



# Blackwood Primary School & ELC Parent Council

Blackwood Primary School, Carlisle Road,  
Blackwood, Lanark, ML11 9AT

**Blackwoodparentcouncil@gmail.com**

## BLACKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting – Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Present

Wendy Thomson (P6 & P2), Laura Watt (P6), Jo McGuigan (P6 & P3), Lisa Tweed (P4 & P1), Alyson Bennie, Ruth Colquhoun, Vivienne Colquhoun, Erin Illingworth, Jenny Bowman, Donna Neeson (P6), Kimberley Millar (P7 & P1), Louise Grattan (P7), Tori Summerville (P6), Emma McGeachie (P6 & P4), Marianne MacDonald (P3), Chloe Semple (P1), Claire Black (P4), Lynsey Clark (P7 & P4), Lisa Ballantyne (P4 & P2), Sarah Smith (P7 & P4), Christine Watson (P4 & P1), Susan Wayt (P6), Evelyn Swan (Gala Day Committee).

### Apologies

Nadine McLlear, Joanne Mills, Fiona Harrigan, Marianne Stewart, Pamela Mitchell

### Welcome

Wendy opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming, especially all the new faces. We are very excited to have everyone here and this is the busiest meeting we've had in a long time.

### Correspondence

Lisa advised there have been no new items received into the PC email, and this quarter's lottery return forms have been completed and returned to the council authority.

### Treasurer's report

Jo gave us a financial update starting with the closing balance from the last meeting of £6565.55.

#### **Income**

- 4x bonus balls, 3 at £59 each and one at £57, totalling £234
- We have received a cheque from Easy Fundraising for £117.49
- We have received the funding grant from the wind farm for the nursery for £4,865
- Total income £5216.49

#### **Outgoings**

- We have tonight passed a cheque to the nursery for £4,865

Giving us a current balance of £6,917.04, however, we are expecting outgoings for leavers hoodies, leavers gift pens, and the science centre trip before the end of term.

#### **Easy Fundraising Update**

- Total raised to date so far is £1692.69
- That's £86.51 raised since last update

### Head teachers report

Since our last meeting

- 3 class assemblies have taken place;
  - P4/3 – Egyptians

- P5/4 – Farm to fork
- P2 – Mini-beasts

All of these assemblies had a great turn out from friends and families, and all classes showcased their learning extremely well.

- Inset day – Emotion Coaching – All staff attended Coalburn Primary for training. Links to our continued focus on being an attachment informed school.
- P7 Residential – Great week had by all on the residential. We will need to survey families for planning for the next few years, , we will discuss this further in the “cost of the school day” later.
- World book day – Thanks to Mrs Colquhoun and the reading leadership group for organising a brilliant day to celebrate our love of reading at BPS
- Burns Competition – A fantastic success and we are very proud of all our performers. Our choir have entered via recording, as requested by the Burns federation and will therefore now not need to perform on 1<sup>st</sup> June as previously indicated. Gabrielle MacDonald (P3) will represent Blackwood Primary in recitation at the National Finals in Gourrock after winning the Lanarkshire round.
- Cross Country – 37 pupils participated in the cross country competition in Lanark. All pupils tried their very best, with 3 pupils finishing in the top 10. Jake McBain (P7), Jayden Gracie (P7) and Finlay Stewart (P6) were all invited to compete in the SLC finals where Finlay had a top ten finish! 3 “team” bronze medals were awarded to P6 boys & girls, and the P7 boys.
- SumDog Competition – Fantastic engagement in the most recent competition with P7/6 and P5 being daily winners, 2 pupils in top 5 positions, and P7/6 being overall winners.
- Dance Festival – Thank you to Mrs Small who ran a dance club twice a week during term 3. Pupils from P4-P7 took part in the Clydesdale Dance Festival at the Lanark Memorial Hall, and were extremely enthusiastic during their performance. Their enjoyment on stage was tangible.
- HMiE Transport Consultation – Parents / Carers from P5-P7 met with Robert Hynd from Education Scotland to share their views on the proposed transport cuts to LHS. A pupil group also shared their views. This consultation will feed into the proposal from SLC when it is published.
- Scots Showcase – All classes shared learning from term 3 at a Scots showcase on the last day of term. We had 2 guest visitors, Mr & Mrs Budgell from Larkhall Burns who presented prizes to P7 winners in the Larkhall Writing Competition, Zoe Gormley (3<sup>rd</sup> place), Ethan Watson (2<sup>nd</sup> place), and Megan Clark (1<sup>st</sup> place). All pieces have been entered into the national Final. Our guests were full of praise for the talent they watched on stage.

**Staffing for 24/25** – We are looking at 9 classes again for next year. Surplus DHT (Depute Head Teacher) has been confirmed, and the process for compulsory transfer has begun.

