

Buckstone Primary School Parent Council
Minutes
Thursday 26th April 2018
6.30pm-8.00pm, P1 Classroom

Parents Council Members Attendees: Brian Chalmers (Chair), Hilary Brown, Nicole Johnston, Louise Logan, Emma Forson, Claire Probert, Morven Langley, Morag Place, Lisa Sykes, Jamie Deas, Anna Hind, Dominique Meunier

Co-opted Member Attendees: Mrs Imrie, Mrs Henry, Mr Beardon, Mrs Campbell

Other Attendees: Councillor Scott Arthur, Louise McLeod, Steven Amabile, Sharon Marshall, Lynda Nattress, Karen James

Apologies: Fiona Damen (Vice Chair), Helen Szoor-McElhinney

Minutes: Christine Stewart (Clerk)

1. Approval of previous minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2018 were approved.

2. Mrs Imrie Update

2.1 Update

Spring Disco: Thanks to the fundraising committee for the disco at the end term.

Hall Opening: Thanks for support with the opening of the hall before the holidays.

School development: BPS has been working on benchmarks with cluster colleagues; our cluster work has been shared widely across the city as an example of good practice. Today, the senior leadership team met with their cluster peers to decide on priorities moving forward. These will be shared with staff on the 8th May in-service day – Mrs Imrie would welcome a parent rep to be present for this.

Learning and Teaching: Developments are continuing with staff, following our Quality Improvement team visit at the end of February. We are continuing our work on developing Assessment is For Learning (AiFL) across the school.

Catering: As requested, the new Catering Manager will meet with parents on 17th May.

School photos: As no parent volunteers have come forward to discuss this issue, the school will now proceed with the organisation of this as seems best.

Request to lower the kerbs: Facilities Management are, at the moment, unable to facilitate a parent-led request to lower the kerb outside Mr Beardon's P3 classroom.

Blinds in the new hall: Mrs Imrie is still waiting for further detail about this.

Upper area: Mrs Imrie is still looking for parental input to discuss plans for the redesign of the upper area. Lisa Sykes, Nicole Johnston and Claire Probert volunteered.

New national assessments: These new online assessments are being rolled out to all pupils in P1, P4 and P7 over the next four weeks.

2.2 Topics raised by parents

Playground access during holidays

The playground was previously open during weekends and holidays, however this appears to have stopped. What is the policy about this moving forward? Mrs Imrie responded that health and safety requirements for school playgrounds have increased in recent years. The outdoor equipment has to be risk checked daily when the playground is open and certain equipment is closed if conditions are wet or icy. Our school risk assessment requires four checks per day take place when school is open, and daily checks also take place during weekends and holidays. This requires a janitor (SSO) to be on duty. The playground is open til 9pm every night on weekdays in term time because there is always a janitor on duty. During weekends and in the holidays, there is sometimes janitor cover and the playground will be open to the community at those times, but janitor cover cannot be guaranteed and when there is no janitor on site, our risk assessment has required the playground to be closed.

Disappointment was expressed at this change, given the high quality opportunities for outdoor play in the playground and the lack of other facilities for children in Buckstone. When the playground was re-developed in 2014, community use was a condition of funding. Mrs Henry thinks that this was a time-limited funding condition, and stressed that health and safety requirements have increased since the funding was given. Since the playground has been closed, the increasing vandalism and anti-social behaviour has very much reduced.

It was asked whether the liability for accidents in the playground could be explicitly signed over to parents during weekends and holidays, to allow community access to continue. Brian Chalmers, while noting that this situation has arisen through Council policy rather than school policy, asked that the school to double-check this with the relevant Council department. Mrs Imrie agreed to do so.

Will the hammock be coming back? The issue is with the supplier; the school is working on it.

Broomlea Trip: First-time P4 parents who would like more information about Broomlea in advance of June's information meeting, given that the first deposit is due. Mrs Imrie agreed to provide an information leaflet. Some information is also available on the school website.

School uniform: It has been noted that pupils are seen to be wearing a broad mix of uniform and casual clothes, particularly in the upper school. Mrs Imrie said that the school can only encourage, not enforce, the wearing of school uniform, and relies on parents to ensure that children follow the uniform guidance. She will ensure that the policy and expectations are communicated again to the parent body. There is a very large stock of second hand uniform held by the Parent Council, enough to provide free uniform to families facing significant financial hardship.

