



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

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017, 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), Ewan Stewart – ES (Treasurer), Patricia Rudolf von Rohr – PRvR (Secretary), Elaine Aitken – EA (Local Councillor), Gill Christie – GC (PTA), Richard Imlach (RI), Laura Calder (LC), Sam Haston (SH), Gordon Roberts (GR), Tracy Brown (TB), Julie Drake (JD), Jill Walker (JW), Annie Kennedy (AK), Marcia Roy (MR)

**Apologies:** Ali Haines (PTA), Nicole Carter Johnstone – NCJ (Communication), Lauren MacKay

### **1. Welcome**

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

### **2. Approval of previous minutes (11<sup>th</sup> October 2016)**

CC pointed out two small typing errors in the minutes from the previous meeting. SB and RI approved the minutes.

### **3. Matters arising**

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

RI had emailed the next available dates for the Sky opportunity to LW, but they clashed with the school inspection. LW confirmed it would be best to do this in early summer. RI will email the next available dates.

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

No further update.

#### **3 iii. Parksmart**

EA explained that Mark Symonds is co-ordinating this initiative. Currently Pentland and St. Marks Primary's have signed up to take part. It was agreed that it would be better for Oxgangs to do this during Spring.

CC mentioned that illegal parking on yellow zig-zag lines was still going on. Also, two vehicles crashed outside the school perimeter in the first week of the year: luckily no one had been injured. EA confirmed she will again raise this with the Council's Road Safety Officer.

### **3 iv. School photographer**

Tempest received the majority of votes from parents attending the November parent consultation meeting(s) and is therefore the current school photographer. LW confirmed that they had already been booked up. CC thanked TB and Kat Girdler for their work with this.

### **3 v. Allermuir (Firrhill) Partnership Centre**

Again no concerns around the building site had been raised. EA confirmed that it is due to be finished in summer 2017.

### **3 vi. Locked Gates to Adventure Playground**

This has been locked again recently. LW explained that it will be locked when it is muddy, but will be opened again when the weather is better.

### **3 vii. Parent Council Website / Skills Bank /Comms**

The PC notice boards at the school main gate and school foyer were updated prior to the school inspection, and now indicate the PC's committee, members, meeting dates, and contact details. CC sourced a security hex key for the external board, thereby bringing this board back in use as a means of publicising PC and PTA information.

CC has also updated the website. It was necessary to move the website from a free web-hosting service to a paid-service. The cost of this web-host was £37 for the year until November 2017. Using a paid host site gives access to a wider range of web based services, should such be required at a future time.

A Skills Bank/Repository database has been initiated and can be found on the "Survey" page of the PC website.

The last PC newsletter went out just before Christmas last year. Copies of these newsletters will be available on the PC website in due course.

### **3 viii. Tech Club / Lego Club / Other activities**

CC explained that he had been in contact with "e<sup>2</sup> Young Engineers" organisation – which offers LEGO based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) activities for children. CC indicated that establishing a "Young Engineers" club would come at a cost, e.g., £225 for a 90 minute session for up to 25 children.

CC indicated that there may be other options. For example, CC indicated that there was an established 'Code Club' organisation, which is free, but which requires a member of staff / named person on site as well as a Code Club Volunteer to run the activities. Code club is based around programming the 'Raspberry Pi' and/ or 'BBC Micro Bit' and is targeted at 9-11 year olds. CC would be able to volunteer for this.

Both these types of activities would support the extra-curricular areas mentioned in the recent Inspection, in areas that the national government had identified as strategically important.

MR also suggested Hot Wires as a good technology resource to build simple circuits.

It was agreed that any suggestions around technology should be forwarded to CC who will put links on the PC website. So all will be able to review and consider the different options.

### **3 ix. Cole Inquiry**

This was due to be published last December. However in order to those criticised a chance to reply, the publication has been delayed. CC thought it was now due in February, but EA highlighted that it might be further delayed as it hadn't been covered at the relevant Council meeting yet.

### **3 x. Cyber Awareness**

The Curriculum Evening around Internet Safety is due to be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February. LW pointed out that parent involvement was really important and asked as many parents as

possible to attend. It was agreed that this was a very important subject, which can be a serious concern with long-reaching consequences.

There is no other Curriculum Evening planned for this year, as this requires working hours to be agreed with all the teachers. Previously the evenings around English and Maths had been very successful, while the French one wasn't. Depending on how this Internet Safety one goes, they might have to consider going back to English/Maths.

#### **4. Update reports**

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

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

Mrs McKenna, who is currently covering Mrs Craigen's maternity leave, has been offered a permanent post at another school. She will be replaced by Mrs MacPherson. Miss Crole and Mrs Irvine will both start their maternity leave at Easter and the school is currently recruiting. There are two new Pupil Support Assistants, Mr Perry and Ms Paul. Miss Mery will hopefully return soon, her class is currently being taught by Mr Hunter. There are also 5 Student Teachers currently at the school.

The class structure for next year has not been decided yet, but as there is currently a P6/7 class, it will require restructuring. The school used to fully restructure all classes each year, however over the last 4 years or so, all classes had stayed the same. Hopefully there will be the same number of classes, so they won't be full to the maximum numbers.

