

LOW PORT PRIMARY SCHOOL: PARENT COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting
Wednesday 20 January 2016

Attendees

Jeremy Fuller - Chair
 Jennifer Ovenstone-O'Donnell - Secretary
 Alice Buckley
 Judith Paley
 Susan Saunders
 Richard Payne
 Rebecca Holmes

Co-Opted Members

Stephen Blake - St Michaels
 Susan Johnston - Class Teacher
 Jane Livingston - Head Teacher
 Tom Kerr - Provost
 Lauren Smith - Class Teacher

Unable to attend:

Carla Bisht
 Andy McGowan
 Fiona Maxwell
 Lynne Lamont - Trust Fund Treasurer
 Tom Conn - Councillor

1. Welcome

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting And Matters Arising: 04 November 2015

Tom Kerr raised a query about the sign referred to in previous minutes. Tom will check on the status of this. It was noted that the original action point was from the meeting in May 2015.

AREA FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	OUTCOME
Bring material forward from last years' activities to create Composite Class User Guide.	Susan, Richard, Judith	Progressing, material to be presented at January 20 th PC Meeting.
Provide a parent to speak on Composite Classes at induction meetings next year.	Volunteer to be identified closer to the time.	On hold, not required until May
Final review of PC Constitution [2015] prior to upload	Jeremy	Proposed editorial corrections reviewed. Pending upload to website. Jeremy will propose a further amendment, targeted at the September 2016 AGM, which will offer guidelines for PC Chairperson re-election.

3. Head Teacher Update - Mrs Livingston

Context: Mrs Livingston provided an update on recent developments. A comprehensive written summary is provided in **Annex A** of this report.

Discussion: It was questioned whether we are under the Health and Safety maximum height recommendations for the playground equipment being considered. Mrs Livingston indicated that this was the case.

Outcome: No actions.

4. Composite Class Structure - Sub-Team Wrap Up - Primes: Susan Saunders, Judith Paley, Richard Payne

Context: Members of the Composite Classes Sub-Team from last year presented a summary of suggestions for enhancing the experience of children in composite classes. There was a discussion on next steps, including the possibility of producing a leaflet for parent/carers. This would be of value to people new to the school and those dealing with the issue of composite classes for the first time.

Discussion: Feedback had been given to the school and the school had taken suggestions into consideration. Composite Classes are a recursive topic. Hence the point of documenting the topic so the material can be reused. Mrs Livingston is maintaining a hardcopy repository of PC related material for future Parent Councils/Teachers to have as a reference.

Outcome: Sub-group members will meet with Mrs Livingston to develop an updated document on composite classes taking into account feedback from the school on practical considerations. A final review of this document will take place at the next PC meeting.

5. Central Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) Data - Setting Expectations and Understanding Limitations - Prime: Open discussion

Context: CEM testing is part of life at Low Port Primary. The data from these tests provide a number of opportunities for the school in terms of highlighting areas where children are performing well, doing as expected or where additional attention is required. The one thing CEM is not; is data for creating public school league tables. This was an open discussion to help understand some of the limitations of CEM data's use, and to investigate the value of requesting further information.

Discussion: CEM tests take place over the course of one week to allow for various factors such as timetabling, hardware availability and absences within groups. They are one assessment of many but are of particular interest as a quantitative assessment. However they are not always a valid picture of ability and this is taken into consideration as part of the monitoring and tracking process. P7s take the CEM in February/March and the data is passed on to the High School. It may also be available for discussion at the Parents Evening in March. For the rest of the school the testing period is in April/May. The best time for feedback is therefore, at the Parents Evening in October in the following session. This gives time for assessing the data and passing it on to the next year's class teacher. There is a council leaflet providing information on CEM testing. It was suggested that this be sent out via email. It was noted that the data is also used for quality assurance purposes.

Outcome: Mrs Livingston to draft information on CEM testing for next Parent Council meeting. The objective is to work towards something helpful for the Parent Forum. Discuss the role of CEM data in the wider quality assurance process within WLC.

6. Another Item - Parent/Carer Input - Prime: TBD

Outcome: No additional discussion items were forthcoming. Parents and carers are encouraged to provide input on topics they would like to discuss at Parent Council Meetings.

7. School Ground Update - Prime: Mrs Livingston

Context: Update on activities related to the school ground, including progress with regard to new equipment in the play area.

Discussion: The school is over half way on fund raising, thanks to ETF for its generous contribution. Good sponsorship activity around sponsored silence. The hope is to get to the target, near or shortly after the end of the year. Should applications for grants be submitted? Key issue is time and volunteers to do this.

Outcome: An appeal (from PTA) for volunteers to go out on Groupmail for people interested in looking into grants and for setting up and helping out with Sparkle Night.

8. Rose Garden Development - Prime: Alice Buckley

Context: The Parent/Carer feedback document on the proposed Rose Garden development was submitted to the primary stakeholders of West Lothian Council (WLC) and Burgh Beautiful, in early November. They appreciated the format and detail in the document. On December 3rd Alice represented the Parent Council at a site visit for stakeholders. A revised proposal was created in early December. The process is now awaiting the creation of official WLC drawings.

