



Oxgangs Primary School – Parent Community Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 10th October 2017, 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Staff Room

Present: Richard Imlach – Chair (RI), Tracy Brown – Vice Chair (TB), Ewan Stewart – Treasurer (ES), Patricia Rudolf von Rohr – Secretary (PRvR), Liz Walshe – Head (LW), Louise Mercer – Teacher Rep (LM), Scott Arthur – Councillor (SA), Nina Smith – Co-Chair Fundraising & Event (NS), Kat Girdler – Co-Chair Fundraising & Event (KG), Laura Calder (LC), Sam Haston (SH), Crerar Christie (CC), Calley Thomson (CT), Lucy Dalgliesh (LD), Maggie Mazoleka (MM), Liz McAinsh (LMcA), Gordon Roberts (GR), Aristides Kiprakis (AK), Kerry Knox (KK)

Apologies: Jason Rust – Councillor (JR), Lauren McKay, Cathy Burn

1. Welcome

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

2. Approval of previous minutes (30th May 2017)

TB and ES approved the minutes.

3. Review of Matters arising & existing actions

3 a. PC Meeting Dates 17-18

It was agreed that an additional, 4th meeting should be held next year to be able to deal with all the matters arising. This will be scheduled in April. The other dates for 2018 are 23rd January and 15th May.

3 b. Communications Update

The Facebook page has been updated based on the name changes agreed at the AGM. There needs to be discussion around and decision whether the page should be open for general posting, considering required controls around this.

3 c. Action Tracker

The new suggested approach is to use a separate action tracker, with reference numbers in the PCC minutes. This will help keep track of actions. This was discussed and agreed.

3 d. Clubs (Tech club / others)

There are already various clubs available at Oxgangs. KG will compile a list with all clubs (Action Ref. 2017/08). All are encouraged to send information to KG.

LW suggested to also include club available in the community around Oxfords. In addition she suggested to ask the children at the next 'Bingo Ball' what they would be interested in (Action Ref. 2017/09).

CC mentioned that the recent survey had highlighted interest around Maths. CC then provided an update on Action Ref. 2017/03. 'Code Club' was deemed to be option. CC will send information to LW in order to get a point of contact, which has to be a teacher. CC will volunteer to help and will investigate funding further.

3 e. Cole report update

CC explained that the national Government held a review session in June. The Committee reported in October. There was nothing new in the national Government discussions that had not already been covered in the local Government. There was still nothing covering the point that children and teachers had been sent back into the building without proper risk-assessment. Oxfords was not mentioned.

3 f. Sky visit (Action Ref. 2017/02)

RI managed to book visits to the Sky Academy. LW confirmed that the two P5 classes will visit, each lasting about 3½h. The PTA will be paying for the coaches required. It is hoped that other pupils will be able to go next year.

3 g. Tesco blue token fundraising (Action Ref. 2017/01)

LC confirmed that Tesco are still looking at which causes will be shortlisted for the next quarter. An update is expected in December.

3 h. Engagement activities (House Hillwalk, Family Social Event)

TB is working on organising a House Hillwalk. This will be a family event, for all children, irrespective of their House. (Action Ref. 2017/10)

4. Update reports

4 a. Head teacher report (LW)

LW provided an update. Around staff matters, Mrs Irvine will return on 4th December from maternity leave. Miss Buckle is still off and it is not confirmed when she will return. Miss Pole, Pupil Support Teacher, will be leaving to go to Stenhouse.

Many events have taken place in the school: 25 visitors came from the Scottish Executive; Dr. Bill Rodgers visited and 35 staff members attended one of his training sessions; the P7 are currently away in their camp; P7 also attended a Maths & Science Day at Edinburgh College together with other cluster Primary schools; P6 will go to a Science & Tech Day at Merchiston tomorrow; P6 spent a day with the Rangers Service in Holyrood Park; P4/5 continue their swimming lessons at Merchiston; the school established four Community Groups.

In relation to the Pupil Equity Fund, Mrs Fenton is the PEF teacher. She has introduced support in the playground, including the promotion of playground games. 'Nurture' is currently the main focus, linking to emotions and talking about them.

Parent Consultation are due in November. This will include an introduction to 'SumDog' by LM, for all parents who have seen it before.

Action Ref. 2017/11 RI and KK will organise a questionnaire to establish how communication with all parents could be improved.

4 b. Fundraising & Event (NS)

At their last meeting, Amanda Gordon and Gill Christie stood down from the Committee. Ali Haines (AH) remains as the Chair, with Nina Smith and Kat Girdler as Co-Chairs. Cathy Burn is the Secretary.

AH will talk to Michael regarding the auditing of their accounts.

There was a discussion around events at the school. We are currently only allowed to use the school premises for 16h per year, which needs to be kept in mind for any possible event.

