**Minutes of Parent Partnership Meeting**

Wednesday 26 August 2020 – virtual “zoom” meeting

In attendance: Leigh Henderson (Depute Headteacher), Emily (Depute Headteacher), Pauline Marr (new Headteacher), Debi Black (Senior Early Years Practitioner) Hayley Birchmore (Chair of PPG), Marna Mesbahi (Depute Chair/Treasurer), Jenny Donaldson (PPG Secretary), Nicola McEwan, Heather Biggs, Andy Wilson, Mhairi Cummings, Jess Day

Apologies: Melissa Thomson, Correen Hope, Su Duthie

**1) Chair Update/Recap of Last Minutes**

Hayley Birchmore provided a brief overview of last meeting which mainly discussed the impending Covid situation and P7 Prom/leavers arrangements all of which are now somewhat redundant.

HB advised that since the last meeting the committee had been busy, they had managed to arrange, purchase and facilitate delivery of a leavers gift for the P7’s and had sourced and purchased the usual P1 gym bags which have arrived at the school.

The committee also oversaw and assisted in the interviews and selection of the new Headteacher for the school, Pauline Marr.

It was agreed by all that we would start afresh following events of late

**2) Treasurer Update**

Marna Mesbahi confirmed that we were sitting on a healthy bank balance of approximately £2,450 with no further payments to be made.

Payment of P7 leavers gifts and P1 starter gifts had been invoiced and accounted for.

HB advised that an audit of the books was required and the committee to discuss and make the arrangements for this.

**3) School Update**

Leigh Henderson advised that Mrs Marr’s start date with the school will be in October. This is due to the current Covid-19 situation, it was felt by the council that it was not an appropriate time for her to leave her current post at Gore Glen with no headteacher. In the meantime, the current structure at the school will continue with Mrs Marr’s added involvement.

LH advised that there was some apprehension about the return to school following the pandemic, but it has for the most part been a success. The children have adapted wonderfully and seem very happy and settled at the school.

LH advised there is a nice feeling of calm at the school at present, in part due to there being no movement around the school. The children remain in their classrooms all day including lunch time where they can have their packed lunches (P1-3 are delivered to them).

The school is trying to make as much use of the outdoor space, but this has been slightly hindered by this week’s weather, windows are open for ventilation and the children are actively taken outside for PE/activities as much as they can be.

We then went on to discuss the current guidance on when to keep children off school and LH advised that a flow chart help sheet was sent to all parents this afternoon to assist in this. LH advised that coughing is a big issue and trying to differentiate between a covid-19 cough and a normal cough is extremely difficult. The current guidance is that if a child coughs 3 times within an hour then they are required to phone the parent to collect the child and request that they contact NHS inform for advice and a test. This is going to be extremely difficult to manage with the ‘winter cold’ season imminent. In addition to this, they have been advised that if a child displays non covid-19 symptoms such as common cold, sore throat, runny nose, cough then you are advised to keep your child off school until they are well enough to return and the school will be following this.

The current playground pick/up drop off arrangements were reviewed with consideration given to setting up a one-way system in and out of the school but on the whole it was agreed that this was not feasible/practical for most parents and should be used as a last resort. There were some concerns about parents congregating at the gates and in the first instance it was agreed that senior management would attempt to do a run through/have a playground presence with a view to discouraging any groups.

Finally, the issue of school meals was raised given the winter season and whether hot meals would at some point resume. LH advised that they are following Midlothian Council guidance on this and do hope hot meals will return but will keep parents updated.

**4) Nursery Update**

Debi Black provided the nursery update and advised that like the school the nursery children had adapted extremely well to the changes at the nursery. The children are loving being back and do not seem phased at all. The nursery staff have made a conscious effort to have active chat with the children about it and about their ‘lockdown’ activities.

The children are very resilient, an outside handwash system and one-way entry/exit has been put into place and is working really well.

The nursery has an all-day play policy and the children can choose whether they wish to be indoors or outdoors. We would encourage the children to come to nursery with waterproofs/wellies. We do have a supply of these if children come without.

There are plans to extend the nursery hours and communication will be sent out to parents in the next day or so to advise that the children can return to full-time hours from 22 September 2020.

DB was asked to consider if the nursery required any additional equipment/items to assist with the expansion and Debi is to review with her team and advise of anything in due course.

**5) Any Other Items of Business**

AGM

HB advised AGM overdue and to review council guidance on virtual AGM which she has received and thereafter to discuss further with committee.

School Photographs

As it stands formal school photographs will not be possible this year as no external parties are allowed into the school premises.

PM suggested that there had been some chat elsewhere about outside photographs being done.

MB advised she had seen a local photographer advertising such services on Facebook and she would make contact with a view to taking this forward.

School Uniform

There has previously always been a uniform shop at the school to assist families and MB queried if it was still at all possible to run this and if so, how best to do it. MC offered to assist MB with the sorting of the uniforms if this can proceed.

There was a general discussion on the matter and LH and ER are to review and consider if this can be taken forward perhaps with the use of one of the community rooms.

MC and various parents advised that they were not aware of this facility and questioned if many parents were. It was suggested that a leaflet is drafted and distributed to advertise the full Hub services available and PM advised that this was already in planning.

Snack time milk

The school office is currently working out the costs and a letter will follow to parents shortly with the costings etc for this.

Fundraising ideas

HB advised in the absence of any school events we will need to think outside the box in terms of fundraising and she is currently looking at other revenue streams to include Amazon Smile and Easy Fundraising and more information on that will follow.

Halloween – parties will not be able to take place but HB suggested that we follow the model used last year for the younger children and instead of a disco we try to arrange classroom activities in the form of games/possibly even a movie and the PPG would happily provide the snacks/drinks. LH/ER to discuss with the teachers to garner their support.

Xmas – it is anticipated that no xmas fayre will take place this year. HB and the committee are to consider what if any other events/activities we can arrange with a view to celebrating the season. The xmas raffle is always a good generator of income and HB has already commenced research into an online raffle.

In addition to the above HB suggested that we again do the xmas cards if the school did not see a problem with this. LH advised provided there is enough time to allow things to sit 72hrs this should be fine but suggested we find an alternative payment method as cash cannot be collected. We all agreed online payment only for safety and ease.

Dress down days

It was suggested that we proceed with dress down days as an easy fundraiser – this could be monthly as before with a suggested donation of £1 as previous. The only issue appeared to be with safe handling of funds, but we discussed whether the money could not be thrown into a class bin/bucket of some kind and then left for 72 hours before being handled this should reduce/eliminate transference risk. LH to consider further and we can pick up at next meeting.

Hayley Birchmore

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday 28th September or Wednesday 30th September at 6pm.