

Castlehill Primary School Parent Council Annual General Meeting
14 September 2023

Meeting at St Andrews Church Lower Hall, Bearsden at 7:30.

Attendees: Shona Burnside, Gayle Campbell, Marianne Charrier, Katherine Currie, Margo Currie-Bevis, Andrea Ferguson, Emma Gillan, Alice Hall (Secretary), Gail Hunter, Gemma Kemp (Co-Chair), Lesley McLean (DH), Alastair Muir, Katie Reid (Co-Chair), 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: Aimée Kelly, Kasia Kelly, Natalie Harper, Cllr Alan Reid. Confirmation of Quorum given.
3. Minutes of 2022 AGM and minutes of last PC meeting on 20 April. The minutes of both meetings were agreed. Further to the 20 April meeting, Katie asked if the school had heard more from EDC on lines and bollards for the Abbotsford Road school entrance, and the HT said she would follow this up (**Action: HT**). The HT also said she would follow up on training for parents on use of Seesaw (**Action: HT**).
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 was elected as co-Treasurer alongside Stephanie Baynham.
5. Review of the Parent Council Constitution: Katie noted that the Constitution has last been updated in 2021. The Constitution was reviewed again and agreed.
6. Treasurer's Report and Approval of Accounts: The Treasurer's report (Annex A) was shared with attendees and the accounts were approved. The balance stood at £5848..
7. Head Teachers report
 - Building works update: Work was now completed on the school hall floor, with lines for courts to be painted in October week. Work had also been done in the front stairwell and infant corridor. The previous staff room (room 6) had been made into the ELR1 classroom with a sensory snug and interactive white board - and the old ELR assessment room had become a new staff room. Two cloakrooms had also been adapted to store classroom resources previously held in room 6 and provide nappy changing facilities. Katie asked about RAAC and the HT confirmed there was no RAAC across East Dunbartonshire.
 - The school roll was now 203, with two more pupils joining after September weekend. The school was staffed for eight classes, with two teachers team teaching in P1 where the roll (including ELR

pupils) was 31. The P1 playroom was also being used to deliver support for learning across P1-4. Once spaces had been kept in mainstream for ELR pupils, there were 4 spaces in P2, none in P3, 5 in P4, 4 in P5, 2 in P6 and in P7.

- A number of new staff had started across the school and ELR. Two SLA and clerical assistant roles had gone back out to advert and a supply SLA was in place to provide additional cover.
 - There had been an update to fire evacuation procedures. Previously the school had been evacuated upon hearing the fire alarm and waited until the fire services arrived before re-entering. Under new procedures, during the Building Manager's working hours (07:30-16:00) he had the role of investigating if there was a fire and then phoning 999 if evidence was found; only in this instance would the fire services attend. All other processes remained the same and the children should see little difference. A fire drill would take place soon to test the new procedures.
 - The August Inservice days had been used among other things for updates on Child Protection; GDPR and Fire Evacuation; a policy overview (Special Leave; attendance; dignity and work; anti bullying; personal care procedures); risk assessments for individual children within the school and ELR; and self-evaluation of the learning; teaching and assessment cycle. Given that building work over the summer had prevented teaching staff from coming in and preparing their classrooms, time was also given for staff to clean and prepare their classrooms.
8. Report of the work of the Parent Council in 22/23. Katie explained that item 3.4 in the Constitution required the Parent Council to make a report on its previous year's activities at the AGM. She then ran through the key issues discussed at Council meetings in 22/23, and the areas where financial support were provided (Annex B).
9. Fundraising Group Report. Alice gave a report on the work of the fundraising group in 22/23 (Annex C). She also said that the group were planning three activities for the Christmas term – Halloween discos for the children on 26 October, a parent/carers' social night on 11 November and a Christmas raffle. The HT noted that a Halloween costume swap would run from September weekend, with second hand outfits made available at pick up and drop off times.
10. Update on work of the Parent Forum. Katie said the last Parent Forum meeting had been held on 16 May. A presentation had been given on Including Every Learner and attainment data in EDC, with very positive data on positive leaver destinations. There had also been brief break out rooms, where the idea of Head Teachers providing written reports in advance of PC meetings had been discussed. This would allow members to digest the report and consider any questions in advance. Katie asked if Council members would like to adopt this approach in Castlehill and there was broad support for this idea (**Action: HT**). Katie also offered to share the minutes of the Parent Forum meeting with Council members.

