



## **Oxgangs Primary School – Parent Council Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016, 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Staff Room**

**Present:** Crerar Christie – CC (Chair), Liz Walshe – LW (Head), Louise Mercer – LM (Teacher Rep), Sue Bellis – SB (Vice Chair & Eco-Group), Nicole Carter Johnstone – NCJ (Communication), Ewan Stewart – ES (Treasurer), Patricia Rudolf von Rohr – PRvR (Secretary), Elaine Aitken – EA (Local Councillor), Gill Christie – GC (PTA), Richard Imlach (RI), Kat Girdler (KG), Laura Calder (LC)

**Apologies:** Ali Haines (PTA), Gordon Roberts, Tracy Brown, Sam Haston, Julie Drake

### **1. Welcome**

CC opened with a welcome to everyone.

### **2. Approval of previous minutes (7<sup>th</sup> June 2016)**

NCJ and SB approved minutes from the previous meeting.

### **3. Matters arising**

#### **3 i. Sky opportunity and “Welcome to Oxgangs” film – P6**

RI explained that Sky provide the opportunity for children to make news programmes in a full TV studio based in Livingstone. This is for children aged 8 to 16. The school needs to register. LW confirmed that one teacher would be interested in taking her class, probably in January. RI will advise LW of maximum numbers and when next available slots can be booked.

GC explained again the idea of creating a ‘Welcome Film’ introducing Oxgangs to new pupils and parents. LW would need help from parents. CC will put this on the Skills Base Survey.

#### **3 ii. P7 Leaving party organisation**

There was a long discussion around the organisation of P& leaving parties, the one last year but also in general and going forward. There were concerns that the cost for pupils, including possible clothing expectations, could prohibit some pupils to attend.

These parties were historically organised by P7 parents with no cost to the pupils and held in the school. More recently some had been held outwith the school, for example in a club in town or on a party bus.

Last year’s party was different due to the school being closed for a good part of the spring. RI provided background information around this, for example that an external location had to be found as return to the school wasn’t guaranteed. The planning required a lot of work from

about 14 parents. It was held in Boroughmuir, where the rent cost £100. The cost per pupil was about £25. Each pupil was asked to pay £5, which 47 pupils paid. About 3 didn't attend, and 3 attended for free. The PTA paid £250, Firrhill Community Council £90 and in addition the ESP contributed £250. Additional funds came from bake sales, auctions etc. CC confirmed that the Parent Council had not been involved in discussions with ESP around their contribution.

It was agreed that someone from the PTA should be involved in the organisation. GC also suggested to give the P7 a stall that Christmas Fair to raise funds.

LW and LC will create some guide-lines to support future P7 parents. RI will provide them with some notes of his most recent experience.

### **3 iii. School photographer**

KG explained that there had been bad feedback from different parents on the current photographer ALS, including children being missed, the children not looking at the photographers or the photographer being rude.

It was confirmed that both the current photographer as well as the suggested Tempest offer 25% commission to the school. The prizes seem to be very similar, although the packs will differ.

It was agreed that this should be put to a wider audience. Therefore at the parent consultation on 21<sup>st</sup> November, it will be presented in a display with samples from both photographers and parents can cast their vote.

### **3 iv. Firrhill Partnership Centre**

CC and LW confirmed that no concerns around the building site had been raised. This seems to be a very well organised and controlled building site. EA confirmed that this will be called the 'Allermuir Centre'.

### **3 v. Locked Gates**

Again it was raised that the door between the adventure playground and the ornamental garden is always locked. LW will look into this.

## **4. Update reports**

### **4 i. Head teacher report (LW)**

LW gave an update on what has been happening in the school, including a quick summary of changes in staffing such as Mr Brewer and Mrs Pall leaving, Miss Nash and Mrs Clark returning.

The school have worked hard and are now ready to apply for the Right Respecting Level 2.

There is a lot of work going on around sustainability, where 17 global goals have been included in the curriculum.

Around science and technology, the school looked at technology last year, and this year the focus is on science, specifically planning to do more around investigations, using iPad technology. This is a two to three year plan. LW asked any parents working in this field to come forward to gain their input.

Currently 'Digital Leaders' are getting trained up, one for each P4-P7 class, organised by Mrs Irvine. They will also cover their buddy-classes in P1-P3.

The school is also working on 'Growth Mindset', which resulted from a Pupil Questionnaire which highlighted a lack of resilience.

Various activities are taking place for Charities, including World Porridge Day (which raised £130), Children-in-Need and LEPRAs.

