

Kirknewton Primary School Parent Council meeting 23rd January 2024, on Zoom

Present: Pip Shiels, Adele Murphy, Kirsten Patience, Fiona Wright, Victoria Guthrie, Turid Engstrom, Sara Shaw, Barbara Dunlop, Amanda Blainey, Julie Thynne, Lyndsey Robertson, Sarah McNee

Apologies: Laura Stewart

- 1. Welcome and apologies**
- 2. Approval of previous minutes:** approved
- 3. Head Teacher update (Kirsten Patience)**

Staffing update:

- In the nursery Mrs Chapnik has left. We are currently advertising for one more permanent pupil support worker for the nursery and have had our request for another one approved by the council.
- We are advertising for a pupil support worker for the school, to backfill Mrs Walkingshaw.
- Miss Hawking will be retiring in the summer. Her post will be advertised soon.
- Two members of staff will be going on maternity leave in June: Mrs Mackriell and Mrs Fairnie.

Validated Self-Evaluation

- Next week on Monday and Tuesday we will have a Validated Self-Evaluation in the school. This is a good occasion to celebrate the progress that we have made in the school together with the children. Our Education Officer Emma Ballantyne will be working with us on that. And head teachers from other schools in West Lothian will be supporting and contributing as well.

12 Days of Christmas

- Focus on meta-skills for the children and to keep learning going up until the end of term. Children were very engaged with this resource.
- This, together with our 12 days of summer resource, has really raised profile of the school across Scotland as a resource to develop meta-skills. Other schools have been using this as an example of best practice and we have received great feedback on this from those schools.

Passion Projects/Social Enterprise

- These are having a really positive impact for the children. We have now moved on to Social Enterprise with the children, and the children are very excited about running their own business. P7s will be running their smoothie selling this week and next week sees the dog biscuit enterprise launching. Given the success so far we aim to continue with this.
- 'My Primary' will be the next step in terms of encouraging the children to develop a skill set that they are excited about. If any parents have any skills they would like to share with the children on a Friday morning the school would welcome contributions from the parents for this.

School fund update:

- KP drew attention to changes in the P7 end-of-year fund – kept any money left over after costs of camp, for the P7s to get a free trip as a leavers' treat. We will consult with the P7 children to decide with them what they would like to do to celebrate their end of primary school.
- Pupil savings fund: This is what parents/carers have already put towards trips.
- Literacy fund: intention to purchase another Promethean board for the P3s.
- Wider school experiences fund: to support with activities as part of My Primary.

4. Answers to questions/points submitted in advance

Q: Footballs after school and the request that children do not play with footballs in the playground after school.

A: Older children will keep their activities to the field and Muga, and there will only be controlled games in the front playground, to try to avoid any collisions or injuries particularly with younger children in the front playground around pick-up and drop-off times.

Q: P7 Camp

A: We need to balance with keeping costs as low as possible with getting the experience right for our children. The hope is to go to Lendrick Muir again this year. We understand parents/carers need to know the costs of camp and we will be confirming this as soon as possible, to help parents/carers be able to save for the cost of this. KP to confirm how money can be transferred from Kirkie Savers to iPay in order to pay for camp.

5. Updates from Sub Groups

- Equalities for Everyone group (Adele Murphy)
- We met before Christmas to discuss priorities for this year. We would like to try to raise awareness of neurodiversity across the school, and how we can feed that into the parent/carer body and the local community. We interviewed some pupils in the school interested in being part of the group to support this. There is now a pupil from every class to be an ambassador to this group. We will look at this in an assembly. We will contact East Calder Library to propose a section of the library dedicated to this.
- Health and Wellbeing UNCRC group (Barbara Dunlop)
- We've met and discussed some great ideas. We're thinking about going for the Gold award for UNCRC and how to go to our parents/carers with that without it being onerous. We are considering combining this with our annual talent show as this has been engaging and successful so far.
- We would like to align with Health Week with a focus on sustainability, putting a challenge to families to try to not buy anything new (beyond necessities) for a week. We would like to encourage upcycling or recycling, as well as sharing of resources. Our Health Champions are very excited about these ideas and we will be refining these shortly.

6. PSA Update (Sara Shaw)

- Since November PSA held their AGM. Most of the committee is new, and finding their feet with running the PSA. During the AGM we reviewed some of the constitution and updated some aspects. We will circulate minutes and the updated constitution for those interested.
- We successfully ran the Christmas card programme, with all orders completed successfully. We organised and ran a very successful toy sale before Christmas, raising just under £500. A lot of work goes into these kind of events; more volunteers or committee members would be most welcome to get involved.
- Plans for the coming year are underway: we would like to work with the school around the 100th anniversary, as well as run some other fundraising events.

7. Wee Updates

- Headteacher drop in: the next one is Monday 26th February. This is a great opportunity to engage with the leadership team and discuss anything parents/carers would like to bring up, as well as discuss the chosen theme. The Kirkie Coffee Group, run by the children, serves tea & coffee to the visitors during the session.

8. Significant dates this term

- Reminder to please [check the school calendar](#) for significant dates for this term.

9. AOCB: none

10. Next Parent Council meeting

Monday 25th March at 8pm via Zoom (note change of date), details in Group Call.