11. Discussion of issues arising

- Key themes for the Parent Council to focus on. Katie asked Council members if they had specific themes they would like to focus on in this academic year. Alastair noted that activity could usefully spring from the principles in the Constitution including partnership with the Local Authority, welcoming parents/carers and others into the school, developing engaging activities for the pupils and representing parent/carer views. Katie suggested an ongoing focus on cost of living, linked to these principles, and Gemma highlighted the value of recent online safety courses organised by the school. Alice asked about opportunities for parents and carers to volunteer in the school, building on a survey the school had run the previous year on potential areas of interest. The HT explained that volunteering was more complicated now that individuals needed a PvG - but she hoped to put out more information on this soon. The school also planned to run pulse groups on specific themes, giving parents/carers the opportunity to come in and give their views in small groups; these discussions might raise issues which could usefully be picked up by the Council.
- Resources for teachers. Following a number of Facebook posts from local teachers asking for help accessing classroom resources, a parent had asked if Castlehill teachers needed PC support to buy resources. The HT said she did not think this was a problem as the school had some funds available to help with this. The DHT did though note that the sandpit would benefit from fresh sand and a lid. It was agreed we should get costings for sand (**Action: DHT**) and also contact the local Mens' Shed to see if they might be willing to help out with a lid (**Action: Katie**). We could also reach out to parents to see if someone might be able to help (**Action: HT**). On a related point, a few parents had commented following the Meet the Teacher event that the ELR classrooms seemed rather bare. The HT explained ELR classrooms were designed to be low stimulus, with displays being made up primarily of children's work. Parents were though strongly encouraged to contact the school with any specific concerns.
- Plastic toys at school events. Katie raised a concern about selling plastic toys at school events, noting that this did not fit well with the school's environmental principles - and that, for this reason, Mosshead primary had already stopped. Council members agreed to try selling non-plastic toys, starting with the Halloween disco (recognising that there was still a stock of plastic toys from previous events which would also need to be used up). It was also agreed we should enlist the support of the pupil plastic pollution group in making the case for this shift (**Action: Katie to contact Miss Davies**).
- PE changing facilities. A parent had asked if the P7s could change for PE at school in order to prepare them for secondary school. The HT said the changing spaces had actually been removed post COVID and so this was not possible.

- Mural. A parent had suggested the PC pay for the murals in the school playground to be updated. Council members supported this idea and the HT noted this could be linked to the school values. Mosshead primary had recently had their mural updated and it was agreed to ask them about pricing/their supplier. It was also agreed to contact Glasgow School of Art to see if one of their students might be interested (**Action: Katie**).
- Seesaw. A few questions about Seesaw had been raised by parents - including on frequency of posts, especially in the ELR, and the different approaches used by different classes to sharing information. The HT explained that formal standards in place for the number of posts teachers should put on Seesaw in relation to individual children, with higher frequency in the ELR. Some teachers did have the time or inclination to post more, but this should not set similar expectations for other classes. On the question of variation in use across classes, the HT said she would review how Seesaw was used across the school to see if it was possible to achieve greater consistency (**Action: HT**).
- Funding for school buses. Katie noted that at the last PC meeting it had been agreed to revisit the issue of PC funding for school buses, She set out the approach used last year and noted that, in total, the PC paid £856 for buses for school trips and £300 for a P1 play experience which was in lieu of a school trip. The main arguments in favour of PC contributions were the rapid rise in the cost of buses post COVID, and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on families (whilst noting that pupils in receipt of free school meals have trips paid for by the Pupil Equity Fund). The main arguments against were that fundraising should go towards items and projects that benefit children in the school community for the long term, rather than just one day; and that a majority of parents in the Castlehill community would probably be happy to pay for the transport for their child's trip. The DHT then said that two trips were currently in the planning stages, with all classes expecting to plan a trip over the academic year: A P1 trip to Mugdock - bus cost £200 - and a P5 STEM trip to the Forth Road Bridge - bus cost £500. In discussion, there was support for requesting some contributions from parents, possibly payable in instalments. However, no firm decision was reached on the way forward. Following the meeting, the Chairs and Secretary therefore decided to canvas views from PC members in writing on a number of options (**Action: Katie**).
- Temperature in the school. A few parents had raised concerns about the temperature in the school during the recent Meet the Teacher event (which took place on an extremely hot day) and asked if the school had considered purchasing fans. The HT explained that use of fans was complicated from a health and safety perspective. The cost was also unlikely to be justified given the number of occasions they would be needed.

