

Location: LOW PORT PRIMARY SCHOOL: PARENT COUNCIL
Time: Wednesday 24th May 2017, 7:00 – 8:45pm at Low Port Primary School

Minutes (version 2)

Members

Jeremy Fuller – Chair
 Alice Buckley
 Rebecca Holmes – PTA Chair
 Richard Payne
 Susan Saunders
 Kelly Robertson
 Douglas Maxwell
 Judith Paley

Co-opted Members

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

Apologies

Jennifer Ovenstone-O'Donnell, Fiona Maxwell, Andrew Macintyre, Tom Kerr, Tom Conn

1. Welcome – Jeremy (7:00, 5 mins)

The agenda was agreed and minutes from the previous meeting approved.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising: 8th March – 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	<p>Complete. Details of the issue and request were captured in a document and sent to Councillor Tom Kerr (See Annex E). Tom forwarded this information to West Lothian Council (WLC) and requested action. Thanks for this Tom.</p> <p>West Lothian Council responded indicating that a new release of database software should be operational in August 2017, which should address the limitation.</p>
Jeremy to seek support from Councillors in obtaining an installation date for the new playground equipment.	Jeremy Fuller	<p>Complete. Tom Conn responded to Jeremy's request for assistance and actively chased this issue up with the WLC. Thanks for this Tom.</p> <p>The playground equipment was finally installed in April.</p> <p>Thanks to everyone who contributed to this activity on its long path from concept to reality.</p>

3. Head Teacher update and wrap up for the year – Mrs Livingston (7:15, 15 mins)

Discussion: (summary provided by Mrs Livingston in Annex A)

Outcome: No issues raised.

4. Handling of news of tragic events Prime: Kelly Robertson (7:30, 10 mins)

Context: In the light of what happened in Manchester recently, there will be a discussion on how the school handles information about tragic and upsetting events. There will be an opportunity for parent and carers to provide input.

Discussion:

Question: Is there a school policy for handling this type of information? **Answer:** There is no specific school policy on this matter, rather an attempt to achieve a consistent approach. That is, tragic events are not proactively brought up with the children, but neither is discussion suppressed when children bring up matters. The general approach is to encourage children to discuss such topics with their parents/carers.

Question: Is Newsround watched every day? **Answer:** No, Newsround is not watched every day and during times like this week when a major upsetting incident has occurred, Newsround is generally not watched. The only class that watched Newsround this week was P7, who specifically requested to see it. Some classes have not watched Newsround this year. A class teacher will watch the episode of Newsround prior showing it to their class to ensure suitability.

It was suggested that maybe additional guidance could be provided to Parents and Carers on how Newsround is watched at the school.

On the day of the Parent Council meeting (24th May), West Lothian Council had been in communication with the school to provide guidance on matters arising from the incident in Manchester.

Outcome:

To provide complete clarity on this topic, Mrs Livingston provided the following text on the morning after the Parent Council meeting:

School Procedures for Dealing with a Significant World Event

There is not a specific school policy relating to this. However, there has been a whole staff discussion earlier in the session on best ways to manage this in a class setting.

If children bring up a sensitive subject then the class teacher uses professional judgement to facilitate a discussion but is mindful of the age/class context/etc. We also need to be mindful of families who have expressed very clear views on their child(ren) not having these discussions at school or watching any news programme at all and would direct a child with specific questions to talk to their parents. Newsround is vetted by the teacher and not watched at every stage, by every class or every day. School does not plan to send a groupcall to all parents about this at this time.

Action: School to consider ways to inform families about how Newsround may be used specific to each class i.e. through the blog, meet the teacher, etc.

5. Evolution of fundraising at LPPS – Prime: Jeremy Fuller (7:40, 10 mins)

Context: There is a plan to create a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) with a wider set of objectives that will supersede the Education Trust Fund (ETF). As with ETF, the SCIO will support direct financial contributions, as well as enabling a wider range of fund raising approaches and activities it can support. At the previous PC meeting, the Parent Council gave its general endorsement for plans for the evolution of fundraising at LPPS. At this meeting, a proposal will be made that the PC gives its formal endorsement to wind up the ETF, once the SCIO is operational. It will be further proposed that ratification of this endorsement take place at the annual AGM at the start of next term. It will take significant effort and many months to go through the legal process of establishing the SCIO, and further time to establish bank accounts, etc. It is therefore anticipated that the SCIO will be operational in 2018.

