

Minutes - Craigentenny Primary School Parent Council Meeting

10th September – 6.30pm

In attendance: Karen Aikman, Kerri Carr, Jackie Chalmers, Stephanie Dean, Calum Freeman, Nikki Gordon, Cllr Joan Griffiths, Marianne Hopley, Mary-Claire Kelly, Steven Malcolm, Claire McDowall, Lisa Murray, Dee O'Brien, Alex Stainforth, Richard Slack, Sarah Thomson, Carly Simpson, Jo Thorpe, Claudine Turley, Emma Walker, Mussie Zewdie

Treasurer's Report

Emma doesn't yet have access to the full accounts, but approx. balance is £1,821.00.

Head Teacher's Report

1. It has been a positive start to the new session, P1s and other new pupils settling in well. We have been looking at creating Vision and Aims to go alongside our Values. This has been done with staff and pupils and there will be an opportunity for parents to contribute to this at Parent Consultations.
2. Staffing
 - New staff - two probationers Maria Pavlova in P2 and Linzi McDowell in P7. Two new PSAs starting, Lindsey Stuart in main school and Stacey Cormack in Language Classes.
 - Sarah Thomson going on Maternity Leave on Thursday 10th October, Lisa Murray acting up. Advertised for a PT Nursery – secondment/temporary.
 - Advertised for an Expressive Arts Specialist.
3. SQIP – Now on the website

Parental Engagement

- People Know How - Leaflet
- Parent Focus Group: HWB, Homework, Reporting, Communication, Parent Consultations etc.
- Parent Workshops – Nutrition, Sleep, Maths sessions.
- Parent Volunteers – in/out of class, one-off/regular.

Health and Wellbeing

- Updating HWB Curriculum, involving Pupils, Staff and Parents.
- Meeting with Parent Focus Group before Oct.

Nursery

- To improve Literacy attainment for our Nursery children and reduce barriers to learning.
- To develop our Nursery outdoor learning environment and create opportunities for children to work with open ended materials.

Cluster

- To work with cluster colleagues to improve teaching and learning through collaborative enquiry – first year will be P7/S1.

4. Curriculum

- Newsletters came out on Friday with information specific to stages.
- As a school we are continuing STEM focus this session;
 - Last week we held a STEM Roadshow run by Royal Navy and Airforce for P4-7 about digital communication.
 - P5 and P6 Girls for Tech event on Tuesday 1st October.
 - There will be a STEM family Challenge Evening in January.
- NSPCC coming into speak to P1-7 next week.
- Support from parents for sporting events EPSSA – send out an email.

5. Building Work

- 1 mile – Will be reinstated after the building work is complete, classes still making use of the remaining markings
- Bike Racks – Moved by Sept Weekend – chasing this up
- Basketball Court – Two options arrived today, we consult with families and pupils
- Woodland Area sectioned off for a week from Thursday

Dog's Dirt

This is still a big issue in the area surrounding the school. Discussed ways of tackling this problem, including;

- Issuing letters to local residents asking them to keep an eye out for any culprits and report them.
- If we can pin point an approx. time when this happens we can arrange for a warden to come down to try and catch them. Asked if we could just get a warden to come down anyway as their presence in the area may help, but advised there are only 4 wardens for the whole city and so we need to be able to give them an approx. time when this happens.
- Also suggested the Community Council can help with this. Elections are on-going for the Craigentenny/Meadowbank area at the moment, from 9th-30th September. In order to be represented we need to have at least 10 people standing and if we don't, there will be no Community Council for our area. Advised that groups can also stand, so the Craigentenny Parent Council could stand as a group and it means we could be involved in whatever work they are undertaking and be kept informed about what's going on in the area. Agreed that we would enter a nomination form.

Parking

Parking around the school has got worse again during drop off and pick up time. Probably due to the on-going building works as everyone is now trying to park around 1 gate. Private taxis in particular, although not always, are guilty of parking on the chevrons which is causing chaos. Suggested we might want to consider using Parking Buddies which are being used in some other schools – HT to investigate.

