Copper, Barney Todd also said that the school now has Yammer accounts which are closed on a per class basis but are also available on a wider basis – though still within Glow.

Ruth McMaster also said that with the innovation funding the school will also be setting up Sum dog an on line numeracy tool – this will allow inter class inter school challenges etc, and there is lots of supporting material.

The Burns supper is to be held on Thursday 26th January.

**Treasurer report**

Linda Hennessey is unwell so a full update was not available.

A brief discussion was held about what had been paid out so far and it was confirmed that the funds had not yet been requested from the parent council.

Jackie Marra had asked that the parent council confirm the funding for camp for those children who needed assistance. It was confirmed that 3 x £150 had been approved.

Domhnall Dods raised a query about performance of the Ipay system. Ruth McMaster confirmed performance was erratic but they are looking to add new features and are looking for feedback from parents. It does work better on computers than on phones so if people are having issues then this is a possible solution.

**Fundraising update**

The main item discussed was the East meets West event on 18th Feb. Nadia Maqbool confirmed what had been organised so far and a number of people volunteered for a range of tasks. Volunteers are still needed to set up the hall between 4 and 5 on the day, Barney Todd volunteered to lead on this. Nadia also asked for cake donations.

Kirsty DiCaccia has set up an Easy Fund Raising page for the Parent Council, Sarah will send out details shortly.

It was agreed that the school will do the Christmas cards again, it had been popular and raised around £200.

Sarah Henley said this is her last year with the school so she is trying to hand over tasks this includes Bags for School. Ruth agreed to share list of tasks that need to be handed on.

Strawberry Fayre – we need a team to organise it. Sarah Henley will organise a meeting. Ruth McMaster suggested we should look at organising a meeting during the day so that non-working parents can get involved. This works well with other schools apparently.

**Action: Sarah Henley to organise meeting**

**School / PC partnership development**

Playground trim trail. Ruth McMaster said there is nothing to report other than Greenrigg PS have said we can look at theirs.

The Community Council have said they think the school extension may be back on the agenda.

Ruth McMaster said that in 2009 plans were looked at and WLC are now revisiting these to bring the projected costs up to date.

Domhnall Dods said that in the last meeting we had discussed playground resurfacing – Ruth McMaster confirmed there is no budget.

Nikki Cooper said she had seen examples from a Livingston based company but Ruth McMaster said they have to use approved WLC procurement processes.

Nikki Cooper said she thought the next big fundraising effort should be aimed at raising money for the trim trail. She volunteered to go and look at some examples locally of what other schools have done.

Sarah Henley said the sponsor a book campaign will not happen this term, world book day is in march so ties in well with that. Sara Henley circulated copy of paper on it in the meeting.

Road Safety - Pauline Arnott sent apologies but had sent an update. She is planning to meet with JRSO pupils and has discussed with Councillor Fitzpatrick. She will present proposed campaign in March. Sarah Henley said there had been an incident with a local resident so it would make sense to involve residents. This can go to community council meeting using the JRSOs and Pauline Arnott. Sarah agreed to speak to Pauline.

Parents have raised the 1 mile a day challenge. Barney Todd has been looking at the research into the impact on attainment - a report is due very soon. The school can look at supporting it.

Martin Rutherford gave an update on the primary school platform which he had shared with the members of the parent council. He invited people to have a play around, explore options and provide feedback.

**Actions: Sarah Henley, Nikki Cooper, Martin Rutherford**

**Councillor Fitzpatrick update**

On planning Councillor Fitzpatrick reported that the Brotherton planning appeal was upheld. WLC got counsel’s opinion which said that they did not have a case for Judicial Review and would fail.

Murieston West is also for 200 houses will also cover the school for catchment. The council has zoned the area east of West Calder High School and covers Bellsquarry. The reporter is holding two public meetings at the Cricket Club at 9.30 Wed 15 February and 10am 1on the 16th February.

Armadale Academy pupils have raised £10k to fund defibrillators. Councillor Fitzpatrick suggested the parent council might want to consider doing this as there are incidents where children do have heart attacks. There was a case at Bellsquarry around 30 years ago. The fire service provide free training on the equipment and CPR.

The Scottish Government consultation – it is not known what this will produce but on pupil equity funding – Bellsquarry will receive funding but will be asked to account for spending so will cause extra administration. There was a discussion on how other schools will be using funding to try to close the attainment gap. It was felt that as Bellsquarry is a relatively affluent area there will be minimal extra funding coming to the school.

**AOB**

Barney Todd mentioned device management. Pupils will be able to use any device that can connect. So in addition to the ipads pupils can use any device that can connect to the internet. The WLC ideal is a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy. Parents will understandably be reluctant to send in new devices or will not want to send old devices in case their children are mocked for these.

He suggested that as an alternative the school take on old smartphones and allow children to use these. He asked parents to consider whether they have any old mobile phones which they could donate. Barney Todd took an action to consider how best to present this to parents. Nikki Cooper said there would be a nightmare with random chargers. Domhnall Dods explained that under EU law all phones have had to have the same cables for some years now, only Apple fail to obey this. Barney Todd agreed that chargers are not an issue and the school could buy cables for apple and other devices cheaply.

**Action: Barney Todd**

The nursery is having a bingo night on 2nd February.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 13th March.