

# Abbeyhill Parent Council

General Meeting  
Tuesday 8th November 2022, 4-5.30pm

Parent Council Members Present:

Name	Role	Present
Jennifer Graham (JG)	Chair	✓
Siân Harris (SH)	Secretary	✓
Moir Robertson (MR)	Head Teacher	✓
Ali Morris (AM)	ASN Rep	X
Ruth Punna (RP)	Social Media Manager	✓
Heather Tuffery (HT)	Ordinary member	X
Heather Rikic (HR)	Ordinary member	apologies
Melanie Chuprasova (MC)	Ordinary member	✓
Melissa Sturgeon (MS)	Ordinary member	✓
Jo Millar (JM)	Ordinary member	apologies
Marilyn Wilson (MW)	Ordinary member	apologies
Liva Svarare (LS)	Ordinary member	X
Adenike Arowol-Ladega (AA)	Ordinary member	X
Alice Gritti (AG)	Ordinary member	X
Ann Pratt (AP)	Ordinary member	apologies
Suzanne Macdiarmid (SM)	Ordinary member	✓

Other Attendees:

- Kathryn Graham, Acting Principal Teacher & P4 class teacher
- Illyana Nedkova, Curator in Residence
- Laura Bownas, P2 & P3 Parent
- Junko Inaba, P2 Parent
- Debbie Small, Nursery Parent
- Dkyana Naleas, Parent
- Vytaute Valulante, P3 & Nursery Parent
- Amanda Ferrier, Parent
- Che Finlay, Parent
- Jonathan Combe, Business Manager
- Emma Fordie, Parent
- Dave Pratt, P3 & P5 Parent
- Yanko Velichkov, Parent

# Minutes

## 1. Welcome from the Chair

The chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. The chair explained that the Parent Council works with Moira and the school management team to improve the school environment (i.e. both physical and learning) to achieve the best outcomes for each and every child. The job of the Parent Council is to represent the wider Parent Forum within school, sharing the views of parents and carers with the school management team. All parents and carers in school are part of the Parent Forum, everyone is valuable.

## 2. Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting

### Parent Council Actions and Updates

Ref.	Date	Action	Owner	Update
21/22_01	c/f from previous session	Set up skills register for Parent Forum.	JG	Web Administrator appointed now (Kei Taniguchi) – Aiming to build Skills Register by PC meeting in February 2023.
21/22_02	c/f from previous session	Arrange audit of PC accounts.	JG	Mr F Stewart can carry out the audit. He now needs to talk with AP (former Treasurer).
21/22_03	c/f from previous session	Confirm if PC matching for 10 Villages Funding grant has to be used at the same time as the grant or can be held back to be used for the space previously occupied by the Janitor's house.	MR	MR has been in touch with person in charge of this area (Jade Mooney), explaining that the groundworks are taking longer than anticipated, and asking if we can delay the grant until everything is ready (i.e. as we don't want to lose any of it); we are awaiting a response to that question.
1309_01	13/09/2022	JG and MR to work to organise in person feedback for reporting as well as responses to surveys to give people more opportunity to share their voice.	JG, MR	Mechanism now in place for gathering views / values; a link went out to the Parent Forum last week, please do fill it in – Action Closed.
1309_02	13/09/2022	MR to take back to staff to see what they can use the Teams for.	MR	Using Teams more with P6 and P7 as a pilot; looking at the logistics of how to roll this out more widely across the school – Action Closed

1309_04	13/09/2022	SH to talk to MC to understand ways other schools handle their uniform banks.	SH, MC	Managed a very brief chat but need a proper one.
1309_05	13/09/2022	JG to liaise with IN to get Funding working group up and running	JG, IN	JG still to liaise with IN to get this up and running; needing volunteers for this, please contact Jennifer if interested – Aiming to update PC on this at the meeting in February 2023.
1309_06	13/09/2022	SH to organise uniform drive to support the call for uniform for Ukrainian refugees	SH	Uniform for Ukrainian refugees – Complete (Thirteen complete sets donated, as per notes in Chair Report) - Action Closed
1309_07	13/09/2022	AM, MR, JG to discuss how to set up in-person support group for parents of children with ASN	JG, AM, MR	Still to discuss.

