

Abbeyhill Parent Council Meeting

Date: 07.03.18

Venue: Abbeyhill Primary School

Minutes By: Simon Preston



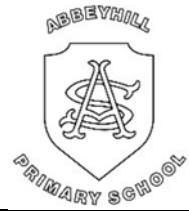
ITEM	DESCRIPTION		ACTION
	PRESENT		
	Simon Preston	PC Chair	SP
	Vlad Hasis	PC Treasurer	VH
	Astrid Gracie	Acting Head Teacher	AG
	Charlene Kay	Parent	CK
	Melanie Chuprasova	Parent	MC
	Billy McElhone	Parent	BM
	Iliyana Nedkova	Events	IN
	Keith Martin	Principal Teacher	KM
	Apologies		
	Karen Ridgewell	Secretary	KR
1.0	Welcome by the Chair		
1.1	SP welcomed and thanked all for attending. Apologies and introductions were made.		
2.0	The Role of the Parent Council		
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of the PC discussion was briefly outlined for the new attendees. 		
3.0	Previous Meeting Actions		
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraising - SP presented an update from James Preston. James is progressing his plan for an Awards for All Lottery application to improve the playground. He has had meetings with Linda Watt and with Iliyana Nedkova to look at how best to improve the playground and how to involve artists. He hopes to have a draft application for the next meeting. 		JP
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Crossing - Email correspondence has been received from Laing O'Rourkes Community Engagement Officer and a letter from CEC's Senior Transport Team Leader advising that the length of time for crossing has been extended by a few seconds. SP thanks KR for her working making this happen. 		
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Janitor's House - a letter was issued to the Capital Planning Asset Management Team the first week of Feb. Chasing email sent to Crawford McGhee and Wayne Markham week of Feb 25th. 		KR
3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SP hopes the missing CEC funds will be in our new account this week 		VH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground Improvements. A further playground meeting of Parents Council/Staff took place to plan the (now postponed to 24 March) Super Saturday playground tidy. The meeting also discussed the possibility of a trial run using one of the large, empty planters as a sand table, an offer of tree logs and wood slices from CEC. KR has produced a proposal for line painting in the playground, which will happen after Super Saturday. BM volunteered to help with the line painting. Information/educational boards have been ordered directly by the PC, a 15% discount was negotiated with the supplier to help offset the VAT. PC funds have been used to buy 		SP/BM

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	<p>a storage container for loose play parts already obtained (wood) and more still to be sourced. Wooden loose parts will come into use next week and we will then launch an appeal to find more items such as willow rods, tarpaulins, crates, buckets, cable drums, nets, old suitcases, steering wheels, computer keyboards. PC funds will be used to purchase compost, seeds, plants and bulbs for the upcoming Super Saturday playground tidy. The school has purchased paint, brushes and cleaning equipment.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drummond School - SP attended a meeting of concerned parents from Drummond, Leith Walk Primary and Broughton Primary. They are a well organised group who are doing an excellent job in the current consultation process. SP also attended the CEC informal consultation meeting at Drummond on February 27th. Largely due to pressure from this group, CEC confirmed at this meeting that Drummond will remain open to all pupils in the existing catchment area. The parents group sent a deputation to the CEC Education, Children and Families Committee on Tuesday 6 March and have asked that other options are considered before deciding where high school GME pupils will go in the short and long term. 	
4.0	Chairs Report	
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to all who helped make the inaugural Abbeyhill Burns Supper such a success and to those who bought tickets and raffle tickets. £363 was raised which will be spent on Playground improvements. • £30 from PC funds was given to P2 teacher Abi Flowers to purchase World Book Day book voucher prizes. (now rearranged for March 8th) • Well done to Iliyana Nedkova for £200 confirmed in sponsorship from a local Polish-run business towards the P6 coach trip with resident artist Kristin Mojsiewicz. (now rearranged for March 22nd) • Thanks to over 30 parents, pupils and teachers who came to the Snow Clearing Party on Sunday 4 March. Information about the initiative was retweeted by the First Minister to her 900K followers and a photo appeared on the front page of the Edinburgh Evening News. • Super Saturday Playground Tidy and Bake Sale was postponed to March 24 10-2pm due to snow. Lots of planning has already gone into it, equipment has been sourced and we're hoping for a great turnout. • The parent survey about playground improvements had 39 responses and lots of very helpful comments and suggestions. 30 parents gave email addresses and said they were willing to help with practical support, 23 of these with fundraising. • VH has confirmed that he will be stepping down as Treasurer at the next AGM – thanks to him for all his work. AGM is 20 June. (VH said he may continue if a replacement isn't found) 	
5.0	Treasurers Report	
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our current funds in the bank account: £2,792.89. 	
6.0	Head Teachers Report	
6.1	<p>Pupil Numbers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 161 in Primary school, 48 Nursery 	

