

Parent Council Meeting

26 September 2018

## MINUTES

### **In Attendance**

Jane Weir (JW) Chair

Katy Westacott (KW)

Julie Tait (JT) Treasurer

Gary O'Connor (GO)

Katie Wotherspoon (KFW) Secretary

Joanne Jamison (JJ) Vice Chair

Johanna Jenkins (JJK)

Johannah Prentice Espey (JPE)

Alison Hagan (AH)

Kelly Watson (KW)

Kasia

Lynne Guyatt (LG)

### **Actions from last meeting**

- Cost for class to attend St Augustine's visits
  - o 2 trips for 14 pupils at £2.40 return per pupil
  - o 3 trips for 26 pupils at £2.40 return per pupil
- Funding requests received before the meeting – this is an ongoing action
- Church liaison officer has been asked to discuss with Fr Deeley the possibility of non-catholic pupils going up for a blessing when their class receive communion

### **Data Protection Policy**

A data protection policy has been drafted using a template provided by Connect. Everyone was content with this draft so it was signed by the Parents' Council members at the meeting and a copy will be put on the Parents' Council page of the website with a hard copy available at the school reception on the notice board.

Two Parents' Council email addresses have been set up at the cost of £9 for the domain and £6.60 a month for the two addresses (to be paid by direct debit). There were no objections to this arrangement.

### **Headteacher's Report**

#### **Parental involvement –**

- The school would like to recruit more volunteers to help in school to help with things like reading and trips. This would require volunteers to be PVG checked and to understand the need for discretion and the importance of confidentiality. It would be nice to get the wider community involved.

- The reason there was a delay to the Open Doors days was to allow the work on the classrooms to be concluded. It was decided to hold these after school so that parents could look round the classrooms without disturbing pupils.
- The Family Learning (curriculum) morning is on 8<sup>th</sup> November from 9.15 - 10.15 am. Tea and coffee available from 8.50.
- CEC open day is on 31 October: School will be open for one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. St Augustine's ex-pupils normally come to be guides.

#### **Staffing –**

- A permanent fulltime PSA and a temporary part time PSA (mornings) have been appointed and will start imminently.
- While Mrs Westacott is on adoption leave, Mr O'Connor will be acting head until the interview process is completed. This is due to happen in the near future. Staffing is currently being worked out and parents will be updated as soon as possible. Mrs Westacott reiterated that the learning and teaching of the children is the highest priority.
- Interviews for an administrator were held on 27 September
- The new Business Administrator will start after the October break.

**Health and Safety/Risk assessment** - The stairs into the playground have been declared unsafe and will be cordoned off until they have a non-slip covering on them. This will also apply to the stairs behind the PE hall. This work should be done soon.

#### **Funding Requests –**

- First Communion Retreat train fares - £90
- St Margaret's Day celebration - £30
- 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations - £TBD
- Oven and Food trolley - £TBD
- Baskets for storage - £112

Mrs Westacott also said that the Council have apologised for the delays to completing the school building and have complimented the staff for how they have handled it. She also highlighted that a lot of ideas developed at St Margaret's are now being implemented across schools in Edinburgh.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

- The balance at the bank is £4446.19
- The cheque from the Robertson Trust for £637, match funding what was raised at the quiz, is still to be put in the bank
- Overall balance is £5083.19
- The 2017/18 accounts have been passed by OSCR

#### **Fundraising Calendar**

- It was agreed to provisionally set event dates. To do this Mrs Westacott is going to check with the Business Manager how many lets we are allowed.
- It was decided that we would go ahead with the spooky walk / fire station visit for P1-P3 as they always enjoy this.
- KW will ask the rest of the school what they would like for Halloween.
- The Halloween events will not be fundraisers this year. We will have another fundraiser later in the year at which we hope to get match funding. This will be discussed further at the

October Parents' Council meeting, all suggestions welcome and a Facebook message will be put out to ask the wider parent body for ideas.

- There was a suggestion that the sponsored event and the family event could be help separately.
- We will have a bag pack between now and Christmas to raise funds for the pantomime buses. The school will book the coaches and submit a funding request to the Parents' Council.
- There will be another bag pack later in the year for the sailing
- JJ will agree the dates of these with the supermarkets
- It was agreed that a team should be put together for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary event and that an email would go out to the wider parent body from the fundraiser. Asking for volunteers.

### **Other Discussions**

**Food For Thought** – There was a request for the Parents' Council to subsidise some of the equipment for this project that is outside of the Government funding. This is for food preparation, Food growing and Poly Tunnels. There was no objections to funding this.

**Poetry** – There has been an independent artist in school working with P6 and P7 working on their RLS poems, based on the 'Carriage Window' poem. This has included a trip on a train with the artist to generate ideas. This artist has been back a number of times to talk about his travels around Scotland. Another artist has been into school to do some stop/start animation. This is all leading towards a showcase for RLS birthday.

**Cluster Choir** – From November children applying to Queensferry High will be able to join the Cluster Choir.

**Parent Pay** – iPads will be organised for reception to help make Parent Pay accessible to all parents. Parents' Council will look into the possibility of holding Parent Pay workshops at some school events / parents' evenings.

**Parent Information** – There was a suggestion that rather than parents being asked to come into school to get information about upcoming events perhaps this could be combined with other school events. Such as, the Camp introduction and information about God's Loving Plan being after the Talking News Letter and information about music lessons being after the Christmas Concert. This would cut down on the number of visits parents are asked to make to the school and help people be available for more things. The consensus from the Parents' Council was that this was worth trying.

