



Location: LOW PORT PRIMARY SCHOOL: PARENT COUNCIL
Time: Wednesday 2th November 2016 7:00 – 8:45pm at Low Port Primary School

Minutes

Attendees

Jeremy Fuller – Chair
Jennifer Ovenstone-O'Donnell – Secretary
Alice Buckley
Rebecca Holmes – PTA Chair
Fiona Maxwell
Judith Paley
Andrew MacIntyre – Trust Fund Treasurer
Susan Saunders

Co-opted Members

Stephen Blake – St Michaels
Tom Kerr – Councillor
Tom Conn – Councillor
Lauren Smith – Class Teacher
Jane Livingston – Head Teacher

Apologies

Richard Payne, Douglas Maxwell, Kelly Robertson

1. Welcome – (7:00, 5 mins)

Jeremy chaired the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

Mrs Livingston indicated she will be talking about the quality improvement processes which most don't see.

Previous minutes are approved and are on the website.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising: 31 August 2016 – (7:05, 10 mins)

AREA FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	Outcome
Provide information about procedures relating to quality assurance and self-evaluation.	Mrs Livingston	See item 4.
Talk to Mr McRae about arranging collaboration and/or a meeting between the Pupil Council and the Parent Council.	Mrs Livingston/ Jeremy Fuller	A meeting between the PC and Public Council is tentatively scheduled for January
Consult the Eco-committee about the future of the eco-greenhouse	Miss Smith	Decision to keep and fix.

Investigate follow up action on the GroupCall limitation of only one email address per child.	Jeremy Fuller	To follow up.
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2.1 Limitation of Groupcall emails:

Context: Jeremy had previously approached West Lothian Council (WLC) about the issue of the integration of SEMIS data base and Groupcall. Currently, Groupcall emails only go to one parent as 'primary' contact. The data base does not allow for two entries (email addresses) per child.

Discussion: Jeremy went direct to the Council, initially, but was bounced. Mrs Livingston then raised it, but, as it was seen as an IT request, it bounced back as 'not education'. The core problem is integration.

The Groupcall service is free, while the school used to pay for 'parent mail'. One way around the limitation is for a different parent to be allocated per child, (but this doesn't solve the issue in the case of there being only one child). It is also labour intensive to administer.

Action: Tom Kerr said he would look at the issue. Jeremy to forward Tom details.

3. Head Teacher update – Mrs Livingston (7:15, 15 mins)

Summary provided in Annex 1

4. Quality improvement cycle - Prime: Mrs Livingston (7:30, 15 mins)

Context: Mrs Livingston will discuss activities around the school's continuing improvement program. There will be an opportunity to provide Parent Council input.

Discussion: The improvement process is evidence-based and a continuous activity which goes on throughout the year. There is a working time agreement of a 35 hour working week. 22.5 hours are class contact time. 2.5 hours are RCTT(reduced class contact time), i.e. for PE, Music, and assemblies. The rest of the hours are mapped out for the year. There are recommendations from the Council for these, but it is different for each school. Cluster events are working time agreement.

Outcome: No further action for the Parent Council at this time.

5. Policy Behaviour Review – Prime: Mrs Livingston (7:45, 10 mins)

Context: Mrs Livingston will provide an overview of this activity and feedback from a pupil feedback group. There will be an opportunity to provide Parent Council input.

Discussion: The following feedback was provided by the children on the topic of behaviour.

- Both P1-3s and P4-7s said they liked the Golden Rules: do be gentle, do be kind, etc.
- The Class Charter allows for 30 minutes at the end of week for 'golden time' but classes opted to earn their golden time instead.
- Pupils said they felt happy and safe.
- Some of the older ones said tackling in football had improved.
- Some pupils had been 'talking back' to pupil support staff. To highlight the need for respect children are now required to address support staff by their title and surname, rather than first names.
- Some pupils wanted rewards to be the same and fair across classes.
- It was found that stickers lose appeal from P5 upwards. Some children found them to be 'embarrassing'.
- Sanctions - loss of golden time was generally accepted as fair.
- Every teacher had a different way to reward, i.e. stickers collected at the back of jotter.
- Warning cards and reward cards were issued on the playground.

It was felt to be important to sign up children to their own rewards/punishments, e.g. 2 warnings, then 5 minutes off golden time. If the behaviour was of serious concern then a parent was phoned, or pupils were told see the Head Teacher. Occasional facilitation of disputes between pupils was required to resolve a situation. Pupils and staff had discussed the word 'bullying'. Bullying was only bullying if it was ongoing and persistent; not just a word said in anger. The school emphasised a 'restorative' attitude to conflict.

