

## Minutes: Tynewater Primary School (TPS) - Parent Council (PC) Meeting 95

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October, Community Room, TPS

### \*Action point (\*AP)

#### 1) Welcome and apologies

- a. Apologies: Mr John Dagger JD (headteacher), Aurora Mancini AM (treasurer) , Laura Else LE, Laura Mackay, Nicky Faux ,
- b. Present: Emma Diffley ED (Chair), Julia Critchley JC (Secretary), Sana Malik, Jane Brown, Liza McMillan, Stevie Blackwood SB, Anna Davanna AD, Mairi Milne, Sarah Whigham, Claire McCallum (CM) (deputy head teacher), Jamie May & Nina Cassidy (P7 ambassadors)

#### 2) Minutes of last meeting/Outstanding Actions

- a. The minutes of the previous meeting (94) were accepted
- b. Outstanding actions are covered in the agenda for this meeting.

#### 3) Chairperson's Report

- a. ED reports that Skanska requested that the key to the playground/gardens that had been loaned to ED (on behalf of PC) has to be returned. This will make future arrangements for garden work by parent volunteers more complicated. .
- b. ED met with deputy headteacher CM and they discussed the school's review of behaviour management polic. The school have drafted an 'Ethos, Culture and Relationships' document which CM will send to the PC.
- c. The Christmas fair will be held on 3/12/22 from 11am-2pm. We have access from 9am-4pm for set up/tidy up.
- d. Unfortunately the Midlothian Council (MC) school PC chairs meetings have yet to resume. ED will attend to represent TPS when they do. ED has contacted MC to find out when the next meeting will take place .

#### 4)Treasurer's Report

- a. AM sent her apologies
- b. The PC were very recently updated by AM at the AGM.

#### 5) Deputy Headteacher's report

- a. Head teacher JD sends his apologies, he does not usually attend TPS on Fridays. CM reports that while he is busy preparing Moorfoot Primary for an inspection on 7/11/22, they are in daily contact discussing affairs at TPS.
- b. CM welcomed and congratulated the 2 new P7 ambassadors, Jamie and Nina. CM explained that house captains would be elected next week.
- c. The pupil voice groups will restart soon with the aim to meet 4 times a year and work on a range of projects. The children have had input into the project ideas.
- d. There was a recent in service day after the October half term. The staff reviewed the school's "Ethos, Culture & Relationships' policy. A draft of this will be sent to ED for her to share with the rest of PC. The document outlines the house points scheme and what the staff response will be when behaviour goes right or wrong. The house points system will be focused on a new very visual points scoring system with tubes and tokens to fill them. 1 point earned for demonstrating school values, 2 for very good demonstration and 3 for behaviour/work that is deemed exceptional.
- e. The school values are due to be reviewed as they are 7 years old. The school policy states the schools visions, values and aims.
- f. Parent consultations will be held next week. CM offers apologies to parents for the difficulties encountered setting dates and with the booking system. Aiming to stick with the current booking system going forwards. ED requests that CM shares details about the new ParentApp again, as it appears not all parents are receiving school information.
- g. Update on Seesaw is that it should be returning soon

- h. Katie in the office has been working very hard to get to know families and the school administrative processes. There have been a lot of changes in the school and patience and understanding from parents & carers is much appreciated.
- i. Tynewater Community Council will be present at the parent consultations next week and parents/carers will be able to approach them with relevant issues/concerns
- j. A police Scotland representative has been in to talk to P6/7 children about antisocial behaviour and bullying. This visit has been very beneficial provoking useful discussions.
- k. CM outlines a busy term ahead, particularly with Christmas activities. There will be a P1-3 nativity with parents able to come into school to watch. There will be 2 shows, 1 daytime & 1 evening. Dates for this and also the various class Christmas parties will be decided and circulated next week. JC re-emphasised the importance to parents of important dates coming out well in advance to allow busy parents to arrange time off work etc.
- l. Pantomime: school is arranging for M&M productions to come into school on 28/11/22 for a performance of Snow White. It is hoped this will make Christmas pantomime more accessible to all children.
- m. Swimming for P4 is to resume this year
- n. Music: Dunedin concert will come and work with P5 & 6, Drumming will be arranged for P1 & 2
- o. Skiing restarts next week for P6 & 7
- p. P7 and of year activities: the P7 children have expressed interest in a prom and a camp. The P7s will discuss their ideas and decide on a short list. This will then be shown to the parents via a google form for parents to have a voice in deciding the most suitable activities. CM offers apologies for the delay in organising dates for these activities.