12. Planning of meetings for the coming year: Future meetings are planned for 29 November, 1 February and April (date TBC)

Annex A – Treasurer’s report

Castlehill Treasury Accounts covering activities from September 2022 to September 2023

Balance at September 2022	£7,388
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Income

Lottery Fund	£930
Halloween Discos	£630
Christmas Raffle	£977
Spring Tea Boxes	£625
Summer BBQ	£1,113
Easy Fundraising	£36
Donatons towards Buses	£230
Donations towards p1 outdoor experience	£95
TOTAL	£4,636

Expenses

Ipads	£3,033
Sound system servicing	£180
Replacement sound equipment	£878
Buses for trips P2-P7	£856.00
P1 Outdoor Experience	£300
Contribution to P7 Residential	£300
Contribution to P7 leavers meal	£120
p7 Leavers ties	£50
Nursery Graduation T-shirts	£144
Small Lottery fee	£20
Connect Insurance	£130
Hall hire (AGM and future event)	£165
TOTAL EXPENSES	£6,176

NET SPEND FOR THE YEAR	£1,540
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BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD AT SEPTEMBER 2023	£5,848
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Annex B – Report on the work of the Parent Council 22/23

2022-23 was a welcome “back to normal” year following pandemic disruption.

In terms of supporting the school financially, the PC:

- Subsidised transport for school trips and the P1 play experience
- Subsidised transport for the P7 residential as well as leavers ties and a donation to their meal
- Subsidised nursery graduation T-shirts
- Purchased a new sound system for the school
- Purchased iPads for the school and nursery
- Bought litter-pickers for the school

A number of issues were discussed at Parent Council meetings including the following

- Cost of living – Parent Council subsidised school transport for trips. We also set up a Halloween costume swap.
- School building issues – PC wrote to the council about the issue and the impact on pupils.
- Parking at school gates and homework were also discussed at several meetings.

Annex C – Fundraising Group report

We organised four main activities over the course of 2022/23:

- **Halloween discos** – two discos were run, one for EYC and P1-3 children, and one for P4-7. No tickets were sold, but families were invited to make donations (suggested level £3) and sweets and toys were sold. Attendance was very high (including 90% of the mainstream school) and we made £630.
- **Christmas raffle** – we used online raffle company Raffall to run the raffle with people purchasing tickets directly from the company. 35 prizes were available including hampers made up of donations from families and prizes from local businesses. Over 2000 tickets were sold and we made £977.
- **Mothers' day/Spring afternoon tea boxes** – we made up afternoon tea boxes from home baking and donations, which families were able to order in advance and pick up in the playground. 68 boxes were sold and we made £625.
- **Summer BBQ** – the Summer BBQ included live music, a performance from the school singing group, a visiting fire engine, beat the goalie, food and drink stalls and a range of commercial and non-commercial stalls. It was very well attended and we made over £1100.