Book Fair – future options: There has been parent feedback that the books on offer at the fair are TV-show driven rather than high quality. Is it possible to look at other ideas? A P3 mum runs the local Usbourne franchise and would be happy to do the book fair. The school noted all feedback and will look at the issue, taking into account that it receives a significant quantity of free books from the current supplier.

Daily mile/exercise: Most classes are now doing various forms of outdoor exercise two or three times per week. P7 classes are very busy with transition to high school activities.

3. Councillor Update

Cllr Scott Arthur provided a community update. His full written report is included as an appendix.

Scott had arranged for the playground at Pentland PS playground to be inspected to see if the 'mud' situation there could be improved, and he asked for the Buckstone PS playground at the same time. Does Buckstone Parent Council want to take this to the next stage, of drawing up costings e.g. for rubberised safety surfaces? There was general agreement that the situation of mud in the playground has improved but that it would be useful to see costings. Mrs Imrie noted that some grass areas will be re-seeded over the summer.

4. Diversity and Inclusion

Helen Szoor-McElhinney has circulated a proposed list of Parent Council values to members of Parent Council for feedback. The plan is to reach out to the whole school community with a Survey Monkey survey.

Brian noted at the last meeting, there was discussion about having a 'class reps guide', in order to try and ensure consistency in the role but also that it is not too burdensome. Emma Forson has created a draft version, which Brian will circulate around the group.

There is an existing 'Friends of Buckstone Primary' closed group on Facebook, affiliated to the Parent Council. It is suggested that it would be useful to launch a new Parent Council Facebook page - publicly viewable but all posts require moderator-approval (similar to the Our Buckstone-Fairmilehead page). Brian and Hilary will discuss this.

5. Borough Park – installation of Goal Posts

Scott Arthur outlined the proposal from a local resident, Kevin Edwards, to erect a set of goal posts on Borough Park (AKA the Water Board Field). He requested feedback as to whether or not Buckstone PS Parent Council supports this proposal. A good deal of community support has been expressed on Facebook, and local businesses Access Building and IQ Fire & Security are prepared to cover the cost of purchase and installation, however the situation relating to any maintenance costs still needs to be confirmed by the Council. The football coaches would prefer that the goals are not installed, so that they can use the field flexibly,

and there are objections from at least one neighbouring resident. The Council's Children & Families department owns the field and the final decision on this proposal will sit with them.

Parent Council agreed to support this proposal, due to the general lack of local amenities for children and because the Buckstone Association amenity areas cannot be used for ball games by children aged 7 years and over. Morven Langley will discuss the matter further with the football coaches and Mrs Imrie will contact the relevant Council department to discuss. Scott Arthur will then consult with the community once feedback has been received from these discussions.

6. P6 Pupils – Discussion around Uniform

The P6 committee attended with a presentation (see attached). To balance their extra P7 responsibilities, they are requesting permission to wear various special uniform items, which they are willing to fundraise for. The presentation included other requests, the most important of which was improvements to the upper school toilets.

Following discussion between the pupils and Parent Council, it was agreed that the committee would come back to the next meeting with costs for a list of agreed uniform items, and that Lisa Sykes would meet with the group in the interim to support them in developing their proposal. The agreed list of uniform items includes:

- 1) Track suits, in school colours, worn to represent the school at sports and interscholastic events. The P6s have noticed that other schools have this sort of thing but that Buckstone PS doesn't. Parent Council offered to fund a bank of these tracksuits, held by the school and borrowed by pupils as and when required. The P6 committee was happy with this.
- 2) For 'smart' uniform events, a special P7 school tie in the school colours and with the school crest. Parent Council may be able to fund one tie per pupil. Tesco or Asda might be an option for this as well as Borders Embroideries.
- 3) The P7 hoodie, but in navy rather than purple in order to differentiate the P7s from the rest of the school.

Mrs Henry and Lisa Skyes will liaise. Thanks to the P6 committee for an excellent presentation. Mrs Imrie noted that Facilities Management have no plans to refurbish the upper school toilets but she will go back and ask about this again. The small toilet in the gym hall changing rooms is about to get a makeover.

