



Oxgangs Primary School-Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 10th March 2015, 7.00 - 9.00 pm, Staff Room

Present: Crerar Christie – CC (Chair), Gordon Roberts – GR (Vice Chair), Liz Walshe – LW (Head), Louise Mercer – LM (Teacher Rep.), Carol Munro – CM (Treasurer), Sue Bellis – SB (Eco- Group), Patricia Rudolf von Rohr – PRvR (Secretary), Gill Christie – GLC (PTA Secretary), Ewan Stewart – ES, Juliana Valuchova – JV, Tracy Brown – TB, Alina Ghiocel – AG

Apologies: Nicole Johnstone (Communication), Elaine Aitken (Local Councillor), Claire MacDonald, Alan Fisher

1. Welcome

CC opened with a welcome to everyone. All introduced themselves.

2. Approval of previous minutes (14/10/14)

There were some amendments required on LW's update. LW will email them to PRvR, so that the minutes can be finalised and published. Beside that, they were approved.

3. Matters arising

3 i. Road Safety

CC provided a quick update regarding Road Safety around the school.

The Crossing Attendant has left just before the February break. There is now an open vacancy for this, however this is not being advertised by the school but falls under the responsibility of the council. It took a long time to appoint the previous one. LW will mention the open position in the next Newsletter.

There are ongoing concerns around the parking and crossing safety, including parents parking on the yellow zigzag lines. TB had emailed the councillors regarding these concerns. There is already planning underway to get the white lines on the street calming measures ('bumps') change to yellow ones, which would make them legally binding.

CM advised that concerns had also been discussed at the South West Neighbourhood Meeting. A possible option would be CCTV cameras around the roads as well as the staff car park.

It was agreed that TB would contact the councillors again as this previously resulted in Traffic Wardens attending, even if only for a short time. She will raise questions around the absence of the Crossing Attendant, progress on the yellow lines, considerations of the 2nd

crossing at the other end of the school on Oxgangs Road North as well as general thoughts around installing Pelican crossings and / or CCTV.

3 ii. Firrhill Partnership Centre

CC advised that he had not heard anything further. Planning Permission had been granted, but he was not aware if contractors had been employed yet.

4. Update reports:

4 i. Head teacher report (LW)

LW gave an update on what has been happening in the school.

The Right Respect Level 1 Inspection has been completed and it went well. The school is currently awaiting the report and certificate.

There was a recent visit by Learning Directors, who were really impressed by the school.

The funding application to the British Council was successful, which means there is more money available for the school's link with Kenya. The new head teacher from Kenya will visit Oxgangs in May. LW is looking for support from parents, regarding accommodation, church visits etc.

The school has revisited their 'Vision, Value, Aims' with the involvement of children, staff and parents. They have come up with a new suggestion. (See AOCB for more details.)

Many visits and trips have taken place since the last PC meeting, including trips to the Risk Factory, Woodland and Community Garden (John Muir Award), swimming at Merchiston Castle etc.

There have been visits to the school from the Travelling Gallery (by the Victoria & Albert Museum in Dundee) as well as the Zoo Bus.

The Bikeability Training is ongoing and is being supported by Firrhill pupils. The school is always looking for more support from parents too.

There will be a concert on 2nd April, organised by the music teacher, Mr Grant, where all parents are welcome.

After the Easter holidays, 8 teachers from Norway will visit the school. They are specifically interested in additional support provided to pupils in Oxgangs. Following this, another group of 20 visitors will come from the Czech Republic who want to learn more about Health & Wellbeing in Scottish schools.

4 ii. PTA (GLC)

GLC provided an update on the PTA.

The first ever Christmas Fair has been a success with good feedback from the stall holders.

The Children's Christmas Parties had been held on 2nd and 9th December. Unfortunately the first one coincided with the start of the Norovirus outbreak and for the second one the DJ didn't turn up. However the children still had a good time.

The Christmas card and mug sale has again been very popular.

The recent Social Night has also been enjoyed by many parents and staff. The PTA are considering changing this next year, as the current format required a lot of organisation.

The Rag Bag continues to be well supported and has raised over £800.

Next will be the Mayfair, for which the planning has already started. The PTA will soon be looking for volunteers.

The funding request for the P7 Leaving Party has been approved by the PTA (£250). In addition the following request has have been received and requires approval by the Parent Council:

£1935 for the Science Festival

The Science Festival includes a visit to each class and workshops for all children. It will take place the 2nd week after the Easter holidays.

The request was approved by the Parent Council. It was, however, noted that it should only be paid after the Mayfair to ensure sufficient funds were available.

The next PTA meeting is on Wednesday 1st April at 18.30h in the staff room. All welcome!

