

Parent Council Meeting 03/11/2021 6.30pm held via Zoom

Present: Aileen King (Chair), Louise Duncan (Secretary), Vicki Wright (Treasurer), Jackie Mellon, Laura Birrell, Mark Jones, Marilyn McRobb, Lea Sime

Apologies – Sarah Kelly (Treasurer)

Headteacher's Report

Staffing

Mrs Paris is leaving next week and Jackie has appointed two new Learning Assistants. A youth Worker, Mrs Reid (of Lasswade HS) has also been appointed and she has experience of supporting children who struggle to access the mainstream classroom.

Enhanced Support Classroom/Provision

As per the last meeting, the enhanced support classroom is being introduced. This is happening as a pilot project as part of wider discussions on ASN support across Midlothian.

Staff for this room have been appointed and will start within the next week if they are not already in the school. They will initially spend time getting to know the children and staff.

Before the October holidays, Jackie was advised that provision would be moving to St Margarets. This has now happened following a very short consultation and move period.

Communication

Still trying to move to email only communication as the multiple different communication types are causing difficulties. Unfortunately, school have struggled to get the final number parents to provide their information though this has been dealt with in part by catching parents at the door etc but there are still a number of parents who have not returned their details. It is planned that the move to email communication will happen sometime in the near future.

COVID restrictions

No real changes in terms of restrictions as had been hoped (particularly with regards to mask wearing etc) though there has been some cautious lifting of restrictions in school. Some children now having lunch in the lunch hall and there are plans to extend this.

RHSP

Parent meeting for RHSP programme was held today. Were expecting 20 parents but unfortunately only 6 attended resulting in a disappointing representation across the school. Those who attended felt it was a useful meeting and everyone has a task/some reading to do in advance of the next meeting.

P1 photos

Jackie advised that she had received confirmation today that the Midlothian Advertiser won't be able to come in to do P1 photos as they have done previously. They usually do multiple schools in a day but with COVID restrictions it will unfortunately not be possible this year.

Activities

Bake Off (run by Miss Hogg) – it was agreed by school that this would be pushed back to spring/summer for multiple reasons - including COVID restrictions and new allergy training which is being introduced across Midlothian.

Light Switch on – Jackie was approached by Derek Milligan, local councillor, about the Bonnyrigg light switch on. Hawthornden are the only school to be approached this year. Jackie has approached her manager

(Julie Fox) to check that she agrees that it is appropriate for the school to participate given COVID restrictions. It is expected that the event will draw crowds but be a smaller event than it usually has been. Usually P5 who represent the school but school are aiming for 5 and 6 to be involved this year. School will run an art competition in school to select the two children who will switch on the lights.

Christmas – it was acknowledged that it was option to do the Panto at the Brunton this year but no refund would be possible if it was cancelled for any reason. Instead, the decision has been made to arrange for a pre-recorded panto to be screened at school. As yet, there has been no news about what will and will not be allowed for class parties.

Misc

Moderation of writing – The school will be involved in a moderation of writing exercise to ensure that expectations across the school are the same for pupils in each stage/year group

Fundraising/Treasury

Coin Wars

This was much more successful than we had anticipated it would be this year. In total, £425.85 was raised with P5A being the winners. Aileen will get in touch with Miss McGuinness about what sort of goodies her class would like.

Dress down

the most recent dress down day raised £109.60.

It was noted that funds aren't likely to be needed much between now and Christmas. The only reason funds might be needed over would be to make up raffle bags/hampers which are light.

It was noted that Vikki is still to be added as a signatory on the Parent Council bank account.

Christmas

Unfortunately, due to restrictions, we are still unable to hold our usual Christmas fair this year. We will however see a return of our Christmas Raffle.

Each classroom will get a theme – home baking, arts and crafts, sweet treats, family night in, pamper and festive. Dates as follows:

Letters to go out – w/b 08/11/2021 (Louise)

Closing date for ticket pre-orders – 03/12/2021

Counting/issuing tickets – 08/12/2021

Raffle Draw – 10/12/2021

Competitive element for teachers – bottle of wine and box of chocolates for the class selling the most tickets and the class selling the most tickets per head (to account for difference in class sizes). Also option to provide the winning class with a treat from parent council funds.

Input needed from teachers – collect in money/encourage donations/share on social media (similar to duck race)

There was a query about why we do not get additional prizes from local businesses. It was acknowledged that this is something we used to do but the returns reduced each year and it was felt that it was no longer worth pursuing.

It was suggested by Mr Jones that it might be possible to arrange for P7s to arrange ticket sales in the playground at pick up time to boost sales.

P7 transitions

There were some technical difficulties at the first information evening last week. It was queried whether Hawthornden had been supplied with the slides/information that could then be shared with parents who missed bits due to the IT difficulties. Jackie advised that she was in touch with the high school about getting these.

It was also acknowledged that discussions are beginning in the next couple of weeks between Hawthornden and Lasswade HS about those children who may need additional support in their transition/need to be known to their teachers.

Date of next meeting – The next meeting will be held on 09/02/2022 at 6.30pm