**Cost of the School Day** conference for SLC took place on 25<sup>th</sup> March. This is something that we often speak about in our school and it has been a consideration in our decision making for a few years now. However, SLC have now created a new policy on this. They have produced rules and guidance that we must follow to reduce any cost implications for families and there are some things that we just can't do any more. An example is surrounding school uniform, all South Lanarkshire Schools will promote the use of affordable inclusive and flexible uniforms for children and young people. This is something we have promoted for quite some time, as we promote the uniform swap, donations through Facebook and the second chance shop. One of the big ones is that no child or young person will need to pay for any aspect of their core curriculum / education. The question there is around school trips, with the idea that all trips should be educational, how do we now try to do these without any cost to families, with one of the biggest expenses being transport. With such big class sizes, it's difficult for us to take a class of 33 (+staff) on a public bus to go anywhere. We had one solution, where all of our P2-P4 teachers this evening attended a course with the Science Centre. On completion of this course, they are able to teach some of the science within their classes, and the Science Centre will offer free entry for all the pupils and cover some of the transport fees to get there. The remainder of the cost of the bus would be £210, which we have asked the Parent Council to cover and they have kindly agreed. As far as **residential trips** go, we are not allowed to ask parents to pay more than £20 a month for this. We need

to look at options on how this will now look going forward, as the cost of the bus alone this year was £2000. We plan to survey parents to help us with our decisions around this to help us establish if it should be a week, or less, which year groups should go and how often we offer the trips eg just P7 every year or P6 & P7 every other year. The other consideration will be the P6 pupils who didn't go this year as they chose to wait for next year, so we don't want to disappoint them either. A lot of schools only go away for 2 nights. It is a great experience for the children, being able to go away with all of their friends.

### **Emotion Coaching – Jenny Bowman**

Jenny spoke to us about the recent training that all staff at BPS have recently received and gave us the opportunity to review and discuss the responsibilities of the staff, pupils and parents.

Relationship Policy - Built on promoting positive relationships and understanding distressed behaviour  
Attachment/trauma informed schools

6 attachment pledges

- See the whole person
- Hear the voice
- Recognise behaviour as communication
- Respond with compassion
- Act to make a difference
- Believe in change

6 principles of nurture

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe base
- Nurture is important in the development of wellbeing
- Language is understood as a vital means of communication
- Transitions are significant in children's lives
- All behaviour is communication

Recent introduction of our 3 school expectations

- Be Respectful
- Be Ready
- Be Safe

We have started our "Going Above and Beyond Expectations" postcards, which are given out every week at assembly to identify and celebrate those pupils who are consistently going the extra mile in school.

It is important that we have consistency across our school community, so our relationships policy sets our clear expectations for all staff, pupils and parents.

### **Any Other Business**

- **Online Incident / Snapchat** – We look at and often talk about internet safety within the school. Unfortunately, we now have a lot of children with mobile phones and using social media platforms. A recent bullying incident on Snapchat has been highlighted to us and we would like to remind parents that the age restrictions for social media platforms are there for a reason and none of our children within the school meet the minimum age requirements. We have spoken to parents about these incidents, but they continue to happen. We actually have P2 pupils speaking the language that is being imposed on them on these platforms. How else can we deal with this, as whilst it is not technically a school issue, it is becoming a school issue when these things are affecting the children at school. Parents need to take a responsibility for their children and understand the implications of

allowing them on social media. We are even aware of children receiving messages at 4am and there is a pressure on the children to reply straight away to messages.

➤ **Catering update** – Alyson met with the Facility Service Officer on behalf of the Parent Council to pass on the complaints we had collated from parents and pupils about the food. Some of the points discussed were;

- Quality of cooked food
- Kitchen running out of certain items
- Salad trolley
- Food waste
- Wrist band system
- Cereal Options

Since this meeting, an additional audit has been carried out and the ordering system has been discussed with the cook and rectified. We have agreed that the pupils will be encouraged to take options to avoid waste, and the teachers would monitor the salad bar, to avoid it running out. The food does seem to have improved and we now have pupils queuing for seconds and more fruit, which suggests an improvement.

➤ **Gala Day** – Evelyn Swan from the Gala Day Committee attended the meeting to let us know about the gala day plans for this year and to ask if we could get involved. They are looking for the 3 schools to take part with dressing up, taking part in the parade and perhaps create some healthy competition between the 3 schools. This year, we will be having inflatables, climbing wall, trampolines, petting zoo, and mascots. We are offering a wristband to all children who take part, which will give them some of these activities for free. We are also looking at an art competition for the children to create a logo for this year. We are open to any other suggestions to help us bring the gala day back and help it grow. Bent & St Johns have entered through their parent councils, it doesn't have to be expensive, but please consider it? The Gala Day is on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June. We will look to see if we can get a sub group set up to come up with ideas. Louise Grattan asked about the parade route and mentioned that it misses a large part of Blackwood by missing out the Wimpey's. Is there a way that the route could be adjusted to a similar route that Santa takes, to include more of the village and hopefully get more people involved, as most of the gala day court were down that way last time, and their houses were all decorated. Evelyn said she will take that back to the committee and see if that can be altered. The Parent Council will post to our FB group to see if any parents would be able to set up a sub group to assist with this.

### **Next meeting (AGM)**

Wed 28th August 2024, face to face in the school.

### **Close**

Wendy again thanked everyone for coming, and for their input, it's been a very productive meeting with a lot covered. We hope you can all join us again next year for the AGM, where we will need to elect 3 new council positions. Parent Council office bearers are in role for a maximum period of 3 years. At the AGM we will need to elect 3 of these roles – Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The current role holders have thoroughly enjoyed their time and roles, and would welcome anyone who may be interested in being elected to one of these positions to have a chat with us or speak to the school.

### **Blackwood Parent Council 2023/2024 –**

Wendy Thomson (Chair), Laura Watt (Vice-Chair), Jo McGuigan (Treasurer), Lisa Tweed (Secretary)

#### **In support of -**

Blackwood Primary School, Carlisle Road,  
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Head Teacher – Ms Christine McMillan

#### **In collaboration with -**

South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources  
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