



## **Oxgangs Primary School – Parent Forum Annual General Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016, 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Dining 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), Ali Haines – AH (PTA), Julie Drake – JD, Sam Haston – SH, Lauren McKay – LMck, Richard Imlach – RI, Laura Calder – LC, Kat Girdler – KG, Gill Christie – GC (PTA)

**Apologies:** Elaine Aitken – EA (Local Councillor)

### **1. Welcome, introduction and apologies**

CC opened with a welcome to everyone and provided a short summary of the Parent Forum scope including its link into the Parent Council and other sub-groups such as the Parent Teacher Association, ECO-Group or Communication. There were no elections due this year, as all office bearers had been selected for two years the year before.

### **2. Approval of previous Parent Forum minutes (8<sup>th</sup> September 2015)**

NJ and GR approved the minutes from the previous Parent Forum AGM.

### **3. Update Reports**

#### **3 i. Parent Council Report (CC)**

CC provided a summary of the PC's activity during the last year. There were three meetings, in October, January and June, with an extraordinary meeting in April. There were also three South West Neighbourhood Meeting during the last year.

During the year, the Parent Council had been dealing with ongoing issues such as road safety, parking, bullying, the Breakfast Club, the new Medical Centre and school dinners.

One of the main areas covered was the Breakfast Club. The funding from Edinburgh City Council had been reduced from £5k to £1k, which meant, as no other sponsorship could be found, the cost to parents had to be increased.

The second main event, that the Parent Council had to deal with, was the wall collapse in early 2016. This resulted in a lot of communication with Edinburgh City Council, the ESP, as well directly with parents and through Facebook. The Parent Council Website was established for sharing information. An extraordinary Parent Council meeting was held with an extended Parent Council, Executive members of Edinburgh City Council Executive, the

School leadership team, and local Councillors (ESP were invited but declined). CC attended a Edinburgh City Council meeting on the matters as well as being a witness at Prof. Cole's Wall Enquiry.

### **3 ii. Parent Council Treasurer Report, approval of accounts and appointment of an auditor (ES)**

ES provided a summary of the Parent Council's account. The year started with £1,362.91, and it ended with £2,008.54. He confirmed that an independent accountant will audit the books. ES will provide the details at the next Parent Council meeting.

### **3 iii. PTA Report and PTA Treasurer Report (AH)**

AH provided a very detailed report of the PTA's fundraising (and other) activities during the last year, including tuck shop, Christmas cards and mugs, book bash, 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.

AH said that they were always looking for new ideas and welcomed any new parent to join them.

CC thanked all the PTA for a great job done – many activities in the school would not happen if it wasn't for the PTA fundraising.

This year the May Fair raised over £5k and the Rag Bag nearly £800. Overall, the PTA made over £8k this year. The draft PTA accounts presented showed an opening balance of £5,829.92 with a closing balance of £10,702.45. Although the Science Festival and the Football Kits were still outstanding from this amount.

### **3 iv. Communications Group Report (NJ)**

NJ explained that she was working on how best to communicate with all parents, to inform them of what the Parent Council and all the sub-groups are doing. Beside the two to three annual newsletters, there are various channels such as Parent Mail, the Parent Council website, the notice board and the PTA Facebook site. She thanked everyone who has provided articles for the newsletters.

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

The Playground Development Group usually meets on a Thursday at 7pm, once a quarter. Their responsibility is to improve and tidy up the green areas around the school, including the Environmental Garden, the pavilion and the painted playground games. The next work squad will take place in October. They raise money through the sale of bulbs and the Plant Stall at the May Fair. They are currently also looking at the P1/P2 playground.

The Eco Group usually meet once a month on a Friday morning. This is being run by representatives from every class with support from Miss Murray and Miss Buckle as well as parents. They lead an annual ECO assembly and have put in the application for the next Green Flat. In addition the Group also raises the Tiger sponsorship money.

### **3 vi. Head Teacher Report (LW)**

LW provided a report covering the period from August 2015 to August 2016. The number of pupils at Oxgangs keeps raising to currently 486 pupils (previously 477), including 73 nursery children. There are again 16 classes. The nursery provides morning and afternoon sessions, including morning provision for two-year-olds and a staff-run afternoon Parent Group. About five pupils from Braidburn are integrated in classes in Oxgangs as well. The Firrhill Village are working together closely (i.e. Firrhill High School, Braidburn School and Oxgangs Primary School).

