



Oxgangs Primary School – Parent Forum Annual General Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 12th September 2017, 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Dining Room

Present: Crerar Christie – CC (Chair Parent Council), Liz Walshe – LW (Head), Ewan Stewart – ES (Treasurer), Patricia Rudolf von Rohr (Secretary PC), Tracy Brown – TB (Traffic Group), Ali Haines – AH (PTA), Richard Imlach – RI (Engagement Group), Gill Christie – GC (PTA), Andrew Blaikie (Depute Head), Scott Arthur (Councillor), Jason Rust (Councillor), Andy Brechin – AB, Laura Calder, Lucy Dalgliesh, Kat Girdler – KG, Maggie Mazoleka, Liz McAinsh Lauren McKay – LMck, Carolyn Mill, Gordon Roberts.

Apologies: Louise Mercer (Teacher Rep.) Nicole Johnstone (Communication), Sue Bellis (Vice Chair PC, Eco- Group) Julie Drake, Sam Haston, Michael McLeod

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

CC opened with a welcome to everyone and provided a short introduction of the people currently holding posts within the Parent Council. He highlighted the importance of all of us working together as we all have one thing in common – the best interest of our child/children attending Oxgangs Primary.

2. Approval of previous Parent Forum minutes (20th September 2016)

LMck and KG 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 regular meetings plus one extraordinary meeting. He also attended two Southwest Locality meetings, where we feed back into Edinburgh Council.

During the year, the Parent Council had been dealing with ongoing issues such as parking, bullying, P7 Leaving Party, P1/2 Playground, creation of Tech Clubs, Behaviour at school, Parent Engagement, PC Constitution and visit to Sky studios.

The PC conducted three surveys during the year: the main Annual Survey, a Skills Resource Survey to identify parents who could offer skills to the school and a Child Survey just before the end of the last school year to identify high & low points.

The PC website has been moved to a new host and has been regularly updated.

CC has also had various involvements in the Cole Inquiry, where a main concern raised was that the children and staff had been sent back into Oxfords Primary following the wall collapse without sufficient investigation and lack of knowledge of the reason of the collapse.

CC and some other PC members also gave evidence during the School Inspection. This had been completed under a new inspection regime and the school received two 'satisfactory' rating. The PC felt that this was not fair and did not represent the school correctly, which CC fed back to the Council.

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 £2,008.54, and it ended with £2,708.67. There has only been the annual payment from Edinburgh Council (£698.80) and interest (£1.33). He confirmed that the books have been audited. The accounts were accepted.

ES highlighted that another payment of about £700 is due from Edinburgh Council this September. In addition, he is having ongoing discussions with the school's business manager to establish if there was a shortfall from the Breakfast Club which the PC had agreed to cover. He expected this, if at all, only to be some hundred pounds.

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

AH provided a detailed report of the PTA's fundraising this year, conducted through:

- Commission from Christmas cards and mugs
- Running a tuck shop in October.
- Christmas Shopping Evening- Money was raised from stall holder fees plus entry fees
- Ragbag bin - well used and cheques received at regular intervals
- Quiz night
- Children Christmas parties – split into lower and upper school.
- May fayre – this was moved to the area at the front of the school and the time was reduced from 3 to 2 hours due to lack of volunteers. Attendance was good and stalls appeared to be popular.
- Easyfundraiser website – minimal money made, need to promote

Through the PTA's fundraising, they were able to provide funds for:

- Ice lollies for school sports day and snack and medals for nursery sports day
- Science Festival workshops
- Football kit
- P1-P3 inhouse Pantomime
- P4 -P7 Trip to the Pantomime
- Donation to the support fund
- Buses for P7 camp
- P7 leavers party - £500
- Drum Fun

Not only does the PTA fundraise, but they also help out with events within the school such as running a book swap for the whole school, the Big Book Bash, in November and providing refreshments for the new P1 parents meeting before the summer.

The PTA Facebook page now has 240+ members and is great for raising awareness of what the PTA are doing and of local events that may be of interest to parents.

Going forward the PTA committee is always looking for new volunteers so that we can share out the workload and continue to run the events. The meetings are open to everyone and we value any contribution, no matter how small. After all, many hands make light work! We are

also looking to incorporate new events into our timetable however we are restricted by the amount of extended lets we are allowed in one year as well as lack of helpers.

Michael McLeod, Treasurer of the PTA, could not attend the PC AGM. He had confirmed to AH that there were currently around £13,000 in the account, with the Panto bill outstanding. This is expected to reduce it to about £11,500. Overall the PTA raise about £7,000. Currently they are looking into buying new iPads for the school.

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.

3 iv. Communications Group Report (CC)

As Nicole Johnson (NJ) couldn't attend the PC AGM, CC explained that last year NJ had created three newsletters which get distributed into the community around the school. Going forward the communication approach of the PC will be reviewed.

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

CC explained that the Playground Development Group's overall responsibility is to improve and tidy up the green areas around the school, including the Environmental Garden, the pavilion and the painted playground games. They raise money through the sale of bulbs and the Plant Stall at the May Fair. They are currently looking at the P1/P2 playground, aiming for about £10,000 for this. There are ongoing discussions with the PC/PTA to support this.