7. Fundraising Committee

The next fundraising event is the Summer Fair on 25th May. The fundraising committee is considering moving the time forward, say to 3.30-5.30pm, to support staff helpers and parent volunteers. There is a general issue with help for this fair. The fundraising committee is depleted both in numbers of volunteers and also in energy. Attracting volunteers to staff the stalls and to help with the huge amount of clearing up and moving equipment is always a ever-present challenge, and the fundraising committee is having to consider whether they

can continue to hold two fairs per year. Many parents are unable to help out due to family and work commitments, but fresh faces would be more than welcome. Emma Forson will forward information to Morag Place to populate a timetable app for volunteer signups. Hilary Brown will draft up an email asking for parent help.

8. Buckstone Ski Club

This item will be carried forward to the next meeting.

9. Football Team

Morven Langley gave an update on the football team. It was agreed to have a mini-presentation towards the end of the year in recognition of the hard work by everyone involved. The P5 sponsor is arranging for the P5 team to go out for an end-of-season dinner.

It was agreed that it would be appropriate for Parent Council to purchase a memento such as a small trophy for each P7 team member. Morven will confirm numbers with Claire Probert, who will then research prices.

10. Finances

The financial year now runs to 30th June i.e. the end of the school year. Claire Probert confirmed the income, expenditure and current balance for each account:

FUNDS	Start	Income	Expenditure	Balance
GENERAL	15,730.11	19,807.22	19,022.16	16,515.17
FOOTBALL CLUB	1,481.36	2,450.00	1,998.41	1,932.95
PLAYGROUND	3,262.63		1,971.00	1,291.63
	20,474.10	22,257.22	22,991.57	19,739.75

It was agreed to fund the production of a yearbook for each of the current P7 pupils as a leavers' gift (requested by the year group instead of a t-shirt).

Hilary Brown noted that parents have asked about craft materials and moveable ovens for baking. A list of items will be compiled and brought back for discussion.

Donations of second-hand books are still very welcome.

11. A.O.B

It was agreed that Buckstone Primary School would hold a bucket collection on Friday 4th May to support the local fundraising efforts for medical treatment for Firhill pupil Kira Noble (<https://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/solvingkidscancer/kiranoble>). As all of the school's fundraising goes through Pupil Parliament, information about this will go out on behalf of Parent Council. Hilary Brown will take this forward.

Mrs Imrie confirmed that the senior team is still looking at how the 2018/19 classes will be organised.

Appendix 1: Community Report

Prof Scott Arthur **Councillor for Colinton-Fairmilehead** **Report for Fairmilehead Community Council – May 2018**

Anti-Social Behaviour – I have been working with the police deal with anti-social behaviour in Buckstone, the Waterboard Development & Frogston Road.

Fairmilehead Park – This is now seeking a Green Flag Award and it is hoped funding will be found to improve it by installing a wildflower meadow, a bee colony and a small football pitch.

Pentland Primary School - Many thanks to the Pentland Primary parents who contacted me about the problems the muddy playground was causing them. I am working with the Council to improve this for the kids – a meeting has been organised for early May.

St Marks Primary School – I have recently spoken to the children about my role as a Councillor.

Hunters Tryst School Site – Plans are now online for comment – I have promoted this locally and via Facebook. There will be 85 affordable homes - 35 Mid Market Rent and 50 social rent.

Comiston Farmhouse – It now looks likely this property will soon be sold via the ESPC as a family home.

New Pedestrian Crossing on Buckstone Terrace – Now delayed until July (was August). I have requested a formal report on the delay for June.

Lothianburn Park & Ride Proposal – Report delayed until May.

17 Buckstone Crescent (Abandoned Property) – The bank action is expected to culminate in May/June

20mph Scheme – Signs have now been erected and the scheme is now live. All outstanding issues have been resolved.

Winter – I am still pressing for new grit bins in one or two places.

Redford Barracks Working Group – I have been appointed to this group along with Cllr Rust & Cllr Daggart. Although the SNP (Cllr Barrie) and Conservatives (Cllr Daggart) agreed to co-convene the Working Group, Cllr Barrie has resigned and an additional SNP member is to be appointed. The next meeting will be on the 24th of May and will include a tour of the Barracks. I've stressed that Colinton & Firrhill Community Councils have to be involved.

Oxgangs YPC - A few people have noticed that the old Oxgangs Young Person's Centre is being demolished. The site will be clear soon and we will have a new facility by March 2019.

In Council – The South West Locality committee is now had its first full meeting!

Promoted on my Facebook – 20mph scheme, Winton East appeal & Hunters Tryst development.

More local news on my Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/DrScott4Ward8/>