

PARENT COUNCIL MEETING



JANUARY 30TH, 2016

Description	Action
<p>(1) Welcome Mr. Bryan Heaney welcomed everyone in attendance as the chairman of the P.C. Parents. (Apologies and attendances are set out at the end of the minute.)</p> <p>(2) Opening Prayer Opening prayer led by Father Scally. Special prayer for the Parent Council.</p> <p>(3) Minutes of Previous Meeting: Corrections to the last meeting minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ Apologies & attendance: Note - Mrs. Margo Saliba was present at last December meeting. </p> <p>Agenda item - School meals (incl. sugary drinks) Two items arose from last meeting: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Motion on the removal of flavoured milk and juices from the school menu. 2. Setting up a working group to audit the school lunchtime in order to establish the level & arrays of improvement that could be made. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Proposed removal of flavoured milk and juices from the school menu: Following up on getting further feedback from parents on this subject in order to allow the recommendation to move forward; it was noted that the general response from the parents' community to PC members remained favourable. Also confirmed the school hadn't been approached by anyone to communicate any particular preference. Noted the Parent Council is a reasonably representative body to pass the motion. A formal proposal is approved to write to the Head of School, and anyone else who is meant to be, to request that the provision of drinks to be reduced to milk and water only. ❖ Proposed observation of children during School lunch times. Suggested at the last meeting, it aims to look at the wider concerns expressed by parents as regards school meals. The Parent Council proposes to put together a working sub-group with the cooperation of the school to monitor what goes on at lunchtime. The intention is to provide parents, the Parent Council and the School with a better appraisal of the lunch experience and establish areas where there would be scope for improvement. Noted and agreed that in order to minimise disruption, two people will be carrying the observation exercise and report to the working group. A "hands on" approach suggested by the school would also allow a better understanding of the school's kitchen. Ultimately it would provide a better understanding on how children are choosing their school menu; especially amongst the younger ones as regards to choices available and dining hall supervision. Remit of actions (tasks list) to be established prior to contact with all interested parties and/or advertise through Parent Mail & School's website. All for the preparation of first sub-group meeting. </p> <p>Agenda item - School Partnership (SP) Mrs Margo Saliba informed all present that the School Partnership Group had had further meetings and progress is steady and positive. The maths core instatement is there. It translated into the carrousel of the financial week school's event. Noted there's still more information on broad confidence to go online. The library side of the plan has started already with some of the action agreed. As a result there are a number of classes already signed up for library</p>	<p>PC</p> <p>PC - JBB</p>

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membership and next phase of the library is moving forward as well.

The input of the community element is reflected into searching partners who would have a direct involvement and add value to it. The SP was considering initiatives in relation to developing a growth mindset for pupils and parents.

Agenda item - Educational Attainment

The new Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) return collects data each year from for all pupils in Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 in publicly funded primary and secondary schools, and for all pupils based in special schools/units. This return measures national performance in aspects of literacy (i.e. reading, writing, and listening and talking) and numeracy, and reports on the proportion of pupils who have achieved the expected CfE level, based on teacher professional judgements, relevant to their stage. The information was based on teacher professional judgements as at June 2016.

**Percentage of children achieving the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)
Level relevant to their stage, 2015/16**

Stage	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
P1 (Early Level)	80% - <90%	90+%	90+%	90+%
P4 (1st Level)	90+%	90+%	90+%	80% - <90%
P7 (2nd Level)	80% - <90%	70% - <80%	80% - <90%	80% - <90%
P1, P4 & P7 combined	80% - <90%	80% - <90%	90+%	80% - <90%

Percentages for St Peter's - SOURCE: Scottish Government/ public tableau

Parent Council enquired on the meaning of the above figures: how it is compared on a year to year basis and how the children are performing in specifics.

School informed in details that there is a lot of guidance that is still coming from Education Scotland as to how teachers actually meet and help them make those decisions (see above).

Education Scotland and Edinburgh City Council came up with a reference of “*significant aspects*” where teachers are asked to look at specific traits within a level instead of considering every single part of the curriculum. There are also more benchmarks for literacy and numeracy that have recently been issued in draft form. The cluster schools including St Peter's are working already on this draft guidance as it is considered the most up-to-date reference. Consequently, the School indicated that the above percentages are only indicative outside a broader and more complex environment of evaluations which suggest that the CfE might not represent an accurate reflection of the children abilities thus has its limitation on how to interpret the figures. The School stated that St Peter's attainment continues to be high. Nonetheless, the Parent Council also stressed that looking at the graphs over time might be a useful indicator. As it is noted that by the time the children reach P7 the percentages are falling in every category and therefore a loss of added value from P1/ P4. Meaning potentially that a portion of the pupils has not attained the appropriate level and there is possibly cause for concern. The Parent Council enquired on the possibility to obtain a comparative of the results over a set period of years. St Peter's to confirm if the tracking attainment documentation is consistent / cohesive enough for interpretation purposes. The parent Council proposes to gather more information from the Council / School on the subject to allow for a better analysis.

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More specific information can be found from this BBC article “*Scottish school data published for first time*” published last December: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-38302299>. It provides links to the ‘*Curriculum for Excellence levels for your school*’, ‘*look more closely at the statistics*’ and ‘*Scottish schools statistics for 2016*’.

