

# Newlands Primary School Parent Council

## Minutes of PC meeting 12<sup>th</sup> January, 6.30pm in the school.

**Present:** Anna Weild (in the Chair) Elena Kerr, Margaret Habeshaw, Fee Hodgkiss, Tomke Ortgies-Rae, Ali Goodyear and Jayne Adamson; School staff team: Darryl Wilson, Marcel Kaljee and Linda White

**Apologies received:** Silke Isbrand, Jo Bullough, Nick Magee, Sarah Magee, Hilary Roxton, Miranda Moore, Jo Bullough, Alison Turpie, James Turpie.

Item	Comment	Action
1	<p><b>Welcome and introductions</b></p> <p>AW welcomed all and outlined the format of the evening. In the absence of a secretary, JA offered to take minutes for this meeting.</p>	
2	<p><b>Minutes of previous meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes were approved, with thanks to FH.</p>	<b>FH to finalise.</b>
3	<p><b>Update from School</b></p> <p><i>(a) Curriculum and learning</i></p> <p>DW gave an update from the school, reporting on how it aims to develop the curriculum and improve its teaching through developing new spelling, writing and reading practices.</p> <p><i>Spelling- 'Alphabetic code" (Phonics International, MK)</i> Highly-organised, systematic and yet flexible synthetic phonics programme (program) designed for all ages and needs and suitable for anyone who wants to learn to read and spell. Children learn 'codes' that will allow them to spell the word. They will count the code on their fingers e.g. RAIN = R, AI, N = 3 sounds. Staff attended training in November. Primary1/2 has started to use this new method and plan to roll out throughout rest of the school (<a href="http://www.phonicsinternational.com/">http://www.phonicsinternational.com/</a>).</p> <p><i>Reading (MK)</i> The teachers are currently reviewing what stage the children are at and what they are being taught, aims, how to achieve these. Books are being reviewed with a view to updating learning materials. School looking into options such as Floppy's Phonics (developed by Oxford Reading Tree)</p> <p><i>Writing- 'Talk4 Writing' (LW)</i> Talk for Writing enables children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading and analysing it. Through fun activities that help them rehearse the tune of the language they need, followed by shared writing to show them how to craft their writing, children are helped to write (<a href="http://www.talk4writing.co.uk/about/">http://www.talk4writing.co.uk/about/</a>). In late October 2015 Mrs White had introduced this method in primary6/7. The improvement in the children's abilities has already been impressive.</p>	<b>DW to check SIP has been circulated to all parents.</b>

<p><i>Theme 'Backpack preparing for life'(MK, LW, DW)</i> The way that the children are learning and the teachers are assessing has changed, with emphasis on the child not just aiming to completing a piece of work but knowing what skills they have and why they are learning this, realising their own skills and potential.</p> <p><b>(b) Staffing and support</b></p> <p><i>Management</i> DW reported that assistance from Martin Elliott (deputy head, west linton) is no longer available. AW noted that management support had been promised by SBC for a year starting in the 2015/16 academic year at 0.4FTE (both schools). That this is not being delivered when there continues to be a clear justification for this will, by definition, be to the detriment of both schools. In addition to the need for sustained short-medium term input, there is a case for the school to have long-term, structural management support. AW noted that this is a matter of considerable concern that needs to be addressed as a priority.</p> <p><i>Classroom</i> A teacher has been appointed to the primary 4/5 class for Mon, Tue as Mrs Hall reduces her hours (subsequently confirmed in Thursday notes as Mrs Buxton).</p> <p>Dawn Taylor from SBC Enhanced Support Team will now be working with teaching staff 3 days/week at 0.6FTE (both schools)</p> <p><i>Assistance</i> With assistant staff off sick over the coming months, DW requested assistance to cover playground duty over the lunch break for several weeks (Mon-Thu). School would arrange PVG. MH also offered to help with community contacts if needed.</p> <p><b>(c) Other</b></p> <p><i>Parent evening &amp; book fair</i> Parent evenings: Tue 1<sup>st</sup> Mar 3.30-5.30 and Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar 6-8pm. The Book Fair will take place at the same time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MK suggested Parent Council be present at Parent Evening, with a table so parents can come and find out more.</li> <li>• DW requested assistance from parents in supervising Book Fair.</li> </ul> <p><i>Railway event;</i> Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March there will be a Railway event at the school. Children are working on projects; poems, drawings, history, which will be shown on this day with competitions and performances for parents. This is in conjunction with NCDT who have obtained funding for a Borders Railway event on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March and to build a permanent train in the school playground.</p>	<p><b>AW/SI to meet DW/MK to discuss way forward. To approach Broughton PC.</b></p> <p><b>DW to send letter to all parents requesting help.</b></p> <p><b>DW to ask parents for help in book fair supervision</b></p> <p><b>All PC to identify a couple of PC members to promote PC at each session.</b></p>
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## Update from Parents Council

