

Parent Council Meeting, Monday 7th October 2013 Minutes

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Questionnaire results
3. Road safety
4. Creative learning
5. Event planning
6. Uniform
7. Outdoor education
8. Fundraising cards
9. Head Teacher report

PC Attendees: Ruth Downes, Lisa Crampin, Kate Smith, Senga Minto, Colin Tsang, Karen Lyons-McGann, Isolde Doig, Susie Haigh, Claire Slocombe, Amalia Theodorakopoulos, Astrid Azurdia

Apologies: Julia Boswell, Sandra Huettenbuegel, Fauzia Khan, Andrea Fisher

School Representatives: Francis Donaghy, Andrew Robson

Also Present was Councillor Martha Wardrop (Hillhead ward)

1 Welcome

Ruth began the meeting with welcome and introductions of the PC and Parent Forum members.

2 Questionnaire Results

The PC questionnaire which had been distributed through the school bags had a very limited response with only 23 paper and 8 online forms completed.

Thank you to those who contributed.

Though not statistically significant, it is worth noting that common interests were PC involvement in improving the use of outdoor spaces, running family social events and contributing to the Gibson St Gala.

3 Road Safety

Councillor Martha Wardrop (MW) was invited to the meeting to hear the concerns of the PC regarding road safety.

The historical and continuing issue of the traffic using the Otago St entrance was discussed. As highlighted in the School Letter last week, the situation is worsening and there have been a number of near miss incidents involving reversing cars. The situation is also of serious concern to residents.

Senga Minto brought the meeting up to date with the initiatives that have been attempted in the two years the school has been open to reduce the danger irresponsible drivers are creating.

These have included bringing the issue to the attention of traffic wardens, the police, land services. Individual parents have attempted to advise of the dangers, often being met with an abusive and aggressive response.

The gate was initially opened on the understanding that it would be used by pedestrians only and this information has been repeatedly given to parents.

The lack of an improvement is due partly to the ineffectual existing road restrictions of double yellow lines. These are not sufficient to enable fines to be levied against offenders as traffic wardens have no jurisdiction with these until after a significant time period has passed.

The meeting discussed possible solutions including:

- Closing the gate which it was felt would put further pressure on the already busy Kelvin Way entrance
- A human chain or shield was discussed but the PC was not prepared to put parents in a potentially dangerous situation.
- School zigzag lines as these would allow the issue of on the spot fines
- Restricted access to the area around school opening and closing time
- The school is also trying to secure funding for a barrier to be installed at the start of the slip road into the parking below the school. This would prevent drivers from undertaking a three point turn and would also stop illegal parking. They also want the "pavement area" at the slip road to be highlighted

The PC took advice from the school and councillor and decided to pursue the option of school zigzag lines and the request for restricted access. Ruth Downes will write to the Council accordingly. In the meantime the school could be issued with police no stopping cones to use at appropriate times.

Glasgow Kelvin MSP Sandra White has also been contacted and we await her response. Councillor Wardrop advised that she will be in contact with Sandra White and that she would pursue the matter of a Police Action Plan. She recommended a pupil voice through Junior Road Safety Officers or pupils meeting with the appropriate Council officials.

Senga Minto and Ruth Downes to progress this matter.

4 Creative Learning

Rachel Lowther led the discussions around the lack of space available for creativity due to the success of the school and therefore its increasing school roll. The school has already lost its drama and art rooms and the media suite and library is now under potential threat.

Individual classrooms do not support the big build/ messy work/imaginative play that the Curriculum for Excellence emphasises as vitally important to creative learning and expression.

Also the current facilities for PE are under intense pressure with 2 hours of activity expected for every student and 23 classes to accommodate. The Scottish Government recognises that securing this entitlement delivers the broad health and wellbeing outcomes and experiences contained within Curriculum for Excellence.

The school predicts that the demand for places in the coming session will be such that every available space needs to be used for classrooms. This is in an attempt to ensure that children within the catchment area will receive a place.

