

Parsons Green Primary School

Parent Council Meeting

Monday 6th February 2023

Held online via Teams



1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Rachel King (Chair), Gillian Turner (Vice-Chair), Claire Haggett (Secretary), Susan Cochrane (Head Teacher), Nicky McDonald (P7 teacher),

Hilary (parent), Gill and Ed (parents), Lee (parent), Nikki (parent), Manousos (parent), Donna (parent).

There were apologies from Simon Millar (Treasurer) and Jennifer McGowan (Deputy Head Teacher).

Rachel introduced herself as Chair, and gave a very warm welcome to those present.

2. Actions from last meeting

The minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

Actions from the last meeting will come up as part of the meeting tonight; including:

Rachel has spoken to one of the local bookshops on behalf of the PC about the books and shelves, more on this to follow.

Thanks were given to Gill about offering to help with the raffle and fundraising; more to follow on this also.

3. Climate Change sub-committee

Hilary spoke about the work of the Climate Change sub-committee, which is newly formed.

The group came about as an action from the group that PG parent Fiona Diggle has set up – called Mothers CAN (Climate Action Network), a group of local people taking action on climate, based on an American model to try and pay it forward, set up other groups, and bring together people who want to try and take action on climate. Members can be mothers, but don't have to be. One of the actions from the Mothers CAN group was that it was realised that it would be good to join up with the school.

Hilary, another parent Hazel (Darwin-Clements), and Rachel therefore had a chat about this to form links with the school, and there was an initial meeting which discussed the priorities of the school, the group, and the way in which ideas could be of potentially mutual benefit.

The group then met with Ms McGowan to discuss what has happened before, what is happening now, and aspirations for moving forward. There has been one meeting of the Climate Change sub-group so far, and one to come tomorrow. The terms of reference of the group need to be finalised, but the plan is to take a lead on some of the following:

- To bring forward proposals for climate related activities and to help support and galvanise action;
- To take on the delivery of at least some of these activities;
- To support and encourage the recruitment of volunteers;
- To have an active to play in the PC.

There are also some more specific project ideas:

- Connect into the Building Improvement Programme; and explore whether it is possible to work with the 'Lets Go Zero' initiative among schools, which is working towards net zero by 2030;
- Explore whether solar panels would be an option;
- Think about school meals and reducing food waste, coordinating with Edinburgh City Council and their work about climate in schools;
- Get children at the School involved, via the Leadership Groups;
- Create more awareness of action that can be taken on climate at the School;
- Help to link the school more closely with the local community;
- Bring a response to the travel plan (being coordinated by Fiona).

Rachel responded that this all sounded brilliant; and that the group were working on both a macro and micro level, and seeing the school as part of something bigger.

Hilary, Manousos, and Gill and Ed contributed to the discussion. Ed and Gill asked about whether there is a children's environmental group, and offered to meet up with them. Ed said that today he had the first meeting with P6 about an edible fruit hedge, and they had some amazing suggestions which could link in with the work of the Climate Change group. These excellent ideas included the School becoming more 'food secure' and providing food to go into the kitchen; and having and decorating bins for recycling and encouraging.

ACTION: Ed asked for volunteers on Mondays from 1-3 after Half Term to come and work on this with the children.

Rachel said that food waste is key topic for Edinburgh City Council, and lots of children are interested in growing their own food, so there is lots of potential to link up with this. Furthermore, climate change is a huge priority for all of us – for all of our children, so this will be kept as a core priority for the Parent Council.

ACTION: Rachel and Hilary to keep in touch about the PC and the Climate Change group, and how their work can be supported.

4. Road Safety and Travel Plan

There has been a lot about this over the past three years, since Sam Rutherford was Chair of the PC, when there was work on Safer Routes to School. Lorna Henderson from Edinburgh City Council has said that we now have a travel plan.

There have been suggestions for safer and more sustainable travel to school from the Climate Change group, and they are gathering more feedback and will then report back to the School and the PC.

5. Treasurer update

Apologies were given from Simon; Rachel gave an update on the current balance and outgoings.

Simon's report is appended to these minutes.

Simon has also undertaken a review of the spending and income for the PC over the last five years (including therefore pre-covid and covid) – the key points are that we are bringing in much less income (approximately half) than before covid; but we have also have cut what we are spending. In sum, we are now working at a much smaller scale. There were also more grants for which successful applications were submitted, and there was always had someone to coordinate that, and complete applications. Applying for grants is ad-hoc, and infrequent – and Rachel put out a call for a volunteer for this, as it makes a huge difference to the PC, bringing in approximately £2500 per year.

Huge thanks were given to Elspeth McCormick who co-ordinates the Christmas cards, these raise a huge amount of money and we get beautiful cards.

Gillian noted that the Christmas Fayre is a huge fundraiser, and there was a discussion about aiming to hold this again this year.

It was also noted that more families this year might need to call on the fund to support children being able to participate in activities this year (such as Benmore, money to pay for coaches and go on school trips etc).

It was agreed that extra money should be put into this fund now from the PC; the PC currently has funds available, and it is important to ensure the support fund is able to help those children in need. Mrs Cochrane will check the upcoming calls upon the fund, and let the PC know how much extra it would be helpful to add into the fund now (likely to be in the region of £700-1000). The details will be arranged, but this was agreed in principle by the Meeting.

There was a discussion about encouraging wider use of EasyFundraising, and encouraging friends and family to sign up also, and spreading the word on parent WhatsApp groups. For money spent online, a proportion goes to the School, which is very straightforward.

