

Minutes: Tynewater Primary School (TPS) - Parent Council (PC) Meeting 96

Tuesday 6th December, 1830 – 1930, Online

*Action point (*AP)

1) Welcome and apologies

- a. Apologies: Sarah Whigham,
- b. Present: Emma Diffley ED (Chair), Julia Critchley JC (Secretary), Aurora Mancini AM (treasurer), John Dagger JD (headteacher), Claire McCallum (CM) (deputy head teacher), Sana Malik, Liza McMillan, Stevie Blackwood SB, Anna Davanna AD, Mairi Milne, Alastair Livingstone (AL) (PC community officer - Pathhead, Mayfield, Easthouses) Laura Mackay, Laura Else LE, Fiona Hayes, Irene Michie (IM), Eilidh Macfadyen (EM), Myrtle Pont (MP) (chair Tynewater Community Council)

2) Minutes of last meeting/Outstanding Actions

- a. The minutes of the previous meeting (95) were accepted
- b. Outstanding actions have been addressed

3) Chairperson's Report

- a. ED reports on the success of the recent Christmas fair. Estimate £1400 raised. Fantastic turnout, lovely busy atmosphere, ran smoothly and overall very successful.
- b. Huge thanks passed on to all the helpers and generous donations towards the Christmas fair.
- c. PC agreed to fund recent pantomime so no cost to parents. ED highlighted that PC is keen to support trips out in future

4) Treasurer's Report

- a. AM agrees with ED's rough estimate for Xmas fair
- b. Currently approx. £3500 in bank but expenses towards pantomime to come out and Xmas fair to be paid in.

5) Headteacher's report

- a. Head teacher JD gave update to PC of the recent activities in school. Busy term.
 - i. P1/2 have enjoyed drumming lessons and performed in a concert today (Tuesday 6th)
 - ii. P5-6 have been working with Dunedin Consort and put on a performance last week – very much enjoyed
 - iii. Pantomime last week was a great success. The performance came to the school to enable all children to attend. Moorfoot nursery children attended and enjoyed the experience.
 - iv. P6 & P7 have been enjoying skiing
 - v. P4 and P3/4 school swimming lessons have recommenced this year and the children started 2 weeks ago. This is going well.
 - vi. Nursery are preparing for their nativity
 - vii. P1-3 nativity will be next week and children are enjoying preparations.
- b. School improvement plan
 - i. Digital learning: focus is on staff training to bronze level on google work space
 - ii. Microbit training: This is a device for teaching coding (aimed at P4 upwards and this will lead into a digital group led by Mr Watson to teach coding.
 - iii. Literacy: Midlothian council are to release a new literacy framework in the new year. New writing framework coming too.
 - iv. Numeracy: planning to buy more materials to aid numeracy, there is a new Midlothian

- numeracy framework for maths which we are engaging with.
- v. Right respecting schools: drafting a new RRP policy which is under review. Whole school assemblies are linked to RRP to aid Tynewater achieving Silver RRP award
- vi. School house point system: is being met with enthusiasm from the kids. The staff are in process of fine tuning how points are awarded

c. Qs for JD: ED asked about reading cloud and accelerated reader and established with JD that the school is utilising this PC funded resource.

6) Anti-social behaviour (AS)

