

# Abbeyhill Parent Council

## General Meeting

Tuesday 9th May 2023, 16:00-17:30

Parent Council Members Present:

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

Other Attendees:

- Kathryn Graham, Acting Principal Teacher & P4 class teacher
- Illyana Nedkova, Curator in Residence
- Cllr Jack Caldwell, City of Edinburgh Councillor, Leith Walk Ward
- Ana Willcox, Parent
- Damilola Ogundiran, Parent
- Timothy Olawumi, Parent
- Beth McCulloch, Parent
- Vera Okunzuwa, Parent

# Minutes

## 1. Welcome from the Chair

The chair opened the meeting, welcomed all attendees and gave a brief overview of the role of the Parent Council.

## 2. Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting

### Decisions Made Outside Parent Council Meetings

Ref.	Date	Decision
D1703_01	17/03/2023	The Parent Council voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the budget for the Summer Garden Party of £390.

### Parent Council Actions and Updates

Ref.	Date	Action	Owner	Update
21/22_02	c/f from previous session	Arrange audit of PC accounts.	JG	Audited accounts will be presented at the AGM in June, in line with Connect guidance. Propose to close
1309_04	13/09/2022	SH to talk to MC to understand ways other schools handle their uniform banks.	SH, MC	Uniform Bank has now moved to be always available inside school entrance area. Propose to close
1309_05	13/09/2022	JG to liaise with IN to get Funding working group up and running	JG, IN	Carry Forward. Discussions on funding availability for larger projects still to take place
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	Carry forward
0702_01	07/02/2023	Include review of managing the playground maintenance budget in the next meeting	JG	Carry forward. Review of managing the budget requires understanding of spend for maintenance activities. This will be gathered as part of the playground tidy event in Early June
0702_02	07/02/2023	Include how to manage access to funds for	JG	To be considered as part of the Money Matters for Parent Councils

		expenses, particularly for large events in the next meeting		agenda item. Propose to close
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## 3. Reports

### 3.1 Head Teacher's Report

#### Review of Policies

MR raised that as a new head this year they have been reviewing and updating a number of the school policies. The attendance policy has been the latest reviewed and updated. This is trying to set an expectation of raising attendance as much as possible. Any child with attendance below 90% or over 25% lates will get a letter home to raise awareness of that with parents. Support is available within school to help with improving attendance and this will be a way to start that conversation.

#### School Healthcare

PSAs and EYPs are all first aid trained, as are class teachers where required. PSAs are all trained in specific medical needs e.g Diabetes, Epilepsy, allergies so they can support children in their own classes but also cover in the event of absence, class trips etc. If medication is needed daily or for an emergency this is all held in the class medical bag. This is kept in class but travels everywhere with the class (PE, Playtime, Lunch etc) to make sure there is no rush if something is needed. Individual care plans are in place, along with additional risk assessments for individual children where these are needed.

#### School Nurse Service

This can be accessed through referral following conversations with school. Concerns such as sleeping, weight gain/loss, wellbeing can be referred into service and the school nurse would then be in contact with the parents to look at how the service can provide support.

#### School Counsellor

There is also a school counsellor available that we children can be referred to, though this is generally for the older children. A universal approach, building resilience, is being undertaken with all of the children, helping them to build the toolbox of things that can work for them in supporting their emotional wellbeing. This is also part of family learning. MC talked about her role working as a member of the school nursing team and suggested that a drop in session for the school nurse might be an option.

#### Road Safety

The council team are working through survey data received from the routes to school survey so they can build this into an overall plan. The junior Road Safety Officers have been working to paint a banner to remind parents not to park at the school gates, which will be up shortly.

### **School Library**

Due to growing role and the need for appropriately sized classrooms, the library has now moved to a new location in the infant building that isn't suitable as a classroom for more than 18 children. Work is continuing to make this a welcoming and engaging space for children.

### **School Improvement Planning**

Work will begin soon on the improvement plan for next session. Some surveys will be sent out soon relating to areas of focus from this year e.g. vision and values, home learning to gather parent views. Views will also be gathered from the children to help with planning for next session. This will look at highlighting key focuses for next year based on the solid foundation of work done this year.

### **Playground**

Children love the new markings and are really enjoying playing with these. Fencing was not replaced over Easter and the Council are now looking to complete another survey to see if the fence can be patched rather than fully replaced. However we have had confirmation that the janitor's house will be turfed over the summer and the hoarding will be saved and relocated. JG asked if Edinburgh's Futures had been in touch about supporting designing an overall plan for the outdoor space. MR confirmed they had not been in touch yet.

### **PSO**

MR shared more about the role of the PSO. Part of the role is supporting parents with attendance; some children will be identified for support through the attendance review, but families can also ask for help if they need this by contacting school. The PSO also runs SPA - Supported Play Area. This is a quiet place with fewer children that allows the children to work with a trusted adult to build social skills. Also trained in LIAM - supporting children experiencing anxiety - staff or parents can contact school to refer. They have also been working with social skills groups looking at zones of regulation. This session has been about building capacity and building children's confidence in working with a new adult.

### **Staffing**

Recruitment is underway for a new Early Years Practitioner (EYPs). The role received 18 good quality applications so the role will hopefully be filled soon.

There have also been some staff movements to note - Miss McMillan is moving to a post in Aberdeen; Ms Nixon is moving to a new post in Edinburgh and Miss Smith will also be leaving. We are waiting to hear what will be happening with staffing for next session.

