

Abbeyhill Parent Council

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 6th June 2023, 6.30 – 8.00pm

Present:

Name

Jennifer Graham (JG)	Chair
Moirra Robertson (MR)	Head Teacher
Ruth Punna (RP)	Parent
Melanie Chuprasova (MC)	Parent
Melissa Sturgeon (MS)	Parent
Jo Millar (JM)	Parent
Marilyn Wilson (MW)	Parent
Ann Pratt (AP)	Parent
Hazel Morrison (HM)	Parent
Ana Willcox (AC)	Parent
Kathryn Graham (KG)	Acting Principal Teacher & P4 class teacher
Jonathan Combe (JC)	Business Manager (Note Taker)

Minutes

1. Introduction and Apologies

The chair (JG) welcomed all attendees and opened the meeting.

2. Role of the Parent Council

The chair asked if a brief overview of the role of the Parent Council was required for those in attendance, however, this was deemed not necessary.

3. Minutes of the Last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were circulated to attendees in advance and no objections were made. The minutes from the meeting were therefore approved as a fair reflection of the discussions held.

4. Reports

Treasurers Report

The Income & Expenditure account for Abbeyhill Primary School Parent Council Year Ended 31 May 2023 was circulated in advance of the meeting. The accounting period covers 08/06/22 to 31/05/23. As there is no Treasurer in role, the Chair advised that the annual financial reporting period will be 1st June – 31st May in future years to allow full accounts to be prepared in good time ahead of the AGM in June.

The Chair reported a small increase in income on the previous financial year, however, expenditure had increased significantly as a result of being able to fund more events post-covid.

Bank account closing balance was £10,065.17 with circa £7,000.00 available for future projects. 2023/24 will see a focus on the lower playground space within Abbeyhill Primary School. No queries were received in response to the Treasurers Report.

Chair's Report

The Chair's report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their support during the past year through attendance at Parent Council meetings and helping run events throughout the year, with children enjoying the benefits. The chair commented how lovely it had been welcoming parents/carers/children back into school for events post-covid.

More family themed events are planned for 2023/24 and the Chair issued an appeal for any event ideas which could be discussed at future meetings.

The Summer Garden Party takes place on Saturday 10th June 2023 and is free to attend with everyone welcome. Raffle tickets can be purchased from the school office and any donations of raffles prizes will also be gratefully received.

An appeal was made for volunteers to help with garden maintenance in the school over the summer holiday period to ensure the grounds are looking fantastic for the return of the children in August.

Fundraising levels for 2022/23 had decreased with fewer opportunities and volunteers together with the cost of living impact. The sales of the school calendar were down on previous years, however, they are still available for purchase at the Summer Garden Party. The first meeting of the 2023/24 session will include discussion on whether fundraising events remain appropriate/viable as well as finalising a calendar of events for the year ahead. It is hoped that parents/carers will get involved and can choose specific events to volunteer.

No questions were forthcoming in response to the Chair's report.

5. Invitation for and voting in or Parent Council Members and Office Bearers

The Chair proposed that all parents present could form the parent council for 2023/2024. JM commented she would like to continue, however, she had found it difficult to attend meetings held during the day. The Chair responded by confirming all meetings going forward would be held in the evening slot from 6.30 – 8.00pm.

The Chair asked whether anyone present does not wish to be a member of the Parent Council. No response, therefore, assumed all attendees are happy to form the Parent Council for 2023/2024. (Addendum to minutes – JG contacted HM who had made no audible contribution to the meeting to confirm if they had heard and understood this part of the meeting. HM confirmed that they had connectivity issues and had not been able to respond. However they do not feel that they are in a position to be a Parent Council member at this time due to additional caring commitments).

The Chair informed everyone she would like to continue in the role for the 2023/24 session but asked if anyone else wished to put themselves forward for the position. No proposals were received. JG was nominated for the role of Chair by MW and seconded by AP.

JG re-elected as Chair.

JG nominated AW (current nursery/incoming P1 parent) for the role of Treasurer. This was seconded by AP.

AW elected as Treasurer.

The Parent Council has been operating without a Secretary and The Chair highlighted that the constitution does allow for people that are not members of the Parent Forum to be role holders. The Chair asked if we could start asking outside the parent forum for a secretary. AP stated that she was not comfortable with someone outside the parent forum taking role.