Halloween Disco

Will go ahead with a disco again on Halloween, which is a Thursday this year.
Will split groups as follows:

P1-P3 from 6-7pm. Tickets will be £3.50 and they will be provided with juice and a snack.
P4-P7 from 7.15-8.30pm. Tickets will be £2.50 and there will be a tuck shop available.

Volunteers will be required to help out at both discos, please let Marianne know if you can help.

School Photos

Asked if the schedule for taking school photos could be brought forward as it feels it takes place too late in the year. Already booked for this year but will check if it can be changed. If not, will consider bringing this forward next year.

P6 Music Tuition

P6 music tuition began after Easter last year which is pretty late to begin this and so asked if it could be brought forward to ensure the children are given the best possible start. HT already been in touch with Martin Hutchison to find out what the process will be for this year.

Also asked why it starts in P6. Music should be started in P4 for strings and P5 for brass and woodwind. Suggested it may be due to the provision provided for this area but HT will find out.

P6 Residential Trip

There won't be any residential trip this year. The current P6's will go next year when they are in P7, along with the P6's for next year.

Also asked if skiing lessons are still available for older classes. HT will find out.

Student Climate Strike

If your child is going to the march, parents need to let the school know in advance that their child won't be in school due to the march. If not, then it will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

AOB

- Clothing Bank: advised parents can drop off items at any time as this isn't clear and should be communicated.
- Xmas Fair: can only continue if we have enough volunteers, not just on the day but to help organise it. Suggestion made to set up a committee to organise the fair. Marianne will send out a request for volunteers. The fair will take place on Friday 6th December. Can also drop off toys and books for the fair which can be stored in the school.
- Tea Towels: was a success last year and raised quite a bit of money, much easier to organise and so agreed we'll do this again this year.
- Aldi Sports Stickers: school has a poster that the stickers are added to, so send any stickers in with the children. Suggest this is also added to Facebook page.

- Mental Wellbeing: issue raised about increase in bullying and racism. Parents concerned about how this is being tackled and suggested having an Ethnic Minority Rep in school. HT advised this is already covered in the curriculum under Building Resilience but happy to discuss any particular issues or consider any further action that may be required.
- Parents Evenings: parent raised concern that the June parent's evening was too late on in the year and should be brought forward, mentioned some schools have them in February. HT advised it's too late to change it for this year, but can look at the following year. Will discuss further in Focus Group.
- Sports Day: parent asked if format could be reviewed as didn't think it was very good. Felt there should be more races rather than group activities. There were differing opinions on this as others really enjoyed it and general feedback received through the school had been positive. Will discuss further in Focus Group.
- Cooking Classes: asked if it would be possible to teach the kids basic cooking. Is aware Holyrood High School arranges for people to go into primary schools to introduce cooking. Trying to organise something with Edinburgh College but they have been inundated with requests. School doesn't have the facilities to accommodate this but children would potentially go to a professional kitchen to learn about healthy eating, making smoothies, pizzas etc.
- P7 Open Evenings: no dates as yet, will get in touch with Leith Academy for further information.
- Focus Group: time not really suitable as most parents will be at work on a Thursday between 11 & 12. Suggested looking at alternative days/times. Suggested possibly a Friday when more parents are not working.
- Parent Council Meetings: need to try and encourage more people to come along to the meetings. Child care seems to be one of the main barriers for a lot of people. Suggested we consider allowing children along to some meetings so that more people can attend. Also suggested everyone at the meeting try and bring along at least 1 person to the next meeting. Could also consider having an informal coffee event particularly for new parents to the school to introduce them to the Parent Council.
- Playground Equipment: asked about getting more equipment for the playground but this is expensive due to the Health & Safety mats that are required. Suggested getting more playground markings, perhaps with the times tables. Previously given a grant through the Edinburgh Partnership Fund. Marianne will find out what grants are available and see if we can put in another application for playground markings.