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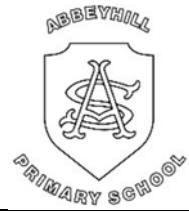
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6.2	<p>School Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 25 years at the school, Ms Anne Taylor has decided to retire from her teaching post at Abbeyhill at the end of this term (Easter). As she said in her resignation letter, she arrived in January 1993 to cover a maternity leave and has been here ever since! She is a much valued and highly respected member of our school team and will be greatly missed by her colleagues and the many children she has taught. We wish her every happiness and success as she embarks on this new phase in her life. • We have recently appointed Mrs Gemma-Rose Lansdown to the permanent teaching post. In light of Ms Taylor's retirement, Mrs Lansdown will be teaching Primary 1 from the start of next term. Mrs Lansdown has managed to make arrangements with her current school in Fife, so that she will be able to visit her new class on a couple of occasions before the end of this term, to ensure a smooth transition for the children. Ms Taylor is also preparing the children to manage this change, through work she is doing as part of their learning in class • Mrs Scates has decided to retire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Accordingly Miss Stephen is in class full time. She currently has an MA student, Sophie Toms, working with her until the summer ◦ A cover teacher (Mr Kirkbride) has been arranged for Mr Martin's class one day per week until Easter. It is hope this arrangement will continue weekly after Easter, to allow Mr Martin to do some additional development work for the school • Mrs Wat, who has been working as an EYP in the nursery has secured a new appointment and is leaving at the end of this week. She has become an important member of the Nursery team, in the short time she has been with us and we wish her every success in her new post • Snr Pello Martinez, a Spanish assistant is working in classes in the school until the end of May. He will be working alongside class teachers and supporting with the introduction of Spanish • Staffing in other classes remains unchanged • Thankfully, after so much sickness absence, we are back up to full strength. 	
6.3	<p>Nursery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional cloakroom and toilet space: the work will be carried out during the Easter holidays • Our capacity will grow to 64 • 12 children on the waiting list for starting, works permitting, after Easter • We intend re-decorating Room 1 in the Nursery during the Easter holidays • We have been conducting a review of our nursery environment (staff, children and parents – through a questionnaire) – we have also been given funding by the Early Years Team and have put in a large order for some fabulous new furniture and equipment. • Staffing in the Nursery after Easter: we are awaiting clarification from the Authority about staffing levels 	
6.4	<p>School Improvement (National Improvement Priorities)</p>	

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	<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work continues with the school grounds improvement group, who have had a number of successful meetings: • The garden clear up had to be postponed due to the weather; instead we had a 'snow party' on Sunday 4th March – many thanks to the parents and children who came along to help • 'Super Saturday (playground tidy) has been re-scheduled for Saturday 24th March • The Pupil Council have generated a list of jobs – we hope people will come along to do a specific job during that time • The Pupil Council also plan to hold a bake sale to raise funds both for charity and the playground fund <p>Loose Parts Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff are taking part in training after school next week • We are going to be working with Canongate Youth Project next term (as part of our Pupil Equity Funding) to improve children's experiences in the playground. The work will include • Loose Parts Play Day – Tuesday 24th April – with play rangers from Canongate working with P1-7 classes in the playground across the day • Weekly play ranger sessions: Wednesday lunchtimes with play rangers from Canongate leading and supporting loose parts play in the playground • Play Champions training – an 8 week block of lessons to train up Play Champions in loose parts play –it is still to be decided which upper primary children this will be targeted at. • Mindfulness – lessons are now complete in P5 and P7 and we are discussing ways to keep up these practices as part of our daily mindfulness routines • PEF funding continues to be used to provide access to extra-curricular and curricular activities (eg trips) for children whose families might otherwise struggle • The nurture groups established by Miss Stephen are working well with identified children as part of our Building Resilience Programme • Positive playtimes and lunchtimes: staff in the dining halls and playgrounds are now issuing 'golden tickets' to children when they see examples of positive behaviour. These are being exchanged for pebbles in class to fill up a glass. Once the glass is full the children can choose an activity to celebrate their collective efforts (eg. extra playtime). <p>Raising attainment (Numeracy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately, as Miss Stephen is now in class full time, we are not currently able to provide additional support in numeracy (in addition to what is being provided in class) for those children who require it • There is an advert out for a teacher for maths/numeracy 3 days per week, the intention being that they will work with support groups, children 	