Various events are due to take place: the Tuck Shop, like last year, spread over 2 days / 2 weeks; the children's Christmas cards should be going out before the October holidays; there is no Christmas Market this year; Christmas parties on different days for the younger/older children. The May Fair has been pencilled in for 26th May 2018.

They are currently also looking at longer school ties, as some parents had raised concerns that the current ties are too short. Funding will be looked into in the next academic year.

Funding has been agreed for the 'Mindfulness Toolkit'.

There was another discussion around the small number of parents attending the meetings. It was agreed that it would help, when asking for volunteers, to be clear about what the raised money will be used for.

4 c. Breakfast Club Fundraising (ES) (Action Ref. 2017/04)

As per AGM, the balance of the PCC account was £2,700. There was a shortfall of £1,600 this year in the Breakfast Club. This will be covered by the PCC account.

The PCC account now stands at £1,800, following a £700 payment from the Council.

The Breakfast Club currently costs £100 per child per year. There are about 140 children registered. Not many children have been lost to the new morning club run by the Afterschool Club.

In order to cover the full costs, the annual charge would have to be increased by about 20%. Although the PCC covered this year, we need to decide the approach for next year. Last year over 20 letters asking for sponsorship/support did not receive any replies. The Council funding is £1,000 per year. ES will look at possible options for next year's funding (Action Ref. 2017/04).

4 d. (Road) Safety Group (TB)

JR (in an email update prior to the meeting) and SA explained that they had raised the traffic concerns with the police. They confirmed that they would give the area some attention when they can. Yellow Line offences were, however, decriminalised about 10 years ago with the issues controlled now by Parking Attendance. JR and SA have raised with them as well.

4 e. Engagement (RI)

A Hill Walk is being planned by TB (Action Ref. 2017/10). There were also discussions around possible further videos, maybe covering the subject of how parents can help their children with their homework.

4 f. Communication (vacant post)

RI confirmed that he will move the PCC Website to Wordpress, as it is easier to use. He is also looking into a closed 'Google Group' to communicate updates in-between PCC meetings.

Overall we need to aim for a more consistent communication approach. Anyone interested in working on this should let RI know. KK confirmed that she would be happy to help.

This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

4 g. Playground Development and ECO Group

The next work squad date has just been communicated via ParentMail. ES also confirmed that the Playground Development group currently has about £2,300 in their account.

4 h. South West Neighbourhood Group

We missed the first meeting. The next one is on 26th November, either TB or RI will attend.

5. Requested Items

5 a. Defibrillator

There are defibrillators at Firrhill and Braidburn. LW is not aware of any plans by the Council to install them at Primary Schools. RI will query this with the Councillors. (AS had left the meeting by this stage.) (Action Ref. 2017/05)

5 b. Astro Turf Usage (Oxgangs/Firrhill)

LW confirmed that the issue has now been resolved. SW explained that there was still a desire for a meeting between Council officers and clubs. There is lack of clarity around who can let first. Generally the usage between the schools has been agreed.

LW said that until 18h the Oxgangs Astro can be used by Oxgangs, unless Oxgangs allows other schools to use it. LW asked Andy Brechin to pick up with her directly if anything still unclear.

5 c. Skype Foreign Schools

This was a suggestion as other schools are doing this. LW explained that their partner-school in Kenya don't have any electricity therefore this is not currently on option for them.

5 d. Dress Up Friday fundraising

[Carry forward to next meeting as run out of time.]

5 e. Allermuir (Firrhill) Partnership Centre

[Carry forward to next meeting as run out of time.]

6. Playground Development Group Collaboration

This group is currently made up of two parents and Miss Buckle. The plan is to restructure the P1/P2 playground. A consultation confirmed this would cost about £10k.

LW pointed out that new Health & Safety Guidelines had just been rolled out, which will need to be considered.

LM mentioned the Virgin Bank initiative as another possible fundraiser (beside the Tesco Blue Token). They lend £5 to each child to create an enterprise. Any gains made can be kept by the children/group.

Action Ref. 2017/12 – RI and ES to meet with the Playground Development Group to see how this can be supported and moved forward.

7. PC Objectives 2017-2018

[Carry forward to next meeting as run out of time.]

8. Finance Strategy

[Carry forward to next meeting as run out of time.]

9. AOCB

Councillors JR (via email prior to the meeting) and SA provided an update on issues previously raised – in addition to 4.d above. JR has been in contact with AMEY regarding the hawthorn hedge on Oxgangs Road North (bordering Firrhill sports pitches and Braidburn School) to get this cut. SA put forward a motion around the 'Cost of School Day Project'. This is to recognise that school is not free and to increase the school uniform grant for next year. Edinburgh Council currently pays £43 per year for pupils from low-income

backgrounds. This is one of the lowest in Scotland. Charities recommend that the cost is £129 p.a.

10. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 23rd January 2018 at 19.00h