

Abbeyhill Primary School

Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 9th October 2013

Present: Chris Byrne (Chairman), Lisa Tansey (VC), Charlotte Intihar(VC), Di Falck (Treasurer), John Dallas, Amine Mourad, Lynsey Elbekhti, Neil Hargraves, Sandra Stewart (Headteacher), Caitlyn McDiarmid, Lynsey Stewart and Linda Watt.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Correction to minute: Lisa Tansey was seconded by Mrs Stewart.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Co-opted members / office bearers:

It was formally agreed that Charlotte Intihar would serve as joint vice-chairman with Lisa Tansey.

Dates / times of future meetings:

All meetings will be held at 6.30 pm on Wednesdays. Dates are: 4 December 2013, 29 January, 19 March, 7 May and 18 June 2014.

Parent helpers:

Mrs Stewart expressed grateful thanks to everyone who is helping to tidy the school grounds. School volunteers are also helping in the library and with outings. Chris Byrne has joined the school's Eco Committee.

The committee agreed to approach other parents at events and Parents' evenings in order that they may have a list of possible helpers.

Community Links:

The committee hope to forge strong links in the community, and it was agreed to invite local councillors to the Parent Council meetings. Current councillors are Karen Doran, Joanna Mowat and Alasdair Rankin.

Charlotte Intihar and Chris Byrne plan to attend the City Centre Neighbourhood Partnership and the Old Town Community Council meetings where possible.

Hallowe'en Disco:

1 November 2013. Plans well underway with the Events Sub Group. Concern raised regarding payment for disco as the signatories may not be authorised by then, but Mrs Stewart agreed to assist if necessary.

Disused Janitor's House:

The after school club, SCOOSH, has expressed an interest in running their after school club in the old janitor's house and it is believed that they may be willing to contribute towards the renovation costs. There has been some concern about the Council's future plans for the building. Mrs Stewart agreed to keep the Parent Council informed of any future development proposals.

3. Chairman's Report

The past few weeks since AGM have seen the PC finding its feet and trying to establish what priorities might be.

A web site has been established for the Parent Council which can act as an information repository and also a public 'face': Abbeyhill Parents at <http://abbeyhillparents.wordpress.com> Hopefully this will help to improve transparency as parents can read minutes, check agendas, and catch up on news.

We have set up two sub-groups as a way to enable parents to deal with practical tasks outwith full Parent Council meetings. Two groups so far: Events and Garden & Grounds. Each will feedback soon on progress.

This opens the topic of structures. Abbeyhill PC has in the past acted a bit more like a PTA/PSA, primarily concerned with fundraising and events. While this is important and needs to continue, there are other responsibilities we need to look to.

Chris Byrne has put these into broad areas which are within the scope of what the PC ought to take an interest in. PC can decide what detailed issues might be best tackled and in what order. It may not be necessary to form a sub-group for each area, but may be useful in focussing our efforts.

1. Communications and Policy (Includes consultation with Parent Forum; links with outside bodies; scrutinising and providing feedback on school policies)
2. Facilities (Buildings, infrastructure, etc.)
3. Events (Social and fundraising events ie. PTA type activity)
4. Gardens & Grounds (Gardening club, help improve and maintain playground and garden areas)
5. Parent Engagement (Outings, clubs, activities, helping in class, etc.)

CB reported back on some recent meetings:

- *CCWP North Neighbourhood meeting 30.9.13*

Interesting snippets included:

- Guidance has been given on 'political impartiality' to all schools on the Independence Referendum next year.
- Notion of skill sharing across parent groups between schools. Building a skills database. This was primarily about sports /active schools but could also be about other activities, eg. after school interest groups/clubs for children.
- Consultation on 600 hours of early years provision.
- Council budget consultation also mentioned. See agenda item below.
- Several school PC/PTA have set up charitable trusts (or in the process of doing so) in order to apply for larger grants: is this something Abbeyhill ought to consider?

- *Abbeyhill PS Eco Group 9.10.13*

Children's priorities include: Wildlife garden/biodiversity, Outdoor Classroom, Water usage/conservation, Energy conservation, Litter, Recycling (new paper recycling bins purchased for each class)

Also discussed was the School Travel Plan. A survey of how pupils get to school has been conducted. Results available on 30 October.

- *HMIe meeting 30.9.13*

CB cannot give out all details of what was discussed, however can say that HMIe stated that the Abbeyhill parent group meeting turnout was the 'highest she'd ever seen' which was interesting considering Abbeyhill is the smallest school she had ever visited. Also asked quite a few questions on how aware parents were of school policies on homework, bullying and so on.

4. Treasure's Report

A brief report was given. Forms have been handed in to the bank to change signatories, and a full report will follow.

5. Headteacher's Report

Mrs Stewart gave a report to the Parent Council about recent events in school. She was pleased to report that the pupils have had a good start to the school year. Feedback was given about various pupil committees including the Pupil Council, Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO) and the Eco Committee.

She also gave a brief account of the recent HMIE inspection. It is anticipated that the full report will be available by the next Parent Council meeting.

Following the JRSO report by Miss McDiarmid, the committee hoped to invite Lorna Henderson and Mark Symonds to a future meeting.

Linda Watt agreed to bring the Travel Survey to the next meeting.

6. A.O.C.B

It was agreed that CEC's budget proposals would be discussed at the next meeting.