The curriculum this year will also focus on outdoor learning. For example the nursery have been going to the woods every Thursday together with the parents. They can only take 10 children at any time, although there has been a large interest. The P6s are working towards the John Muir Award by conducting work in the garden.

In addition, swimming has started again. Many great assemblies have already taken place. The open day for new parents is on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The P1 Reading Workshop is on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. The Flu immunisation is on the first day after the autumn holidays, 25<sup>th</sup> October.

Finally, the electronic ParentPay system is on its way, although exact dates are still to be confirmed.

#### **4 ii. PTA (GC)**

Christmas cards have all been completed today and should be ready in the first week after the autumn holidays for parents to order.

Tuck Shops are also coming up in the first two weeks after the break, so far there has not been a great response for parent helpers.

The Christmas Shopping Event will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> November. So far 15 stalls have paid their deposit, 2-3 still have to confirm.

The PTA Christmas parties for the children will be split again, like last year, between P1-3 and P4-7.

The PTA asked for the permission of the following spending – which was universally agreed by the present Parent Council:

£500 – school support fund

£1,300 – 2 days of DrumFun

£1,500 – Panto (full coverage for in-house performance; partial for trip to external venue)

£790 – P7 bus

#### **4 iii. Communications (NCJ)**

NCJ advised that she will wait a few weeks after the autumn holidays before the next newsletter.

Regarding the PC Board inside the school, NCJ will add new photos (if possible from the PC Website), including names and year groups. It was agreed, that dates for PC meetings etc. should also be added there.

LW explained that the noticeboard outside at the main entrance also belonged to the PC, also it seems that the key for it had been lost. KG said that she would get a locksmith to look at it. It was agreed that updated information should be put up there, including PTA, Work Squad dates etc. if possible.

#### **4 iv. Playground Development Group and ECO Group (SB)**

In relation to the Playground Development Group (PDG), SB advised that the Autumn Work Squad is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> October. They are currently waiting on a Council adviser visit to look at the P1/2 playground. SB will find out more on the plans for a new playground, specifically around sustainable types of playgrounds like other schools have.

Concerns were raised around litter dropping specifically by Firrhill pupils. KG will email Firrhill directly regarding this.

LC also queried if it would be possible to have recycling bins in the playgrounds. SB will raise this with the PDG.

The ECO group has its next meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **4 v. South West Neighbourhood Group (SB)**

No meetings have taken place.

#### **4 vi. Breakfast Club Funding Group (ES)**

ES explained that there was no further update on this. He still had to discuss the current situation with the Business Manager to establish any potential shortfall which could impact the ongoing running of the club. ES will email out if he gets any updates.

#### **4 vii. (Road) Safety Group (TB)**

No update as TB wasn't able to attend. However the following points around road safety were discussed:

EA explained that 'Park Marked Project' was taking place again, with Pentland Primary interested in going ahead this term. This campaign runs for about 5 weeks and is led by the pupils. It contains different stages such as parents signing up to a charter, designing posters, police talk, questionnaires.

CC raised again the confusing speed signs (20 mph vs 30 mph) at the end of Oxfangs Road North. EA will pick this up.

### **5. Cole Inquiry Update (CC)**

CC explained that he had now signed his witness statement on the enquiry. He didn't know what the findings will be. These are due to be published in December.

### **6. Parent training courses (CC)**

CC has not heard back from PC Stevens around possible online safety courses.

### **7. School Survey 14/15 & 15/16 (CC)**

CC confirmed that he has sent rough tables, figures and comments to LW. The sanitised version, i.e. a synopsis without individual comments, will be issued in draft by the end of the week to the PC members.

### **8. Needs and Resources (CC)**

CC suggested setting up a Technology Club. This could support children to understand what lies underneath the computers, apps etc. they use. This would be low cost. LW liked the idea and will consider how this could be linked into the curriculum.

KG also mentioned 'Mini-Engineers', and she will get more details around this for the next meeting. RI also highlighted 'Lego-Mindstorms' which could be interesting.

CC will set up a Skills Base. This will help identify parents with technical skills, but will also include others such as generally helping with field trips, languages etc.

CC is also still trying to set up a Cyber Security event but has not received any replies from PC Stevens. EA confirmed that there are now two funded Police officers and she will check.

### **9. AOCB**

NCJ confirmed that P6/7 will not go to a Panto in December but will go to see Wonderland in January.

Concerns were raised around Nits being ripe again in school. LW confirmed that she can get in touch with the NHS to get leaflets and combs. She will send out a reminder again to all parents to be vigilant.

ES wanted to highlight that Westkip had not won the weekly House competition for 2½ years now, which is getting rather discouraging. LW said that she will pass this on.

**10. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 19.00h