



**Date:** Wednesday 21 October 2015

**Place:** Hillhead Primary School

**PC Attendees:** Gillian Anderson, Simona Manca, Keith Thomson, Ruth Downes, Astrid Azurdia, Emma Benzie, Sandra Huettenbuegel, Emma Grehen, Katie Nicoll, Amanda Buchanan, Ana Langer, Kiki Kobatake, Fionnuala Featherstone, Andrea Fisher, Anne Hanson, Kirsty Matheson, Colin Tsang.

Francis Donaghy, Andrew Robson

**Parent Attendees:** Ursula Canton.

**Apologies:** Julia Boswell, Athole McLauchlan, Zoe Higgins, M. Mitchell, Fiona Stuart, Naoimh Fleming, Susie Haigh.

## **AGENDA**

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Election of office bearers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer)
3. PC meeting dates for coming year (PC guidelines)
4. Event planning - what do we want to do, dates, lead person/group
5. Action areas - what do we want to focus on, lead person/group
6. Outdoor sessions update (Andrea)
7. Spending of PC funds
8. Grant for outdoor classroom
9. Uniform
10. Update on media suite
11. Head Teacher's update
12. AOB

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

Ruth welcomed all present and all PC members introduced themselves. Apologies were made.

### **2. Election of Office Bearers**

All three current office bearers are stepping down (Ruth Downes as Chair, Susie Haigh as Secretary and Amalia Theodorakopoulos as Treasurer). Three new

members of the PC have volunteered to take up the office bearer roles and these nominees were approved with thanks. The new office bearers are:

- Gillian Anderson (Chair)
- Simona Manca (Secretary)
- Keith Thomson (Treasurer)

### 3. PC meeting dates for the coming year

It was agreed to continue the pattern of previous years with approximately two PC meetings per term, varied between daytime and evening times to try and maximise opportunities for people to attend. A Doodle poll will be set up to finalise date options and dates will be circulated to all parents.

Decisions/Actions	Person to Act
Set up Doodle poll, decide most popular dates and circulate to all parents	Gillian Anderson/Simona Manca

### 4. Event Planning

It was decided to aim for a similar diary of events to last year and individuals volunteered to lead on these with the help of other members of the PC and the wider parent body. This would include:

- International Night (**Lead Person: Astrid Azurdia**)
  - Likely date Thursday 3 December.
  - There was discussion about options to extend the space used for International Night to include the social space in order to allow more people to come as last year not everyone was able to get tickets. The option of splitting any fundraising between the school and a refugee/migrant charity was also raised.
- P5/6 Disco (**Lead People: Amanda Buchanan/Zoe Higgins**)
  - Likely date - early March.
  - It was decided to run the disco again for the P5/6 classes again as this was considered the best age groups for it.
- Spring Fair (**Lead Person: To be decided**)
  - Likely date - mid May
  - More detailed planning for the fair will happen in the new year but with a good run in time due to the amount of work involved.
- Autistic Awareness Week (**Lead Person: Fionnuala Featherstone**)
  - Date - 14-18 March 2016
  - The parent/carer support group established to help children with autistic spectrum conditions will work with the school to identify activities and events which could be done as part of Autism Awareness Week and feedback to PC how we can best support it.

There was discussion about the options relating to a **community celebration grant opportunity from Year of Food and Drink Scotland** - any grant under this scheme would need to be used by the end of January 2016. The nature of International Night and the way it is run does not make it an ideal candidate for this grant as there are relatively few direct costs involved. There was discussion of using any funding for a gazebo in the Piazza playground but this would be difficult because of fire exit routes and also uncertain weather conditions. The possibility of a Burns Night event was raised but no lead person was identified to take this forward.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Decide on whether and what to apply for and organise event	<b>No volunteers as yet</b>

There was also discussion about reintroducing a **Fairtrade Café**. This was originally run monthly and latterly every term in the hall which wasn't considered an ideal location. Various possibilities of change of venue (new GP room?) and time were discussed and the potential to link it to social action activities.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Re-establish Fairtrade café in whatever format considered best	<b>No volunteers as yet</b>

## 5. Action Areas

- Traffic
  - Discussion on the continued problems with traffic in Otago Street. This problem was recently highlighted in an Evening Times article and Cllr Martin McIlroy is taking the idea of the Haddington approach (closing Otago Street to traffic during drop off and pick up times) to GCC.
  - It was agreed to write to the GCC again supporting the Haddington solution and raising the issues of double double yellow lines (to allow instant tickets to be issued) as well as the lack of lollipop person support on the routes to school

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Write to GCC on traffic issues	<b>Ruth Downes</b>

- Social action
  - Francis Donaghy reported that the Primary 7s will be undertaking a variety of charity appeals and related activity through the year with a local, national and international focus. This will start with involvement in the

90kg rice appeal which raises money to send a Malawian farmer's child to secondary school. This will be done as a social enterprise activity and may also include putting together a rice cook book. Ursula Canton said she had contact with students from Malawi and perhaps a link was possible here.