Discussion:

An overview of the plans to evolve fundraising at the Low Port was presented (see Annex B). A proposal to wind-up the ETF after the establishment of the SCIO was put to the Parent Council (see Annex C).

Outcome:

All members of the Parent Council present endorsed the proposal to wind-up the ETF, after the establishment of the SCIO. The proposal will be presented to the AGM for final endorsement.

6. Parent Forum Survey follow up – Prime: Jeremy Fuller (7:50, 20 mins)

Context: 49 people responded to the PC Survey. This will be an opportunity to discuss the survey feedback and results, and identify actions.

Discussion:

Jeremy expressed his happiness at the level of response to the survey. During the meeting the group drafted comments and follow up suggestions to the main feedback themes. This document will be sent to the Parent Forum as a follow up to the Survey (available in Annex D)

Outcome:

Based on the survey feedback it is proposed that next year the Parent Council send out much more information to the Parent Forum. Early identification of specific topics that people may wish to engage in as Parent Council members or co-opted volunteers is recommended. A discussion with the school may help identify good topics for the Parent Council.

7. PTA update – Prime: Rebecca Holmes (8:15, 5 mins)

Context: Update on latest developments in the PTA.

Discussion:

None

Outcome:

Unfortunately, limited available time meant Rebecca did not have an opportunity to provide a detailed update. However, she did indicate that generally things were going well in the PTA.

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

Context: Update to be provided on matters relating to the school grounds.

Discussion:

Unfortunately, limited available time meant Miss Smith did not have an opportunity to provide a detailed update. However, she was able to let the group know that all bottles have been removed from the green house ready for planting climbing plants.

Outcome:

Members of the Parent Council asked Miss Smith to let them know if any assistance was needed with planting, when the time came.

9. PC Succession planning – Prime: TBD (8:30, 5 mins)

Context: Jeremy's 2 year term as PC chair will end at the next AGM. Candidates for the PC chair and the PC vice chair positions are welcomed. This will be a brief discussion about current members' plans for PC participation next term.

Discussion:

Approximately 50-60% of current Parent Council membership indicated plans to step down at the AGM in September.

Outcome:

Information about the activities of Parent Council to be prepared ahead of the AGM and a request for new members sent out by email early in new term. Proposal to have a sub-committee to evolve communication collateral for the Parent Council for the AGM (Prime: Rebecca, Helpers: Jeremy, Kelly, Judith)

10. Any other Business (8:35, 10mins)

1) Concern has been expressed by one of the Parent Forum about the volume of traffic going in and out to the Low Port Centre. It was not clear from a school perspective what could be done about this. It may be good to bring this up with councillors at the next session.

2) Following on from the activity on the topic of parental engagement at Low Port earlier in the year. It is proposed that a communication be sent to the Parent Forum on this sometime in June. (Prime: Alice)

3) Appreciation was expressed for Jeremy Fuller's contribution to the running of the Parent Council over the last two years.

Next meeting date: AGM (7th September, 2017? – To be confirmed)

AREA FOR ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
School to consider ways to inform families about how Newsround may be used specific to each class i.e. through the blog, meet the teacher, etc.	Mrs Livingston
Prepare communication collateral about the PC for the AGM	Sub-team
Prepare all necessary material for the evolution of fundraising discussion for AGM	PTA primes, ETF trustees, PC primes.
Send out communication to Parent Forum on Parental Engagement at Low Port Primary School	Alice Buckley

Annex A – Head Teachers Report

HT report PC Meeting 24 May 2017

Class structure and staffing –

At this point in time, there are likely to be 8 straight classes for next session. We have allocated the P1 teacher for next session so that the transition process can start with nursery schools. All other staffing will be allocated in June once this is confirmed fully. There are likely to be changes to staffing next session. There will be a move on day, planned for the week of the Marches, when the pupils meet the new teacher and a slip will be sent home with P1-3 as last session.

Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) Update

We are working closely with cluster colleagues at a range of different ways to use the PEF funding to best meet the needs of identified pupils. We do however have a very limited amount of money to access. We are currently looking at ways to support early intervention.

Specialist Outdoor Learning

Changes out with our control to outdoor learning specialist provision have impacted on the traditional outdoor learning weeks for P5 and, potentially, skiing/snowboarding for P6/P7. However the recent review of quality residential camps may offset this in terms of quality experiences and costs incurred as discussed at Parent Council in previous meetings.

