

Castlehill Primary School Parent Council Annual General Meeting 8 September 2022

Meeting at Bearsden Academy 08/09/22 at 7:30.

Attendees: Stephanie Baynham, Claire Chamberlain, Marianne Charrier, Katherine Currie, Murtatha Fahad, Alice Hall (Secretary), Aimée Kelly, Gemma Kemp (Co-Chair), Stephanie MacPherson (Acting DH EYC), Rosy Marshall-Mcrae, Graham McCormick, Lesley McLean (DH), Alastair Muir, Lindsey Parker, Cllr Alan Reid, Katie Reid (Co-Chair), Cllr Calum Smith, Mandy Thompson (HT)

1. Welcome and introductions. Katie (chairing) welcomed attendees and new members of the Parent Council (PC).
2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum: Mairie Eadie, Gail Hunter, Sara Kelly, Clare McCafferty. Confirmation of Quorum given.
3. Minutes of 2021 AGM and minutes of last PC meeting on 28 April. The minutes of both meetings were agreed. Further to the 28 April meeting, Katie asked about progress in installing the defibrillator and purchasing iPads. On the first, the HT said East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) had had concerns about installation, but approval had now been given. Cllr Smith said he would also raise the importance of this with the Council. On iPads, the school was still pursuing the purchase with EDC – in the meantime, iPads funded through the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) were being used in class.
4. Elected Positions: Katie Reid and Gemma Kemp were formally elected as Co-Chairs of the PC. Alice Hall was elected as Secretary. Katherine Currie and Stephanie Baynham were elected as co-Treasurers.
5. Review of the Parent Council Constitution: It was agreed to amend paragraph 3.1 to make clear that the role of Treasurer and Secretary can be done jointly.
6. Treasurer's Report and Approval of Accounts: The Treasurer's report (Annex A) was shared with attendees and the accounts were approved. Katie noted that the bank account had a healthy balance, although payments for bins (£150) and the iPads (c.£1000) were still to be made.
7. Head Teachers report
 - The HT started by saying that the school return had felt encouragingly normal. There were still a few COVID cases, but relaxed isolation rules meant the impact was minimal. Issue-based school groups, skills-based 'Fun 31' sessions and 'family time', where children from across the year groups did activities together, were restarting – promoting relationships and acceptance across the school. Local groups were also starting to use the school premises again.

- The school role had now reached 201. A number of new staff had also started and the staffing situation was feeling more settled.
 - The Meet the Teacher event had gone extremely well with 248 parents/carers attending and 79% of mainstream children and 55% of ELR children receiving a visit. Getting more parents/carers into the school would be a key element of the school improvement plan for 22/23 – with in-person parent evenings in October and March, class assemblies and the Christmas show/nativity. A number of parents had also already signed up to help lead/support Fun 31 and after-school groups. A key challenge was how to target more vulnerable families who were typically less involved in school activities. The school were planning a survey to get more information on what parents would like/need. It was noted that we needed to understand why families didn't engage, and also consider organising activities at different times of day, reflecting different working patterns.
 - On school trips, the local trips organised the previous term had gone well and the school was keen to repeat them next summer. In addition, each class would have another trip linked to learning. The HT asked if the PC could provide financial support for buses and Katie said we would be keen to support, whilst needing to balance with other priorities. It was agreed we would discuss this further at the next meeting (**Action: Alice**). The DH also gave an update on plans for the P7 residential, with a provisional booking having been made for a centre in Castle Douglas.
8. Report of the work of the Parent Council in 21/22. Katie gave an update on the work of the Parent Council in 21/22 (Annex B).
9. Fundraising Group Report. Alice gave a report on the work of the fundraising group in 21/22 (Annex C). She also said that the group were planning two activities for the Christmas term – a Halloween disco at the end of October and a carol singing event early in December.
10. Update on work of the Parent Forum. Katie said the last Parent Forum meeting in May was cancelled due to being unable to get a Convenor. The next meeting is scheduled for 4th October.
11. Discussion of issues arising
- Cost of living. Katie asked if the PC could do anything to support the school in responding to the cost of living crisis. The HT said that, following the Summer Fayre, second hand uniform was being made freely available to all children. It was agreed that it would be worth exploring a similar approach to Halloween costumes in order both to reduce costs and encourage recycling. It was also agreed that requests for donations and financial contributions from families should be handled sensitively.
 - Bullying policy. The HT said the policy was up for review in the first quarter of 2023 and it was agreed this would be discussed at a

future meeting (**Action: Alice**). The HT also flagged that it was important that families raised any concerns at an early stage.

