



Oxgangs Primary School – Parent Community Council Minutes

23rd March 2021 – Hosted on Teams

Present: Aristides Kiprakis – Chair (AK), Kathryn Wright – Head Teacher (KW), Louise Mercer (LM) – Teacher Rep, Lesley Roarty, Kaythie Reid (KR), Crerar Christie (CC), Ben Bunting (BB), Helen/Ben Panter, Barbara Findlay, Patricia Rudolf Von Rohr (PVR), Kerry Knox, Herve Lacriox, Louise McLennan (LMcL), Bertrand Frossard, Jo Stewart, Owen Murray, Jack Jurainski. Kate Hill, Kate Smith, Fiona Morrison (FM)

Apologies: Gordin Robertson, Lauren McKay

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

2. Approval of previous minutes

Previous minutes of 16 November 2020 were approved.

3. Updates

(i) Headteacher Report:

- KW noting that the changes that have been made to start and finish times and to pick up and drop off points seem to be working well. There have also been some changes within the school day to lunchtimes and break times to tighten up on bubbles.
- KW reporting that during lockdown the school was monitoring engagement on teams- where this was low, email contact was made to check all was well. Ipads were leant out and where required, materials were provided by email or in hard copy. In general feedback on the learning on teams was fairly positive- following the feedback given more teacher contact had been provided and more feedback on work had been given. It hadn't been perfect but had gone pretty smoothly. Thanking parents and staff alike but a special thanks to the PSAs for their efforts here.
- Breakfast club starts after the Easter break. Parents had been asked to Register and KW was hopeful, despite being restricted in numbers, to be able to accommodate everyone's requests.

- There is a new school administrator- Chrissie McLennan- who joined during lockdown. Her and Caroline make a great front of house team.
- The school had a delivery of 104 new ipads during lockdown. Thanks go to Mr Hunter who has done a wonderful job of prepping these for use. The increased numbers mean that every class will now have its own set of ipads that will remain with that class. LM noting that the nursery will be getting more for its use too.
- KW also reporting that she is keen for the school to use ICT to enhance communication with the school community. Examples of that include:-
 - (i) The school website is being worked on;
 - (ii) Friday updates from each class;
 - (iii) Increased use of twitter

Feedback from a number of parents on the call was that there was a general appreciation of the Friday update which parents found helpful in engaging their children in conversations about their learning. One parent noted that the tone of the weekly update was as though it was being told through the voice of a child in the class.

AK passing on a query from one parent that perhaps a split Friday newsletter from the school might cut down on the amount of content- KW would consider this suggestion.

AK also raising a query from a parent about the number of instances of whole classes relocating/being unable to go to their classrooms because of the disruptive behaviour of individuals and a suggestion that all parents involved be notified. KW noting that some children were struggling to regulate behaviour on their return to school and that the school was following protocols in the action it was taking in these situations which was to remove the rest of the class from the situation and continue with learning elsewhere. Safety was always the paramount consideration. In response to the notification comment it would be too time consuming (as well as unnecessary) to notify every parent and there were also issues around protecting the privacy of the individual(s) concerned.

LMcL observing that we are missing having any visual understanding of what the children are doing and that parents were missing the interaction. Highlighting the music videos Mrs Sims had posted online at the start of lockdown which gave parents a glimpse of the activities the children had been involved in before lockdown. KW was going to explore whether the increased allocation of pads may open up opportunities here. This was currently being explored with regard to the P7s.

Fiona Hill asking whether all children were glad to be back and whether there was a whole school approach being taken to reflect on the experience for the benefit of those who were not so happy to be back in school. KW going over the various resources that were available in this regard, including 'Zones for Regulation'- a universal approach to helping children recognise and manage their emotions- in which the staff were undergoing training.

A question from one parent was whether the Wednesday morning music lessons offered by Mrs Sims for younger children could continue- KW would explore this with Mrs Sims and see whether her timetable would allow for that.

- KW reporting that there was a change anticipated for class organisation for next year. Numbers at the school have dropped so the likelihood is that the school will run with one class less next school year- a composite class looks likely, unless numbers change dramatically. An email about this to the affected year groups (current P2/3) would be coming out in the next few days. FM asking about the criterion and KW confirming that while it used to be based purely on age the Council have changed this so that other criteria such as gender and friendship groups can now be taken into account in determining the make up of the composite class. Further information about this would be circulated by email.
- KW noting the focus on the equalities group, which had started. The children had had the opportunity to get involved in this during lockdown and KW invited any interested parents to get in touch on the school admin email address if they wanted to get involved.
- Comic Relief raised £223 and was enjoyed by the children.
- Parent Consultations would be the 2nd week back after Easter and would be by phone call as before.

4. AOB

- LM querying with the Parent Council what was proposed with regard to the Parent Council noticeboard at the entrance to the school playground. This has been neglected in recent years and the content is out of date and faded- could the content be replaced or removed and used for another purpose? It was the first thing people see when they visit the school. CC noting that the office have a key, as does he. It being agreed by those on the call that the school make use of this for art work (or any other purpose), with perhaps a small space left over for a Parent Council flier (should one ever be prepared). KW suggesting that the school might task the captains with taking control of this in some way.
- Re the Disney Plus licences it transpired that the school is not allowed to buy a licence for this so the funds from the Parent Council were not required here. KW reporting that the school have been given access to an alternative similar service from the Council.
- KW making a request to the parent Council for funds to enable the school to provide a Julia Donaldson book for each child transitioning to P1 from nursery as part of the transition pack provided by the school. The undiscounted price would be around £300 but the school would explore whether any discount was available. This request was approved and it was agreed that the Parent Council would aim to provide (a) a sticker to go inside the front cover recording that the books had been purchased with funds donated by the Parent Council and (b) some form of flier detailing who the Parent Council are and what they do, in an effort to bring in more parents joining the parent community. This last point was to be considered further at the next meeting.

- LMcL asking if any special activities are planned for the P7us who are missing all of the usual leavers activities (camp etc). KW was very aware and noting that while resi trips could not go ahead the Council had confirmed that each child would be offered an EPIC day out- an outdoor activities based full day out. Letters about this would be coming out shortly. The intention was also to have some form of video or similar to work towards instead of show to make a memorable finish plus consideration was being given to a virtual finishing ceremony. Assuring parents that the school would make it special.
- AK raising the issue of the parent questionnaire, which hadn't been issued last year- was this worth resurrecting? There were mixed views here but KW noting she would be interested to see the results (provided that the feedback given was not personal). CC undertaking to have a look at paring this back- he and AK would continue discussion offline.
- PVR noting that the current signatories of the Parent Council were her, CC and Ewan Macleod and asking whether it might be worth trying to get parents of some of the younger children in the school involved here. It being decided that any changes could wait until the AGM.

5. Next Meeting:

18/05/21 at 7pm