



PARENT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: Monday 2nd March 2015, 7-9pm

Place: Hillhead Primary School

Parent Council Attendees: Ruth Downes (Chair), Susie Haigh (Secretary), Amalia Theodorakopoulos (Treasurer), Sengo Minto, Astrid Azurdia, Sandra Huettenbuegel, Anke Hilt, Amanda Buchanan, Claudine Corneloup, Margaret M., Emma Benzie, Kirsty Mathieson, Rachel Lowther, Anne Hanson, Agnieska Lampart, Kate Smith,

Staff Attendees: Francis Donaghy (Headteacher), Andrew Robson (Depute)

Other Attendees: Approximately 6 parents from parent forum

Parent Council Apologies: Colin Tsang, Kiki Kobatake, Andrea Fisher, Isolde Doig, Lisa Crampin, Julia Boswell, Fauzia Khan

AGENDA

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Consultation outcome update
 - a. Composite classes
 - b. How school working with space restrictions in creative arts/PE/ICT/additional needs and what parental support/GCC pressure can be given?
 - c. Lunchtime pressures (How working? Advance ordering option? More covered areas for children with lunchboxes)
 - d. Other issues raised by parents: Top gate/KPEYC access issue and use of woodland area; additional staff needed for more football pitch access.
3. Spring fair update (Ruth/Susie)
4. School disco update (Amanda)
5. Other feedback on actions from meeting 2nd December
 - a. Class email lists (Kirsty)
 - b. Uniform
 - c. Outdoor Learning/playground group (Andrea)
 - d. Healthy Eating sub group

- e. Gibson Street Gala
6. Fundraising
 - a. Easy fundraising (Susie)
 - b. Teatowels/bags (Julia)
7. Use of PC funds
 - a. Feedback from Pupil Council meeting (Ruth)
 - b. Lunchbox storage (Ruth)
 - c. Reel music club – drum repair and raffle
8. PC presence at Parents' Meetings (26th and 31st March)
9. Head Teacher's update
10. AOB
 - a. FGM
 - b. PC communication
 - c. SPTC training events

MINUTES

1) WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Ruth welcomed all present.

2) CONSULTATION OUTCOME UPDATE

Ruth provided summary of events regarding consultation since the last meeting.

The outcome of the consultation was to retain KPEYC on site; convert part of the car park into a dance studio; to proceed with some of the catchment boundary changes, but to add other areas back into the catchment; and to impose a cap of 75 for August 2015 P1 intake.

The executive committee approved these decisions.

The SNP 'called in' the decision and asked for it to be put before a Scrutiny Committee. This took place on 13th Feb. The scrutiny committee upheld the original decision.

The Parent Council asked for a meeting with David McEwan to discuss the plans for the dance studio. This took place on the 20th Feb.

He presented the plans and confirmed the following

- There would be no covered access into the dance studio; children will exit the main building to access the new space.
- Plans include a toilet and foyer / cloakroom area

- Original plan was for capacity to allow two classes to use the space, now plan is for capacity of 40.
- The time scale will depend on the planning stage, if there are no hitches it may be completed for August 2015, if not possibly by September weekend.

PC concerned about capacity issue in particular. Reducing the capacity appears to be based on budget constraints, yet limiting it to a 1 class space will restrict the benefit such a space will bring the school.

2a. Composite Classes

David McEwan mentioned in the meeting with the PC that composite classes would be likely to happen next year.

Francis Donaghy (FD) confirmed that he has not been informed of any plans for composites and has had no discussion with education authority about this.

Andrew Robson (AR) and FD explained the way composites work and the potential impact over the next 5 years of creating a composite within the current school structure. Although a composite between P3/4 would technically work next year, there would be implications for the flexible space available over the next few years and there would be no guarantee that the composite could be reclassified at a later date to return to straight classes. In the normal course of events children enter the school not just in P1 but in all other years. So consideration would have to be made for how this would impact upon pupils arriving from within the catchment during the school session who would not be accommodated due to the prohibitive nature of a composite model.

Concern expressed by parents present that composites being considered in order to alleviate space issues, random groups being put together to suit the building rather than for educational purposes.

Question asked – is the decision to create composite classes the head teacher’s, or can the authority make this decision?

FD stressed he has not discussed issue of composites with the authority or had anyone contact him about it at this stage. But in theory the authority could make that decision.

Decisions / Actions	Person to Action
PC will write to Maureen McKenna and David McEwan to ask for more detail on the dance studio plans and in particular to request that the capacity be increased. Also to ask about composite classes and request that this decision be made by the school’s management.	Ruth Downes

2b, 2c, 2d How school working with space restrictions and what parental support/GCC pressure can be given?

