



Oxgangs Primary School – Parent Forum Annual General Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 8th September 2015, 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Staff Room

Present: Crerar Christie – CC (Chair Parent Council), Liz Walshe – LW (Head), Louise Mercer – LM (Teacher Rep.), Gordon Roberts – GR (Vice Chair PC), Sue Bellis – SB (Eco-Group), Patricia Rudolf von Rohr – PRvR (Secretary PC), Ewan Stewart – ES, Tracy Brown – TB, Nicole Johnstone – NJ (Communication), Elaine Aitken – EA (Local Councillor), Michael McLeod – MMcL (Treasurer PTA), Eilidh Haston – EH, Ali Haines – AH (PTA), Julie Drake – JD, Rachel Pickett – RP, Clare McDonald - CMcD

Apologies: none

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

CC opened with a welcome to everyone and provided a short summary of the Parent Council scope including its link into the Council.

2. Approval of previous Parent Forum minutes (6th September 2014)

CC advised that there weren't any written notes currently available. He gave a verbal summary of the meeting which was agreed. He will provide a written version to be agreed at the next Parent Council meeting.

3. Update Reports

3 i. Parent Council Report (CC)

CC provided a summary of the PC's activity during the last year. There were 3 meetings, in October, March and June. Unfortunately he hadn't been able to attend the South West Neighbourhood Meeting during the last year.

Part of the PC's remit is to be involved in recruitment and selection for key members of the teacher staff. CC, SB and GR have now completed the appropriate training.

The PC has been and will continue to organise and inform about training sessions available for parents on various subjects. In addition, the PC has been involved in dealing in issues brought up by parents such as road safety, including yellow lines, litter, overgrown hedges etc. as well as school dinner.

3 ii. Parent Council Treasurer Report (CC)

Due to the Treasurer Carol Munro leaving the school, CC advised that there was currently no report available. He confirmed that there were currently about £1,900 in the account.

3 iii. PTA Report and PTA Treasurer Report (AH / MMcL)

AH provided a very detailed report of the PTA's fundraising activities during the last year, including tuck shop, Christmas cards and mugs, first ever Christmas shopping evening, the Rag Bag collection as well as the May Fair, which is the biggest fundraising event. In addition they organised the children's Christmas Parties and the annual quiz and disco for the parents and teachers.

Through this fundraising the PTA was able to provide funds for many important parts of the school, such as Science Festival workshop, Support Fund, Drum Fun, P7 leavers party and buses for camp, Pantos, ice lollies for sports day etc etc

The newly set up PTA Facebook page is a bit success and helps raising awareness of what the PTA does.

Gabby Carlyon has decided to stand down after serving two years as Chair. Everyone would like to thank her for all her hard work and enthusiasm. She will be terribly missed. The PTA urgently require more support and any ideas for this are very much welcome.

There were discussions around how to attract more people to join the PTA, for example breaking up jobs into smaller chunks or creating clear 'job description' so new parents are aware of what will be expected to them. These will be considered by the PTA at their next meeting.

Regarding the Treasurer Report, MMcL confirmed that this still had to be full finalised. The year started with £4,300 and currently there are approximately £5,800.

3 iv. Communications Group Report (NJ)

NJ advised that she will send out dates early for the next newsletter to ensure people have sufficient time to provide any articles.

3 v. Playground Development and Eco Group Report (SB)

Regarding the Eco Group, SB confirmed that the next meeting will be 25th September and they are always looking for parents to join. Parent participation is required to keep the Green Flag status. In addition there are representatives from every class. The meetings are very pupil-led and usually take place during the assembly on Friday mornings.

The Playground Group usually meets on a Thursday at 7pm, once a quarter. The next meeting is on 24th September. Their responsibility is to improve and tidy up the green areas around the school, including the pavilion and the painted playground games. The next work squad will take place on 3rd October. They also raise money through the sale of bulbs.

3 vi. Head Teacher Report (LW)

LW provided a report covering the period from August 2014 to August 2015. The number of pupils at Oxgangs keeps raising to currently 477 pupils, including 68 nursery children. There are now 16 classes, although the school had originally been built for 14. During the last 12 months there has been significant change in the staff team as well, with 10% newly recruited since the end of the term. The previous, long-serving Business Manager Miss Munro left and Mrs Hare has now joined in this role. There is also a new School Administrator, Mrs Laing, and a new Music Teacher, Mrs Kennedy.

Some highlights of the last year include: updated school vision, value & aims, Level 1 Rights School Accreditation, French introduced across the school, links between Braidburn/Firrhill/Oxgangs strengthened, global link with Kenya continued with a visit from the Kenyan head teacher, focus on reading & writing through very targeted intervention with good results, improved results from the Children Well-Being Questionnaire, targeting support for Maths with good success especially for middle-rated children.

The aims for this year include: embed French across the school, introduce a more effective system for learning discussions/reporting, continue to focus on Maths (specifically with Mr Alan Hogg supporting extended Maths in P5-7), review the Science Curriculum, strengthen

inclusive practice with consistent visuals being used across Edinburgh, for the nursery to concentrate on 'Building the Ambition'.

LW expanded on the planned changes to the learning/reporting system, explaining the proposed set up covering two shorter reports per year, teacher/child discussions carried out over a longer period (4 per week) and recorded to cover Literacy, Math and Health & Wellbeing. This structure was welcome by the PF.

LW concluded that overall she was very proud of the school and its achievements as well as the very good support by the parents.

4. Selection of Parent Council Members and Committee

Elections were held for the Parent Council members as follows:

Chair: Crerar Christie was nominated by LM and seconded by SB.

Vice-Chair: Sue Bellis was nominated by AH and seconded by GR.

Treasurer: Ewan Stewart was nominated by PRvR and seconded by RP.

Communications: Nicole Johnstone was nominated by CC and seconded by ES.

Secretary: Patricia Rudolf von Rohr was nominated by TB and seconded by JD

These persons are hereby authorised to represent the Parent Council.

In addition the following people will join as members: Rachel Pickett, Tracy Brown, Gordon Roberts and Eilidh Haston.

5. Discussion of issues raised by the Parent Forum

The gate between the environmental garden and the adventure playground behind the school is currently locked. LM will raise this at the next management meeting.

There were concerns raised by some parents that there weren't sufficient vegetables at the school lunches for all children. LW will investigate this further.

There was an issue raised regarding inappropriate pictures of pupils on Instagram being shared amongst pupils. LW advised any parent with such concerns to come to her so they can be addressed.

Finally it was mentioned that there had been an incident at the school with a policeman being present. It was confirmed that this resulted from an argument outside the school-gates amongst grown-ups.

6. Date of next Parent Council meeting

Tuesday 6th October 2015 at 19.00h