



Oxgangs Primary School – Parent Community Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 6th March 2018, 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Staff Room

Present: Richard Imlach – Chair (RI), Tracy Brown – Vice Chair (TJB), Ewan Stewart – Treasurer (ES), Patricia Rudolf von Rohr – Secretary (PRvR), Liz Walshe – Head (LW), Louise Mercer – Teacher Rep (LM), Gordon Robert (GR), Scott Arthur – Councillor (SA), Effie Fenton – Playground Development Group Teacher Rep (EF), Lauren McKay – Fundraising & Events (LMcK), Kat Girdler – Co-Chair Fundraising & Event (KG), Laura Calder (LC), Kerry Knox (KK), Crerar Christie (CC), Calley Thomson (CT), Ruth McGrath (RMcG), Kaythie Reid (KR), Lucy Dalglish (LG)

for points 1, 2 and 5b: Calum Gordon – Operational Estate Contract Manager, Edinburgh Council (CG), Jason Rust – Councillor (JR), Phil Doggart – Councillor (PD)

Apologies: Ali Haines – Fundraising & Events, Aristides Kiprakis, Sam Haston

1. Welcome

RI opened with a welcome to everyone.

2. Approval of previous minutes (23rd January 2018)

GR and KG approved the minutes.

3. Review of existing actions from the action tracker

Done.

4. Update reports

4 a. Head teacher report (LW)

Staffing – LW reminded everyone that Miss Crole will return from maternity leave and Mr Blaikie will be leaving after the Easter Holidays.

LW thanked everyone who came out to help clear the school grounds after the snow. It was a great effort.

The school had great results with their cross-country team. There is going to be another race next Monday with representatives from P6 and P7.

The newly established Community Groups, where all children are involved, have been very busy. This includes organising a 'World Week', where they look at involving local businesses

to come in and present different types of jobs. The Health & Wellbeing Group are working on updating the FIT15 programme. The Right Respecting School Group want to improve the toilets in the school. This will include toilet-twinning with a place in Africa on Water Day 22.3.2018. The Sustainability Group have organised a bird watch across the school and are now looking at packaging/waste.

LW also thanked the Fundraising & Events Group for funding the recent Science Festival visit, which all pupils enjoyed. P7 will complete their visit later.

4 b. Fundraising & Event (KG)

KG provided the following update:

- Our meeting was postponed last week due to snow, proposed date now Wednesday 14th March TBC
- Agenda: May fair, tuck shop, beetle drive.
- Festive dress down day raised £126.90
- Xmas card and mug sales raised £500.00
- Rag bag Dec £61.60 Jan £99.20 Feb £100 Total raised in 2017 £527.60
- Cheques to be co-authorised by PC as over £500: Panto's £999, Science festival £2045, Camp coach £1090, Lyceum bus £810
- Date for May Fair Saturday 26th May
- Committee change : Nina Smith resigned as Co Vice chair before Christmas
- Nothing else to report at present

The expenditures listed for Panto, Science Festival, Camp Coach and Lyceum Bus were approved by the PCC.

4 c. (Road) Safety Group (TJB)

TJB had provided the following update prior to the meeting:

- Police Officers have been seen occasionally patrolling the zig zag areas around the school and moving people on as necessary.
- CEC carried out interviews on 22nd February 2018, references now need sought and a PVG check carried out. Hopefully we should hear about a start date soon.
- The school car park continues to be used as a drop-off point for parents to get as close to the school as possible. The janitor hasn't been at the car park gate in the mornings for some time.

4 d. Engagement & Communication (RI)

RI provided the following update:

- Annual PC Survey: Due to the overall Council survey just having been issued to parents, it was agreed to postpone our survey until after Easter. CC offered to create 'Best Practice Videos' around the school survey. RI will pick up with CC on this. **[Action Ref. 2018/05]**
- Facebook: Engagement continues to grow with 10 new members taking us to 261 (some others have left). Recent Ceiling Tile and Snow event proved popular items with lots of interaction. Requested photos of snow day and had 61 posts.
- School Comms: Awaiting overview of school communication strategy from Ruth McGrath at March PC meeting.
- Communications Parent Survey from Nov 2017 – analysis:

General message from the feedback gathered regarding the current communications issued by the school/PCC is, that they are not sent out far enough in advance when asking something of parents and the communications could be clearer.

What could rectify this:

- Send out dates of events in advance (possibly an annual calendar of events for standard events)
- The use of text for reminders (Ensure parents have signed up for this service)
- When sending out email, give an option to get in touch with named person if need clarification

When we asked parents about how we could increase parent involvement the responses were mixed. We need to think about how we address the concerns the parents have;

- *“having more activities out with working hours”* - Realistically we are never going to reach all parents, but could we vary the time we have events where parents are asked to attend?
- *“Rota for parents” / “Rep for each primary”* – both good ideas, we need to respond in a way where parents do not feel pressurised into doing something that doesn't interest them.
- *“PTA group could be more approachable/more open to suggestions”* – We need to respond to this in a way that we have acknowledged this, and assure parents that they are approachable and open to new suggestions – maybe a presentation by the group at assembly, where you have the captured audience.
- *“Know what funding is being spent on”* – To publicise the funding in a good news story and to let parents know when we are raising funds for specific items.

4 e. Finances (ES)

ES confirmed that there were no expenditures since the last PCC meeting in January.

