

Location: LOW PORT PRIMARY SCHOOL: PARENT COUNCIL
Time: Wednesday 8th March 2017, 7:00 – 8:45pm at Low Port Primary School

Minutes

Jeremy Fuller – Chair
Jennifer Ovenstone-O'Donnell – Secretary
Alice Buckley
Rebecca Holmes – PTA Chair
Richard Payne
Susan Saunders
Kelly Robertson
Andrew Macintyre
Fiona Maxwell
Kirsty Pllu

Co-opted Members

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

Apologies

Douglas Maxwell, Judith Paley, Tom Conn – Councillor

1. Welcome – Jeremy (7:00, 5 mins)

Minutes of Parent Council meeting on 01st February 2017 approved. These are available on the Low Port website.

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

AREA FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	Outcome
Send Tom Kerr details of the GroupCall limitation regarding sending emails to multiple contacts per family.	Jeremy Fuller	Outstanding – Jeremy to create a problem statement outlining the issue and the request.

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

Discussion: (see Annex A)

Outcome: No Parent Council actions identified

4. Development of Parent Forum Survey – Primes: Alice, Judith, Jennifer, Rebecca (7:30, 30 mins)

Context: The PC is creating a survey to gather input from Parent and Carers. This will be the second update from the PC sub-team working on the creation of the survey.

Discussion: Initially the PC sub-team focused on the issue of Parental Engagement as a topic for a Parent Survey. After further research, it was concluded that it would be more useful if this activity evolved into a detailed investigation into Parental Engagement at Low Port and a separate survey created seeking feedback on the Parent Council itself.

Parental Engagement Framework

West Lothian Council (WLC) currently is focused on Parental Engagement, and is actively involved with this initiative. The PC sub-team met with Mrs Livingston to review and discuss the information the PC sub-team had produced so far.

The PC sub-team reported to the Parent Council that they felt that there were many areas identified in the Council's Parental Engagement initiative, which the school addressed very well. The PC sub-team may summarise their findings in a document in the May timeframe. Further activities may also stem from this.

One area of Parental Engagement that is expected to change in the near term is the school's website. Ownership of this will transfer to WLC, though the exact timeframe has not been set. The PC sub-team felt better to assess this aspect of Parental Engagement after the changeover.

Parent Council Feedback Survey

Using a baseline of a few suggested questions, the meeting drafted the following set of questions during the meeting for a Parent Forum Survey. The objective of this survey is to obtain feedback to improve the operation and focus of the Parent Council.

Survey Questions:

1) The Scottish government defines the role of the parent council by the list of bullet points below. In your opinion, how well is the Low Port Primary parent council meeting these objectives?

- Supporting the school in its work with pupils [Yes/No/Matrix]
- Representing the views of parents [Yes/No/Matrix]
- Promoting contact between the school, parent, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community [Yes/No/Matrix]
- Reporting to the Parent Forum [Yes/No/Matrix]

2) Could you please expand on your answers above? [COMMENTS BOX]

3) How would you like the Parent Council to communicate information, their activities and feedback?
[Multi-choice – newsletter, website, email, blog]

4) Do you know who to approach with concerns or topics that you would like the Parent Council to try and address? [Yes/No]

5) Would you like to be more involved in Parent Council [Yes/No].

- If Yes, how could we support you to do this? [Comment Box]
- If No, are there barriers preventing you from becoming more involved in Parent Council? [Comment Box].

6) What other feedback would you like to give the Parent Council? [Text based response]

All parents are welcome to participate in the Parent Council – we look forward to seeing you.

Outcome: The PC sub-team will continue work on the Parental Engagement topic with ongoing meetings with Mrs Livingston. The survey to be launched immediately to enable the Parent Council to review the results in its May meeting.

5. A comparative look Curriculum for Excellence in West Lothian– Jeremy Fuller (8:00, 10 mins)

Context: Achievement data for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels, 2015/16 is publically available at:

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/sg.eas.learninganalysis#!/>. We will briefly discuss the information available, while being mindful of the many caveats that accompany the data.

Discussion: The great information available on the Curriculum for Excellence data website (see link above) was highlighted. It provides reference data for the high level of achievement by children at Low Port.

Outcome: Jeremy thanked Mrs Livingston, the teachers, volunteers and anyone who helped contribute to these great results.

6. PTA update – Prime: Rebecca Holmes (8:10, 10 mins)

Sparkle night is tomorrow.

