

Abbeyhill Parent Council Meeting

Date: 3 Feb 2021 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Venue: TEAMS

Minutes By: Ali Morris



ITEM	DESCRIPTION		ACTION
	PRESENT		
	Charlene Kay	PC Chair	CK
	Valerie Henry	Acting Head Teacher	VH
	Ali Morris	PC Secretary	AM
	Ann Pratt	PC Treasurer	AP
	Heather Ridik		HR
	Jennifer Tamaru		JT
	Mariam H		MH
	Keith Martin	Principal Teacher	KM
	Marilyn Blyth Wilson		MBW
	Apologies		
	Ruth Punna	Social Media	
	Vlad Hasiu	Parent	
	Illiyana Nedkova	Curator-in-Residence	IN
1.0	Welcome by the Chair		
1.1	Charlene welcomed and thanked all for attending.		
2.0	The Role of the Parent Council		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To promote close cooperation and communication between parents and teachersTo promote equality and fairnessTo study and discuss matters of mutual interest relating to the education and welfare of pupils.To engage in activities which support and advance the education and acities of pupils at the school.Parents in the PC role to represent the wider parent body.		
3.0	Minutes of last meeting		
3.1	<i>Call for PC Members</i> Any parent/carers can become a member of the Parent Council. It just requires attendance of 3 meetings per year and allows you to vote in any decision making process. If anyone would like to join just get in touch with one of the PC Office Bearers or let us know at the next meeting.		
3.2	<i>Social Justice library (update from Heather Rikic)</i> The survey has been carried out. Now making a list of books for each year group, doing the background work. Once this is complete there will be		

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	recommendations for the PC to source. Notes that EPIC is now on a red list of not secure and schools have been asked to not use it any more. Heather to seek alternative suppliers to Epic. VH to check why it is on the red list Thanks to Heather for all her work.	HR VH
3.3	<i>Uniform exchange</i> Heather Rikic has also taken over the uniform exchange. (Second hand uniform items are donated to school, and the PC sells them for 50p per item. Funds raised are used to buy clean underwear that is kept in the school office for any children who have an accident and need clean underwear while at school.) The current intention is to give away surplus stock once that is allowable with social distancing, and then to open to new donations.	
3.4	<i>ASN Parent support group</i> Ali and Val to set up a meeting to work out how to take this forward.	AM, VH
3.5	<i>School Homework Policy review</i> On pause until school life is back to normal. and Val to set up meeting to work out the best way to take the research/surveying parents and teachers etc.	AM, VH
3.6	<i>Financial update</i> AP has sent a reminder email to Linda Watt and also spoken to KM about the unpaid part of the P7 leavers gifts, which are 50% funded by the PC. The PC continues to be happy to fund 50% of the gifts, but in order to do this we must have an invoice or even an email requesting payment. Val to follow up. Val asked who is responsible for ordering the P7 hoodies. Clarified that hoodies are purchased as they go into P7 so they can wear it for the whole year. Keith to check with Jeanette and find out in time for this year's P6 class as they go into P7. There may also be school gifts at the end of P7 but currently unsure of this.	VH KM
4.0	Head Teacher's report	
4.1	Thanks to the parents for the £100 coffee voucher at Red Kite. Very much appreciated and gave the teachers a boost. All spent now 😊 Thanks to everyone for contributions to the school rationale and positive behaviour policy.	

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	<p><i>Remote Learning</i></p> <p>Remote learning was very challenging in first week, trying to get everyone on Teams. All but four families are now engaging, and the school is trying to get in touch with those parents to provide help. School is also seeking to help if child isn't engaging in any given week, by calling parents to check in and offer help. Teachers are seeking to set the work at a pace that suits the children. As things get more established staff are able to be more flexible.</p> <p>School has been providing paper worksheet packages for those that need them and have also loaned school iPads, provided food parcels, and 3 months free internet for families in some cases.</p> <p>Miss Macdonald and the PSAs providing support for learning.</p> <p>School is here and they do want to support everybody.</p> <p>Thanks to all parents, who have done an amazing job.</p> <p><i>Communication with families</i></p> <p>Trying to find the balance between keeping people informed but not overwhelming. Going to do a weekly update document, every Friday.</p> <p><i>Staffing in-school</i></p> <p>Staff are in bubbles. Nursery has quite a lot of children in, and staff are each attending one day per week.</p> <p>P1-P7 staff are in 2 days a week and 2.5 days remote learning. One teacher and one PSA in each bubble.</p> <p>2 staff are self isolating.</p> <p>Children attending the school may or may not have their class teacher on the days they are in – may be someone else looking after the class. All children are set up with iPads. They access the remote learning that their teacher has provided and given support within their bubble. Teachers in the bubbles are part of the Teams for all the classes in their bubble, so can support the children in accessing their tasks.</p> <p>Places are provided in school for vulnerable children. There are ay categories of vulnerable, including children who didn't engage during the first lockdown, Care Experienced children and those for whom English is not their first language. It is not as clear cut as before and hasn't been easy to decide which children should have the available spaces.</p> <p>If somebody is really struggling then please get in touch. It maybe appears to be that random, but there are reasons for every child who is invited in.</p> <p>Any ideas please suggest them.</p>	