- Purchase of new sound system. The HT said the sound system was around 17 years old and would need a service – with at least some bits (if not all) needing to be upgraded. There was broad support from attendees for the PC making a financial contribution, whilst ensuring this was balanced alongside other funding needs. The HT said she would consult other primary schools and provide some costings for repair/replacement (**Action: HT**).
- Key themes. It was agreed a main focus of the PC in the coming year should be on getting more parents into the school.

12. Any Other Competent Business:

- Katie asked if attendees would prefer future PC meetings to be in-person, virtual or hybrid. It was agreed that hybrid meetings would not work effectively and we should aim to hold meetings in-person where possible (**Action: Alice**).
- Rosy asked about the different communication channels used by the school. The HT said that the parent portal (an EDC platform) was used for administration and Seesaw was used to support learning. Once all parents had returned their consent forms for Seesaw, it would be possible to do more with the platform – although parents would not be able to message teachers directly. They should though feel free to email the office with any issues or speak to the teachers at pick-up time. Teams would be available in case of any future lockdown, but was not currently in use. Murtatha asked how parents could get information on the topics covered in class and the HT said this would be covered in class newsletters.
- Graham asked why older children had their lunch slot in the middle of the midday break. The HT explained that increasing numbers meant the school needed to stagger lunchtimes in this way.

13. Planning of meetings for the coming year: Future meetings were planned for 17 November, 26 January and April (date TBC)

Annex A – Treasurer's report

Annual Accounts covering activities from Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

Balance at the start of the year	6,820
Income	
Lottery Fund	£906
Halloween Pumkin Trail	£420
Christmas raffle	£694
Spring quiz	£230
Easy fundraising	£144
Summer fyre	£2,300
Total income	£4,694
Expenses	
Den building kit	£1,091
Picnic/games table	£1,475
P7 bus journey	£500
Ties	£230
Nursery graduation t-shirts	£153
Pocket money stall (summer fyre)	£128
Food for summer fyre	£208
Insurance	£61
Small Lottery Fee	£20
Donation to defibrillator	£100
Donation to Castlehill Nursery	£100
ELR 4 Anti-Racism Group/coloured pens	£60
Total expenses	£4,126
Net income for the year	£568
Balance carried forward to year end Sept 2022	7,388

Annex B – Report on the work of the Parent Council 22/23

In 22/23 the Parent Council:

- Set up a separate fundraising group and invited local Councillors to the Council's meetings.
- Supported the school financially:
 - Bought skin-coloured pencils at the request of Mrs Southworth
 - Bought den-building kits for outdoor play
 - Bought picnic benches and games which are now installed in front of the school office
 - Supported nursery events and graduation
 - Supported the P7 leaving meal, bought ties and helped with coach transport for their residential trip
 - Supported local fundraising for a defibrillator
 - Agreed to support the school in purchase of iPads for roll out of SeeSaw.
 - Agreed to help fund new school bins following a request from the children
- Set up a well-received meeting with chairs of several other Bearsden primary schools to share experiences and issues of concern. These meetings will now continue into this school year.
- Supported the schools in addressing issues of concern:
 - Easing of Covid restrictions. We were concerned EDC was moving more slowly than other Council areas in 'returning to normal' after COVID (e.g. use of virtual parent evenings). The Co-Chairs raised this at the EDC-wide Parent Forum and wrote a letter to the Council.
 - School lunches. In January, we also had concerns over provision of school lunches – the restricted (and unhealthy) menu, the use of single use plastics and the fact that COVID staffing constraints meant senior staff members in the school were having to prepare lunches. The PC wrote to the Council and at the following meeting the HT confirmed the situation had improved.

Annex C – Fundraising Group report

We organised four main activities over the course of 2021/22:

- **Halloween Pumpkin trail** – over 40 families volunteered to decorate their houses for the trail, with prizes awarded for the scariest, funniest, best decorated, most effort and best pumpkin. Maps were sold on a donation basis and we made £420.
- **Christmas raffle** – we used online raffle company Raffall to run the raffle with people purchasing tickets directly from the company. Twelve prizes were available – hampers made up of donations from families. 1543 tickets were sold and we made £700.
- **Spring quiz trail** – we organised a spring quiz trail before the Easter holidays where children found and completed clues and then got a prize for completed answer sheets. Around 30 families participated with maps costing £1 each – and glitter tattoos also on sale for a further £1. We made £230.
- **Summer Fayre** – the Summer Fayre involved live music, Castlehills got Talent, a barbecue, food and drink stalls and range of other commercial and non-commercial stalls. We don't have numbers on participation, but it was well attended (despite the weather!) and made £2180.

Additional funds were raised through sale of Christmas cards featuring the children's art (£300), the Lottery Fund (£906) and Easy fundraising, where big brands make a contribution to fundraising (£144).