JM suggested that members could share the role and asked if the membership would be happy to share the duties throughout the year. There are five meetings each year, therefore, it may only mean taking on this task at one meeting per year if sufficient members are willing to take a turn. MS commented that she understands a number of current nursery parents are interested in joining the Parent Council membership and may be willing to assume some duties. The Chair commented this was exciting news and hoped new member would join the first meeting after the summer (to be held in September 2023 – date to be confirmed).

The Chair informed attendees of an option to pay a Clerk £40 per meeting to undertake secretarial duties. City of Edinburgh Council allocate funds of £500 per annum for Parent Council admin duties that could be used for this. The Chair advised the funds had not been used to pay someone for admin duties to date, however, some of the money had been used to purchase a speaker with surplus funds remaining.

6. Any other AGM Business

JM, current P2 and Nursery parent raised a query regarding whether it was deemed appropriate for parents/carers to find out information on school business via the Parent Council meeting minutes. JM commented there should be no surprises in the Parent Council minutes and asked that associated information and agenda should be communicated in advance of meetings. A discussion ensued in relation to Parent Council communication and how we need to ensure they are effective to benefit the children. The Chair responded by advising communication would be a key agenda item for discussion at meetings during the year ahead.

JM enquired about the format of school communications (email) to ensure it was easy for parents/carers to search the emails easily. Many parents/carers read school communications on mobile phones/tablets and it can often be difficult to find the email with the relevant information. A suggestion was also made to review how information can be accessible for everyone with a focus on equalities and any additional support needs. JM offered to support with this using her professional skills as a ESOL teacher. The Chair commented that Parent Council papers have been distributed in advance of Parent Council meetings this year to make the meetings more accessible but would also appreciate the support of JM to present these in a translation friendly format. This would be particularly important when communicating information regarding key dates in the school calendar.

The Chair brought an end to the AGM part of this evening's meeting.

Ordinary General Meeting

Name	Role	Present
Jennifer Graham (JG)	Chair	✓
Ana Willcox(AW)	Treasurer	✓
Moirra Robertson (MR)	Head Teacher	✓
Ruth Punna (RP)	Social Media Manager	✓
Melanie Chuprasova (MC)	Ordinary member	✓
Melissa Sturgeon (MS)	Ordinary member	✓
Jo Millar (JM)	Ordinary member	✓
Marilyn Wilson (MW)	Ordinary member	✓
Ann Pratt (AP)	Ordinary member	✓

Other Attendees:

- Kathryn Graham, Acting Principal Teacher & P4 class teacher
- Jonathan Combe, Business Manager (Note Taker)
- Hazel Morrison, P1 & Nursery

7. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last Parent Council meeting are available on the website.

8. Actions from Last Meeting

- **Funding Sources for Large Projects**
JM asked whether there was a list of projects. The Chair advised that this would be a task for the membership at the next meeting but were looking for artist related projects and the lower playground project, perhaps to work with someone associated with designing spaces. JM asked whether feedback could be sought from children and parents, which could then be used to form discussion at the Parent Council meeting around what is achievable.
- JM commented that some parents/carers had expressed an interest in establishing a gardening club and how this could be progressed. MR advised that this would be welcomed and times when the garden could be accessed for a club to take place. MR also clarified that relevant volunteer checks (e.g. PVG check) would have to be undertaken by any interested parties in advance of the club taking place.
- **Carried forward from previous meeting.** AM was not present at the meeting, however, The Chair reported she was not aware of actions having taken place regarding ASN. The Chair stated that they were unsure if AM would be continuing in the role and made an appeal for any volunteers to take on this role if it is vacated.
MW offered to take on the role of ASN Rep, helping where possible. (Addendum to minutes – AM had sent an email to The Chair that was not seen until after the meeting that they would like to vacate the role. They stated they haven't had capacity to do anything at all this year and can't see that changing any time soon)
- **Ring fenced funding for playground maintenance.**
Playground tidy up took place on Friday 2nd June 2023.
Looking to replace missing/damaged playground toys/resources. The Chair proposed further discussion at the next Parent Council meeting once the costs of the playground tidy and replacing toys have been confirmed.
- The Chair commented how useful it had been having the school nurse attending the recent P1 parent session in the school and proposed it would be an informative session if the nurse was able to attend a Parent Council meeting. KG suggested contacting the nurse to see if they could attend a future parents evening in the school where they could be available to meet with any interested parties.
- **Carried forward: Sharing Views.** Parents will be able to share any views they have at the Summer Garden Party on 10th June 2023.
- **Carried forward: Wildlife Garden Area.** Continue to investigate ways to 'soften' surface in wildlife garden with woodchips for example.
- **Breakfast Club:** JM enquired about the breakfast club start time of 8.00am and whether it would revert back to the earlier time of 7.30am. MR advised the start time of 8.00am would remain until circumstances around staffing levels changed. JM also enquired whether a