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	<p><i>Art Therapy</i></p> <p>Queen Margaret University have offered an Art Therapist, who is doing a placement as part of their training programme. Concentrate on social and emotional wellbeing for some children. Hoping to be accepted for the pilot March to summer term. Initially this will be in small groups and individual work.</p> <p>In September it will be rolled out to wider groups of children, probably not whole class/whole school but that could be explored through additional trainees if there is appetite for that.</p> <p><i>Mindfulness</i></p> <p>There's an upcoming pilot on Mindfulness for children – more info will be available by the next Parent Council. That will be whole school.</p> <p><i>Transition to Secondary School</i></p> <p>Drummond High School has started virtual transition work.</p> <p><i>P1 Intake</i></p> <p>Currently Abbeyhill has been allocated one P1 class of 25, however the numbers are currently uncertain (34 registrations of which 6 are requesting to go to other schools). If numbers go higher than 25 there would either be a composite class or two teachers.</p> <p><i>Janitors House</i></p> <p>Progress! The bat assessor suspects there's no bats in the loft but because bats are protected they are having to take it down brick by brick. If bats are found they will be rehomed. Once the bats are removed they will bring in the bulldozers. This work has been classed as a matter of urgency, and school has been told that it will be happening ASAP. Val requested a date but none given yet. She will keep an eye on it and chase as necessary.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised previously about the safety of the walls next to the janitors house and the outdoor classroom. Val advised that the plants growing through them have been removed. Questions raised about which parts of the wall may or may not be safe. Val to speak to Linda to double check what has been done and what still needs to be done – make sure no structural problem before we build any planters in front of it.</p>	<p>VH</p> <p>VH</p>
5.0	Chair's Report	
5.1	<p>Thank you to Ann for taking the lead on the fundraising calendar this year and for all the parents, carers, staff and community members who played a role in its success. It's fantastic to sell out again this year and funds raised will go towards school improvements and pupil needs.</p> <p>Thank you to Ali for taking on the role of parent council secretary.</p> <p>Illie has done an initial report of the 10 Villages funding spending. We</p>	

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	<p>haven't actually invoiced any of the artists-in-residence for this yet as projects have been delayed due to the covid restrictions but hopefully a lot of these projects will be able to start soon.</p> <p>We are thinking of applying for this year's 10 Villages funding to support an art therapist-in-residence, and will have the advice of parent Heather Tuffery which is incredibly helpful. We will have a think about this in light of the potential pilot project from QMU.</p> <p>Our big project at the moment is the Outdoor Garden/Classroom: see separate item below.</p>	
6.0	Treasurer's report	
6.1	<p>There's been quite a of activity since last time. Spending on the outdoor classroom has begun in earnest, which is wonderful. Separately, funds have been raised through sale of the calendar, so there's been money coming into the account too.</p> <p>Funds at last meeting: £18,774.62</p> <p>Funds today: £18,065.09</p> <p>Since the last meeting £1,700 has been spent on the garden so far.</p> <p><i>Fundraising calendars</i></p> <p>The calendar raised a total profit of £1,129.12, through a combination of website and in-person sales. It was a huge team effort.</p> <p>The costs of production were printing, bags and stickers. These were covered by 13 separate sponsorships.</p> <p>Special thanks and mention to so many people but particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gayle Gleeson who pulled all the artwork together, organised the calendar formatting, designed and created parts of the overall look and got the final version ready for the printers. She has also taken over the running of the PC website and so was instrumental in getting the online sales form organised and working• Dave Pratt who did the front cover artworks and little bits throughout.• Sian another parent who did the artwork for the PC month.• William Kearns who did copying work of some of the paper images.• Mhairi who organised and collected the sponsorship, offered her help and experience from her involvement in previous years and was a vital member of the sales team.	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Charlene and Mel who did daily sales at the school gate.Ruth (social media) who promoted the calendar online.Abi Flowers (P7 teacher) chased teachers up and collated all the artwork, also formatting.Janette constant point of contact for queries and dealing with parents handing money in.The local businesses who have supported the calendar, and therefore the school, with their sponsorships, especially considering the tough year it's been for small businesses. <p>We're very grateful to everyone who helped, and would also like to thank all the parents, pupils and staff who put artwork in to create the calendar, and everyone who bought the calendar.</p> <p>It's definitely worth doing this each year for the funds raised. The total calendar money raised over all years has been kept together in a pot so there is potential to identify projects to spend that on.</p> <p><i>Other upcoming spend</i></p> <p>The other ring-fenced pot of money is the £3,000 from last year's ten villages funding, which will be spent on the school's ongoing Artists in Residence project. That will all be spent once Covid allows the project to go ahead.</p> <p>£500 has been allocated for the playground upkeep fund. A group has been set up to take that forward post Covid.</p> <p>£200 is kept back each year to pay for the P7 ceilidh band. This traditionally happens at Christmas time but could happen this year in the summer.</p> <p><i>Easy Fundraising App</i></p> <p>This app raises money for the school when people shop online. We need a rep to publicise it and monitor income generated. It's not a huge job but would be greatly appreciated if someone would volunteer to take that on.</p> <p>Ali to include a request for volunteers to go in the email circulating these minutes, and Ruth to do the same via social media.</p> <p><i>Other</i></p> <p>Web hosting has successfully moved from James Preston (former parent) to Gayle Gleeson. Very grateful to her for taking on that job.</p> <p>Ann attended a Connect Training Course for Treasures of PCs. Useful course. Will circulate the notes to PC members. Main takeaway was that committee members all have joint ownership for the funds: the Treasurers</p>	AM, RP