Family Learning

We continue to seek ways to report to parents through family learning events. Family learning events this term include –

- Outdoor learning morning on Friday 2 June 9-10.30am for whole school
- Grandparent/special person day for P1 Thursday 22 June
- Elephant tea party
- Sports day
- Graduation where the P7s share their talents and skills, and plan the event themselves.

Partnership Working with Parents

Mrs Ramsay and I attended a family engagement conference where we attended a workshop with Eleanor Coner from the Scottish Parent Teacher Council. We heard about the positive working with other schools and met to have an initial discussion with her about what the project looked like in terms of commitment. An information event for all interested parents and community members was planned but the speaker was unwell. We will look to reschedule a future date.

Bereavement Policy

We have completed work on a new Bereavement Policy which will be posted to the website following parent consultation.

Self-evaluation and SIP ideas

The Pupil Council asked all children for their views on the school. This was shared at an assembly on 12 May. These ideas are in line with staff views for self-evaluation and ideas for priorities moving forwards. Ideas from both staff and pupils include –

- AAL, technologies, more resources, improved planning for IT
- Reviewing current curriculum pathways to ensure Developing Young Workforce guidance linked to skills for lifelong learning and work features.
- Moderation of learning in line with Scottish Government benchmarks.
- Partnerships and family learning continuing as a focus.
- STEM work (Science Technology Engineering and Maths)

- Embedding maths approaches and resources in planning, learning, teaching and assessment, including numicon resource, Number Talks approach and using our SEAL champion to support classes.
- HWB - mental health and wellbeing and focus on Inclusion, Citizenship and Equality.
- Develop profiling of learning in upper school.

Next steps are for the school to formally gather these views and ideas to form the School Self-Evaluation Summary (SSES) which is a formal Council document; the School Improvement Plan (SIP) in line with the Cluster Improvement Plan (CIP); produce and share a parent-friendly Standards and Quality Report.

Proposed evolution of fundraising at LPPS (2017-2018)

• Today:

- The PTA organises social events, many of which raise money for the school.
- The Education Trust Fund (ETF) charity, raises money through regular and one-off cash contributions from parents and carers, with the added benefit of Gift Aid.
- **Issues:**
 - The ETF charity entity and constitution is no longer fit for purpose from an operations and trustee obligations perspective.
 - PTA is currently unable to make use of charity status (e.g. Gift Aid, Charity rates on services, etc) and access to grants.
 - It can be unclear to the school who to approach for funding.

• Proposal (2017-2018):

- Create a **Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)** called **Friends of Low Port Primary School SCIO (FLPPS)**.
- The SCIO will accept regular contributions and organize fundraising through social and other activities.
- The funds will be spent on enhancing the education of the children and promoting a sense of community at the school.
- The PTA and ETF will be retired at the appropriate time.
- **Benefits:**
 - Centralised administration for all fundraising (i.e. requires less people to run).
 - Greater opportunity to apply for grants and Gift Aid.
 - Limited liability.

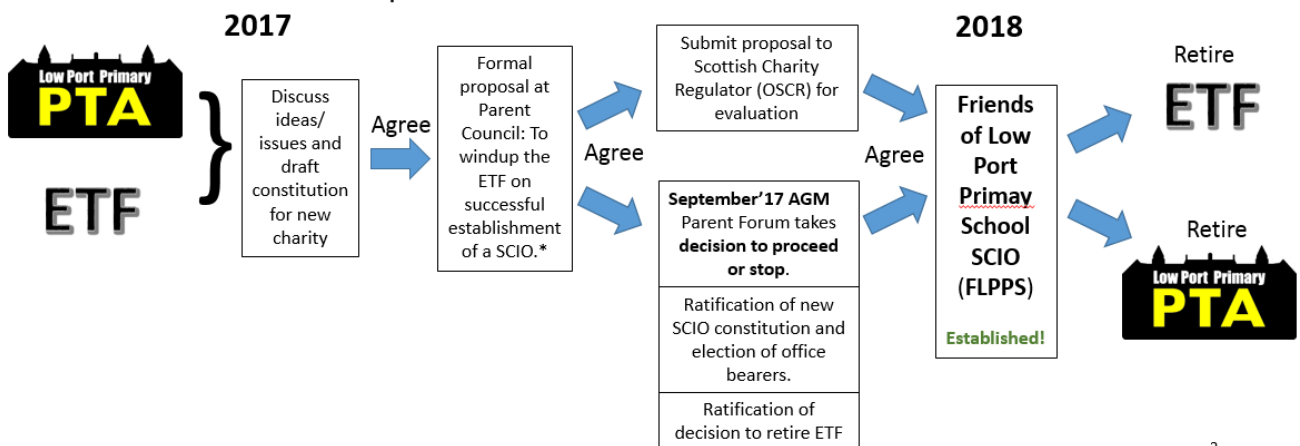
11 May, 2017

Version 3

1

Process of evolution

- It will take a significant effort to create a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and windup the ETF.
- An illustration of the process is shown below:



* ETF constitution requires that any amendments must be approved at a Parent Council meeting.