### **Parent Engagement Course –**

- this was a very interesting and worthwhile session, held by Connect, that generated lots of ideas.
- It also provided a lot of information that will be helpful to the Parents' Council and JW can make this available.
- There
- JJK has been asked to be the Parents' Council representative for children with additional support needs. This is to ensure that the Parents' Council are aware of and able to discuss overarching issues specific to this part of the school community. Individual issues and concerns should continue to be discussed directly with the school. It would not be appropriate for individual issues to be brought to the Parents' Council. There were no objections to the creation of this position.
- Connect also suggested a number of health checks that Parents' Councils could undertake. JW is going to do these.

## **Questions from the Parent Body**

### **How has the situation been resolved regarding the seating arrangements in the P6 classroom?**

- The seating arrangements vary throughout the day, this includes the bean bags, iPad area, tables use of textbooks, they go through to P7 for literacy and they have PE.
- There is a maximum of 20 minute periods in any one area then they rotate.
- Once The Studio is finished P6 and P7 will be able to use this for things like art.
- It was also pointed out during the discussion that there is not enough space for the P6s to hang up their coats. This was agreed and will be looked into.

### **A parent has asked if it is possible for the school to supply headphones / earphones if they are required to use the IT facilities as there is a cost implication?**

- This is not a requirement, headphones can be brought in if a child wishes to use them. There have been headphones in the past but as time goes on they tend to get lost. GO will look into a funding request for this.

### **It has been asked if the school cleaners could be requested to do a more thorough deep clean? Areas of concern include interiors of the windows, cobwebs in the front porch, P6 window sill, high window next to Mrs W office – very dirty, Foyer and the St Margaret's rug.**

- These concerns have been passed on to the facilities manager. There have been exceptional circumstances at the beginning of this term and the cleaners are working hard to keep the school in order.

### **A further question about the cleanliness of the new classrooms – floors dirty and ongoing work.**

- Contractors will do a thorough deep clean once all the works are completed

### **Is Mr O'Connor going to be the permanent replacement while Mrs Westacott is off on adoption leave?**

- Council procedures need to be followed in regard to Mrs Westacott's replacement. Mr O'Conner will be acting head until interviews are carried out for an internal council secondee to take up the position.

### **Is there going to be a permanent replacement teacher for Mr O'Connor while he is standing in as acting head? How is this going to impact the P6 and P7's?**

- Yes, this will be advertised as a fixed term contract. While this is being organised, there is an excellent pool of teachers the school can call upon.

### **What is the current situation with the PSA's? Have the current vacancies been filled and how are staff hours being allocated?**

- A permanent fulltime PSA and a temporary part time PSA (mornings) have been appointed and will start imminently. It is up to the school's discretion how their hours are allocated.

### **Has a replacement been found for Mrs Blackie? What are the alternative contact arrangements if there are no staff to do this?**

- Interviews for this post have been conducted and while we wait for the successful candidate to take up their post the office will be manned.

### **Why are the children watching a lot of DVD's in class time and how does this support their learning?**

- There have been DVDs for a number of reasons. There have been unusual circumstances with the delays to completion of the school building and DVDs have been allowed to enable teachers to organise classrooms and get learning started ASAP. DVDs were also watched as house treats, the Houses voted on what they wanted as their house treats and chose DVDs.

**What were the prizes for the Houses competition and how was this decided?**

- The P7s surveyed the different houses and they voted for their own prizes. These wouldn't usually be all at the same time, normally one house a term.

**How many PSA's are providing cover in the playground during breaks and lunchtimes as there have been numerous incidents in the playground reported?**

- There are usually 3 PSAs out at lunch and break time, if there are less Mrs Westacott would cover this. There were 2 PSAs off at the beginning of term and Mrs Westacott covered this to allow other PSAs to get their lunch. The school contained the children in one part of the playground during the works.

**Has there been any update regarding the stairs accessing the playground?**

- The stairs have now been assessed as unsafe and the Facilities Manager is organising the work needed to address this.

**Is it possible to start a payment plan in P6 for P7 school camp to allow parents a longer period of time to pay ... perhaps starting at Easter? Some parents feel £70 in one month is a lot of money.**

- It was agreed that this was a good idea and the school will look into facilitating it.

**AOB**

- **Communication** – Could the school please give more notice about events that are coming up to enable people to plan and budget. This includes St Augustine's events. This will be fed back to St Augustine's.
- **High School Meeting** – Is there a Queensferry High meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January? This will be looked into.

**The next parent Council meeting is Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October – 6.30 pm**

**ACTION SUMMARY**

Action	Owner	Date Due
Send GO copy of the data protection policy	JW	ASAP
PC table at parents evenings to collect info from parents about what they might be able to help with at school	All PC	For parents' evenings
Parents Council to organise teas and coffees for Family Learning Morning from 8.50	All PC	08/11/18
Teas and coffees for nursery open day	All PC	
Check with Business Manger how many lets PC are entitled to	KW	
Survey children about what they would like for Halloween	KW	Done
Set dates for bag packs with supermarkets	JJ	

Bring fundraising ideas to the October PC meeting	All PC	Oct 24 <sup>th</sup>
Send email to wider parent body asking for volunteers for the 60 <sup>th</sup> anniversary team	JJ	
Connect health checks	JW	
Funding request for headphones	GO	
Look into a payment plan for school camp	GO	
Look into whether there is a QFH meeting on 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	GO	