Regarding the Eco Group, the school has just changed its approach. Going forward Community Groups have been set up so that all pupils will be involved in a group. There will still be class representatives for specific activities such as assemblies.

3 vi. Road Safety Group (TB)

TB provided an updated on the last year's activities:

The PC have been trying to get yellow lines painted around the Lollipop Crossing near the junction of Firrhill Crescent and Oxgangs Road North since November 2014. The yellow lines were finally painted on 3rd July this year. These provide the lollipop lady with a clear line of sight on either side, allowing her and the children to step into the road safely.

The new restrictions have definitely made a difference but there is still the odd driver who flouts the rules and places your children in danger.

Regarding future plans, TB would ideally like the area patrolled occasionally by parking wardens or police. She has been in touch with the local police and has also asked Firrhill Community Council to speak to the community officers at their next meeting. Councillor Scott Arthur also confirmed that he will pick this up with the community officer.

Parents are also requested not to park in the school car park which is for use by staff of Oxgangs, Firrhill and Braidburn schools. It is probably time to ask the Janitor to man the gates for a few weeks to reiterate this message. As always, Tesco's car park is available for parents to use at drop off/pick up times.

3 vii. Engagement Group (RI)

RI explained that this group was newly formed in the second half of the year. It is widely accepted that positive parental engagement leads to greater success for your child in their education. Oxgangs PS already do a lot to encourage engagement through initiatives such as the current Maths week, or meetings outlining internet safety. The purpose of the subgroup is to understand if we can support the school further and help develop greater engagement between the school & the parent community.

It is important to understand the difference between Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement. Parental engagement provides an opportunity for all families to be involved in their child's learning outcomes. All families, regardless of work obligations, income level or access to technology, can participate. Simple steps such as asking about a child's day or

establishing a time and place for homework go a long way towards teaching kids to work hard and value the opportunities school gives them.

So what has the engagement group done so far?

- Proposed a change from PC & PTA to that of a Parent Community. Gives a softer feel to the Parent Council – clarity in that the PC is there to support a community. Helps people to understand the purpose of the community.
- Discussed themes & opportunities for how to increase engagement – this is ongoing.
- Discussed tasks for growing engagement through involvement
- Brought kids & parents together to create a movie to outline the benefits of engagement & involvement in your child's education. This video was shown at the "Meet the Parents" evening in Sept 2017.

What are the next steps?

- Understand the needs of the school with respect to engagement. What opportunities are there for the PC to help?
- Last year the school encouraged parents to climb their house hill with their children. Opportunity to grow this into a group activity for each house at the weekend. If the odd teacher could come along, all the better – helps build & grow relationships. This is an activity for both child and parents.
- Grow the movie making opportunity – get more parents involved in making a video with the kids centred around engagement themes – i.e. helping with homework, helping with learning, health & wellbeing, etc.
- Remote involvement: Consider if the PC can help enhance the communication channels to families.
- Get feedback using polls, surveys etc. (digital/non-digital)
- Channel more representation & consultation across the year groups into the PC to understand areas for development – the needs of a P1 are vastly different from the needs of a P7.
- There are many more opportunities.....ideas, inputs, and help from parents will provide these.

3 vii. Head Teacher Report (LW)

LW provided a report covering the period from August 2016 to August 2016. The current roll is 459 children with 417 in school and currently 42 in the nursery. Our school roll has remained constant and we still have 16 classes, am and pm nurse and provision for 2 year olds. Restructuring of most year groups took place at the end of last session and we do not currently have a composite class. We still have a number of split placement pupils attending from Braidburn.

We have a number of new member of staff this year:

- Miss Burnett is teaching P3 and Miss Savage in P7.
- Mr Ramsay is teaching in P4 until Mrs Irvine returns from her maternity leave.
- Miss Buckle is currently unable to attend work due to family circumstances and Mr Sansom has been covering. Unfortunately (for us) he has secured a long term contract at another school and will be leaving on Friday.
- Mrs Duncan, Mrs Barker and Miss Shiels have joined us as Pupil Support Assistants.
- Miss Méry has taken on the role of Support for Learning.

Ms Fenton has been appointed as our Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) teacher. Targeted support will be provided for identified pupils, nurture and a variety of groups will be established, training programmes for staff delivered, playground procedures and supports audited and new systems developed. Ms Fenton will also assist with monitoring, tracking and analysing our attendance and attainment data.

Some highlights from the last year include:

- We refreshed our science curriculum, planned relevant investigations in every class and used digital technology to record and present findings.
- We now have pupil digital leaders who are trained to promote the use of iPads to support learning – further iPads purchased to support learning.
- We promoted 'Growth Mindsets' to encourage resilience and perseverance with learning.
- Forest Kindergarten successfully implemented in nursery with support from parents.
- House Captains encouraged families to climb their house hill with great success!
- Behaviour Policy reviewed and updated with input from parents, pupils and staff.
- Our school community raised £3,894.73 for LEPR.