## 3. Reports

### 3.1 Head Teacher's Report

#### Introductions:

- Jonathan Combe (Business Manager) – Online - Joined in August, working Wednesday and Thursday. Works at Kaimes School on Monday and Tuesday (started there at the start of June). Previously worked for 21 years in Out of School Care. Was with Spring Oscars as Senior Operations Manager for a long time, lots of crossover between that role and his new role at Abbeyhill (e.g. Health & Safety, Finance etc). Hoping to be at the PC meeting in person in February 2023.
- Kathryn Graham (Acting Principal Teacher & P4 class teacher) – In Person.

#### Staff Updates:

- Have now recommended someone as a PSO; hoping they will start before the end of this term, or in January.
- Appointed Mrs Small as a PSA with P3 and P6 recently, she is getting to know the children.

#### Staff Training:

- “Who cares?” – Staff took part in training around ‘children within the care system’. What is it like to be in care? How can they best support children in care? [NB: The organisation who ran the training are coming in to school to work with P6 & P7 soon too, to raise their awareness around the issue as well.]

- Early Learning and Speech Programme (Nursery Staff) - Mrs Graham is leading the tracking of learning within Nursery, to make sure that all children are progressing with pace and that nobody is getting missed.

#### Student Action:

- Red Start, a charity focused on financial education, is now in a three-year partnership with the school (free of charge). They are coming into school to work with the children, and also offering the children an opportunity to go into a workplace. The aim is to help children from P1 upwards to develop an understanding of finances.
- Rights of Child – Mrs Flowers is leading the school to develop a rights-based culture, looking at the UNCRC. Children in P7 led a beautiful launch assembly on this today.

#### Other Updates:

- Mr Woodhouse and Miss Nicholson are supporting staff to use all technology and make the school environment more sustainable.
- 10 Villages – As previously mentioned, Jade Mooney has been contacted to ask if we can extend this funding beyond the Easter deadline.  
Harvey Slater has also been in touch about the playground and is working on adjusting the costings for this. We are aiming to use the money to best effect, so that it will have the most impact.
- Parental Engagement - Jigsaw planner went out to all parents recently. The aim is to encourage parental involvement in learning. We would also like to increase parent engagement through homework, and we are looking for volunteers to join a short-term working party on this (i.e. to give feedback on the proposal).
- Road Safety Update [NB: We will discuss this in more depth later] - Please park further away from the school, leave earlier, park safely, or walk into school. There is a hazard around the bridge with Rhonda, one of our lollipop ladies, where parked cars obscure the visibility. Safety features on Brand Place are part of the Travel Plan (see later notes).
- Music Tuition – There is no music specialist in school. Music lessons are delivered by class teachers. Violin and Cello are offered to P5 through P7 by specialist teachers. Also, the Youth Music Initiative visit every year and work with P1. This year, P3 will also benefit from specialist input.
- Vision, Values and Aims – A survey went out which collected views from parents. Nursery are looking at this too and how it links in with them. It'll be in a slightly different form for them.
- Library – No update at the moment, other than we have some fantastic pupil volunteers.

### 3.2 Curator in Residence

- Colony of Artists pARTy (16<sup>th</sup> September 2022) Thanks to all who joined this experiment. It has provided us with a template to do it next year as a garden party right after school. In the past we have always aligned with the Colony of Artists weekend (a two-day festival), but moving forward we are looking to extend the festival to three days, with Friday as the first day, and the focus on day one being at the school.