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	job is administrating and record keeping.	
7.0	Curator-in-residence's report	
7.1	<p>Illie wasn't able to make this meeting but has circulated an update to the PC. In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Artist in Residence project aims to bring the wonder of expressive arts to every child at the school, as well as staff, Abbeyhill families and the wider local communitydue to the COVID-19 pandemic we have had to re-imagine this project and pivot from live interaction in the classrooms towards the delivery of their residencies in the new virtual and outdoor classrooms at Abbeyhill Primary School. The new digitally-led residencies will now culminate into the 16th annual Colony of Artists festival weekend on 18 and 19 September 2021.The project will bring a poet, illustrator, artist gardener, art historian and app developer to work with children across the school.The first digital residency is underway with illustrator delivering school-wide initiative. Entitled <i>Up Up and Away</i>. All classes from Nursery to Primary 7 will pay tribute to James Tytler the first person in Britain to fly in a hot air balloon in 1784 from nowhere else but our own Abbeyhill!The second project will be led by poet Ken Cockburn, creating a poetry walk.The third project will be led by Art Historian Ana Gonzalez-Choucino who will use the school windows as a blank canvas for art installations.In addition we have a new project with gardener in residence Yolanda McKean, who will be focusing on contemporary art and gardening.And finally we are developing a mobile app called Our Holyrood Park. This is currently in Beta testing.	
8.0	Outdoor Garden Classroom	
8.1	<p>Charlene provided an update on progress with the outdoor classroom:</p> <p>Thanks to everyone who's been involved: it's been a real group effort so far. A £9,460 lottery grant was awarded for the project, of which £1,720 has been spent.</p> <p><i>Upcoming spend</i></p> <p>6 huge planters, which will take the school total to 8 so that each class can take ownership of their own planter and decide what they want to plant.</p>	

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	<p>These should be in place before all pupils are back at school.</p> <p>A waterproof trousers and wellies pool for the school. Abi Flowers has done the survey and Linda will put the order through the school to access discount prices. These will be supplied by Muddy Puddles, which does really good quality equipment. They will be stored in the old scooter shed, by the heated pipe so they can dry out in there.</p> <p><i>Purchases to date</i></p> <p>Fire pit, firewood, wheelbarrows, topsoil, garden equipment, 7 large boxes for Covid-secure outdoor toy sets for each class – all the toys from the sheds have been shared out equally. PC can also provide supplement funds for further items of this nature.</p> <p>200 trees and shrubs were donated from the Conservation Volunteers I Dig Trees initiative. We actually have more trees than we have space for, and: some in pots. Tried giving them away but most families don't have tons of space. Charlene is going to get in touch with rangers at the park, as we don't want these trees to go to waste.</p> <p>We've also received free seed potato kits, from an initiative to get primary school kids growing and cooking. It's an annual thing so can do next year.</p> <p><i>Activities to date</i></p> <p>Mr Hamilton and Mr Woodhouse have been trained in fire safety and each class got to have a marshmallow roasting time before Christmas.</p> <p><i>Benches</i></p> <p>Benches have been made from wood donated by Holyrood Park rangers from a tree that once stood in Holyrood Palace. Mr Woodhouse had the excellent idea of each child in the school burnishing their names into the benches. Thanks to William Kearns and Dave Pratt for constructing the benches.</p> <p><i>Local Community</i></p> <p>Part of the funding criteria for the garden is that we involve the local community, and it is on the to do list to work out what that will look like.</p> <p><i>Fruit trees</i></p> <p>Parent Jennifer Tamaru offered two apple trees to donate to the garden. Both are compact varieties so there should be space. The offer was accepted with thanks!</p>	CK
9.0	Any other business	
9.1	<i>School uniform</i> <p>Ann noted that she appreciated the recent approach to PE when kids went to school in PE appropriate clothes. Much more comfortable for the</p>	

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	<p>children and easier to move around in than standard uniform clothes. Requested that school explore that as an option for every day wear, as activity is integrated more into daily school life.</p> <p>A brief discussion raised other views such as uniform clothes being hard wearing and concern about longevity of non-uniform, also liking that a uniform provide parity for kids across the school and doesn't require thought about what they should wear each day.</p> <p>Discussion to be tabled for the future as there is lots to think about. We will make it a rolling item on the agenda so that it can be picked up at the appropriate time, most likely once Sally is back.</p>	
10.0	Date of Next Meeting	
10.1	<p>24 March 2021, 6:30-8:00pm, on TEAMS.</p> <p>Val to invite teachers from Drummond High School to attend the next meeting to take about the school and answer questions.</p>	VH