Context: Rebecca gave an update on some of the positive steps toward reinvigorating fundraising in the school. Previously, it was proposed that the fundraising activities of the ETF and the PTA be combined into a new fundraising body for the school. The ETF and the PTA have been updating their constitutions to move toward charity status. This will help to facilitate online payments and amalgamate the purposes and aims of both bodies. The proposed name for the new charity is 'Friends of Low Port'.

Next Steps:

- Andy to contact contributors to make aware the new direction
- Redraft the new constitution
- Send to parent forum for comments/objections
- Send in September the decision taken by the PC to rubber stamp
- Dissolve separate constitutions
- Jeremy to update PC constitution to reflect the change

Jeremy asked if there were any objections to having one body. No objections were expressed.

The following factors were put forth in favour of the merge:

- No change to monthly contributions - still tax efficient
- Easy payment method via standing order to a new Paypal account
- More efficient with resources in one place, i.e. less people/admin required to run

Outcome: The Parent Council gave its endorsement of this activity and look forward to the next update.

7. School Grounds update – Primes: Miss Smith & everyone with information (8:20, 10 mins)

Discussion:

ECO committee

The ECO committee has decided that the plastic bottles be removed from the green house, but the canes retained. Further planting is to take place around the greenhouse to make the resulting space look wild and interesting.

New playground installation

Still no update on when the new playground will be installed. Many of the Primary 7s feel like they will never have an opportunity to see the playground equipment, which the school community worked so hard to raise the funds for. The playground equipment is in a warehouse waiting to be installed. Mrs Livingston is constantly chasing the matter, but those responsible for the school grounds have not committed to an install date. Jeremy will seek the support of our Councillors in resolving this matter. Any suggestions on how to move this matter forward are invited.

Supergrounds (all weather pitch)

Support is sought for people to assist in sweeping sand onto the all-weather pitch. This needs to be done periodically. The "sanding" needs to occur in a dry period. An email will be sent out to the Parent Forum with further information on how people can assist.

Outcome: Jeremy to seek support from Councillors in obtaining an installation date for the new playground equipment.

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

None.

Next meeting date: Wednesday 24th May 2017, 7-8:45pm in G.P. Room

AREA FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Jeremy to seek support from Councillors in obtaining an installation date for the new playground equipment.	Jeremy Fuller

HT Report for Parent Council Meeting 8.3.17

Staffing

We continue to have staff absence impacting on the work of the school, although at the moment it is less than earlier in the term. Communication has been sent to classes affected. Where possible we have tried to ensure continuity for the classes, i.e. Mrs Ramsay and regular supply staff.

Financial Review

Since the last PC meeting, I have spoken individually to parents and to pupils regarding plans for residential learning.

Findings include

- A preference for a shorter P6 camp and a week-long P7 camp
- A preference for not too wintery a date as it can impact on the kinds of activities on offer.
- A preference for the current spread of cost of around 15 months. Parents felt that they were happy to pay for a quality learning experience for their child with notice of costs.
- The current P6 camp is further away which can impact on the transport costs. However, it was overwhelmingly rated highly for the nurturing and supportive aspects for younger pupils perhaps away for the first time. Accommodation, kinds of activity, facilities, range of indoor learning given the date we go are all strong themes that came through.
- The current P7 camp activities are high quality and there is more independence on site. However, accommodation plans for renewal have not materialised in the last two years and costs are rising. We reviewed some other camps used across the cluster and WLC of similar quality activities, independence and specifically accommodation, and the numbers of our children (specifically the current P4 group of 38)

Conclusions are –

- We have continued to book Robinwood for P6
- We have booked Lockerbie Manor for P7 next year with an agreement around transport.
- Parents to be given plenty of notice after this meeting.
- Initial correspondence to highlight availability of funding for those it applies to as usual.

Pupil Equity Fund

Scottish Government funding allocated to schools to close the gap and promote excellence and equity. This is based on Free Meal Entitlement. Our allocation is very low as we have very few pupils in receipt of free school meals. However, we are sure that there are pupils entitled to this that are not in receipt. School will send a groupcall to explain to all families.

Class Medals at End of Term

We have reviewed class medals with all classes. Whilst overall more children voted to keep these than have them go, the comments against class medals are powerful. The decision is for these to stop. Other trophies and awards will be issued.

Family Learning Plans

We continue to work closely with cluster colleagues and a parent meeting for information around AAL is being held at Linlithgow Bridge on Tuesday 21 March for parents of P5-7 pupils.

Also planned is an outdoor learning open morning for the morning of 2 June 9-10.30am where parents can drop in at any time and see outdoor learning in action.