- a. JC raised 2 separate concerns: ASB in village and also ASB within the school
- b. MP from Tynewater Community Council responded on subject of ASB in the Pathhead community. Reported that recently there are concerns about bullying in the village and concerns from parents not wanting their children out playing in the village/Callandar park due to concerns about bullying, fighting and even knife carrying. MP clarifies that the reference to knife carrying is hearsay, and has no definite source for this. MP acknowledged that at the least this reflects there is a level of anxiety about young people's behaviour in the local community. MP asks PC Livingstone for his opinion. MP is able to report positively on both the local police officers & mypas visiting the school to address ASB. MP also highlighted that there have been some unacceptable behaviours at the Pathhead youth project. She was interested to hear more from the PC but there was no one present who can add further information.
- c. PC AL responded. There have been only occasional calls to police regarding concerns about ASB in Pathhead. He suggests that there may be some reluctance to call for fear of lack of anonymity. PC AL assures anonymity and is happy to be emailed about concern. In case of more urgent situation recommends phoning 101 or even 999 if necessary. Overall crime in the area is down this month though perhaps all incidents are not being reported. PC AL encourages people to come forwards with their concerns.
- d. ED asks if it is same perpetrators or varies and are they primary school children. PC AL replies that there have been too few reports to be able to say. PC AL describes a recent visit to the school where he played football with p5-7 to try and encourage children to see police in a positive role and then feel more able to report concerns to police.
- e. ED agreed that the PC can help with information gathering and pass on to PC AL. PC keen for ongoing visits from PC AL into school
 - f. JC then raises second concern of behaviour in school. Many parents are hearing stories from their children about antisocial/violent/disruptive behaviour within the school. The concerns are shared via class and PC WhatsApp groups and also parent conversations in playground at pick up. ED agrees that she has heard similar concerns and notes that she always asks parents to direct concerns to school.
- g. JC reports that the PC feel there are lots of concerns from parents which are raised through WhatsApp and asks if the school are also receiving lots of concerns. If not then why not? Do the parents not feel able to contact the school? JD/CM say there are few concerns reported to the school. CM stresses that all parents should get in touch with any concerns. JD directs parents to the safeguarding and behaviour management policy.
- h. AD contributed and reports that she hears many stories from her children which make her feel the children do not understand the behaviour management policy, her children report not feeling safe when they see ASB. Furthermore her children do not understand why children who appear to be misbehaving then appear to be rewarded - in the children's eyes that is (e.g. getting to go play football, leave class to go baking).
- i. AB raises similar concerns, her child feels there is no point raises concerns with the teacher as in the child's opinion the teacher is too busy/won't do anything
- j. EM raised a point wondering if there is a lack of trust in the school and that parents don't feel they are being listened to and hence do not take the time to contact school with concerns as assume nothing will be done.
- k. IM has been raising serious concerns with the school about [REDACTED], including raising incident with the police.
- l. EM suggests adding quarterly reporting of concerns to the PC agenda. PC agreed that creating a mechanism where we can proactively collate feedback as a PC from the wider parent body would be very useful. It would allow us to present regularly to the school, highlight key priorities/concerns and common trends.

7) Communication with school

- a. LE raises concerns with communication with the office staff. She feels strongly that there has been a real change in the past 12 months. LE has had some difficulties communicating with the school recently regards [REDACTED]. LE appreciates change in staffing but is disappointed that she got no response to her emails regarding management of [REDACTED] issue.
- b. JC shared similar concern where she emailed school regards change in time of picking up children and received no response. Including no answer to phone calls. Also JC has had no response from office to sending PC related emails about distributing minutes and details about this PC meeting.
- c. PC members present have positive feedback about new app and receiving information via the app and also pleased that seesaw is back. The concern is how to get in contact with the school/teacher. PC understand the rationale for removing messaging function from seesaw. It does limit parents/carers to email.
- d. LE raises that while we all appreciate the office staff are really busy, the PC prefers not to use WhatsApp to distribute info (partly because of past experience of criticism which can follow our PC messages). However at times because the office staff, who are no doubt very busy, there can be delays and then PC feel the need to use WhatsApp to distribute info.
- e. JD expressed concern at reports of lack of response from office when parents contact about children and will take that forwards with office staff.
- f. JD emphasises that if we use TPC gmail and email all of: JD, CM and office, then it will go on the app quicker.

8) Parent volunteers

- a. ED questions the recent suggestion from CM that all PC members should be PVG checked in order to briefly enter school to check cupboards etc
- b. CM clarifies that it is not necessary for all PC members to be PVG checked to undertake PC activities
- c. JD/CM clarify that when staff led groups with parent helpers (and staff remaining present) resume then those parent helpers will not require PVG checks.
- d. In the future parent helpers in library may require PVG checks as staff may not always be present. e. CM clarifies that PC are welcome to access the cupboards when required, prior notice is required for PC events in school e.g. coffee morin, if PC need to access cupboards then PVG not required office staff will let staff (e.g. JD/CM) know we are in so they can assist.

9) Date of next meeting and close

Future dates: Next PC meeting will be on Friday 13th January 0900 in Community Room, TPS