The school got the 2<sup>nd</sup> Eco Flag in November. As mentioned the Curriculum Evening for Internet Safety is due to take place on 7<sup>th</sup> February, and the school is also fundraising again for LEPR.

There are many school clubs, various active school activities and also new drumming and chanter clubs.

A Firrhill Village Litter Pick is coming up soon. And the school started work on Fairtrade, linking into Sustainability.

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

The Christmas Fair and the Christmas Parties have been a great success. The full totals are not confirmed yet, but will be at tomorrow's PTA's meeting (1<sup>st</sup> February 2017). The next events are the Social Night on 24<sup>th</sup> March and the Mayfair.

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

The last newsletter was published in December 2017.

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

The ECO Group are planning a celebration for the 2<sup>nd</sup> ECO flag. There will also be an ECO assembly which will launch the Fairtrade theme in the school.

In relation to the Playground Development Group (PDG), the Autumn Work Squad has been completed and the next one is planned for spring. It will be confirmed in a Parent Mail. They have done a bag-pack at Tesco to raise funds.

The PDG are still getting Playground companies round to provide suggestions and quotes.

There was a discussion around this and the general consensus was that this needs to be moved quicker. Although it was appreciated that there are strict Health & Safety demands, there are funds available from the PC and PTA. However a proposal is required from the PDG. The following was agreed:

GC will ask the PTA for available funds. ES will consider available PC funds. SH and GR will contact Graham Constructions, who are currently building the Allermuir Partnership

Centre, for possible support, be it material and/or man-power. LM will also discuss this with her contact at Graham Construction. SB will advise the PDG of this.

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

SB couldn't attend the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017. It appears there was another meeting in January but SB didn't receive any invite, agenda or minutes. CC will chase them up to ensure SB is on the mailing list again.

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

ES provided a forecast as follows: There are currently 123 children enrolled, with an income of £7,400 and costs of £7,700, resulting in a shortfall of £300 for this year. ES confirmed that the Council funded £1,000 this year, which will also be the case next school year.

There are currently £2,600 in the PC account and ES suggested to ring-fence £300 for this shortfall.

Caroline Morrison, the Business Manager, had different suggestions to address the shortfall, such as contacting Tesco for free supplies, looking for local businesses as sponsors or looking into different suppliers.

JW then provided the following summary of a planned Breakfast Club Pilot by the Afterschool Club:

They consider offering childcare from 7.30h to school start for a maximum of 24 children (minimum 11 children) at a cost of £4.50 per child per session. They propose to start after the February break and run the pilot with ca. 12 children until the summer holidays, reviewing the situation in May. The Care Inspector has no issue with the extended remit of the Club and the facilities are also available. This is mainly for childcare, but breakfast snacks will be provided. It is currently only planned for Oxgangs pupils as they don't have the capacity to bring Colinton Primary School pupils to their school.

No objections were raised against this additional offer.

However ES agreed that a larger sum should be ring-fenced on the PC account for possible shortfalls, especially next year, in case children move from the current breakfast club to the new one offered by the Afterschool Club provider. It was agreed that the current cost of £90/year will have to be re-considered next year.

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

TB explained that she had chased up Mark Simons on various occasions regarding the yellow road marking, without receiving any reply. These were meant to be completed in the last October break. EA explained that there had been many delays in road-markings across the city due the introduction of the 20mph zones. She will chase this up with Andrew Easton.

### **5. School Inspectors Report**

The summary findings of the school inspectors report were released on the 24<sup>th</sup> January. A nine person team visited the school, both Nursery and Primary, for one week in November last year and inspected the school to evaluate the "...quality of leadership and management, learning provision and young people's success and achievements over a broad range of education provision indicators". A summary of inspection findings is still to be published.

LW described the remit of the inspection team and their activities at Oxgangs.

The summary findings for Oxgangs Nursery were either "Very Good" or "Good". The findings for the Primary School were either "Good" or "Satisfactory". LW also indicated that there is a new inspection model and Oxgangs is the first school in Edinburgh to be inspected using this model.

LW reassured the meeting that Oxgangs is a good school and that all staff are committed to addressing the three identified improvement areas.

LW indicated she had provided feedback to the Inspectors about the inspection process.

EA explained that the report will be discussed at the Education Sub-Committee in March, which LW and CC will also attend. EA wants to make sure that the extra-ordinary circumstances of the school are fully recognised at that meeting. The inspection team are confident that the school has the capacity to improve and see no need to make further visits.

There was a long discussion concerning how best to communicate these findings to parents. Some parents attending the meeting indicated that some parents had voiced concern about the inspection findings. LW noted that the report there were a lot of positive comments made by the inspection team. She also stated that she would be happy to address any parent's queries directly. It was suggested that a communication from LW to the parents, contextualising the Summary Report, and covering the points she'd covered during the meeting, would be well received and would address parent's queries.

CC agreed to draft something from the PC if that was the will of the meeting, but felt LW and her team were in the best position to explain the findings. LW was happy to discuss the findings of the inspection with parents, however, as was evident from this discussion, there was a significant amount of information to convey and it was important to do so with clarity.

## **6. School Survey (CC)**

There was no time left to cover this point.

## **7. AOCB**

There was no time left to cover this point.

## **8. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at 19.00h