Discussion: Tom Kerr provided an update. The proposal for the Rose Garden is with WLC Construction Services. The hope is to have a plan soon to be shared and then go out to tender. There is the issue of how school drop-off and collection will be managed during the works. The ideal is for the work to take place during the Easter holidays so that the summer planting can be done at the appropriate time and the works are not disruptive.

Outcome: Waiting for further update from council.

9. Development of Next Parent Forum Survey - Prime: Richard Payne

Context: The school and the Parent Council actively want to hear parent and carer views on a range of topics.

Discussion: It was highlighted that the value of a survey was to address a clearly identified purpose.

Outcome: No topic and objective was identified at this meeting. Holding a survey will continue to be considered going forwards along with primes to develop questions and a deadline for sending the survey.

10. Update on Training with Scottish Parent Teacher Council (SPTC)

Primes: Jeremy Fuller, Jennifer Ovenstone-O'Donnell, Richard Payne

Context: In this 2015-16 academic year, WLC has paid a regional subscription to the SPTC. As such, Low Port Parent Council and PTA have access to SPTC services and insurance. Jeremy, Jennifer and Richard attended training sessions held at Broxburn Academy. This was a great opportunity to obtain guidance on Parent Council activities, meet representatives from other schools and hear there about their experiences. The next training session is at Broxburn Academy on 2nd Feb (TBC). Investigations are ongoing into whether Low Port could host a subsequent training session. The hope is to boost engagement from other schools in Linlithgow.

Outcome: Proposal to host a training session provided by the SPTC in Low Port. PTA might be able to supply the tea and coffee supplies.

11. Any other Business

Outcome: No additional business topics.

AREA FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Collaborate on the creation and update of the composite class report document. Submit for review at the next Parent Council meeting	Susan Saunders, Judith Paley, Mrs Livingston
Draft Guidance information on CEM testing	Mrs Livingston
Investigate the role of CEM data in the wider quality assurance process within WLC.	Richard, Jeremy
Circulate an audit tool from SPTC for next parent forum survey	Richard

Next meeting date: Wednesday 9th March - 7pm in School library

Annex A:

Head Teacher Report for Parent Council Meeting 20.01.16

Staffing

There have been changes to WLC [West Lothian Council] Management structure. Jim Cameron is now Head of Service for Secondary and our new Head of Service for Primary is Donna McMaster.

Ronnie announced his retirement yesterday to the school. A Groupcall has gone out to inform all families. Mrs Walls, our PE teacher, commences her maternity leave on 28th January. During this time, PE will be delivered by Mrs Caroline Cameron, who has just returned from her maternity leave, and by class teachers.

Mr McRae commences paternity leave after Easter. We will put cover arrangements in place for the class over this 2 week period.

We have experienced some staff absence but we are trying to ensure wherever possible that this is covered by one teacher for consistency for the pupils. Other cover is in place from this week to cover RCCT [Reduced Class Contact Time].

Ailsa Robb will be working with Miss Cuthbert (P3/2), and Jane Donald will be working with Mrs Johnston (P5).

Mrs Barker has decided to retire at the summer holidays.

SIP [School Improvement Plan]

We are continuing to make progress. All reading resources now reorganised.

I have organised GIRFEC [Getting It Right For Every Child] training at cluster level.

There is Active literacy training later this term with cluster colleagues. There is a best practice visit linked to this in another authority.

I will continue to provide progress updates in newsletters.

Grounds update

There was a successful meeting with the PPP [Public Private Partnership] monitoring officer and Alphaschools about the play equipment. I now need to go back and talk to the provider. There are specific questions and queries to clarify and we may be required to put out what we want to wider tender. However I am hopeful that we can work towards having the logistics in place for when the funding is ready.

VSE [Validated Self-Evaluation]

I am part of the team at Addiewell Primary School next week. This is an opportunity for development for the whole school.

School works

There will be new carpets going in to the upper school at Easter and we are buying new chairs as the current ones are causing damage and are beginning to break.

Reorganisation of the office has taken place.

Security

We have been asked to check that security is effective as there have been a few instances of unrecorded adults being within the school without signing in. When outwith office hours, there may not be someone to man the front entrance. The door is open from 8.15am - 8.30am for breakfast club but there may not be a member of staff there to let someone in earlier. After school clubs - the adult taking the club will ensure that the children are taken to the door.

School Website

There are to be changes to school websites to ensure that they are linked and protected by WLC and consistent. The information I have to date is that a project team will be in place throughout the project and will discuss topics including:

- *Specification requirements to best meet the needs of schools on an individual and collective basis*
 - *Review best practice currently being utilised and ensure these elements are considered as part of specifications*
 - *Establish effective governance in terms of content management etc*
 - *Create a plan to establish when each school will fit in to the project*
 - *Establish any training needs required within schools in terms of content management*
- Meetings are planned to commence in January.*
This will be a long term piece of work and detailed consultation with schools and stakeholders is vital.

I would be very keen that our website, which is very well used, does not lose any of its content and have contacted one of the WLC project members to discuss this with them. It was indicated to me that an approximate timescale for this is over the next 2 years. I have made Mr Cooke aware of these plans as he has put much time, effort and skill in developing our website to such a high standard.