Pupils also discussed the meaning of the word 'challenge' and what it looked like. P6-7s have written what it means. Groups came up with a common definition: 'to be pushed out of your comfort zone; to use more of your brain'. The idea of a growth mind set was discussed at cluster level. Often children who are clever are less prone to tackle challenge because of a fear of failure or being seen to be less clever than their peers. These are life-long issues, so it is important to let the wider parent body know that for us (the School) it is not a contest but about achieving a breadth of learning, e.g. applying math skills to a worded problem, not just getting to the next page in a text book.

Outcome: No further action for the Parent Council at this time.

6. Parental Engagement Framework Prime: Mrs Livingston (7:55, 10 mins)

Context: Mrs Livingston will provide an overview of this West Lothian Council initiative. This is mostly an information session.

Discussion: WLC has produced a detailed document to outline best practice in the aim to obtain good parental engagement.

Parents had asked for early warning of events via School Calendar which the school did at the start of year.

There will be an open afternoon, where parents can pick and choose events they want to attend. Every class will be doing maths or literacy.

Outcome: No further action for the Parent Council at this time.

7. PTA update – Prime: Rebecca Holmes (8:05, 5 mins)

Context: Update on latest developments in the PTA.

Discussion:

- There was a successful photography day with 32 families arriving for photos. The PTA made £640 pounds. Last year was a very big fund raising year, so this year the PTA is looking for a quieter year, fundraising- wise.
- The ETF money has been spent on bereavement provisions and Spanish books, many of which were chosen by children, as well as on online learner resources.
- The PTA has looked at how best to do online ticketing and payments. Instead of changing names every time, the aim is to create a much simpler payment scheme.
- The entire committee is coming up for re-election next year, so to ensure continuity, a tiered membership has been proposed to incorporate those who are regular meeting attendees, along with those who contribute particular skills where necessary, i.e. design, etc.
- The PTA would like to increase engagement. Only 4-5 people regularly attend PTA meetings. It was also felt there was a relatively low attendance at the AGM. There may be a perception that things are going well, so people step back, but the same committee are getting tired after 2-3 years. Involvement is only as regular as individuals want it to be, hence the tiered membership.
- There was a suggestion to publicise small chunks of time/tasks, e.g. 'wedding list of jobs'; a timesheet with various tasks for people to sign up to, e.g. in so many days apply for drink license. Create a checklist for events that new committees could re-use. Get father's involved.

Outcome: No further action for the Parent Council at this time. Those interested in assisting the PTA should contact pta@lppspeople.org.uk

8. School Grounds update – Prime: Miss Smith (8:10, 15 mins)

8.1 Context: Update on activities related to the school grounds. Discussion on the future plans for the bottle Green House and related vandalism matters.

Discussion: Miss Smith provided an update. After a one hour session with the children the general consensus was to keep the eco-greenhouse. It was felt that too much hard work had gone in just to knock it down. Even after mentioning vandals the kids were still enthusiastic about keeping it.

8.2 Discussion: Climbing wall project update – everything is ready on the financial side, however, things have stalled otherwise. An archaeologist is required to be on site where digging is to take place below a certain depth on historic grounds. Work needs to be done during school holidays. It is hoped that it can be done before the summer holidays.

Action: Jeremy to contact Lorraine Asquith (Alpha) and Craig Henderson (Council) about the slow progress with regard to the installation of playground equipment.

8.3 Discussion: After school club is missing a light at the back of the school on the left. The pavement is uneven and is dangerous as it is very dark. There are also two lights not working in the parking lot.

Action: Mrs Livingston to investigate.

9. Update on regional PC meeting – Prime: whoever went (8:25, 5 mins)

Context: A West Lothian Parent Forum meeting was held at St Margaret’s Academy on Wednesday, 21st September, 2016

Outcome: No one from the PC was able to attend. The official minutes will be sought.

10. Any other Business (8:30, 15mins)

10.1 Context: Planning for the year. Pupil Council and Parent Council collaboration.

Discussion: The best time to have a face to face dialogue with some representation from the Pupil Council is during the virtual learning session on a Friday when the Pupil Council meet.