ACTION: to reinforce how easy it is to register for EasyFundraising, either with posters/a banner at the school

ACTION: to put out an appeal for a parent to co-ordinate grant applications (perhaps someone who is in third sector/commissioning who is used to applying for grants)

ACTION: to set a date for a Christmas Fayre

ACTION: Mrs Cochrane to let the PC know about the amount needed for the activities support fund.

6. Fundraising and volunteers

There was a discussion about the need for more fundraising, and that volunteers were needed; and that this could be called an 'Events Group' (which could include fundraising!)

We are also keen have volunteers to help an Inclusion and Equality sub-group; Sports and Clubs and out of school co-ordination; and the Library.

Rachel asked if anyone was interested in joining any of these groups; and suggested that there were different levels of involvement that could be undertaken.

Nikki said that in terms of parents volunteering, there are a lot of parents who would like to help but work different shifts on different days of the week, so find it hard to get involved, eg, with reading groups on the same day every week. Rachel said that volunteers should be encouraged, and therefore that work-arounds should be devised.

Nikki is one of the library helpers on a Monday and a few other volunteers have asked around the bookshops but not made much progress, but there might be funding/grants for which applications could be considered. This will be included as part of the Library's work

Manousous said that the Climate Change sub-committee will also be pro-actively investigating any grants that might be available.

ACTION: to hold a Volunteer Fayre, at which we could ask parents what time/day would work best.

ACTION: to create a banner at the school entrance advertising for volunteers

ACTION: Lee very kindly offered to help out with equality and inclusivity; Rachel to follow up.

7. Head Teacher update

a. Activities in the School

Mrs Cochrane gave an overview of the activities and developments in the School.

The Interfaith workshops – put on by the Edinburgh Interfaith Association following from some of the Council's work on Black Lives Matter and tackling racism – were very popular indeed with the children. They ran a great workshop with different faith leaders coming into the school, and the police also attended, talking about racism and hate crimes.

Global Play Day last week was hugely popular with the children, and received lots of great feedback.

The P7 Qually was a huge success; huge thanks were expressed to Ms MacDonald, Mrs Quinn, Mrs Murphy and Mrs Cochrane, and all the staff who contributed a great deal of energy and energy and effort to making the event such a success; creating wonderful memories for the children.

Mrs Cochrane gave an update about the professional learning being undertaken by staff. Child protection work is being undertaken related to behaviours that are being witnessed in the school, and current issues (such as tackling misogyny and the discussions of Andrew Tate that are taking place amongst the children).

b. Class formation

There was a discussion about class formation. The proposed formation for the next academic year is as follows:

Proposed Class Formation for 23-24



P1A	This proposed class formation for 2023-24 is based on sufficient enrolments to make 2x P1 classes viable.
P1B	
P2	(25 pupils is the maximum in a P1 class or in any composite class, 30 is the maximum for P2 and P3, 33 is the maximum for P4-7)
P2/3	
P3	There has been a change to deferrals for entry to P1 from Aug22. Moving forward all requests for a deferred entry for any child who is not yet 5 at the point of school starting in mid-August will be met. This is a significant change in policy from the Scottish Government and still bedding in. Therefore, formation of classes is based on current information as at January 2023. If there is a change to P1 intake, the formation of classes may change and the formation being as follows: P1, P2/1, P2, P3, P4/3, P4, P5, P6/5, P6, P7A, P7B (there would still be 11 classes).
P4	
P5	
P5/6	
P6	
P7A	
P7B	

There have been changes to the deferral service, which have led to increased uncertainty about how many children will take this up, and what the class size coming into P1 will be.

From August 2023, there will be one (large) P4 class; which will remain through the school. There was a question raised about additional PSA support, which is the aim.

There was a suggestion that it would be useful to speak to parents who have children going into P4 about this.

c. Workshops for parents and carers

The two spelling workshops run by Mrs Hargreaves, Support for Learning teacher, had received very positive feedback. The next steps are to revise the PG spelling policy, and to provide an updated list of apps/games for spelling on the PG website.

There are two more workshops coming up this week, on helping children with their worries, and on internet safety.

Parent consultations are on Thurs 23rd and Friday 24th February.

d. Volunteers

Volunteers are needed for reading groups; class trips; library (before or after school); code club (after school); bikeability (during or after school as a club); running a choir, chess club, lego club, etc (could be lunchtimes or after school); grounds; uniforms; and with any skills that could be shared (knitting, sewing, gardening, music...)

8. Any other business

None.

9. Date of next meeting: April 2023, date to be confirmed

PARSONS GREEN PARENT COUNCIL – Monday 6th February 2023

TREASURERS ACCOUNT

Current Balance: **£6,882.82**

Current liabilities:

- £660 for Library education software

EXPENDITURE:

- £1700 paid to Corylus Horticulture (balance of £2800 Grant received in April 2021)

INCOME:

- £62.76 received from Easy Fundraising
- £729.46 received from Elspeth McCornick / Christmas Cards – fantastic!

Summary of the current position of the Parent Council accounts:

CURRENT FUNDS				FUNDS AVAILABLE
Assets	Bank Balance on 01/02/22	£6,882.82		
	Monies banked after statement date	£0.00		
	Uncleared cheques	£0.00		
	Total	£	Liabilities Cumulative	Remaining Balance
Liabilities	Uncashed cheques		£0.00	£6,882.82
	Uncleared payments	£660.00	£660.00	£6,222.82
			£660.00	£6,222.82
			£660.00	£6,222.82
	Less sinking fund	£2,000.00	£2,660.00	£4,222.82
TOTAL LIABILITIES			£2,660.00	
	Balance available to spend			£4,222.82

FUNDING REQUESTS:

None atm.