

Bruntsfield Parent Council Meeting 29 March 2023 (Zoom Call)

Attendees:

Parent Council Members (Office Bearers and Coops): Dan Gerrard (DG) Parent Council Chair, Jenni Fuchs Madine (JFM), Cindy Coleman (CC), Kirsty McIntosh, Marilena Papadopoulou, Jay Feeney, Alison Redpath, Stefan Santjer (SS), Ali McCallum, Lucy Henderson (LH), Lina Marin (LM)

Ordinary Members: Louise Gourmelon (LG), Anna Docherty, Elma Charalampidou (EC), Victoria Lopez-Craig, Szymon Kowalczyk, Ariel Cao, Petros Walden, Jerome Veyret, Sorour Malaekheh

Parent Forum Members: Hoang Nguyen, Laura Cotham, Sumeet Jain, Gokay Coskuner, Jacqueline Lamont

Staff: Stephen Gilhooley (SG)

Apologies: Shanda Doherty, Jasper Stocker

1. Introduction (DG):

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Head teacher update including parents' questions

- SG noted that three new teachers have been recruited for P3, P4 and P5 classes to cover for maternity leave. SG confirmed that the recruitment for the Pupil Support Officer role has been closed and that there are 7 candidates that will be interviewed as soon as possible so that the successful candidate can start working with the families that need support.
- SG confirmed that the P5 Easter Play was a success and received positive feedback from the parents that attended.
- The kids were happy to participate in the Red Nose Day by wearing silly hats or having crazy hair.
- SG was pleased to confirm that two medals were won at the Edinburgh Cross Country event and two medals at swimming.
- There will be a tea dance – children will learn a World War Two dance taking place tomorrow.
- The school Talent show is planned for Friday morning, and it's organised by the children.
- SG confirmed that the partnership with the PC is going well and that PC members have attended two meetings so far. Topics recently discussed were the school budget and its challenges and shared ideas through raising money internal and external resources.
- SG noted that for the next school year, the first professional review and staff annual reviews will take place. The focus will be around the development of the staff and SG will be able to coach and mentor staff. Teachers will be appointed for the next year.
- SG is making plans from a strategic perspective for the next school year, and he is hopeful that the children and parents will get more involved and have a three-way partnership.

- Upcoming events are the P7 expeditions, the Sports day for the whole school and the Leaving events for the P7 class.
- A parent asked a question around the big P1 group coming in the next school term and SG confirmed that 80-84 are expected to start in the next term and that this is managed by the local authority and then in May he will know more, a grey area is with siblings in other schools.
- Another parent raised the high prices of the school photos from Tempest photography, and the effect that this cost has on families with multiple children. SG noted that the school gets a commission of 35% on the photography and agreed to look at reviewing it in future.
- Another parent noted that there is an ongoing consultation over the learning hours from the Scottish Government and if the school can give inside in the pure learning hours in the school as feedback. SG confirmed that kids are spending 25 hours with a teacher, the Edinburgh infants (P1/P2) get slightly less due to cost but the majority of kids get 25 hours. SG noted that the team is making sure that children get quality learning as much as possible. He invited any questions parents may have via email to the schools admin email.

3. ASN Parents Group

- DG confirmed that regarding the families and their children with Additional Support Needs, he has reached out to Sciennes and James Gillespies Primaries to find out what are the initiatives that are happening there. The purpose of the ASN Parents group is to voice concerns on how they are supported and meet other parents that are in the same boat.

4. Parent Council vacancies

- PC vacancies that need to be covered for the next term: Shanda Doherty is stepping down as an events treasurer, if anyone is interested, please speak to Shanda to shadow her. Jasper, the class representatives' coordinator is stepping down. Both roles' replacements are to be appointed at the next AGM. For the Fundraising officer role in the Events team, Lucy Henderson is proposed for the role. The PC confirmed that Lucy Henderson is appointed as the Fundraising Officer.
- LH noted that she delighted to help the PC and help raising funds for the school by being more vocal in what we are doing to raise funds.

5. Treasurer Update

- CC Events Treasurer update: events currently have £540 available in the account.
- Regarding the Primrose fund no donation has been made this year and CC confirmed that the school needs to confirm the amount that is required for donation. CC also confirmed that she needs a few weeks' notice to issue any cheques required.
- JFM gave a summary of the background to the P7 yearbook funding:
In January 2020, the treasurer recommended an annual standing commitment to the P7 yearbook of £1000. This was agreed upon by the rest of the PC, but when presented at the PC Meeting in February 2020 there was push back from parents in the parent forum, who felt the students should fundraise the money themselves. A compromise was reached that the P7s would be encouraged to

raise the money themselves, but the PC would fund a shortfall of up to £1,000 if they didn't reach their target. This was approved at the February 2020 meeting as a standing commitment going forward.

