

Buckstone Primary School Parent Council
Minutes
Thursday 25th September 2018
6.30pm-8.00pm, Staff Room

Parents Council Members Attendees: Brian Chalmers (Chair), Fiona Damen (Vice Chair), Helen Szoor-McElhinney, Anna Hind, Lisa Sykes, Emma Forson, Louise Logan, Morag Place, Nicole Johnston, Morven Langlely, Fiona Brien, Jamie Deas, Michelle Abell, Caroline Leburn

Co-opted Member Attendees: Mrs Imrie, Mrs Conlin, Lisa Tweedie, Christine Campbell

Other Attendees: Councillor Scott Arthur, Steven Amabile, Elaine Byers, Louise McLeod, Louise Logan,

Apologies: Hillary Brown, Kirsten Davie

Minutes: Fiona Damen/Brian Chalmers/Mrs Imrie

Welcome

Brian welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the year, following the AGM in August. Brian shared that Christine Stewart was standing down as the clerk and we are therefore looking for someone to replace her. Brian also thanked Christine for all of her hard work as clerk. Brian asked class reps and parents to raise issues as and when they arise, so they can be addressed and resolved, rather than waiting until the next meeting. Brian is aiming to keep to an 8pm finish at every meeting and asked for support to be tight with agenda items including AOB.

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting on the 23rd August 2018 were approved.

2. Mrs Imrie Update

School Improvement Plan – Class teachers have been sharing learning experiences across the school over the last few weeks. The staff team also continue to work with cluster schools to develop consistency in learning approaches across the cluster.. Mrs Imrie also met with Heads of other schools to discuss attainment and achievement.

Learning stories – The format has been agreed and in addition to the parent who is already assisting, Morag Place and Lisa Sykes will also provide help

Nursery Learning stories – There has been an issue relating to GDPR, however, that has been addressed and they will be coming out shortly.

P1 Phonics – A parent in P1 provided feedback around the children receiving 4 letters per week and whether this was too much? Mrs Imrie explained that the school was following the set programme for P1 and that the 4 letters per week, were now being reduced to 3 (in line with the programme)

Homework – The school will shortly be carrying out a review into its policy around Homework, following the decision that was taken c18 months ago to stop issuing set Homework other than reading books. Whilst there is no set homework, there is information on the class blogs that is

updated every week. This shows parents what to try and there are links to the relevant websites.

Louise McLeod asked what the policy for Homework was in P7 as her child had yet to be issued with any. Mrs Imrie advised that she would pick up directly with the teacher.

There was a large group discussion on the value of Homework and how it enables parents to establish where their child is on the learning journey. Steven also raised an issue linked to this around school communication with Parents. There was a wider discussion on Communication as well and it will be discussed as an Agenda item at the next meeting in November.

School Access in holidays – The Council Health and Safety Risk Analysis has not been carried out yet. However, there will be no access in the October holidays as there will be further work undertaken relating to the moving of the water main and electrical upgrade.

Twitter – A request has been made to consider the use of Twitter for communicating with Parents. There was a discussion around the room, but it was generally felt that email and texts were sufficient at present, but it could be revisited in the future.

Bike ability – There is a shortage of Bike trainers, so the P6 course has been delayed. Various options were considered and Scott Arthur provided the name of someone who lives locally and who may be interested in assisting.

3. Councillor Update

Perimeter light – It appears that the School Perimeter light is not on in the evening

Parking around school – A parent in Buckstone Lea has raised concerns about the Parking and it remains a concern. Other areas of feedback are to put a zebra crossing in Buckstone Lea or Loan East. Scott will go back to the council and request that a representative attends the next meeting to review options.

Empty House in Buckstone Crescent – Update is that Lloyds Bank have taken steps to repossess the property and we can therefore expect to see progress in the coming months.

Pedestrian Crossing – Start date for the work on the Pedestrian Crossing in Buckstone Terrace is scheduled for the 29th October.

Comiston Farmhouse – The sale is expected to go ahead in November.

Fairmilehead Park – Scott advised that it has been awarded Green Flag status. In addition, Goal posts have been installed – on a flexible basis – to enable them to be moved around to protect the grass. This led on to a discussion on progress with the goalposts in Brough Park. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

Buckstone Play park – There was a discussion around the quality of the play parks in Buckstone compared to other areas of the city. Whilst there have been some improvements over the past couple of years, there is work to do. We discussed the installation of a MUGA pitch and Scott will liaise with the Council to look at options – however, he stressed that money is tight at present as cuts are being made across the board.

4. Diversity and Inclusion

Helen advised that she remains happy to continue with the work and has had no opposing feedback to the work that she had shared with the Parent Council earlier in the year.

The next stage will be to go out to the Parent body, via a small survey, to get feedback around how we can improve both participation in the meetings and how we can make the Parent Council even more effective.

Helen will also construct a new draft Parent Council policy, incorporating the School Equality policy, with a view to having it ready to circulate by the end of the year.

5. Toilets in Upper School

Feedback has been provided by Parents that the toilets in the upper school could benefit from being freshened up. Mrs Imrie will speak to Facilities Management to determine if there is any funding that can be provided. Another option is to use a Business 'Day to make a Difference' and use the time to paint the toilets.

6. Lego Card Swap

A parent had raised a query around potentially organising a Lego Card swap at school. Various options were discussed, e.g. Take place at Parents Evening, but it was agreed that it would take place on Friday 5th October, after school.

7. Fundraising Committee

Emma Forson gave an update on a number of issues –

Halloween Disco – All arrangements are in hand

P7 Fundraising Reps – Fundraising reps have been appointed, after a very strict interview process! One idea that was discussed was around them constructing an update board to show what the Parent Council Funds were spent on

Xmas Fair – The system that was used previously that allowed parents to choose their timeslots worked well and will be used again.

Choir – Mrs Conlin advised that the keyboard that the Choir (and the wider school use) is no longer working and a replacement is required. A request for the Parent Council to contribute to it was made and there was broad support from the attendees.

8. Football

Morven advised that all was in order and that there was nothing to report.

9. Finances

There was a discussion around funding for the Pantomime and other parties as Parent Council have made contributions in previous years. It was agreed that Parent Council would provide a contribution of 1000.

10.AOB

Science Link – Helen will speak to Mrs Imrie about the possibility of introducing Bio Science lessons as she has useful links

P1 Parents – Concern was raised around the large puddles around the entrance to the P1 door. Mrs Imrie advised that they will keep an eye on it, but they are caused by the sand from the sand pit blocking the drains.

Communication – Steven raised the issue of how the school communicates with Parents as he had experienced a recent issue. There was a discussion around the most effective methods (letters in bag, emails etc) and it was agreed that it would be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Swimming in P4 – Due to a city wide change in policy, the swimming that was provided to children in P3 will now move to P4. This means that the current P4 cohort will receive a second set of lessons this year.