- Each Artist in Residence does six or seven sessions in school. The thought for 2023 would be to keep the work from these sessions and display it on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as part of the event.
- The Artist in Residence scheme has been ongoing for the past ten years; it would be nice to mark the tenth anniversary in some way. The Colony of Artists festival has been ongoing for eighteen years.
- Class teacher efforts have always been key to involvement in the festival (e.g. dressing windows). The Artists in Residence add value with visual/performing arts. This innovation has been praised by Education Scotland who are working in partnership with the Colony of Artists.
- The Artist in Residence scheme is free to parents and to the school. Artists are paid a professional fee, but out-with the school budget. Five potential funding streams have been identified for fundraising:
  1. Devolved fund from Creative Scotland dedicated to traditional arts - Ceilidh dancers involved, with Caroline from Ceildih Kids. In 2023 she is aiming to do ten sessions as an after-school club on Tuesdays (as per her availability), either in the hall or outside (depending on the weather).
  2. Ongoing partnership with the Polish Consulate - the Polish Consulate herself came to cut the ribbon for our new mural. Polish Contemporary Art Organisation - Support artists of Polish descent. There is approximately £2000 available for support. Joanna Bosca(?) has already started, split between P2a and P2b classes; they are looking at Autumnal items collected. She has almost finished this project and is hoping to come back again to do another project. Monika Smekult(?) also from the Polish programme is joining too and she will be doing a Screen Dance (i.e. dance and film) project, although we aren't sure yet which class(es) she will be working with. [NB: Business Admin arranges the PVGs for this with the school, the fee is covered by the council and doesn't cost the school anything.]
  3. Moray House School of Education and Sport at Edinburgh University - Contemporary dance partnership. A film was shown recently and they performed a dance which had been choreographed by P6 and P7 students. This partnership will continue next year. The student dance company also perform, too.
  4. 10 Villages – We are aiming for this funding too (16<sup>th</sup> Feb deadline).
  5. Creative Scotland – Funding available to support multiple artists (rather than just one at a time), based on the ten-year partnership. Thinking of an alternative to the 'Daily Mile' in schools across China, for artists, maybe with tap dancing or something similar.
- Dave Pratt (i.e. the artist of the mural), is also likely to come back to do the rest of his residency.
- Could we link something in with the Nurture Rooms and maybe the library too? Possibly use some of the funding to bring in an Interior Designer to help with that too?

### 3.3 Treasurer Report

- No treasurer at present. JG covering both roles at present.
- Clarification: Dave Pratt payment not for mural (other than materials), but for Illustrator in Residence.
- Still spending 2020 funding, etc.
- Expenses and Income from Halloween events and Calendar sponsors still to be processed. These will be covered in the February 2023 report.

- MS Question - Check expenditure number as there is a mistake and amend report (Amended report will be available on the website with a copy of these Minutes.)

### 3.4 Chair Report

- Thanks to Mel, Melissa & Anne for organising Halloween parties - All who attended enjoyed.
- Thanks to Siân for help with organising uniform for Ukrainian refugees. Thirteen complete sets for girls from P4 to P7 were donated to Victoria Primary. [NB: We also donated bikes to that scheme, not used by Abbeyhill, so passed on to Ukrainian refugees.]
- Thanks to Ali M & Kei T for baking and managing the pop-up café at the garden party. Brought in a good amount of money (just over £300) which has been put aside to provide art materials for the school.
- Edinburgh International Book Festival – Donating three large vinyl banners from the children’s area to Abbeyhill and these will be used to decorate the fenced area beside Brand place and the library.
- Recruited Kei T to update the website.
- Treasurer role still vacant, please contact Jennifer if you are keen to know more, and she can outline the role further.
- Edinburgh Parental Involvement Group – Locality meetings are now up and running. The aim is to link representatives from all Parent Councils with the council. Following elections, two parent council representatives will be attending the working party.
- National Discussion on Education – You will hopefully have seen the posters and email. We have an opportunity to feed in to how education happens across Scotland. This is the first consultation in twenty years. Please feed in your views, it doesn’t matter if you weren’t educated in Scotland yourself, the discussion needs input from everyone, regardless of their educational experience. The Parent Council will also be facilitating discussions ... in person on 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November in the Breakfast Club and an online session in the evening on 23<sup>rd</sup> November. The survey is available in multiple languages. It is valuable to submit our voice as a collective, as well as our individual responses.

## 4. Special Projects Updates

### 4.1 Uniform Exchange

- Uniform exchange hub is very popular with parents in Abbeyhill.
- Now open more often (monthly).
- SH suggested it could be expanded to include many other things too. Proposal: to expand the Uniform Exchange to accept and share children’s clothing of all types and ages, renaming it the ‘Kids Clothing Exchange’.  
The plan would then be to consult the wider Parent Forum about expanding it into a ‘Full Sustainability Hub’ based on the felt needs of the school community as ascertained by the consultation.
- Currently parents make a donation as they take items (i.e. as they feel they want to).