- Other social action options raised during discussion included: continued support for refugee/migrant charities; collections or links to local night shelters providing support for local refugee/migrant families; shoe box collections for children for Christmas

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Set up social action sub group to look into range of possibilities, how to link with and support school and potential timetable of collections/activities	<b>Ruth Downes/Kirsty Matheson</b>

- Easy Fundraising
  - It was agreed that reminder information about this should be sent out to parents ahead of Christmas present shopping. This could go out through bags or the PC email list. The information could also be put up on the website and a text sent to point people to this.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Get information on Easyfundraising from Susie, distribute and include on website	<b>Susie Haigh (providing information); Margaret Mitchell (website help); Simona Manca</b>

- Cards/bags fundraiser
  - Some initial thinking was done on this earlier in the year but it was not actioned. It was decided it's too late in the term to organise Christmas cards for sale this year.
  - One option would be to have each class do a generic collage design which could be printed on blank notelets and sold throughout the year. This would involve more children and widen the appeal for sale.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Establish best option for development (cards/bags?), identify company to do it and organise timetable to carry it out with school.	<b>Initial talk with Julia Boswell and Zoe Higgins</b>

- After School Care
  - The difficulty of finding sufficient places for after school care was discussed. Problems include: lack of sufficient places in Hillhead based

after school, which includes provision for some non-Hillhead children; fact that after school care takes up dining room space and therefore makes it unavailable for Hillhead after school clubs; lack of premises for new after school care options which have come up over past year.

- Kiki said her personal search for after school care meant she had a list of care providers which could potentially have room for expansion but further work would need to be done to see what might be possible.
- It was agreed that a questionnaire should be sent to parents asking about their after school care needs to establish the scale of the problem and as backing for any further action with either GCC or other care providers. This could potentially be done electronically.

Decisions/Actions	Person to Act
Design and distribute questionnaire and consider next steps.	Gillian Anderson, Kiki Kobatake, Ana Langer

- Support for children and families with autistic spectrum conditions
  - Fionnuala talked about the parent/carer support group which has been established to help and support children and families dealing with autistic spectrum conditions. This includes information and awareness raising, support activities in the school and advocacy. She welcomed the support of the PC in this work and would like to see it expanded to include more people.
- Communication
  - Very brief discussion on different aspects of communication between the school and parents. Francis Donaghy to talk to P1 parents in particular to see how communication to new parents can be improved.
  - Some discussion on methods of communication and options which do not always include paper through the school bags. Options included using brief texts to point parents to updated sections on the website and more use of electronic communication although it was recognised that the PC email list does not include all parents. Further effort could be made to maximise the number of contacts on this list.
- Curriculum Development
  - Agenda item raised by Athole McLauchlan in an email and relating to ensuring that the PC is aware of the school's Development Plan and able to link activities where possible to support what the school is aiming to do. Noted for further discussion in the future.

## 6. Outdoor Session update

Outdoor sessions on a Thursday morning are continuing and loved by the children and Andrea Fisher was thanked for all her effort and expertise in making this happen. There were various points of discussion: Andrea would like to see this activity expand specifically to help those children with autistic spectrum conditions or who particularly benefit from being outside; options for finding money to pay Andrea for her training and expertise in what has essentially become part of the curriculum should be explored; options to involve teachers in CPD or learning from these activities, or involve older pupils more in helping, were briefly mentioned; the gate/fence arrangement as it currently works is not inclusive as any child with mobility issues cannot get into the wooded area because access is by the stairs only.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Options for paying Andrea to be explored - grant options or through school development budget	<b>Francis Donaghy (liaising with Lorna Watson on grant options)</b>
David McEwan to be approached about access issues to the wooded area	

## **7. PC Spending Options**

The PC has around £5,000 in the bank account for spending in the coming year before any fund raising starts. This is additional to the grant finance for the outside classroom.