2

Annex C – presented proposal to wind-up the ETF

Proposal to wind-up the Low Port Primary School (LPPS) Education Trust Fund (ETF), following the creation of a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation to replace it.

Date: 11 May 2017

Introduction

It is proposed that a new Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) be created for fundraising at LPPS. The SCIO will accept regular contributions and organize fundraising through social and other activities. The funds will be spent on enhancing the education of the children and promoting a sense of community at the school.

Once the new SCIO has been created it is proposed the trustees of the ETF undertake the process of winding-up the ETF, as its fundraising services will be provided by the new SCIO.

Parent Council role in winding-up the ETF

The proposal described above has the support of the trustees of the ETF. To wind-up the ETF is a very significant step. To ensure due process is followed, the proposal is being brought to the Parent Council in accordance with clause 20 of the ETF constitution, which states:

20. This Constitution will be reviewed every two years or as required. Amendments must be approved at a Parent Council meeting.

Request for endorsement at the Parent Council meeting on 24th May 2017

Endorsement is requested to wind-up the Education Trust Fund (ETF), when the following two conditions have been met:

- 1) There is an agreement at the annual AGM to wind-up the ETF.

- 2) A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) is established that will facilitate fundraising for Low Port Primary School via regular and one-off contributions. In addition, the SCIO will undertake other activities to raise funds and arrange social events. The constitution of the SCIO will stipulate that the funds raised be used to enhance the education of the children and promote a sense of community at the school.

Version 2

Annex D – Parent Council Survey summary results, analysis and follow up for Parent Forum

Parent Council – March 2017 – Survey Results

A Parent Council survey was conducted with LPPS parents and carers. It was aimed at obtaining feedback, which could be used to enhance the Parent Council's operation. The Parent Council would like to thank everyone who took part, your time and input is very much appreciated.

This document summarises the survey results, provides comments on the results and proposes follow-up action for the Parent Council.

Statistical results

Question 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?

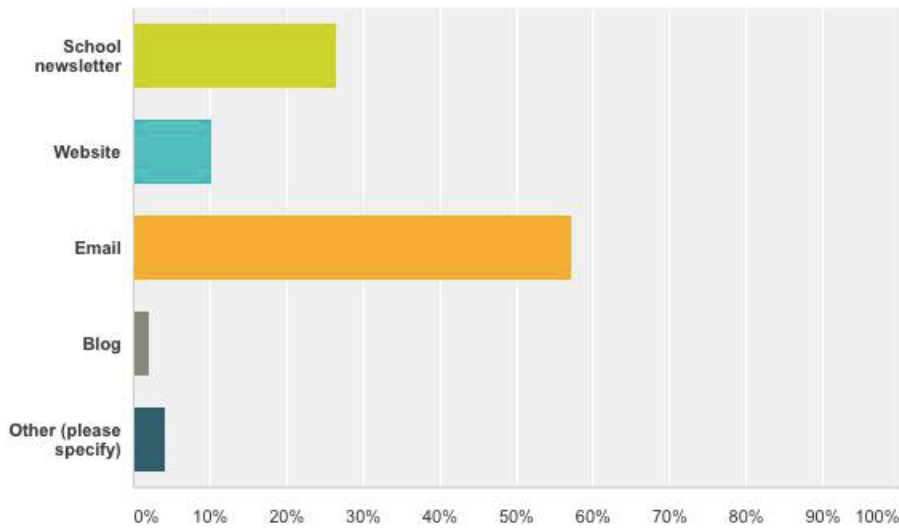
Response:

	Extremely well	Very well	Somewhat well	Not so well	Not at all well	Total
Supporting the school in its work with pupils	10.42% 5	47.92% 23	18.75% 9	14.58% 7	8.33% 4	48
Representing the views of parents	4.26% 2	44.68% 21	34.04% 16	14.89% 7	2.13% 1	47
Promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community	4.17% 2	37.50% 18	29.17% 14	18.75% 9	10.42% 5	48
Reporting to the Parent Forum	4.44% 2	42.22% 19	31.11% 14	15.56% 7	6.67% 3	45

Observations: Most responses in the OK to Extremely Well range.