Action: Proposed date for Parent Council/Pupil Council meeting: 13th January, 3-4 to come. 11-12 am. Additionally, the PTA will ask Pupil Council to give ideas for Gala Day.

10.2 Context: Education Scotland meeting report. How does the Parent Council achieve greater engagement with the Parent Forum?

Discussion: Does the PC want to do a survey? There were 69 responses for the PTA uniform survey. We can do a review to see if parents are satisfied with the status quo, e.g. Groupcall- is it a problem? Ask about communications in general. There should also be the opportunity to feed in some PTA questions (re AGM, etc.)

Action: Focus group to meet to prepare survey questions: The following people volunteered: Jennifer, Alice and Judith. Rebecca will provide PTA input.

Next meeting date: Wednesday 1 February 2017, 7-8:45pm in G.P. Room

AREA FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Send Tom Kerr details of the GroupCall limitation regarding sending emails to multiple contacts per family.	Jeremy Fuller
Engage Alpha School and West Lothian Council about moving the playground equipment installation forwards.	Jeremy Fuller
Confirm arrangements for the Parent Council to meet with the Pupil Council on 13 th January with McRae.	Mrs Livingston
Investigate lighting situation on route to out of hours club entrance	Mrs Livingston
Develop input for a Parent Forum Survey	Alice, Judith, Jennifer, Rebecca

ANNEX 1

HT Report for Parent Council 2 November 2016

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Staffing

No changes at this time.

Improvement Plan

We are making good progress in the priorities.

Priority 1

Teachers have begun working with cluster colleagues towards moderation of either maths or literacy. They have looked at the new Scottish Government benchmarks and how these will impact on learning. All teachers within the school are working as a trio to plan, assess and moderate learning in maths/numeracy. Additional SEAL [Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning] sessions for staff have taken place. A SEAL parent session for P1 and P2 also took place. Our whole school family learning event is planned for 22 November with the focus being learning in maths/numeracy.

Priority 2

Small changes have been made in the way we track and monitor progress to bring in wellbeing indicators. Pupils have been consulted in ways to track achievement (reflection jotters).

P1-3 teachers have had training in using the Online Learner's Journey as a profile. This is currently being populated with plans to launch the live system in January to those families along with an interim report at that time. This will impact on the end of session report in June with P1-3 format being different to P4-7.

Additional Tasks

- All staff have had bereavement training. A policy has been drafted, a toolkit is being developed for support and PTA/ETF have agreed to funding for resources.
- The positive behaviour policy review has begun. Pupils were consulted in October; staff were consulted October/November and information will be shared with parents tonight.
- Eco schools – VLG plan.
- 1+2 planning and resources have been audited and reviewed. PTA/ETF funded Spanish resource.
- There is a focus group working towards Dyslexia Friendly Schools approaches. A parent, 2 Academy pupils and Mrs Cleland are meeting on a weekly basis. Academy staff and pupils are working together with us on developing this further. An assembly for P4-7 will take place on Friday 4th with a focus on dyslexia. Passport to Success are being used to support pupils with dyslexia.
- Growth Mindset training has taken place with Professor Barry Hymer with all cluster schools attending. P6 and P7 have been exploring challenge and growth mindsets as part of their class work.
- We are using the Parental Engagement Framework appendices to help us plan to further develop family learning in line with our current priorities and additional tasks.
- We are working more collaboratively across the school – second level planning together around Shakespeare; whole school anti bullying focus with Rookie Rockstars.

Parent Night Booking Changes

Overall feedback was very positive from families. There were some administrative issues but we have learned from these should the decision be to use this system. PTA/ETF have agreed to fund this should the consensus be to move towards using this system. However, it is reliant in parents/carers opening electronic messages to see the changes/how to use it!

Quality Improvement

An example of our calendar.

Budget Information

As a school, I have access to two budgets – the school budget that comes from WLC and school fund.

School budget – for educational supplies, such as jotters, art materials, textbooks, etc. Resources must come from approved suppliers through PECOS. This budget has been cut over recent years due to changes in printing/copying and also to our school role.

School fund – can hold a small sum of money for ad hoc items such as taster sessions in a class; teacher receipts in small amounts. This holds temporary payments for school camps and such like. At the moment the funding from the PTA is there for the outdoor play equipment. The money is quite limited. It covers some fluidity and movement of money. For example, if PTA pay for parties, the money goes in here and I am reimbursed by cheque for ordering on my card.

I do not have access to sums of money to pay for lots of extra-curricular items.