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	requiring more challenge and 'team teach' alongside teachers	
6.5	<p>Parental Involvement/Engagement</p> <p>We are keen to hear your views. So this is a reminder to encourage all parents to complete the bi-annual city-wide parents' questionnaire which was parent-mailed out this week (with paper copies if that is easier). If possible, please complete the survey online, by Friday 16th March, using the following link: http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/pacr17</p> <p>The Authority uses this to find out parental views. They also provide an analysis of views for each school, which help us in working with you.</p> <p>Sports for Champions</p> <p>Stephanie Inglis, Commonwealth silver medallist visited the school on Wednesday 7th March to share her story and lead workshops. Sponsorship money raised exceeded £400 and is being put towards PE and playground improvement resources.</p> <p>A newsletter with information from around the classes will be mailed out to parents and families this week.</p>	
7.0	Bank Account Signatories	
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VL, KR and Lorna Brown are current signatories. Lorna is no longer a parent and should be removed, SP should be added. 	VH/SP
8.0	Funding for Ground Improvements – approval of spending	
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VL said it was important that all PC spending was planned, approved and budgeted. Projects require a lead who is responsible for managing the project budget. Spending should be approved by 2 post holders. SP said he would be the project lead for the playground improvements and would produce a budget 	SP
9.0	Events	
9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was a general discussion about events that have taken place in the past and those we might wish to see happen in the future. It was agreed that the summer carnival that took place in 2016 was very much enjoyed, but that it was so much work that organisers did not want to do it again. IN was concerned that work needed for the carnival had a negative impact on parents getting involved in the Colony of Artists. VL said that some events had hoped to raise funds but had failed to do so, IN said that events often meant that parents are being asked to pay several times to support activities in school, she felt we should do more to apply for external funds that are available. SP noted that unlike most PCs in the Leith area, Abbeyhill had not made a proposal for funding from Leith Decides. We should address this in future. SP reminded everyone of our earlier intention to hold a formal, registered raffle that would mean tickets could be sold to a much wider group, meaning families were not the only people being asked to raise funds for the PC. CK said that children can be involved in this kind of fundraising. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was generally agreed that fundraising and events should be separated and that events should be more about cohesion and celebration. SP asked if there were any commitments from PC funds for the remainder of the year. VL said that the PC had supported trips to Imaginate in 2017. AG/KM said there was no plan to take pupils this year. IN suggested that in future years we should collaborate with Imaginate events and, in doing so, secure free tickets for the whole school. MC suggested a simpler event than the Carnival, but with a similar atmosphere – a Playground Party to show off improvements to the playground, there was also general enthusiasm for the P7 students to be given a good ‘send off’. SP suggested this could be combined with an International Day to celebrate the diversity of families in the school. Several people said that a previous International Day had been very successful. The meeting agreed to progress with the raffle and with a summer Playground Party/International Day. SP will write to parents who responded to our survey to seek volunteers to form an Events Committee. 	SP
10.0	Any Other Business	
10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IN gave details of the Colony of Artists Busy Bee project, it was agreed to arrange for them to give a presentation at an upcoming assembly. IN gave details of Little Kravitz and Alice Myers, 2 artists in the Abbeyhill programme who may come in to help with the playground tidy and possibly working with us on playground improvements VH reminded the meeting that it had previously been suggested that CEC funds due in this week could be spent on a projector. AG/KM confirmed this was still very much desired and needed. SP said James Preston had some expertise in this area and would ask him to investigate. SP explained that P1 parent Elinor Mason had been in touch with CEC regarding the speed of traffic along Abbeyhill and the need for measures to reduce traffic speed. She has obtained a commitment from CEC to survey the road at the back of the school at Abbeyhill/Brand Place to see if it merits a crossing or slow sign. SP said that the PC constitution had last been updated in October 2016 and needed a further update. SP said that the constitution contained a suggestion that there should be one nominated parent in each year linked to the PC, VL said this had been difficult to achieve, SP said he would make a renewed effort. BM said that his remit at Santander included a substantial commitment to engage with the local community. He hopes to be able to provide some funding for the PC, to raise funds in the branch and to bring his team along to help on clean up events. 	IN/KM SP SP/VH/ KR SP BM/SP
11.0	Next Meeting Date	
11.1	Wednesday 2 nd May 18:30 – 20:00 P7 Classroom	