### **(a) Chair's Report (AW on behalf of SI)**

The position of secretary was still to be filled. In meantime minute taking would be rotated.

### **(b) Class Contacts**

With only one parent stepping forward as class contact, these roles will be put on hold pending further discussion.

### **(c) Treasurer's Report (TO-R)**

September Bank Statement £2,700 in account; Less outgoing: £322 (buses); Incomings: £377 (profits, Christmas concert)

### **(d) Fundraising events (AW on behalf of HR)**

- **Christmas concert:** Feedback from Christmas Concert: license discussion, dress down day need considering in advance; practical issues re tables to reduce queue. Parent council had raised £377 from sales of raffle tickets/refreshments.
- **Generation science:** DW/MK had requested parent council to contribute £160 towards the Generation Science event in the summer. AW said that in principle this is something parent council would most likely support as there has been positive feedback from a group email. However any final decision would have to wait until the council had membership and quorum.
- **School library:** £1,000 required to purchase shelving from IKEA to convert the 'medical room (room between office and Head Teacher Office) in to a library. The school would like for the Parent Council to contribute to the shelving. AW said this could be considered by parent council at the next meeting.
- **Forthcoming events to be considered:** Easter Fair at Newlands Centre (cake stall), Duck Race, Whipman Disco, Sports Day
- **Non-fundraising events** It was suggested that the Parent Council should have a non fundraising event e.g. Beatle Drive, to highlight the Parent Council and to get everyone together for a fun event.

### **(e) Other**

AW raised need for clarification of council membership. This is a constitutional requirement. Provision is made for between 6-15 parents to be Councillors, who will vote on behalf of parents forum (although all parent are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings). Currently membership is list-based and exceeds 15. All

**All PC to discuss at February meeting.**

**AW to email all members on list, confirming if they would like to be councillors or remain as**

	<p>parents currently on list would therefore need to confirm whether or not they would like to be members of council. If there are more than 15 after this then we can discuss next steps at the next meeting.</p>	<p><b>attending/interested members of parent forum.</b></p>
5	<p><b>Projects</b></p> <p><b>School library (DW/MK leads)</b> DW/MK reported that the medical room has been identified as the library. DW/MK are reviewing books, and may later request parents to help with book donations. School were asked to ensure provisions were made for children who were sick and needed to lie down.</p> <p><b>School garden.</b> Update email from NM who had got through stage 1 of the Tesco application and had done a 2<sup>nd</sup> stage submission – waiting to hear if successful. Grant is 8-12K. MK updated that an outdoor classroom will be erected. Funding has come from the school and the Council</p> <p><b>Website/facebook</b> Alison Turpie has volunteered to progress this and will research a website format, etc. MK will also look into what SBC can provide in terms of templates/hosting.</p>	<p><b>DW</b></p> <p><b>NM/MK</b></p> <p><b>AW, AT, MK, EK to form a sub-group and meet to discuss</b></p>
6	<p><b>Other matters arising</b></p> <p><b>Kirkdean School Bus (JA):</b> Currently the bus has to turn right in the morning at Kirkdean because when the Council fixed the junction at Blyth Bridge they made it too high and therefore the bus can't use it. The bus company has been continuously on to the Council but doing nothing. This is dangerous as it is a terrible junction.</p> <p>Mile a Day (AW): <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-33039084">http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-33039084</a>: AW mentioned this health initiative, started by a primary school in Stirling but now being adopted in a number of schools across Edinburgh, Lothians and in Borders. Other parents had also raised with SI and MK also supportive.</p>	<p><b>SI to approach SBC; JA to draft letter.</b></p> <p><b>DW to look into this</b></p>
7	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b> Tuesday 9th February, 6:30pm</p>	<p><b>AW to consult by email as to weekday preferences</b></p>