- The current space needs work in order to make it safer and more useable (e.g. shelving). At present we are using plastic boxes piled on top of each other, which is not great in terms of health and safety
- Funding for development of the space might not all need to come from the PC, some of it might come from other avenues (e.g. 10 Villages project)

**MS** raised concerns about the proposal to expand.

- The expansion would be a “logistical nightmare”. How would the inventory be managed? Who would check the condition of items to pass on? Who would run it? Who will control the public coming in and out?
- Storing inventory inside school may open up the school to liability issues. Is it really necessary to do this? Surely people can use online forums to do exactly the same thing (e.g. Gumtree, Facebook Marketplace). Could we not make this a digital offering? If it was digital then it wouldn’t involve housing inventory at school and the parents could arrange the exchange themselves, thus fostering relationships.
- The proposed budget of £900 with suggestion of buying IKEA flatpack seems an awful lot of money to outlay with no promise of any return. Would the £900 not be better used for children in school rather than going out wider? Too big a commitment for a school of this size to outlay £900 on this. Fundraising is needed if it were to be taken forward, rather than the PC paying for it.
- It is currently an idea, written as a concept, not written as a proposal. It is not at the stage where we can vote on it yet. There is a flaw in the concept. Surely the Uniform Exchange needs to get going properly before adding other things.

**Response to concerns:**

- IKEA – They are known to do fit outs for charity/good causes.
- Joiner in Parent Forum might be able to build something instead, this hasn’t been costed though.
- **SH** & volunteers are currently staffing it.
- Having it in school makes it more accessible to people, rather than a purely digital offering.
- Could do inventory along with digital stuff.

**Vote:**

- Proxy Vote (Apologies) – Supporting the proposal [NB: Not heard pushback at this meeting.]
- More Work Needed before voting.

**Not take the proposal forward at present.** More chats need to happen amongst the Parent Forum around how to manage the Uniform Hub and any extra expansion before progressing this further.

## 5. Brand Place Road Safety

The School Travel Plan is a city wide rolling programme, on a three-year rotation. We need ideas about “What is needed to make it safer?” from the Parent Forum.

- The Council has been approached about getting new barriers and road markings on Brand Place.
- School Travel Plan Group (i.e. part of the council) have ring fenced funding that can be accessed based on responses from forms that will go out to parents and carers in January 2023. Funding is there to support travel to and from school via any route/direction (i.e. the front of the school as well as Brand Place) or mode of transport (i.e. cycle or walk), making the journey school safe.
- All responses need to be highlighted by many.
- Community responses have to be very specific about concerns and locations of concerns.
- January deadline. Get all prepped for then, so that we are ready to go as soon as we can. Unlikely to be a rapid response from the council though.

If significant concerns are raised by enough parents then the school could potentially receive:

- A WikWak sign (i.e. a black light box which flashes when the crossing patrol there).
- Static Barriers – As long as accessible (i.e. double-buggy/mobility scooter can still get past).
- Moveable Barrier (at bottom of playground) – This would stop children walking out into the road whilst chatting and would still allow access to the playground when required.
- Could they add speed bumps? Or ‘close road’ & divert? (Might be deemed too disruptive.)

Concerns raised (by parents/carers, children and staff):

- Narrow pavements
- Lack of barriers
- Speed of traffic
- Road markings missing
- Parking on double yellow lines (regularly)
- Lack of signage about crossing patrol / school coming up, especially before the bridge and on the corner.
- Lack of speedbumps (i.e. only one from Holyrood side).
- Sharp corner, no lights (bottom of Abbey Lane), can't see it until you are there.
- Front of School - Shouldn't be traffic using that road unless residents as it is a Safer Streets road. [Moir spoke with police about signage which is not very clear.]
- Question about field trips with whole classes – there are safety concerns when mobilising whole classes.

Actions in the Short Term:

- PC will collate ideas. What are the concerns and locations of concern? This list can then be circulated to the PC and also to the wider Parent Forum, giving all parents / carers the chance to respond. JG & MR will collate and send out to everyone. So that we are ready to go as soon as January arrives.
- Junior Road Safety Officers - P6 & P7 with Mr Woodhouse - What could be done to help? Use them to gather concerns of children/parents and carers. How best to collate this info? We don't want people to arrive at school anxious - they won't then be in a position to learn.
- MC suggested a few things (since the survey process will take a long time) - Maybe posters could be made by kids to laminate and then place around school. This might “pull at the heart strings” of those driving past. Also, there used to be a Walking Bus from Sainsburys,



could they help? Cable Com could block off access outside their premises without any problem, would they be willing to help? Also, many parents are just not aware of the 'no parking' zones, could we remind people? Does this info pass down to nursery too? [MR – Yes, info goes to whole school.]