The shortfall for 2017/18 breakfast club is being covered by the school (see Action ref. 2017/04). Any shortfall for 2018/19 will now have to be considered. **[Action Ref. 2018/06]**

ES wants to get a consolidated view of the funds currently held separately by the Parent Community Council, the Fundraising & Events Group and the Playground Development Group. Specifically the F&E accounts have not been audited for about two years. **[Action Ref. 2018/07]**

5. Requested Items

5 a. Playground Development Plan (EF)

EF provided a detailed summary of the plans for the playground. This covers two parts – one in relation to large/fixed items (like climbing frames) with an expected cost of about £10,000 and the other for loose parts played with an expected cost of about £2,000.

A short introduction film around loose parts played was shown explaining all the benefits.

LW confirmed that the first two fixed items were already going ahead (cost £1,520 and £1,865).

The next steps include a full risk-benefit assessment for the loose parts. The group have already visited other schools, including PP1, to gain better understanding.

Details of the loose part section will also be shown to parents at the Parent Consultations on 12th and 13th March. And parents will be asked if they can provide any support or items.

The aim is to complete all the sections on the plan in one, as much as possible.

Currently the funds available by the PDG are £2,500 plus the amount due from the Tesco Blue Token. The amount of this is due to be confirmed by the end of March (min. £1,000 to max. £4,000).

The total fund raising aim is £15,000. This will be covered by above, further applications though fundraising offers as well as possible specific fundraisers in the school. Both PCC and the Fundraising & Events Group confirmed that they would be happy to add to the funds, once all the amounts had been clarified.

5 b. Ceiling Tile Issue (RI)

Firstly RI thanked councillors JR and SA for their ongoing communication and support to the school during this incident. Amey had provided a report following their inspection, however it incorrectly stated that a child had been injured. They will provide an updated version.

LW provided a summary of what happened. She confirmed that Amey were on site within an hour of her reporting it.

Calum Gordon, Operational Estate Contract Manager for the Edinburgh Council, attended the meeting and answered the following question:

1. Was a fixtures & fittings inspection carried out as part of the safety inspections following the wall collapse at Oxbgangs Primary School in 2016 and children re-entering the school following repairs?
CG: A Health & Safety practitioner from Amey was on site in 2016 and confirmed that all was safe. It is unclear if the visual check carried out then included areas above the ceiling.
2. If not, what are the reasons as to why that would not have been done?
CG: A visual check above the ceiling tiles has now been carried out following the recent incident by the end of the following day to check all hangers in the school. This was conducted by Amey and Council officers. No other issues were identified. By 12th March all other PP1 schools will also be checked.
3. Amey provided a summary report of the February 2018 ceiling tile incident, which allegedly contain an inaccuracy. What was inaccurate and has that report now been corrected and made publicly available?
CG: It stated incorrectly that a child had been injured. A new report will be issued.
RI queried if there would be any comments from Edinburgh Council to confirm that they were happy with this – considering this report has been compiled by Amey who are employed by Edinburgh School Partnerships (ESP) who own the school and rent it out to Edinburgh Council. AS confirmed that the same questions as discussed here were going to the next Edinburgh Council meeting (on 15th March). He expects an endorsement of the report there.
4. Was the cable suspending the ceiling missing from when the building was constructed, or was it as a result of later maintenance?
CG: The report concluded this was inconclusive. It looks more likely that the cable had never been put in at construction. But it is unclear if this was my mistake or following appropriate assessment. It is also not clear why the tile moved at this point in time.
5. Is the Amey report considered by the Council to be the full & final statement on the latest incident?
CG: This will be discussed at the next Edinburgh Council meeting.

6. Will the Council agree to arrange a full inspection of fixtures and fittings, independent of Amey, given we have now had two separate incidents where the safety of children & staff has been put at risk, to include, but not limited to, areas of concern such as:
- (a) Any wall or ceiling attachment above adult waist height,
 - (b) Banisters,
 - (c) Radiators suspended from ceiling in gym hall,
 - (d) External cladding on the 1st floor - material used, and
 - (e) Electrics including lighting?

CG: Some of these points are checked regularly under the 'Preventative Plan Maintenance' (PPM) which is a non-intrusive maintenance agreement in place between Edinburgh Council and ESP, conducted by Amey. This covers statutory and contractual requirements. There will be a discussion by Edinburgh Council to decide if a more intrusive full independent survey should be carried out.

There were queries around the details of the checks carried out. There was upset that a detailed review of the building had not been carried out following the wall collapse.

The consensus of the Parent Council was that a full detailed building inspection should be carried out, not just the ongoing visual/non-intrusive reviews. Two incidents now cause concern that the original built was not completed appropriately.

RI thanked CG for attending.

5 c. School Communication Strategy (RMcG)

RMcG explained that with her background in Marketing & Communication she had offered her support to the school around communication. So far she was involved in the last event where the parents were offered to sign-up online. That worked well.

She provided a summary of what she felt the challenges around communication with parents were. This covered it being difficult to get parents attention and to get them to take actions (for example with ParentPay), or the difficulty for parents to find specific information on different websites/sources. She also acknowledged the need to manage comments for example on Facebook.

RI provided a summary of the survey that had been conducted with parents around communications.

RMcG agreed to join the Communications Sub-Group. She will consider the questions around parent involvement in the current parent survey to see if they could be improved **[Action Ref. 2018/08]**. She will also pull together information to be shared with all parents around communications and how we are aiming to improve this **[Action Ref. 2018/09]**

6. AOCB

There was no time for any other business.

7. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 15th May 2018 at 19h