The priorities for development in 2017-2018 are in response to the HRMI report which was published in January 2017. The cover the following three recommendations:

1. Further develop children's understanding of themselves as learners with focus on assessment
2. Further improve consistency of learning and teaching in all curricular areas
3. Further develop our Health and Wellbeing curriculum to equip children with the skills to be healthy, safe and successful

We continued to be proud of our school and the wonderful children we have to teach and thank you for lending them to us! We would like to thank all of the parents who support the school in many different ways – PTA, PC, running after school clubs, visiting classes to share skills. We understand this is not possible for all parents and appreciate the support you give your children with their learning. Working together and supporting each other (in good and bad times!) ensures the best possible outcomes for your children.

LW also thanked CC for all his work as the Chair of the PC, especially his support over the last two years.

CC, on behalf of all parents, expressed great thanks to LW, the deputy head Andrew Blaikie and all the staff.

(At this point the two councillors, Scott Arthur and Jason Rust, left the meeting.)

4. Selection of Parent Council Members and Committee

Elections were held for the Parent Council members as follows:

Chair: Richard Imlach (new)

Vice-Chair: Tracie Brown (new)

Treasurer: Ewan Stewart (continue)

Secretary: Patricia Rudolf von Rohr (continue)

Communications: This post still needs to be filled. To be discussed at the next PC meeting.

These persons are hereby authorised to represent the Parent Council.

In addition the following people have indicated interest in joining the PC as members: Liz McAinsh, Kat Girdler, Lauren McKay, Gordon Roberts, Maggie Mazoleka, Carolyn Mill, Lucy Dalgliesh and Laura Calder.

5. Reconstituting PC and PTA as a Parent Community

CC explained that as part of the Engagement Work it was raised that the naming of the current PC/PTA does not help parents understanding of what we are doing. Our aim is to get all parents working together. Therefore CC has drafted an updated Constitution with clearer names – i.e. Oxbgangs Parent Community, Parent Community Council and Parent Community Fundraising and Events Committee.

The draft Constitution had been shared with the parents prior to this meeting for consideration.

The new Constitution has been voted for by a majority of attendees. It has therefore been adopted with immediate effect as the new Constitution.

6. Discussion of issues raised by the Parent Forum

5 i. Defibrillators

AB queried why there was no defibrillator at Oxgangs Primary. They are located at Firrhill and Braidburn schools. However any delay to access a defibrillator can have a major detrimental effect in an emergency. There was general consensus that it would be good to have one at Oxgangs.

LW explained that the Council had installed defibrillators in High Schools and Special Schools initially. She understand that they are looking into rolling this out across Primary Schools too. LW will find out if/when this is likely to happen.

Otherwise, it was agreed, that this will be taken forward by the PC. The cost for a defibrillator is about £1,000 which the PTA/PC could cover. Further points around maintenance/access would also need to be considered.

5 ii. Access to Oxgangs Astro Turf

AB also queried the situation around the access to the astro turf at Oxgangs on Saturday mornings for home football matches. Home football matches are currently being played on the grassy flood-areas behind the school. This is not a suitable surface if there has been heavy rain. Therefore we might end up only being able to play away matches.

The astros at Oxgangs and Firrhill have been renewed over the summer. While Oxgangs chose to have a similar version as before (short), Firrhill have a longer version. This means that the Firrhill Hockey Club cannot use their astro anymore for practicing.

LW explained that the Oxgangs have agreed use of their astro until 17.45h every day. On a Saturday, we don't generally have access unless we pay for a let at about £70 per hour. This is the situation across the whole of Edinburgh. LW has agreed that Firrhill Hockey Club, with about 250 active members, can use our astro after 16.30h on Mondays and Thursdays.

LW will investigate around the use on a Saturday morning.

5 iii. Positive Behaviour / Bullying

CC explained that concerns had been raised at the end of the last school year around this. He therefore wanted to bring this up at this meeting.

It was agreed that a lot of work had since gone into the updated Behaviour Policy and the overall approach as discussed at the recent 'Meet the Teacher' event. This is a consistent and robust approach.

LW confirmed that if any child says that they are getting bullied, it will be taken seriously. She urged any child/parent to speak up, to her, the depute head or any other teacher.

5 iv. Uniform

CC explained that some parents had suggested that we should get longer ties, as the current ties are too short. The PTA had conducted a poll on their Facebook site, with the result that 14 parents would buy a new, longer tie(s).

The minimum order would be 48 from the supplier, which cost about £102.

GC confirmed that this will be discussed at the next PTA Meeting.

5 v. Helping kids learn / School decoration

CC explained that during the survey before the summer holidays the children asked for more help with Maths, for example fractions.

CC suggested that there was capacity at the school for more visual help, for example in the staircases etc.

LW confirmed that they would need to get permission from Amey as well as conduct general suitability assessments.

CC will provide LW with suggestions and LW will get all the relevant forms completed.

6. Date of next Parent Council meeting

Tuesday 10th October 2016 at 19.00h