

## Minutes: Tynewater Primary School (TPS) - Parent Council (PC) Meeting 97

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023, Community Room, TPS

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

#### 1) Welcome and apologies

- a. Apologies: Mr John Dagger JD (headteacher), Aurora Mancini AM (treasurer), Jane Brown, Laura Mackay, Stevie Blackwood, Kat Walkingshaw, Fiona Hayes, Eilidh McFadyen
- b. Present: Emma Diffley ED (Chair), Julia Critchley JC (Secretary), Laura Else LE, Sana Malik, Liza McMillan, 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 (96) were accepted.

#### 3) Chairperson's Report

- a. Christmas fair: ED thanked all the volunteers, staff, children and parents/carers who helped make the fair such a success. The atmosphere was lovely. As yet the total raised is not finalised but likely to be around £1400.
- b. Headteacher vacancy: ED has been in contact with Annabelle Bates (AB) from Education dept. regards recruitment of a permanent headteacher. ED will meet soon to discuss training for parent representatives to be involved in the recruitment panel.
- c. Reading cloud: This is an annual cost funded by the PC. ED and PC are keen that the value for money is reviewed by the staff/school. CM responded that it is being used and that herself and JD are reviewing it as present. Pupil ambassadors Nina and Jamie reported their positive experiences.

#### 4) Treasurer's Report

- a. AM sent her apologies
- b. Pantomime: the PC recently funded the school Christmas pantomime at a cost of £1199.
- c. Reading cloud: PC continues to fund this annual subscription. Cost is £600.

#### 5) Deputy Headteacher's report

- a. Head teacher JD sends his apologies, he does not usually attend TPS on Fridays.
- b. Pupil voice groups (PVG): CM reported that PVGs have restarted. The children are really enjoying the opportunity to work alongside children of all ages within the school. The P1s seem to be particularly enjoying themselves and keen to contribute.
- c. Headstrong: this has started for the P7s and an educational psychologist has been in working with the P7s. Jamie gave some positive feedback about the session so far. CM reports that it is a structured programme delivered across Scotland covering issues like transition and preparing the children for change.
- d. Associated Schools Group (ASG) for Dalkeith: CM reports she will be attending this meeting next week. The focus will be improving STEM (science, tech, engineering, maths) in our schools.
- e. Inset day: at the recent inset day the staff were focussing on the numeracy and literacy policies. They have also been reviewing the school ethos, culture and relationships policy.
- f. Columba 1400: TPS are keen to explore further with the charitable organisation Columba 1400 the idea of developing a community project within the school and Pathhead village. Columba 1400 may be able to support with both ideas and funding. The ethos is about ways of helping the community move forwards together with a focus on shared values. This project is in very early stages and CM looks forward to sharing more in the near future.
- g. Parent consultations: dates have been advertised and the booking system will go live via the online portal on 17<sup>th</sup> January at 1800.
- h. ParentApp: CM apologised for the recent issues with the app. These are out with the school's control. CM assures the PC that the company is working on it
- i. ParentPay: CM apologised for the recent problems with ParentPay which the school are working to resolve.

- j. Literacy & Library group: CM invited Nina and Jamie to read out a request from this PVG. They are requesting funding from the PC for new books, including beast quest comics, more non-fiction covering animal, science, space and food, and also soft furnishings including pillows, bean bags and a tent. The PC thanked the ambassadors for bringing this to the PC and asked that they go back to the PVG and request a detailed wish list with specific items & costs listed. PC also suggested that the PVG organise a request to parents for donations for items such as beanbags/pillows.  
**\*AP: Jamie/Nina to liaise with Library and Literacy PVG regards creating a 'wish list' & requesting donations.**

## 6) Fundraising

- a. Summer Fair: ED proposed the idea of a summer fair. PC member asked how much our last summer fair raised. It was a few years ago and approx. £600. All present felt that overall a summer fair would be worthwhile as a fun event and hopefully also as a fundraiser. There will be certain barriers to overcome. The Pathhead village has an event planned for May which some PC members are involved in so potentially June will be better to avoid clashing. Another barrier will be the venue. School grounds seems ideal as more weather resistant however there are challenges with the Skanska booking process. **\*AP: PC members to form a subcommittee to plan the summer fair.**
- b. Quiz/bingo night: ED proposed organising a social event soon such as a quiz or bingo night. The idea was well received. Potentially a bingo night would be popular & easier to organise. **\*AP: PC members to form a subcommittee to plan this social event.**

## 7) Light pollution

- a. ED raised concerns on behalf of local residents regarding light pollution and effect on local wildlife
- b. The concern relates to the school lights being on all the time. This is detrimental to local wildlife, particularly bats. It is also unpleasant for local residents who are living in a rural area yet being subjected to such bright artificial light all night.
- c. The PC suggested this was something that the eco PVG could raise with Skanska. ED felt a letter to Skanska from the pupils may have more weight than letters from the PC.
- d. There is the further issue of cost financially and environmentally having lights on constantly when not being used.
- e. **\*AP: Jamie/Nina to liaise with Eco PVG regards writing to Skanska about light pollution.**

## 8) Car/bus engines idling

- a. ED raised concerns regarding parents, picking up/dropping off children, leaving engines running whilst parked in the school car park & nearby streets. This behaviour has been noticed from the school buses as well.
- b. This issue has been raised on previous occasions. The PC felt a message to drivers from the children may be more powerful.
- c. PC requested the school ambassadors approach the junior road safety officers (JRSO) PVG to take up this issue.
- d. **\*AP: Jamie/Nina to liaise with JRSO PVG regards drivers leaving engines running whilst parked waiting near/on school grounds.**

## 9) Gardening

- a. ED highlighted the need for work on the raised beds soon before the weeds take over.
- b. PC agreed to set a date for a Saturday afternoon garden tidy.
- c. ED asked if a similar system of parent helpers going in to help plant flowers/vegetables in the spring would be possible. ED had spoken to staff member Jackie McNairn (JM) who successfully organised the planting last year. CM agreed that the school would support this again.
- d. The PC discussed how much the children had enjoyed it last year, remembered the success of winning a medal for our vegetables in the Pathhead Flower show. PC members keen to support similar project this year.
- e. **\*AP: PC members to agree a date for garden tidy**
- f. **\*AP: ED will liaise with CM and JM regarding in school gardening groups.**

## 10) Bird feeding

- a. ED reminded the PC and CM that we have purchased a bird table for the sensory garden though as yet not supplied any bird feed.
- b. JC mentioned that she had donated some bird feeders and bird feed to the sensory garden via the P1 teacher and was interested in feedback as to how this is being utilised.
- c. CM reported that the school are keen to feed the birds and keen to involve the children. She thought the Forest Schools groups might be able to take this on. CM reported that Bill Stevens from Midlothian outdoor learning has been supporting TPS with developing its Forest school project
- d. **AP: CM to report back to PC regarding whether the current donated bird feeding equipment is being used and whether more donations in form of feeders or feed are required.**

## 11) AOB

- a. Friendship bench: this is in need of re-varnishing.
- b. It was noted this was originally a P7 project so they could take on responsibility for organising the work. Though as it is a bench for the whole school perhaps the work could be organised via one of the PVGs
- c. **AP: Jamie/Nina to approach both the 'community' and 'how good is our school' PVGs and discuss with the staff involved which PVG would be best to take this on or they could work on it together.**

## 13) Date of next meeting and close

Future dates: Next PC meeting will be held Online Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 1830

Followed by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 0900 in Community Room, TPS