## 6) Active Schools (AS)

- a. SB reported back to PC following concerns raised at last meeting of limited range of activities offered at TPS. With her contact at East Lothian AS she has been able to compare Midlothian AS with east Lothian AS.
- b. AS Midlothian has one overall programme contact covering all 10 Midlothian areas. In comparison East Lothian is split into 6 areas and There are 5 contacts covering those 6 areas.
- c. Terminology is significant, only free activities can use the term 'active schools' other activities with a fee are called community clubs or 'active Midlothian', 'active East Lothian' etc.
- d. In Midlothian available to TPS children there was 1 free AS activity. There are an additional 12 active Midlothian and 13 community clubs offered over Midlothian which TPS children can access (Nb these have a fee). In comparison in Musselburgh the children were offered 9 free AS activities and an additional 9 Active East Lothian activities (with a fee). SB discovered from her contact that similar range of activities were available in all the East Lothian areas.
- e. In summary there are a wider range of free AS activities (over 100) on offer in East Lothian compared to Midlothian (26) and with more AS contacts working in east Lothian it is easier for parents/staff to make enquires.
- f. AS leaflets: SB brought the Midlothian and Musselburgh leaflets to PC. The Musselburgh layout was superior with more clarity on free versus paid activities and generally more clarity on times, venues, prices and contacts.
- g. CM reports that Midlothian Council have been evaluating AS programme.
- h. **AP: PC to invite Jenna Mccandlish to next PC meeting. CM to request copy of Midlothian's evaluation of AS programme and report back to PC.**

## 7) Class WhatsApp group

- a. SB raised some concerns about use of these class chat groups.
- b. All agree they are very useful for sharing information
- c. Concerns surround negative comments on some groups, particularly when they are in relation to PC efforts/activities.
- d. PC would rather queries/complaints/suggestions were directed to the PC rather than via class WhatsApp chats. Email is the preferred method though there is also Facebook messenger.
- e. CM requests all parents/carers to come directly to the school with any concerns rather than use such group chat groups.
- f. **AP: PC to compose a short notice for all class chats requesting sensitivity, respect and to direct issues to either PC directly or to the school.**

## 8) School Teacher Gifts

- a. JC reported back to the PC on this topic. It had been agreed at the previous meeting that a response from PC was requested & that PC would discuss it further. The PC has discussed this at length and the majority have taken the opportunity to express their opinions.
- b. Agreed that is a potentially emotive subject and PC are respectful of previous upset the issue has caused. PC also felt that it is not the remit of the PC to advise parents how they should show appreciation to school staff.
- c. The PC also acknowledge the Midlothian Council recommendations regards teachers gifts, which is easily accessible on the Midlothian Council website.
- d. PC recommendation is that where parents wish to join together for a collection and while it is useful for the person volunteering to organise to advertise this on the class WhatsApp; please could the PC respectfully request that the conversation is then continued away from the whole class chat.
- e. **AP: PC to compose a short notice for all class chats to this effect.**

## 9) Gardening

- a. As stated above PC no longer has access to a key and all future work will require booking with Skanska.
- b. ED has asked Janice Linton at community lets/bookings how much access the PC can secure but has not received a response. ED requests that CM follows this up for the PC.
- c. All present agree the garden must not be neglected and regular sessions are the way to keep on top of the weeds. The children want to be involved and the PC will endeavour to arrange more sessions within the school day..
- d. **AP: ED/CM to look into access out with school hours.**

## 10) Second Hand Uniform

- a. PC members are all keen for a second hand uniform exchange. The PC has received criticism for only offering this on Friday mornings which will not suit all parents.
- b. PC is keen to arrange uniform exchange in evenings too but this depends on access to school and availability of volunteers
- c. Agreed we would endeavour to have uniform exchange available at the parent consultations next week.
- d. It was discussed that the lack of suitable storage for the uniform is a large barrier to holding uniform exchange as the set up/tidy up required is significant. With improved storage system set up then it would be much easier to have uniform out for parents to take items as needed on a more regular basis.
- e. It was noted that the shelves in the community room would be ideal for storing uniform. CM agreed to look into this for the PC.
- f. **AP: PC volunteers to aim to have uniform exchange available next week. CM to get back to PC regards storing uniform in community room or another option.**

## 11) Library

- a. Nicky Faux, has been working hard arranging the library and is keen for the help of parent volunteers.
- b. ED reports there are many willing potential volunteers
- c. **AP: CM/JD to confirm whether parent volunteers will always be accompanied by a class teacher in the library, and if that is the case will PVG checks be required. Or is the role of the parent volunteers going to include being alone with the children and if so will the school be arranging PVG to facilitate this?**

## 12) Photocopies of class reading books

- a. AD raised concerns that children are being issues photocopies of class reading books, suggesting there are not enough copies of class books available. In addition the quality of the copies is poor making them difficult for the child to read.
- b. PC asks CM for a response as this is disappointing news, particularly after the PC gave £1200 last term for purchasing books. The PC stressed we are happy to allocate more PC funds on books if that is required.

- c. CM responded that she does not support the photocopying of books as described and would investigate. CM reported that she and JD are currently reviewing the existing school reading scheme and other options.

12) AOB:

- a. Reminder of the Halloween parties being held on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Parent helpers are welcome from 1630 to help set up.

13) Date of next meeting and close

Future dates: Next PC meeting will be held Online Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 1830

Followed by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 0900 in Community Room, TPS