4 iii. Communications (NJ)

As NJ was unable to attend the meeting, CC provided an update on her behalf:

The winter newsletter has been issued in December. CC noted that it didn't include anything around what actions had been taken in response to the Parent Council Questionnaire's findings as discussed at the last PC meeting.

NJ is looking for contributions for the next newsletter, which should hopefully go out before Easter. A consideration could be stories around the Red Nose Day.

LW advised that a 'Health & Wellbeing Newsletter' would also go out soon. They will ensure there won't be any overlaps.

4 iv. Playground development and ECO group (SB)

SB provided an update on the Playground Development Group (PDG).

The pavilion has been fixed. It will be cleaned and stained at the next work squad, which is planned to take place in April.

The PDG is looking into getting painted playground games as well as some climbing apparatus. After that they will consider looking at the P1/2 playground.

They will have a plant store again at the next Mayfair.

SB confirmed that she didn't have any updates from the ECO group.

4 v. South West Neighbourhood Group (CC)

CC highlighted some points which had been discussed at the last meeting, such as the 'School Street Project' due to be tried at Colinton Primary (i.e. no traffic around the school during specific times) and online payments being rolled out across Edinburgh Schools etc.

These meetings take place ca. 3 times per year, usually on a Tuesday or Wednesday. If anyone is interested in attending, please let CC know.

5. Parent training courses (CC)

5 i. Recruitment and Selection

CC confirmed that the next course was on 19th May. SB has got the details and plans to attend.

5 ii. Raising Children with Confidence

CC is still hoping to get something set up. LW advised that they are considering dates.

5 iii. SPTC (<http://www.sptc.info/>)

Information on this has been sent out to all attending the Parent Council meeting. CC will keep a list with all such information to be added to the new Parent Council website once it is up and running as an ongoing resource centre, accessible to all parents.

6. Parent Council Communications and Outreach

CC has started creating a new website and showed it to the people present. He will put it on the internet and will send the link to all attendees of the Parent Council to have a look at and provide any feedback.

It will have to be agreed how this will be linked onto the school website, which is currently being updated as well.

7. School Survey 14/15

CC had canvassed feedback prior to this meeting which resulted in some grammatical changes and a change to the question around the PTA.

All agreed with the updated wording. CC to send the final version to CM.

The plan is to send paper copies home in each child's bag as well as to provide copies at the Parent Consultation evenings.

8. AOCB

8 i. Vision, Value, Aims

LW talked through the updated 'Vision, Value, Aims' which have been created by the children, staff and parents. She explained that they were all linked to the 'Right Respect Programme'. The aim was to get them all more precise as the previous ones had been rather wordy. She asked for any feedback. After some discussions, mainly around the 'Vision', they were all approved.

8 ii. School Bookfair

Concerns were raised by TB that some of the books offered were not appropriate and that it was difficult to identify them from the list brought home by the children, for example if parents wanted to get more details of the books in the internet.

It was suggested to hold the next Bookfair during the same week as Parent Consultation, giving parents a chance to actually look at the books.

8 iii. Dog Fouling

TB was also concerned about the amount of dog fouling around the school. She advised that she had raised it online with the Council although it is unclear what to expect from this.

8 iv. Volume of Parent Mail

CC confirmed that he had been asked about the large volume of parent mail and whether it could be targeted better. CM explained that it should be targeted depending on which class the child/children are in. There had been one instance when a mail had gone out to a wider audience than required. If there are any other examples, CM should be made aware of them. It was agreed that emails should always include which class/nursery they concern, in order to help parents with children in different years.

8 v. School Bell

CC had been advised by parents that the school bell rang some minutes late in the morning. LW confirmed that the bell is on a timer, but she will check with the janitor.

8 vi. Free Fruit

LW advised that free fruits for P1/2 would stop at Easter.

8 vii. Goal Posts

LW also explained that the current goal posts will be removed as they are not safe. They will be replaced with smaller ones, which will be put away when not in use. As the current posts are being used in the evenings by older children, their removal could become a problem.

However Firrhill High School, who also use them, have been made aware of the upcoming changes.

8 viii. Active Schools Co-ordinator

This service is run by the City of Edinburgh Council. The current contracts of the co-ordinators are due to finish on 31st March. They all have to re-apply for their jobs, and it is unclear how this will continue. Everyone agreed that it was a great service and hoped that it would continue as at present.

8 ix. Flue Jab

PRvR queried whether the school had any say in dates for next year's flue jab, as this year's had been extremely late (delayed even further due to the Norovirus outbreak). CM confirmed that she had been asked for feedback and will pass this on.

8 x. Chanter Lessons

PRvR also queried if chanter lessons were still ongoing. LW confirmed that this had stopped but some pupils had continued outside the school. She will confirm where.

9. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 2nd June 2015 at 19.00h