2020: £1,107 approved and paid, due to the pandemic preventing any further fundraising

2021: £1,000 approved, only £250 was drawn upon

2022: £1539.50 has been raised for the yearbook, so no PC funds needed

As it has been three years since this standing commitment was agreed, the Treasurer had tabled this for review. There were no objections from the parent forum, and several parents voiced their approval. The standing commitment of £1,000 towards P7 yearbook funds has therefore been re-approved.

JFM also mentioned that the current P6s will be running the bake sale at this year's Summer Fair, with all profits going towards their yearbook fund. This was the same arrangement we had last year, and JFM suggested this could be an ongoing arrangement going forwards.

- Regarding the Clubs accounts out of the £52k balance, £4k was paid to St Oswalds as per the approved funding application. £21k are available to finance the school needs plus £5k that will be kept as a reserve. £26k will be kept to pay the clubs' tutors and settle all the rent invoices.
- SS confirmed that there are now 9 football sessions each Saturday and that the rooftop pitch at Boroughmuir High school is booked to the end of the school year. The voluntary contribution for the Football clubs is £15 and with the money that will be collected the Clubs will be able to hire the football pitches. Overall the PC is able to contribute over £40k over this school year alone to benefit the school and all our children which is really outstanding.

6. Clubs Update

- SS noted that the Clubs will recommence after the Easter break.
- SS highlighted that club uptake is steady. The Creative writing club was cancelled this term. Garage Band has started. Overall, 450 club places have been booked by parents this term across 18 clubs incl. over 50 foc/discounted places + around 180 children enjoy football on Saturdays.
- SS noted that children that attend the Judo club achieved their first belts and that the instrument club children will be performing at the end of the school year.
- SS confirmed that the PC have helped fund 140 club places, with a value of circa £8k for the whole school year.
- SS noted that other Primaries (Gillespies, Craiglockhart and others) have been in touch to see how we have run our clubs at BPS. SS to share our set up and gauge theirs.
- SS confirmed that he will represent the PC in the locality meeting with other PCs and work together to create equality.
- DG thanked SS for his effort and the amount of time that he is dedicating to clubs.

7. Funding Update

- SG is due to supply an updated list of school needs and subsequent funding applications so the available pc funds which have been sitting idle in our club account for almost 4 years, can be spent asap to benefit our children.

- DG noted that in the meeting that the PC members had with the school SMT, it was highlighted that it is not acceptable for teachers to spend their own money and confirmed that the PC wants to support them.
- SG welcomed this comment and confirmed that he is trying to make improvements with the additional resources, and he is focusing on reverting the IT room to a resource room to make sure that all the teachers have access to what they need.
- Regarding the playground project, SG had a chat with Mrs Lamond and confirmed that a short life working group will be created after the Easter holidays to identify the priorities and come back to the PC to state what they want to do and see how with the support of the new Fundraising Officer the school will get support in raising the required funding.
- LG welcomed the idea of the short life working group for the playground. LG clarified that the playground application amount requested is slightly less than £21k. LG also noted that she would like to show to the children some progress on the playground project before the end of the year.
- SS noted that an updated list of funding priorities by the school is key, for the PC on behalf of all parents to make a decision on how to spend the sizable funds available which of course should include the playground project. Everyone agrees that we owe it to our children to make a tangible contribution to the playground this school year.
- It was also noted that some of the funding needs may need to be pushed back to the Council as some items previously requested such as promethean boards, playground maintenance, could be deemed to be the responsibility of the local authority.

8. Events Update

- LM, the new Events Co-ordinator introduced herself and explained that she is a Marketing professional in advertising and a social media manager. LM confirmed that the Pupil Council is now involved, and she is meeting with them and has their support for the upcoming events. LM wants to create an advertising agency with the kids and work on the graphic design of each event and media strategy.
- Regarding the Summer Fair it has been confirmed that the P6 will be in charge of the bake sale and the Pupil council will help with the international food market.
- Regarding the Art Auction, the fundraising will focus on the creation of the Sensory room and LM confirmed that she plans to invite former students to attend and bring them back to the school community. LM noted that she met the illustrator of the new Julia Donaldson book and added that she might contribute to the Art Auction and might attend the event.
- DG thanked LM and noted that LH will help LM to focus on specific funding needs to get more people engaged.
- SS queried whether there are the expenses required for the events. LM confirmed that the school let is covered by the free hours. LM noted that the flyer might have a cost and the website for auction. She will confirm that in the coming days.
- JFM highlighted the need for an army of parent helpers for the Summer Fair and added that anyone who wants to volunteer can get in touch with the Events team.

9. AOB

- SS noted that the Fundraising application form is on our website. Our events treasurer Shanda did previously mention if anyone wants to make any changes to it that she would be open to amend our process. Thus far, no one has stepped forward.
- SS also noted the Risograph funding application for the pc to decide whether to fund this application. To be carried forward to the next meeting on May 16th.
- EC from the Sustainability Group thanked everyone who voted on the Sustainability Project but unfortunately, we were not successful. DG thanked EC for pulling the application together.

10. Close

- The chair thanked everyone for their time and closed the meeting.