It currently looks like we will have 8 classes for next session: P1, P1/2, P2/3, P3-7. Composite classes are made when there are too many children for 1 class but not enough for 2, but enough children at the levels above/below to split classes. These are arranged under various criteria and class lists set up following discussions with current teachers, EYPs etc. Class lists won't be finalised until later into June. Teachers will be communicated soon, but there may be vacancies based on the staff movements noted above.

### **Music provision**

The school does not have a general musical specialist but does get funding through the Youth Music Initiative (YMI) to pay for additional music specialist input. All classes have had the opportunity to work with music specialists this session. IN suggested we could put having a musician in residence to supplement the YMI if we can access funding for this.

## **3.2 Curator in Residence**

- Work is currently full steam ahead with our current residencies - the ceilidh dance artist in residence is now working with P3. Workshops were originally running with parents and children but due to dwindling numbers and clash with choir after school it moved to working with P3. That will continue to end of term
- Welcomed our screen dance artist, who will be working with P3 as the stars of the dance based film that is being worked on;
- 10 Villages have said they're still looking at our funding application so this will hopefully provide funding for artists in the new school year.
- Culminating with Garden pARTy on 15 September where we highlight the art that we have been creating throughout the previous year.
- Will be looking for volunteers to support with this. JG stated that the June meeting agenda would include the items that happen very early in the school year so that parents are aware of volunteering opportunities and these can be managed throughout the summer holidays.

## **3.3 Treasurer Report**

- JG noted that the Treasurer's report details our current financial position. There have been some large expenses such as the invoice for the Playground markings, but these were expected.

## **3.4 Chair Report**

- JG highlighted the section in the Chair's report noting that key roles remain vacant and that no members of the parent forum appear to feel able to take on these roles. This affects the sustainability of the parent council under the current constitution, which states that all roles have to be held by members of the parent forum.
- Legally, only the Chair needs to be a member of the parent forum but our constitution has tied us into a tight spot particularly if nobody feels they can take on these roles on top of their other commitments.
- JG stated that she is currently covering 3 roles and it is not sustainable. If the roles can't be filled then she does not feel that she can continue in the role of Chair.
- The Parent Council needs ongoing management and administration as well as organising specific events. Bringing the constitution back to the AGM in June to loosen up who can hold roles would help us to widen our net to volunteers that may have more time available to them.

## 4. Money Matters for Parent Councils

- At recent locality meetings and through communications with Head Teachers it has come to light that there have been some instances of fraud in some parent groups in Scotland.
- This has highlighted that money matters may not be being handled as they should be.
- Connect, a Scottish charity that supports parent groups has put together guidelines for parent groups and a health check to help with a review of whether we're doing the right things or if there are improvements that can be made.
- JG requested volunteers and will also send an email to the Parent forum asking if anyone would like to be part of a group performing this review.

## 5. Community Garden - Vision Refresh

- A number of parents have asked about the community garden and what has been created versus what was initially discussed.
- MR and JG were not in roles at the time that the garden was first conceived. Neither has seen any plan of what was initially intended. IN stated that she may have a copy of the original application to the National Lottery for funding and will try to find this
- MS asked if Mr Woodhouse should be approached as she believed he was part of the original plan. JG stated that whilst Mr Woodhouse was leading on outdoor learning he did not seem to be a key part of the original plan, which appeared to be driven by the Head and the Parent Council.
- JG also stated that what is needed now post covid might be very different to what was planned in February 2020 so the community needs might have changed.
- MS stated that Pre-Covid there were parents talking about setting up a garden committee - just keen gardeners that want to take care of the garden.
- JG stated that is what we did last summer but it's about being set up so people can be involved on a more ongoing basis.
- It was agreed to set up a session to invite parents to share their views and also find another way for people to feed in their views if they can't attend a meeting.

## 6. Fundraising Opportunity - KiltWalk

JG has identified that the Parent Council can utilise the KiltWalk as a fundraising opportunity. The group did not want to take this forward at this time.

## 7. Events

### 7.1. Playground Tidy

- Plan for people to come along, bring packed lunch and get stuck in to the bits and pieces we need to tidy up for the Garden Party. MC volunteered to walk round the playground and list

the jobs that need to be done so we can have tools etc ready and a list of jobs to direct people to do.

## **7.2 Summer Garden Party**

- MC ran through the current position on Summer Garden party planning. There was a shout out for prizes for the raffle as well as volunteers to support on the day with the running of stalls.

## **8. AOB**

- JG stated that a member of the parent forum has said they will ask about mulch at their allotments that can be used for the wooded area to cover protruding roots.
- JG stated that if we can get the garden running as a community garden we can link with an organisation called the Conservation Volunteers for some volunteering support.

Next meeting, 6th June 2023, 18.30 to 20:00 – This will be hybrid if issues with length of meetings on Teams can be resolved, otherwise this will be in person only.

## **9. Meeting Closed**

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# Parent Council Actions (and Updates)

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0702_01	07/02/2023	Include review of managing the playground maintenance budget in the next meeting	JG	Carry forward. Review of managing the budget requires understanding of spend for maintenance activities. This will be gathered as part of the playground tidy event in Early June
0905_01	09/05/2023	MR and JG to look at arranging a session where the school nurse can talk to parents about their role	MR/JG	
0905_02	09/05/2023	JG to follow up with the Estates team on support for playground design	JG	The Estates team have confirmed that they have asked the member of their team that is supporting with the Janitor's house work to also support with this design. ACTION CLOSED
0905_03	09/05/2023	Email to be sent to the Parent Forum asking for volunteers to help with a review of Money Matters	JG	
0905_04	09/05/2023	Set up a session to invite people to discuss what we want to do with the Community Garden	JG/MR	
0905_05	09/05/2023	JG to liaise with P4 parent to see if they can support with getting mulch for the wooded area.	JG	