- Emma suggested - Could kids make videos to show parents? Also, other schools use the swimming pool, could we send surveys out to them too, to back up our concerns? [MR – Yes, good idea.]
- Debbie suggested – Visual reminders. Get kids and artists involved too. Council, time delay in getting measures in place is not acceptable. East Lothian signage is much better. Could we add visuals ourselves in advance of the council? [MR - Can label school railings no problem, but need permission to add signs to bridges etc]
- Railings – Could we add double sided banners to them? Fun for kids on inside, road safety on outside?
- Hands of Children Graphic “Slow down, children ahead.”
- Creative / Savvy with messaging.
- Role Play Video – Children act as lollipop people and police officers. Could possibly put it out on social media? An idea to take forward with Junior RSOs?
- Send something out in this week’s roundup and remind in next week’s roundup – also send in a separate email ‘Road Safety’ (as might get lost in roundup) - look at data after that.
- It is possible for people to submit comments to the Parent Council inbox through our website Contact Form. We will then collate them. [NB: Volunteers in playground to chase with post-it notes to get views.]

## 6. Events

### 6.1. End of Term Family Film Night

- Proposal for costs has gone out .
- Looked at licensing. MS said PVSL is wrong licence (students and teachers only, unplanned) and Single Title Screening License (i.e. for one screening) would be needed ... £83 + VAT, multiplied by number of films ... plus extra costs for equipment (DVD players etc).
- Could we do it without a licence as other schools do? Request to borrow DVD players from parents? Che raised that this would be illegal, and asked who will take responsibility for this?
- In the meantime, this year, could we scale the plans back (i.e. have children and designated adult).
- JC will chat further to Into Film Scotland about this.
- School has PVSL licence.

### 6.2 Spring Term Event - Snacks and Bedtime Stories

- Early March 2023
- Event - Sharing different things that people do around snacks and bedtime stories. Aiming to get feedback from multiple cultures/families etc. Needs a lot more thought/planning.

- Funding avenues are available for this event.

## 7. AOB (3 mins)

- None.

Next meeting, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 6.30pm to 8pm – This will be hybrid again.

## 8. Meeting Closed

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## Parent Council Decisions

Ref.	Date	Decision
D0811_01	08/11/2022	Not to expand the Uniform Exchange at present. More discussion with the Parent Forum around how to manage the Uniform Hub and any extra expansion before progressing this further.
D0811_02	08/11/2022	PC to assist in collating ideas for road/travel improvements, ready for presentation to ECC in January 2023.

## Parent Council Actions (and Updates)

Ref.	Date	Action	Owner	Update
21/22_01	c/f from previous session	Build Parent Forum Skills Register	JG	KT to start building. Aiming to update PC on this at the meeting in February 2023.
21/22_02	c/f from previous session	Arrange audit of PC accounts	JG	AP to talk with Mr F Stewart.
21/22_03	c/f from previous session	Confirm if PC matching for 10 Villages Funding grant has to be used at the same time as the grant or can be held back to be used for the space previously occupied by the Janitor's house.	MR	MR awaiting a response from Jade Mooney.
1309_04 + 0811_01	13/09/2022 + 08/11/2022	Investigate how other schools handle their uniform banks, and the needs of our community.	SH	SH to organise consultation with Parent Forum on needs for Uniform Exchange, and to chat with MC about ideas from other schools
1309_05	13/09/2022	Set up Funding working group	JG, IN	JG still to liaise with IN to get this up and running; needing volunteers for this, please contact Jennifer if interested – Aiming to update PC on this at the meeting in February 2023.

1309_07	13/09/2022	Set up in-person support group for parents of children with ASN	JG, AM, MR	AM, MR, JG to discuss how best to set up group.
0811_01	08/11/2022	Road Safety Consultation	JG, MR	JG & MR to coordinate road safety consultation with pupils, parent forum, and other schools, ready to submit to ECC in January 2023. PC members and others to encourage parents and carers to abide by 'Park and Stride'.
0811_03	08/11/2022	Family Film Night	JG	JG/JC to clarify position on PVSL licence and Family Film Night costs.