

Parent Council Minutes 28th September 2020

Attendees: Sandra Dargie, Anne Scott, Rachel Liddell, Kirsty Gallen, Katie Campbell, Charlie Goldsmith, Gordon McIntyre, Geraldine Forsyth, Stuart Lithgow, Mandy White, Karen Souza, Emma McLoughlin, Morag Morrison, Neil Gibson, Rita Nogueira, Alistair Keil, Alison Lynas, Mark Brown, Jen Jones.

Apologies: Jennifer Borthwick, Orla Irwin

Introductions

Sandra opened the meeting and invited everyone to introduce themselves and share the year groups their children are in. All year groups were represented except primary one.

Meeting Minutes

- 1. Communications:** Karen advised of plans for a communications campaign to highlight for all parents and carers that the parent council is here, who we are and what we do. She suggested a logo competition (for the children) to help establish a new brand and that this could be decided via a vote on the FB page. She continued that social media updates, including the parent council FB page were planned. Some parents commented that they didn't use it or disliked FB but it was emphasised this is only one channel of communication and the plan is for consistency of brand and message across many channels. The group were generally supportive of the approach.
- 2. Clothing cooperative:** Emma reminded the group of this initiative, which had been in full swing just before lockdown. The plan is to help families obtain used uniform if they need it, and also to help make uniform more sustainable by reuse and recycling within the school community. It also helps deal with our mountain of lost property and saves good quality uniform going into the recycle bank. There will be an option to donate for parent council funds if people wish to. Until we can access school for this (rails are already there) we will use a FB / Freecycle page and it was suggested a link to this could be added to the parent council page on the school website, if guidelines allow. Whilst donations cannot be made whilst this is online, the group agreed this was a great initiative to get underway as soon as possible.
- 3. Fundraising lottery:** Morag advised that the existing raffle licence (renewal due in December) would cover this proposed initiative, which would be a means of raising funds for school whilst our options are so very limited. Participants must be 18 or over and purchase a ticket for £1 – with ideally a minimum commitment of £2 a month, where lottery numbers are allocated on a first come, first serve basis. 50% paid out in prizes (first, second and third) and 50% to parent council funds. There must be 2 witnesses for each draw. The group agreed this was a good fun way to raise funds and the small participant fee helped alleviate any gambling concerns amongst the group. Sandra and Emma to follow up with their cluster and local school contacts for more guidance on the practicalities. **Action: Sandra / Emma**

4. **Christmas cards:** Charlie is running this for 2020 and advised this is underway and another great initiative to raise funds – c£550 raised in 2019. Templates to be done by the October week for submission to the supplier and aim to have all cards back by 1st December. We will raise awareness of this via the FB page and newsletters and make sure parents are aware of other items the art can be applied to – mugs, etc.
5. **Charity registration:** Kirsty confirmed the constitution has been updated and this was approved, with no comments or issues raised. Kirsty, Sandra and Katie to be noted as Trustees and Kirsty will now proceed. Once the application is through, this gives the parent council access to apply for many more grants, gifts for raffles, etc and greatly enhances our fundraising opportunities. Kirsty also noted that as part of her investigations, she found we have Easy Fundraising set up and that monies for this and following a discussion, she and Charlie said they would make some enquiries as to which account receives these donations. **Action: Kirsty, Charlie**

The group noted an earlier discussion about utilising ParentPay for donations for any specific fundraising initiatives – Gordon to check. **Action: Gordon**

Kirsty encouraged any fundraising ideas to be sent to the parent council email address – clermistonparentcouncil@hotmail.co.uk.

6. **Parking and school crossing:** Mark B reminded that this issue has been ongoing for 3 years and that Active Travel have attended previous meetings to help get a solution in place following huge efforts and publicity by the parent council and Charlie in particular. Mark has been advised that approval is there and that the contract should be awarded by Christmas. The group discussed and agreed that no further delays would be acceptable even if it meant the crossing work had to be done during term time, and requested that the school be informed of dates asap to let the school advise the parent body accordingly. Gordon advised that a parent volunteer has also offered to help with putting out our static lollipop men/women whilst COVID restrictions mean this cannot be done by the Junior Road Safety Officers (who are a mixed group).

7. **Head Teacher report:**

Staffing - Gordon advised that Mrs Will is due to retire at the end of term after 25 years with the school and that, along with Mrs Manchester from the nursery, they have over 50 years of service and knowledge between them. The school will be sure to acknowledge their contributions as best they can and roles will be advertised and filled in due course, where nursery vacancies are currently being filled by temporary staff. PSA posts are also being advertised currently.

Coronavirus - Gordon noted how impressed he has been by the pupils, and also thanked the parent body for the vast majority willingly complying with the new rules and that parents being there in the morning really helps the children. There have been no cases in school so far, but he is confident we have the right protocols in place as and when we do. He continued that school is not all about coronavirus – it is not quite the same but there is lots of normality to school which has come back to

life since August and we have had a very positive start to the school year. Meet the teacher and parent consultations will move online and planning is underway.

Improvement plan – the plan this year is focusing on digital input, maths, delivering learning in different ways and in equality training, with some excellent resources this year for staff which they can engage with throughout the year. The group discussed impact on learning given lockdown and Gordon replied that there had been a variety of approaches and experiences for children and so it is not being tackled wholesale, but rather a range of ways to balance things out for each child – informative testing, Big Maths check-ins, etc. A “closing the gap” teacher has been assigned to support p2 and p3 children. Over 200 responses were received from parents which has helped teachers enormously and these have all been read.

Outdoor learning – to continue over the winter and “wet weather” outdoor plans (ex the grass) has been planned on paper with some practical work still to be done but in progress. The group wondered if fundraising for a shelter / supports to support outdoor learning would help and Gordon advised he would consult staff for ideas.

Action: Gordon

Hot food – Rachel queried this, and Gordon noted some practical challenges – it is being provided in nursery because the space allows it. There is no solution yet, but the school are keen to get a hot food option back as soon as possible.

8. **Treasurer report:** having recently taken over, Rachel has spent time catching up with unpaid invoices and balancing the accounts. There is £2,500 in the bank and the group discussed and agreed to review the annual commitments list at the next meeting to discuss what we can do this year.

Katie suggested that the p7 leaving dance funds should be discussed and proposals to either hand this on to the current p7 group who will have some limited options this year, or an alternative plan for those funds. Katie to get some feedback and bring back to the group next time.

Action: Katie

9. **Community council updates:** Alistair advised that he doesn't think the community council are meeting just now given the restrictions but delighted that after school clubs are back, and the church is open for a maximum of 35.

10. AOB:

- a. Food bank – Morag noted the foodbank in Corstorphine Community Centre is taking donations on a Wednesday morning and would welcome donations.