Given outcome of consultation Ruth expressed desire that the PC discuss how best we can proceed and offer support to the school to help alleviate pressure on space. Also what pressure could be put on GCC for additional resources?

Concerns raised and suggestions / ideas:

- Rachel Lowther raised concerns about the amount of art the children receive given lack of suitable GP space for messy art and regular access to art supplies. Suggested investment in art trolleys so supplies could be easily made available to classes, an outside sink, an art ideas 'dossier' for inspiration, and asked that the school commit to timetabling art once a week for all children.
- Fionnuala Featherstone talked briefly about Aspergers and children with additional support needs. Asked for structured play zones to help those who found the busy playground overwhelming. These could be supported with additional parent volunteers.
- Other parents raised concerns about the numbers the school have to manage at lunchtime and the fact that children often choose to eat outside rather than use the dinner hall. Concern that children were missing out on a 'proper' social lunchtime experience by eating food on the go and not having anywhere warm or relaxed to eat and savour their meal.
- Could we ask GCC for more support staff and investment in this area?
- Portable sinks are an option, with built in pumps for the playgrounds.
- Doodle polls for parent volunteers work very well for the current 'outdoor classroom' play sessions that Andrea Fisher is running. Could we make more use of such polls to get volunteers for specific days / activities so the school can extend activities / plan more.
- Changing the gate that leads to Kelvin way would be helpful, at the moment is gets left open and restricts children in the primary school from accessing certain areas of the playground. Moving the gate or creating different access would help.
- Could we create more seating options for the playground to help alleviate pressure on the dining hall – benches? Covered areas for eating?
- Could we apply for an area grant to help raise funds for some of these projects / playground improvements?

FD clarified the following points in response to the discussion:

- Building Buddies has started again, run by teachers who give up their lunch-time to staff the sessions.

- They try to accommodate children with ASN in smaller spaces, but more space would be welcome.
- They are working on zoning playground for different activities.
- Have to plan based on staff, can't rely on parent volunteers – bonus to have them – but can't base plans on them.
- Each class gets 1 hour each week in the GP room.
- All children get art, might not be once a week, it is delivered in a more varied way – might have lots of art over a few weeks, and more regular art at another time. Up to teachers to deliver this and all teaching plans checked for expressive arts as part of the curriculum for excellence.
- Carpets can be covered in the classrooms for messy art – they have tarpaulins that can be used.
- Art trolleys great idea.
- Staff can take buckets / jugs of water out to the playground for art too.
- Sandpit will be installed soon in the piazza
- There are lots of children to get through the dinner sitting, but every child has choice to use dinner hall they don't have to sit outside to eat packed lunches. Children play outside until it is time for them to go in for their sitting, they don't have to stand in long queues. Adding seating to the playground not necessarily the answer as restricts play areas.

Decisions / Actions	Person to Action
Art trolleys to be sourced and researched	Rachel Lowther
Playground group to investigate options for eating outdoors such as mats for children to sit on and improving existing seating areas such as the logs.	Playground sub-group
Apply for area committee grant.	Louise MacKenzie
Research into making the Kelvin way gate lock securely and also option of it being moved.	Francis Donaghy Sarah Lowndes / Playgound sub-group

3) Spring fair update (Ruth/Susie)

- Sub-group set up to organise.
- Any other volunteers please get in touch with PC.
- Date set for 16th May. Outdoor focus, mainly using playground, possibly with some stalls in the social space.
- Hope to have BBQ, cake stall, bring and buy, craft activities, games / sport activities, treasure trail quiz, face painting, tombola and school products for sale (bags / teatowels).
- Entry will be through grove gate and a small charge will be made. Funds will be raised through all the above stalls.
- Sub-group will meet again to take plans forward.
- Further volunteers will be required on the day itself to help run the event.

Decisions / Actions	Person to Action
List of events / jobs to be drawn up and allocated to sub-group members.	Susie Haigh
Let costs to be researched for Sat 16 th May	Ruth Downes

4) School disco update (Amanda)

- Disco sub-group set up.
- First disco will be for P5 and P6, most likely after Spring Holiday on a Thursday night. 6.30 – 8pm. (23rd / 30th?)
- Parent volunteer numbers researched, health and safety plans, and collection policy.
- Will be ticketed event.
- DJs researched and have good possible option with reasonable quote – likely to be around £100.
- Costs will be covered through ticket sales, selling crisps and juice and possibly through use of PC funds.