Areas of spending were agreed as:

- Art trollies (agreed for spending last year but not finalised)
- Completion of playground improvements implemented by GCC but where small additional work still required and may not be financed by GCC
- Outdoor equipment as advised by Andrea (eg. backpacks or teaching materials which can help teachers take children outdoors)
- Exploration of options for canopy over outside classroom on first floor opposite media suite
- Musical instruments

It was also agreed that members of the PC would meet with the Pupil Council and ask for their ideas for spending.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Meet Pupil Council and discuss spending ideas.	<b>Led by Keith Thomson with support of other PC members where relevant</b>
Coordinate with school on finalising items for purchase and action	

## 8. Grant for Outdoor Classroom

A grant has been secured already for the provision of an outdoor classroom designed in part to provide seated sheltered area for children at break and lunch time and also a further opportunity for teachers to take classes outside for lessons. Some options have already been explored as part of the grant application process but this needs to be finalised. David McEwan agreed earlier in the year to top up any missing grant monies as one part of the application was unsuccessful.

Decisions/Actions	Person to Act
In conjunction with school, decide on most appropriate outdoor classroom structure and order. Correspond with David McEwan on additional monies.	Katie Nicoll/Colin Tsang/Ruth Downes

## 9. Media suite update

Francis Donaghy reported that fire officers had met with staff, Katie Nicoll and Ruth Downes to assess again the fire safety and exit strategies for the two classes in the media suite. Following the meeting a more clearly defined exit path has been created in the media suite and marked so that it is clear to all children and staff and cannot be obstructed with furniture. In a recent fire drill, children in the media suite were assembled at the top of the stairs in under a minute and outside in under two. The fire officers have stated that with the recent actions completed, they are happy with the safety of the children in the room.

Francis Donaghy also reported that questionnaires had been given to the children who are in the media suite. Most of the children considered the media suite to be similar in condition to a normal classroom and many liked being located together with another class. The main issues that were highlighted were temperature and noise/distraction. In terms of temperature, some children reported it to be too hot and some too cold but FD has approached GCC again to try and get additional air conditioning units put into the room to allow better regulation although the response has not so far been very positive. Many children mentioned distraction, particular coming from when the two classes are doing activities involving different noise levels. FD said the action point from this was for the teachers to coordinate activities as far as possible and establish more team teaching across the two classes.

Other issues that were brought up in discussion included: request to keep blinds open as much as possible to maximise the natural light coming into the media suite; FD confirmed that the outside classroom on the first floor is currently exclusively for the use of the two classes in the media suite.

PC members emphasised that the media suite should still be considered a temporary measure despite any improvements that may have been possible in its use this year. FD said that the school similarly did not want to continue this arrangement and that, if the Primary 1 cap of 75 was held again next year, that the media suite could come back into non classroom use. The issue of whether GCC could hold a 75 cap, however, was the critical one despite its negative impact on many families in the community.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Follow up with GCC on air conditioning units for media suite  Ensure maximised use of coordinated teaching and team teaching to minimise distraction for the classes in media suite	<b>Francis Donaghy with PC support where needed</b>

#### 10. Uniform

Kiki reported briefly that ideally second hand stalls would be continued through the year. One issue here is storage and accessibility of the second hand uniform. At present it is difficult to get the uniform out and order it, making it harder to maintain regularly. The potential for a cupboard and storage of uniform in the outside classroom at the P4/5 entrance was raised.

<b>Decisions/Actions</b>	<b>Person to Act</b>
Maintain second hand uniform stalls and discuss storage options with school	<b>Kiki Kobatake and Sandra Huettenbuegel</b>

#### 11. Head Teacher's Report

FD reported that the Building Buddies initiative in the school, supported by Fionnuala Featherstone, had been presented at a recent cross schools event using video and other media and had been very well received. There was interest from other schools in introducing similar initiatives.

#### 12. AOB

Three items were very briefly mentioned:

- Additional P7 transition options including inviting current S1/2 pupils back to talk to P7 pupils (**Andrea Fisher/Ruth Downes to talk to FD**)

- Homework - could homework be given out with the option of doing it over the weekend (**FD to look into**)
- Email raising problems with the centralised absence reporting system. Ruth Downes had advised parent to write directly to FD which had been done and action being taken but system problematic for parents and school alike.