multiple child discount could be offered for families with more than one child attending. MR would be happy to look into this further and advised that anyone seeking financial assistance/support was encouraged to contact the school to discuss.

9. Head Teacher Report

- **Attendance:** Letters had been issued to families with instances of attendance issues and MR reported an improving situation.
- **Staffing:** Currently in a transitional phase with four teaching vacancies being filled via a central recruitment process. Confirmation of staffing for the new term to be issued very shortly.
Pupil Support Officer, Nina Singh, has had her fixed term contract extended until October 2023.
- **Road Safety:** Major roadworks planned for the local area, from Montrose Terrace down to Meadowbank, involving new traffic signal phases which will see the various crossing points active at the same time. The works will also create wider pedestrian spaces. MR advised that a meeting had taken place with City of Edinburgh Council representatives and the contractor for the works is to be announced soon. The works will commence at the end of June and due for completion in December 2023. MR reported that funding may be available from the contractor and the school was hoping to progress this matter. Discussions have also taken place regarding road safety issues to the rear of the school.
- **Composite Classes:** MR apologised for any confusion/concern around composite classes for the 2023/24 session. This had been normal practice in her previous local authority and had underestimated the reaction amongst parents/carers at Abbeyhill. The school handbook and website will be updated to reflect composite classes.
- **Attainment and Achievement:** A lot of time has been allocated at assemblies to discuss our school values and achievements. There have been lots of achievements recognised by both children and staff and they have all been celebrated. Achievements are recognised not only within the school but also from external activities and range from sporting success to learning to tie shoelaces.
- **School Improvement Plan:** Currently being finalised and will reflect what we want for Abbeyhill Primary School, displaying a balance between attainment and achievement and focussing on the totality of our curriculum so that everyone knows what we are aiming for.
- **Thank You!** MR thanked everyone within the Parent Council and commented how much she had enjoyed her first year at Abbeyhill Primary School.

10. Funding Request – P7 Hoodies

The chair directed attendees to the funding request information in relation to the purchase of P7 hoodies and advised that the Parent Council had historically paid for 50% of the cost, with parents paying the other 50%. The Chair asked whether the Parent Council should continue to pay 50% or whether the membership wished to pay the full cost as funds would allow for this. The decision was taken that the Parent Council would pay the full cost of the P7 hoodies. Any parent who had already paid their 50% contribution would receive a refund/credit.

11. Any Other Business

- **Dates for 2023/24 Parent Council meetings;** The first meeting will be held in September 2023 (date to be confirmed). Further meetings for the 2023/24 session will be planned and agreed at the first meeting.
- **Colony of Artists:** The event will again take place in mid-September and this year celebrates its 10th anniversary. The Colony of Artists are looking for volunteers.
- **Volunteers for watering garden over summer holiday;** Anyone wishing to volunteer their services to water the school garden over the summer holiday period can sign up at the Summer Garden Party.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution before closing the meeting.

Parent Council Actions (and Updates)

Ref.	Date	Action	Owner	Update
1309_05	13/09/2022	JG to liaise with IN to get Funding working group up and running	JG, IN	JM noted that we should identify projects we want to complete before then matching funding to these. JG agreed. 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	Carry forward to next session. AM noted that they had not had capacity to do anything in the ASN rep role this year and has stood down. JG and MR will take forward next session
0702_01	07/02/2023	Include review of managing the playground maintenance budget in the next meeting	JG	Carry forward to next session. 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 and replacing playground toys over the summer
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	Carry forward to next session. KG suggested that the nurse be invited to an event such as Parents Evening.
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	AW will complete this task as part of taking on the Treasurer role ACTION CLOSED
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	This will be completed as part of the Parent Council stall at the Summer Garden Party ACTION CLOSED
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	Carry Forward. JG has still to discuss with the parent.