Question 3: How would you like the Parent Council to communicate information, their activities and feedback?

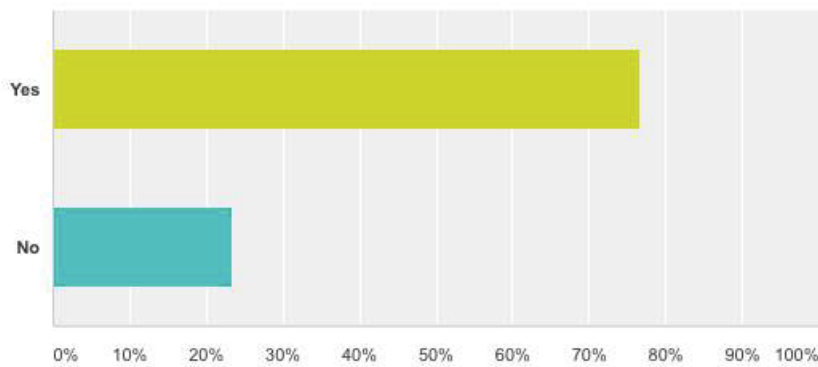
Response:



Observations: Email is the clear winner as the preferred method of communication

Question 4: Do you know who to approach with concern or topics that you would like the Parent Council to try and address?

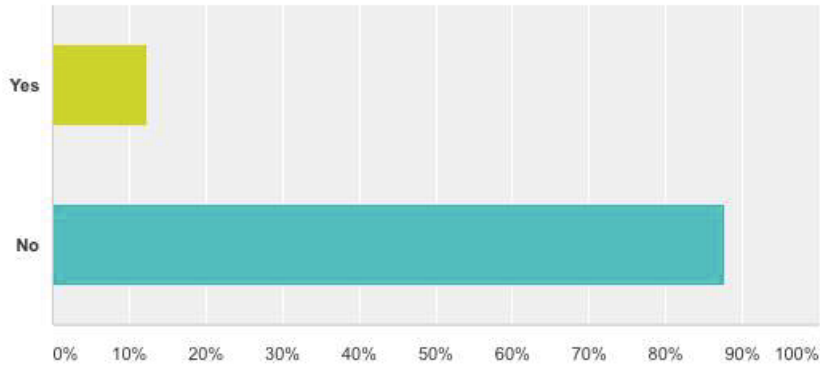
Response:



Observations: Generally, yes (76.6%), although some potential for improvement.

Question 5: Would you like to be more involved in Parent Council?

Response:



Observations: Generally, there is only a select group of people within the Parent Forum looking to be more involved with the Parent Council (i.e. 12.2% of the respondents). Without any data from other schools with which to compare it is hard to gauge how far away for “average” this is.

Text responses to questions

The following section relates to the written responses received in the questionnaire. There was the option to provide a text response for the following questions:

- **Question 2:** Could you please expand on your answers above [to question 1]?
- **Question 3:** How would you like the Parent Council to communicate information, their activities and feedback?
- **Question 5:** Would you like to be more involved in Parent Council?
- **Question 6:** What other feedback would you like to give the Parent Council?

Of 49 respondents 30 provided at least one comment in addition to answering the questions. These comments have been analysed to identify key themes. They broadly fit into three areas: criticisms; appreciation and barriers to involvement (please see next page).

Criticism of the Parent Council

Feedback	Comments on feedback	Proposed follow-up action
7 respondents expressed the opinion that PC represented the views of a few parents.	This is a logistical reality based on the difficulty of gaining a broad base of opinions in real time.	Far greater communication and consultation with the Parent Forum, e.g. more surveys, tagging PC questions onto school events to make obtaining feedback easier.
6 respondents expressed the opinion that PC was interfering / divisive / authoritarian	This is a perception, which the PC council needs to work to address.	PC member awareness of this perception and greater outreach to parents in terms of what the PC does. Added focus on finding ways to assist the school.
11 respondents referred to a lack of awareness of /the role of PC – some acknowledged their own responsibility in not always reading things – others felt communication (especially after meetings and re actions) could be better.	Feedback acknowledged	Greater outreach to Parent Forum on the role of the Parent Council.
4 respondents referred to the way PC meetings could be better run.	Feedback acknowledged	The new committee should consider ways of improving the way meetings are run.