Decisions / Actions	Person to Action
Date to be confirmed, DJ booked and food / tickets / decoration / risk assessment / volunteer poll and rota	Amanda Buchanan and Disco subgroup.

5) Other feedback on actions from meeting 2nd December

a. Class email lists (Kirsty)

Kirsty will continue to work on this with hope of rolling out for P1s next year. Possibly a P1 social early in the year too.

b. Uniform

Sandra and Kiki helping with uniform. Second hand sales planned for parents evenings and hope to do playground sales in the summer term.

c. Outdoor Learning/playground group (Andrea)

Outdoor play sessions going well. Andrea recently set up another parent volunteer poll to help Karen Barclay run golden time sessions in the outdoor classroom on Friday afternoons.

d. Healthy Eating sub group

Astrid raised issue of 'Meat free Mondays'
Suggestion that feedback from wider parent forum be sought.

e. Gibson Street Gala

No volunteers to specifically work with gala this year and organise events in the school. Ruth has informed them that been busy year for PC and we organising our own spring fair which taking up lots of energy. We will endeavour to help organise parent volunteers nearer the time for the day itself if the gala committee require.

6) Fundraising

a. Easy fundraising (Susie)

Easy fundraising now set up and hillhead primary is a cause that all parents, staff, friends and family can sign up to support. Plan to send letter out shortly to promote and explain scheme. Also to have leaflets and info at parents evening.

b. Teatowels/bags (Julia)

Julia was unable to attend meeting – she has done research into costings and is working on getting this project up and running.

Sarah Lowndes offered advice and contacts from last time we had star bags made, which she organised.

Decisions / Actions	Person to Action
Easy fundraising letter and flyers to be put in school bags.	Susie Haigh / Office
Easy fundraising info to be made available at parents eve	Susie Haigh
Teatowels / bags to be produced ideally in time for spring fair	Julia Boswell

7) Use of PC funds

Feedback from Pupil Council meeting (Ruth)

PC met with pupil council who had been asked to gather information about what the children would like PC funds to be spent on. Lots of ideas, big focus on play equipment – hulahoops, skipping ropes etc

Lunchbox storage (Ruth)

Issi Doig researched suitable containers and has found one that will work. Each class will have their own box. These are storage boxes on wheels and were requested by the pupil council for storing lunch packs. At the moment they are left lying on the ground and get kicked about, damaged and lost.

Reel music club – drum repair and raffle

Reel music club are organising a raffle, if anyone has prizes they can donate please contact them directly or contact the PC.

PC also recently paid for repair of a drum – these are instruments that stay in the school and are used by children.

Decisions / Actions	Person to Action
£500 spend on kit for children as per requests from pupil council.	Ruth Downes, Amalia Theodorakopoulos Playground sub-group?
£500 spend on outdoor storage tubs for lunch boxes	Ruth Downes, Amalia Theodorakopoulos Andrew Robson

8) PC presence at Parents' Meetings (26th and 31st March)

PC will have stall at both events with second hand uniform and PC volunteers available to answer questions and provide information.

9) Head Teacher's update

FD thanked all parents for supporting recent sponsored event. So far over £5000 raised. It was a successful day and the children enjoyed it.

10) AOB

a. FGM

Rachel Lowther raised importance of this issue.

Andrew Robson provided update on this part of the school's child protection policy. Child protection officer for school has been contacted for guidance. Staff are made aware of the issue through their training in area of child protection. AR also contacted an FGM support group about coming in to talk to staff.

b. PC communication

Ruth asked that all communication between PC members, especially via email be respectful and polite. Acknowledged range of opinions amongst PC and that feelings running high in recent times but that communication was important and should be conducted considerately.

Susie added that it was important that PC members understand that being on the PC was not simply an opportunity to bang a drum on one issue, but that it involved contributing to the work of the PC in supporting the school and the children. This should involve inputting ideas, taking on activities and jobs and volunteering where possible.

c. SPTC training events

Not discussed.

Other business raised:

- Given enjoyment of sponsored event and raising money for charity is this something children could do more of?

FD – yes, thinking about the idea of P7 choosing a charity to support and then working on fundraising throughout the year.

- Also interest expressed in doing another Maryhill food bank collection as one before Christmas was very successful.
- Could the school look at changing homework hand-in dates, so that children, especially older ones, have weekend to complete work?

FD – something we could look at, will come back to you.

Ruth Downes offered thanks to everyone for attending.

The constitution states that a third of PC Members shall form a quorum at PC meetings and this was easily met.