

BLACKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting – Wednesday 5th February 2020

Present: Pauline Ward, Janie Campbell, Gail Hutchison, Louise Grattan, Alyson Bennie, Claire Black, Jenny Bowman, Natalie Brown, Lynsey Clark, Vivien Colquhoun, Lucy Douglas, Fiona Harrigan, Cllr Mark Horsham, Kerry Keegan, Lorna Laird, Jo McGuigan, Christine McMillan, Kimberley Munro, Donna Neeson, Angela Norris, Pamela Paterson, Julie Smith, Carol Strom, Tori Summerville, Wendy Thomson, Susan Wayt

Apologies: Jaclyn Bunten, Angela Craig, Chris Forbes, Philip Frame, Jane Hall, Erin Illingworth, Cllr Colin McGavin, Emma McGeachie, Ashley Meldrum, Fiona Soper, Zoe Stein

Welcome & Apologies

Pauline Ward opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. Apologies from the above named were noted.

Head Teachers Report (see appendix A)

Christine expressed her thanks to the parent forum for their support of the school. The HMIE inspection had been completed and an interim report received. 121 families had completed the questionnaires, which was encouraging.

Staffing – Mrs Kellie will be starting maternity leave in March 2020 and Mr Dickson will cover her teaching commitments. Mrs Stein will commence maternity leave in late March/early April and it is hoped that Mrs Gray will return and be able to cover her commitments, or alternatively management will cover temporarily. Mrs McMillan is currently providing teaching cover within the school at various points.

The movie night before Christmas had been a great success and enjoyed by all.

Since the last meeting there have been various activities within the school, including the P4 Christmas assembly at the church, trips, parties, P5 starting “Clyde in the Classroom”, transition events for P7s and 3 P5 girls representing the school at the West of Scotland Partnership event.

The P6/P7 residential event is coming up in March and 65 pupils are currently due to attend, and P1 enrolment has been completed with 29 new pupils currently expected. This will allow the school to continue with 11 classes in the 20/21 session.

The school improvement plan continues with family learning days for P2 parents at Forest School in the current week, P1 and P2 dictionary workshops planned and the Barnardo’s drop in sessions continuing. P5-P7 have started cross country and the Lanarkshire competition is due in March. Staff training continues, with mental health being one focus.

Christine intimated that a booklet had been circulated to local schools in relation to updating the Parents as Partners protocols. Part of this relates to the position of a Parent Council within the school environment and the commitment of all parents as part of the parent forum.

Christine alluded to an ongoing social media incident which had called into question the integrity of Blackwood Primary School's Parent Council.

Correspondence

Louise intimated that SLC had requested updates for the PC register, which had been duly completed. A final report form had been received in relation to the Falak windmill grant for Scoot to School, which Pauline and Christine were in the process of completing and returning.

In regards to the social night, confirmation of the booking for Blackwood Bowling Club had been received, as well as numerous letters and e-mails in relation to donation of prizes.

Correspondence had also been received, as well as verbal contact, intimating that a parent from the school had engaged other parents in trying to undermine the Parent Council and detract from the upcoming social night. It had been insinuated within a closed social media group that George Hutchison had been hired to provide entertainment, questioning the integrity of the committee and in particular Gail.

Discussion ensued between all present in regards to how this had affected the committee, the personal upset caused to Gail and the integrity of the Parent Council as a whole. The committee fully updated those present in regards to all decisions made in relation to the arrangements for the social night, costs incurred and expected. Everyone present was very supportive of Gail and the committee.

Financial Review

Gail Hutchison gave a financial overview of the accounts since the last meeting.

Since the last meeting, expenditure had been £87.56 for extra sweets for the movie night, the movie licence itself was £184.50 and coach hire for the panto trip was £390.00.

Current bank balance going forward is £3235.78, with £150 still to be returned from Moviebank for the movie deposit.

Currently there is £190 cash in hand for ticket sales for the social night. The Second Chance Shop have donated £200 for gala day expenses, which will be banked.

Gala Day

Jo gave an update on plans for the gala day. As stated, the Second Chance Shop have donated £200 to help with decoration costs, and the Co-Ordination Group have also awarded a £200 microgrant.

It is intended to send out further letters to parents clearly stating that any children participating in the entry will require a responsible adult with them as staff and the Parent Council will not be supervising. Family involvement will be encouraged, with older and younger siblings being welcome to join in.

Each house will be tasked with designing their "country" flag for the procession, with everyone walking in their houses and representing different Olympic sports.

The sub-committee will continue to make plans and bring these to the next meeting.

Social Night

Gail intimated anticipated costs for the social night to be:

£90 for the bowling club (hire and corkage)

£100 to Odette Clark for providing entertainment, with George Hutchison donating his time and use of equipment for free.

£100 maximum for Prosecco

£150 maximum for pakora

£40 for platters and plastic glasses.

Reminder letters will be issued in the next few weeks, with a closing date of 28th February to allow sufficient Prosecco and pakora to be bought in.

Letters, emails and requests had been made to most of the local shops and businesses for donations for raffle prizes, and other suggested donors were added to the list. Louise will contact more of these in the hope of securing more prizes.

AOCB

Following a discussion at the recent Barnardo's drop in session, Lucy Douglas raised parental concerns about cross country. It was intimated that parents were concerned about children being absent on Wednesdays to avoid taking part, and also some experiencing anxiety and fear issues. Alyson Bennie confirmed that all pupils were able to complete the routes at their own pace but were encouraged to try and achieve better times each week. The course is risk assessed prior to pupils leaving the school each Wednesday and the courses amended accordingly. In regards to the competition, no child is forced take part even if picked for the team. Parents present were reassured by this update.

Following a request by another parent, Louise raised the weekly Star of the Week and if this had lost its shine as pupils were sometimes felt to be awarded it just because it was their turn rather than having achieved anything specific. Christine and Alyson stated that in some cases pupils may not be awarded class star at all during the year. Discussion ensued between parents with different views being presented. Christine intimated that this would be looked at in consultation with pupils when due for review.

Julie Smith intimated that she had tried to log on to Education City but had been unsuccessful. She was informed that the school were no longer utilising this programme.

Pauline passed on her gratitude for the work being done with some pupils in the nurture group. Christine stated that this was something which was not routinely intimated in newsletters but was pleased that it was having a positive effect on the participants.

Close

There being no further business, Pauline thanked everyone for attending, and concluded the meeting. The next meeting will be Wednesday 4th March 2020 at 7pm.

Head Teacher Report Wednesday 5th February

HMIe

- Thank the Parent Council and the parent forum for responding to the HMIe questionnaire - 121 families in total
- The outcomes on the whole are positive ... await the report.

Staff

- Mrs Kellie is expecting and is planning to go on maternity leave in early March. P5/4 have been lettered today that this will be covered by Mr Dickson.
- Mrs Stein is expecting and planning to go on maternity leave in late March. Staffing arrangements TBC
- Mrs Gray is returning from maternity leave after the Spring break.
- Mrs McMillan is providing some cover in classes this term to cover bereavement and sickness absences.

Updates

- P4 Class assembly - Church
- P5/4 class assembly - Burns
- P1 trip Science Centre
- P5 Clyde in Class room
- Residential -
- West Partnership Conference - Reading Culture
- Transition events with LHS
- Enrolment 29 for p1

School Improvement Plan

- Family Learning & Personalised Support
 - Barnardos -drop in session- cuppa connect
 - P6 Forest Schools & P2 Forest Schools
 - P1 & 2 dictionary workshops - - 20th February
- Cross Country - P5-7
- CLPL-, Mental Health, West partnership, Number Talks,