Barriers to involvement in the Parent Council

Feedback	Comments on feedback	Proposed follow-up action
2 respondents referred to the current climate / atmosphere of PC as being a barrier	Feedback acknowledged	New PC committee should consider ways to ensure a positive climate in maintained in the Parent Council. Suggestions should be investigated before the AGM in September.
5 respondents referred to lack of time being a barrier (with a couple suggesting this may get easier for them)	Feedback acknowledged	New PC committee should consider activities where Parents/Carers could contribute a small amount of time.

Appreciation of the Parent Council

Feedback	Comments on feedback	Proposed follow-up action
13 respondents referred to appreciating the work and effort of PC and the parent members.	This feedback is very much appreciated	No action required

Annex E – Explanation of email issue (sent to West Lothian Council)

Promoting Parental Engagement: **School email limitation issue**

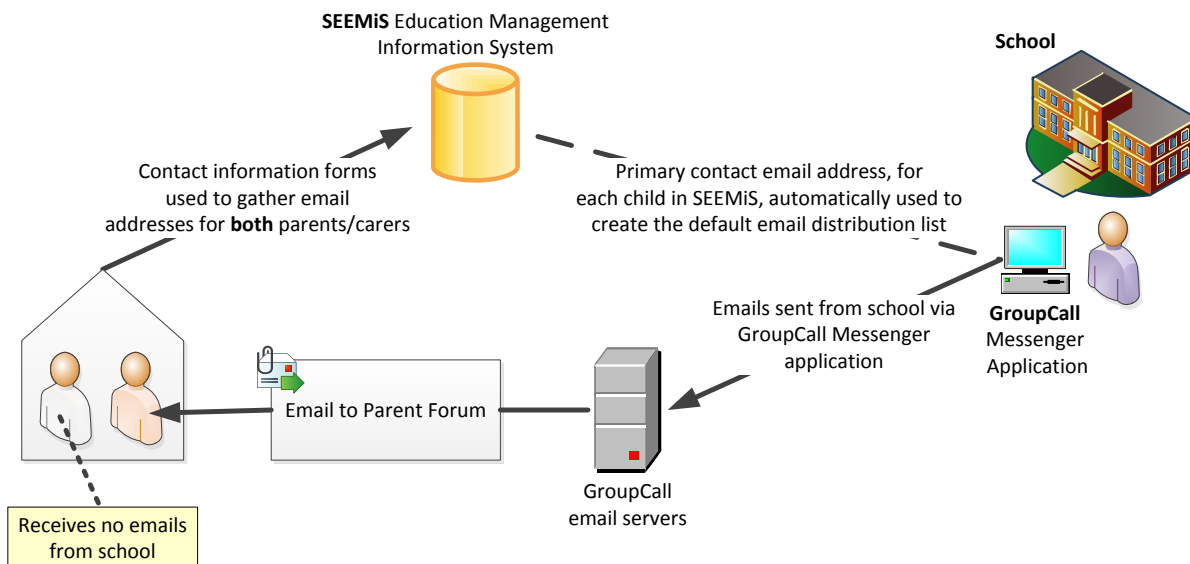
The issue:

Email has revolutionised communication in all aspects of modern life. It is great to see Low Port Primary School (LPPS) using email to regularly communicate with parents and carers. There is unfortunately one significant issue: **not all parents and carers who wish to receive emails from the school are able to do so**. This is due to a limitation in the design of the solution that the school is expected to use to send broadcast emails.

Current email solution overview:

Like other schools in the West Lothian region, LPPS use a broadcast solution for school emails based on a combination of GroupCall Messenger 5 (the email messaging application) and SEEMIS (an information management solution used by all schools in Scotland).

The issue is the default email distribution list for school broadcast emails is automatically generated from only the primary contact email address for each child. Other email addresses stored in SEEMIS is not used. A simplified diagram to show how email addresses are gathered, stored in SEEMIS and used by the GroupCall Messenger email application, is shown in the diagram below.



Why this matters:

Shared email addresses are becoming less common, while changing social trends mean that all the adults in a household are increasingly likely to be actively engaged in childcare and hence school related activity. Sending email to every parent or carer seeking direct school email communication is an obvious mechanism to enhance school engagement and support evolving social circumstances.

Requested action:

Please enhance the current school email solution to enable the option for a second email address to be added to the default school broadcast email distribution list for each child, while maintaining the ability to have contact email addresses that are not used for broadcast email communication.