In August 2015 about 1/5 of the staff at Oxgangs were new, however this year only about three members of staff are new.

Despite having been out of the school building for about three months, due to the wall collapse, the last year was again very busy. Some highlights include: launch of the new Vision, Values and Aims; new Playground Charter; Bronze Award for 'Visuals'; newly implemented Learning Discussions and Reporting; continued work on Right Respecting School and the World's Largest Lesson on Sustainability.

The aims for this year include: Science School Progression with focus in investigation; focus on sustainability; continue improving the Reporting; promote 'Growth Mind Sets'; training on iPad technology and continue targeted support for children.

LW concluded that overall she was very proud of the school. The rich mix of the school is also its huge strength. Great resilience had been shown by both pupils and staff during the re-camp to other school. All part-time staff had worked full time during that period. She had also received lovely feedback from the other schools. It was a difficult time and she thanked all the parents for their support. LW thanked the PTA for the May Fair.

CC, on behalf of all parents, expressed great thanks to LW and all the staff during the time of the school closure.

#### **4. Selection of Parent Council Members and Committee**

The Committee remains the same as last year:

Chair: Crerar Christie

Vice-Chair: Sue Bellis

Treasurer: Ewan Stewart

Communications: Nicole Johnstone

Secretary: Patricia Rudolf von Rohr

These persons are hereby authorised to represent the Parent Council.

In addition the following people are members: Tracy Brown, Gordon Roberts, Richard Imlach, Julie Drake, Kat Girdler, Laura Calder, Lauren McKay, Sam Haston.

#### **5. Discussion of issues raised by the Parent Forum**

##### **5 i. School Dinners / School Roll**

It was brought to the Parent Council's attention by different parents that children sometimes have to sit on the floor during school dinners. It was queried whether this was due to the school having a large number of pupils, including pupils from outwith the catchment area.

LW confirmed that this should only happen in exceptions. If this happens, it should be reported to LW immediately. There are four sittings for school dinners of 20 minutes each, split by different age groups. The hall sits about 140 children. LW also advised that there aren't a large number of out-of-catchment children in the school. There are currently about 40 additional spaces' capacity in the school building, although if they were filled, it would cause problems. A risk would be that children bringing packed lunches might have to eat in their class rooms, while they currently eat together with children taking school lunches.

##### **5 ii. Bullying**

There seems to be a problem with one specific child. CC confirmed that the Parent Council needs to think about what it can do more about bullying in general. LW explained that the Equality Policy on the school website explains the procedure being followed. She highlighted again the importance of children to report any bullying and also having the confidence to report it.

### **5 iii. School Photographer**

TB suggested to move to Tempest, as they seem to provide more interesting pictures. LW advised that the current photographer had already been booked for the following week. It was agreed to ask the parents at the next parent consultation which photographer they would like. TB will organise same samples and information of range of products, as well as confirmation of the commission the school gets.

### **5 iv. Surplus Funds**

There are currently about £2,000 and £11,000 in the Parent Council and PTA accounts respectively. From the PC account, ES will talk to the Business Manager Mrs Morrison regarding the projections for the Breakfast Club, because the PC will need to keep funds to cover any potential shortfalls. From the PTA account, there are some amounts still to come off.

However it was discussed that it would be better to spend some of that money on worthwhile causes instead of keeping it on the accounts. LW confirmed that the school was looking at new ICT approach for the next four to five years. The other point raised was the P1/P2 playground, which the Playground Development Group is already looking at. This point will be discussed at the next Parent Council meeting.

### **5 v. Other Points**

- There has been good feedback on the newly introduced lining-up in the mornings.
- The flu vaccination will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> October.
- German for P5-7 will start next week.
- RI raised the offer provided by Sky for a free day in the studio in Livingston. He will send the details to LW.
- It was suggested to create a database of skills that parents have who could support the school.

## **6. Date of next Parent Council meeting**

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 19.00h