

## **Roslin Primary School Parent Council**

### **Minute of Meeting on September 21, 2023.**

**Attendees:** Madhu Satsangi (Chair), Helen Love (HT), Lesley Deas (acting DHT), Amy Collop, Mhairi Spence, Eilidh Wilson, Emma Hutt (Vice Chair), Karen Lipscombe, Evelyn Maginnis, Neil Burnside, Craig Barrowman (Treasurer), Tim Crymble, Michaela Pagani, Caitlyn Doig, Eugenia Sota, Julie MacDonald, Jo Mistry, Natalia Macintyre, Dana McLennan

**Apologies:** Kat James, Colin Burt, Nico Thomson, Claire Houston, Suzie Fegen, Mary McCulloch

#### **1. Acting DHT**

LD was welcomed as the newly appointed acting DHT who will move over from her role as a Principal Teacher at Cornbank Primary School at the start of November.

#### **2. PC constitution**

MS summarised the PC constitution, which sets out how parents/carers work in partnership with school to create a welcoming environment for children. The PC represents the views of parents/carers and helps raise funds for the school. MS clarified that the PC was not for parents to bring individual issues for discussion – instead, this is better handled by talking to the class teacher. All parents who attend the PC do so on a voluntary basis. HL had previously stated what she felt was the purpose of the PC: focusing on school development, issues that would impact family finances and the home/school link. However, parents felt that policy decisions which impact on pupils and/or parents should also be brought to the PC. HL responded that a balance has to be struck as the school has to make tens of decisions every day and it wouldn't be possible to run all of these past the PC.

##### **a. Buddies**

Some parents felt very strongly that the PC should have had the opportunity to discuss change to the buddies policy. Pre-Covid, P7 pupils had been paired up with P1s as a peer contact point to provide help, support in the playground, etc. This had been amended to P6 pupils being peer contact points. HL explained that part of the rationale was that P7 were already busy, the change had not been brought to PC in advance as it was felt uncontroversial. Some parents said that their P7 children had not had strong feelings about it. However, many parents had said that their P7 children had been upset about missing out on the role. HL acknowledged this outcome and apologized for any distress.

#### **3. PC Year reps**

Everyone agreed that year reps were preferred over class reps. The following people agreed to be the year reps for 2023-24:

Nursery – Eilidh Wilson

P1 – Dana McLennan

P2 – not confirmed (Emma Ahlqvist was this year group's rep last year)

P3 – Mhairi Spence

P4 – Evelyn Maginnis

P5 – Emma Hutt

P6 – not confirmed (Susan Welsh was this year group's rep last year)

P7 – Claire Houston (to be confirmed)

There was a discussion around the use of WhatsApp groups for year groups to communicate, which were considered effective but can also be exclusive. Alternatives were noted. It was felt that it is important to hear views from people who are less vocal or who may feel that they are in a minority and that WhatsApp can provide a good way of gathering the voice of the parent body. It was noted that PC reps might seek to reflect any variations in opinion when presenting views from Whatsapp, encouraging a reflection of diverse perspectives.

#### **4. Parents' survey**

A parents' survey was suggested as a way of gathering input from the parent forum. HL stated that parents' surveys don't always get a huge response but, if constructed reasonably, can offer useful solutions and can help ensure everyone's views are brought to the table. MS and JM will draft a survey form to be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **5. PC Financial Report**

CB advised that there is £1,750 in the PC account. £1,000 will be donated to the school for novel sets for P5-7 and to contribute to the costs of the panto trip, snacks for Christmas parties, etc. It was suggested that the funding donated by the PC for novel sets could be staggered and the some of the funds could be used to pay for the panto, with a contribution later in the year for the remainder of the novel sets. A decision will be taken on this at the next PC meeting.

- a. **The PC Social Committee** has a presence at or arranges events that raise money for the school, including Halloween, Christmas, the Roslin fete and sports day. It had been challenging to restart the Social Committee after Covid. AC has undertaken an inventory of PC supplies and logged this on a Google spreadsheet. She asked that a different person leads each event to help share the burden. It was suggested that a question is added to the parents' survey to try to increase membership of the Social Committee.

#### **6. Homework**

82 responses had been received to the School's homework survey, Some concerns about the data were expressed, due to difficulties in representing different perspectives for children at different stages in 1 survey and other concerns. Homework is optional and the survey shows parents have mixed views about completing this, with approximately one third of pupils doing the homework that is set and two thirds not. Reading homework has been shown to be the most impactful, especially reading with children and talking to them about the text. From P5 upwards, the focus on reading shifts to reading for enjoyment and all children will be encouraged to bring a book of a suitable level home from the library. Parents can volunteer to do reading sessions with classes and this could be promoted for Scottish Book Week in November. Reading and spelling homework (this will focus on sounds for P1-2) will continue and classes will be set occasional tasks, such as preparing a presentation, once a year. In discussion, parents felt that it was the responsibility of the school to inform parents that their child/ren had homework reporting that this had been missed for various reasons. It was noted that a Google technologist will be coming into the school to do a session with parents which should help with Chromebook issues.

## 7. Five-year plan

The school has already developed its values, vision statement and aims through consultation and, by March 2024, needs to set out where it wants to be in five years' time, based on children feeling valued and included. The five-year plan will be a standing agenda item at the next few PC meetings. HL will pose some questions to kick start discussion and send this with Madhu to circulate to PC members.

## 8. Temporary classrooms/ school development

The school roll has increased dramatically with 254 children in P1-7 and over 90 children in the nursery. The school currently has 11 classes but will need 12 next year. HL reported that the temporary classrooms are proving popular, a risk assessment needs to be undertaken regarding entry/exit to the temporary classrooms. She advised that the development of the replacement Beeslack High School was being prioritised over Roslin PS, meaning delays, such as to building a climbing frame to replace the hill.

- a. TC had observed that the builders weren't following the **risk assessments** (vehicles moving around pick up and drop off times, no legal requirement for fencing, etc). HL thanked TC for raising these issues with the council as they have responsibility for ensuring the appropriate steps are followed.

## 9. AoCB

- a. Claire has relinquished her role as secretary and, unless someone else is willing to take this on, the secretariat will be on a rotating basis for the rest of the year. PC members should indicate to Madhu in advance of each meeting if they would be willing to take the minutes at the meeting and come prepared to do so.
- b. KL reported on discussions about the size of the swimming pool at the new Beeslack. She undertook to advise PC members about an open meeting to be held with councillors, as their children will be affected.
- c. **DoNM:** Thursday 9 November at 6.30.