

Parent Council Meeting 3 February 2021 7.30pm via zoom

1. Introduction

- KG welcomed everyone and declared the meeting quorate.
- Minutes from 18 November 2020 were approved
- Apologies: Alison Jenkins.

2. Headteacher's update (CK)

- Teaching
 - Very good uptake on Teams and using Teams for homework since August has helped.
 - Learning grids also available for those not using Teams.
 - CK emphasised that parents should do the work with their children in the way that works for them
 - CK hopes that the Teams experience is better this time and CK has sent questionnaires out to get feedback from parents.
 - Valuable new skills being learned.
- Return to School
 - CK confirmed school is organised and ready for all eventualities, P1-P3 return, blending learning or whatever comes our way.
 - In terms of P1-P3 – same system for drop-off, pick-up and lunch etc from last term. Focus on checking children's progress and a focus on friends catching up and emotional wellbeing.
 - P4-P7 –continue remotely and build on developments in Teams and feedback from parents.
 - Can't predict when P4-P7s come back but the medical news is hopeful.
- Updates
 - Ms Lamond is moving temporarily to Granton school (they have been looking for a Depute) – February to June – to share her experience at Bruntsfield with Granton.
 - Ms Dobie – will increase hours to enable her to work with P2 and P3 children. Perfect fit.
 - CK and Mr Wood will pick up P4s until Ms Nicol returns in May/June.
 - Cover system is all organised and will work well. Additional support for teaching too to enable teachers to spend time on their new roles.
- P1 intake
 - CK is planning for 75-90 children. Depends on take-up from parents. Difficult year to predict.
 - Current P1s are less than 90 but have 4 teachers. As they move into P2, 30 per class so there may be some shuffling of classes. Numbers may change so again difficult to predict.
 - Some concern by parents over lack of mingling of classes so far due to Covid.
 - Teachers know the children and, after Easter, can start to plan and will be considerate of the unusual year the P1s have had.
- Parent feedback
 - CK passed on the thanks for the Parent Council to CK and all the teachers and staff for their huge effort and support during the home-schooling period.
 - KG asked if it would be possible in some scenarios for short teacher explanation videos to help parents (who don't know how to explain it in the way the children are expecting/used to). Very short videos would be ideal.
 - CK agreed and also felt that videos across year groups could work.

3. Chair's update

- Network of PC chairs has helped co-ordinate concerns of parents across city
- Important to keep those networks alive.
- Clubs: reality is no clubs this academic year. Some possibility that outdoor clubs can restart if we were to get into tier 3 for summer term.
- We did work with CEC to approve volunteer-led clubs if we were in Tier 3 – approval but then immediate lockdown announcement. Easter is earliest possible start date for outdoor clubs.
- Clubs team will need help to get the network up and running again on clubs – will be looking for volunteers.
- Focus on return to school but we don't want to lose the clubs platform and network in the medium term.

4. Events update (Jenni and Shanda)

- Seems unlikely Summer Fair (May) is going to be able to run.
- Fundraising last year was excellent (tea towels, cards, winter trail).
- KG mindful that people are stretched and tired and it's not easy to ask people to take on volunteer roles.
- It was decided to explore the option of an Art Fair/auction to celebrate end of academic year.
- Jay Feeney – silent discos – disco in furlough - very popular idea amongst the PC to be developed.

5. Finance (Shanda)

- Spending balance is around £9k. Plus £5k held back. Plus money allocated for existing funding commitments.
- KG – we will want to keep some back but that is a helpful balance.

7. Funding applications

- Smart board – additional information now available.
 - KG summarised information.:
 - School is asking PC for rolling replacement programme.
 - Replacement every 8 years.
 - School paying for one now. School also paying for wifi and connectivity upgrades.
 - Additional board needs to be paid for as expecting replacement soon.
 - KG discussed options for standing commitments.
 - KG and Shanda to discuss payment of standing items already approved.

8. Roads and travel

- RC had meeting with CEC travel committee to understand road closure routing and any plans for changes.
 - Montpelier/Montpelier Park is access road (not closed off permanently). Bruntsfield Avenue is fully closed.
 - May change access points around to enable bin collections. Also looking to improve signage.
 - Waste collections to be at non-peak hours.
 - Further correspondence to residents to ensure they had been given notice and explain changes.
- It is not a given that the changes will be permanent once pandemic measures are eased as road closures were introduced as part of pandemic response. It is important to show we can work with the council and community to demonstrate the closures can work and make them permanent.
- Well done to RC and team for getting traction on these issues and making clear the BPS-specific requirements.

- Road crossing officers – no real progress but CEC will advertise more broadly (including universities). No legal requirement to provide them
- Eddie (former crossing guard) is doing well and we have a gift (CH painting) for him. Eddie has says he misses all the children.

9 AOB

- New Primary School on Canaan Lane:
 - Mainly taking capacity from South Morningside SM and JG so limited impact on BPS.
 - August 2022 is start date.
 - Some parents may end up with children in two schools and we want to look after our families and ensure consultation.
 - JG and SM are creating sub-group and we have asked our community for volunteers (who may be impacted) to join sub-group. KG is working with two parents who want to volunteer.
- Boroughmuir High School extension -delayed to 2022. Will cause capacity issue in short term.
- St Oswald's
 - Funding to buy building and legal process in place. Work to commence in Spring
 - Process in place for consents to enable work to commence. Aiming at August 2022.
 - Need to work out holistic way to manage wrap around care.
 - Need to work out how we work with ST O's project to make sure we make the most of the opportunity.
- Council likely to undertake consultation on school holidays – not likely to be dramatic change. More around nuances of how the year plays out.
- Zoom meetings – PC zoom subscription can used by parents if they want to organise something? CK will discuss with Teachers.
- CK was asked how parents can support teachers in the return to school:
 - Share kind words -teachers want to know that parents know teachers are doing their best.
 - Focus on social distancing. Keep to the school safe. Follow the rules.
- Date of next meeting 31 March 2021.