The PC discussed the start of a campaign to buy the derelict house encompassed by the school building for an expressive arts base. This would be a long term project. In the short term the idea was raised to fund an artist in residence programme which would allow the arts to be explored by pupils in innovative and exciting ways.

The school places high value on creative learning. At present there is a teacher group looking at the use of space and how expressive arts could better be accommodated within the existing limits. This was also recognised in the recent HMI Report which documented the importance of culture and arts within the school.

Councillor Wardrop advised there is a new lottery fund related to the 2014 Commonwealth Games - Celebrate which may be able to fund the Artist in Residence. This and other funding avenues are to be investigated alongside options for where and how the programme could be delivered given the current pressure on space. Possible solutions may lie in the outdoor classroom, using Kelvingrove park and in the future access to the park auditorium which is currently being refurbished. Another potential solution is to turn the wet space which is currently under utilised into a classroom as an alternative to losing the media suite.

There was agreement that exceptional value was created for the Glasgow City Council by the merger of four schools. As well as major capital receipts on four different buildings, there are massive savings in ongoing costs such as rates and utilities. Councillor Wardrop will investigate the capital received in the recent sale of the old Hillhead Primary school to developers as well as investigating the benefits in terms of carbon emissions of the new building.

The PC agreed to research funding for the Artist in Residence programme and the possibility of purchasing the derelict house. MW advised that all party councillors would need to be approached in a project of this size.

Rachel Lowther will investigate funding options for an artist in residence, supported by other parents with interest in this area.

A small sub-group comprising Ruth Downes, Kate Smith, Lisa Crampin, Senga Minto, Isolde Doig and Rachel Lowther will start investigating options relating to the more general issues of space and possible campaign initiatives.

5 Event planning

Following the achievements of last year's International Evening and the feedback from the questionnaire the PC has decided to organise a family social event.

Thursday 5th December is the planned date.

The aim is to celebrate the schools cultural diversity through food, music and dance. It is hoped the Maryhill Integration Project will be involved again and that Scottish Music can be included.

Fundraising was discussed including the possibility of a suggested donation for tickets and/or a raffle. The school can provide an official letter to be taken to businesses when asking for prize donations. Francis suggested selling raffle tickets prior to event as well as on the night.

Astrid Azurdia and Susie Haigh are to begin planning for this and will use the existing partnerships within our international community to shape an inclusive and successful event.

Discussions had been held before the summer about the possibility of an adult only quiz night to be held outwith the school. The suggested date was in the new year so this may be something we can look at in a future meeting.

6 Uniform

Susie confirmed that the second hand stall would take place at parent's evenings and stressed that the items had been donated and not taken from lost property.

7 Outdoor Education

The PC wish to support the school in improving the access to outdoor learning. **Claire Slocombe and Colin Tsang agreed to take this forward.** Andrea Fisher was not present at the meeting but her previous considerable input into this area was appreciated and she will be approached for assistance.

8 Seasonal Fundraising

Kate Smith updated the meeting regarding the possibility of producing pupil designed Christmas/Diwali/Eid cards. Possibilities include individual design, class or year group montage or a design competition. The cards cost approximately £3.50 for a pack of 12 and could be sold for £5. Timescales are tight to produce them in time.

Susie Haigh to use Kate's research to take the idea forward. If decision made to go ahead then Claire Slocombe will assist.

9 Head Teacher Report

Francis explained that, due to an incident which took place inside the main entrance to the school, the school is reviewing security arrangements and assessing how to prevent unofficial access to the school grounds. This could mean, for example, that parents will have to be accompanied at all times within the building. The staff will also be reinforcing the children only play zone within the infant playground to further prevent unauthorised entry.

The school will issue a letter this week to inform parents of the changes necessitated by this incident.

Thanks was given to all who attended. The next meeting date will be announced shortly.