Agenda Item - New Behaviour Plan

The new behaviour plan introduced at the beginning of the year is based on a traffic lights model at classroom level and through “houses/clans” within the school where points are being earned. These are translated into a variety of reward activities at the end of each week. The children's response has been very positive from the onset.

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However, despite the school having communicated the new policy through its forums of information (newsletters, website), the Parent Council reported to the school that there was a lack of deeper consultation for the scheme's introduction and also that it hadn't been more clearly circulated and informed at this point in time.

The school stated that it hadn't received directly any feedback from parents regarding the new policy so far and would welcome them. Mrs Nazarian confirmed that a detailed guidance on the new school's policy was currently being drafted and aimed at being communicated to parents in the near future through the school's website. The school will track the effectiveness of its policy hoping it will have a positive impact in the long term. It will promote good behaviour and increase positive relationship. To do so, the school also asked the Parent Council to survey the parents at the end of the year to find out what their feelings are about it. St Peter's will equally try to involve parents who have particular skills to volunteer and take part into the concertation group either as a supportive role or by adding their expertise on the matter (PVG disclosure obtained). The school will undertake ongoing / continual appraisal until it feels the level is right.

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(4) What is happening to the School.

Agenda Item - Staffing

The post of Deputy Head Teacher has been advertised. Its closing date was 2nd February 2017. Interviews will take place after the February holidays. Mrs Nazarian enquired whether there are / is PC member(s) who have/has carried out the *Recruitment and Selection Training* and would be available to take part in the selection process scheduled towards the end of February. PC to organise additional meeting for its contribution to the type of questions for the interviews.

Mrs Nazarian also informed that, from the appointment of the DHT, the advertisement of two posts of Principal Teachers will follow.

PC

School website

Noted the school website is now up-to-date. The support page "this week in school" had been failing. Mrs McAdams has been in touch with the School, proposed to volunteer along with a couple more parents and help on the website.

Parent Pay

General query on the progress to implement the new 'Parent Pay' system in St Peter's – particularly on the possibility to order lunches on behalf of the children. Based on last November's discussions with Mrs O'Connor, the Parent Council enquires whether the option of booking only the lunches aside of the financial aspect will be happening in the forthcoming months.

The School informed that St Peter's is part of the next roll out but the Council hasn't formalised it yet. There are two phases to the roll out: one to pay for school trips etc., then a second one to cater for the meals options. Phase one hasn't been introduced yet. The School reiterated that Mrs O'Connor remains very much involved in the process. PC proposed to the School to write a letter in terms of expressing parents' frustration as Parent Pay is perceived as a determining tool to ensure control over the menu choices. St Peter's to enquire with Mrs O'Connor.

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(7) Head teacher's report

Please refer to the document attached. Detailed information on the financial week and carousel. Music classes - extra dates.

(8) PC Chairman's report

No external matters to report. A cluster meeting is scheduled for next week and the week after .council committees where Mr Bryan Heaney will advise if any material output from the meeting.

(5) Agenda item - transition plans from P1 to P2

Ms Kennedy had a meeting with the parents on 30th January regarding the current staffing in primary one and the sensitive issue on the 'P1 to P2 transition'. Parents who could not attend

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have received a letter on the points that were discussed. Noted that everyone who had been involved has been appreciative of the meeting, seen as opportunity to ask questions and get clarification on any issues..

(10) Any other business

Agenda Item - Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) initiative

By cultivating an interest in the natural and social sciences at a younger age, the chances of STEM success in higher education can be greatly improved and help reduce the gender gap in these fields. So, further to parents' demand on how they could assist in improving and/or reinforcing the children's performance in science and technology development, the Parent Council has been enquiring if, and how a STEM initiative could be implemented within St Peter's. It indicated that there is a list of contacts willing to take part in science & technology activities and that it would be greatly beneficial to make the most of it.

Mr Evitt informed there is a science club run by parents at St James' Gillespie before school time. It is organised in three year groups of 12 pupils each and has a joining fee. It is run on a school term rota. Should the PC be interested in finding more about it, it may contact directly the school for the attention of the club organiser who will be happy to forward information on resources. Mrs Neil who is the School' STEM coordinator is due to attend a conference on the subject the 21st March. Noted the PTA has also funded this year technology kits for the whole school. Also advised different types of activities are build-up into the class time; having the subjects taught as an integrated curriculum. Noted that the school had held a science / engineering focus week before.

Although there is an approved plan for this year, Mrs Nazarian suggested for the next session to organise a group of parents helping to further develop STEM as a whole school focus and put it into plan in order to be able to sustain these kind activities. Mrs Nazarian also indicated that the school would be opened to time tabling a room for science organisations to run as an afterschool club (ie: similarly to French classes, etc.).

Mrs. Johnstone's and Msgr. Kerr's retirement

Msgr. Kerr will be invited to come back after the February break to take part to a service in the School. PC to organise for Mrs Johnstone a signing book and a collection similarly to Mrs Jamieson's leave. Mr. Bryan Heaney to make the presentation for Mrs. Johnstone & Msgr. Kerr. Possibility of a coffee morning to be assessed / organised for Msgr. Kerr (TBC).

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(11) Closing Prayer led by Father Scally

Apologies

Mrs O'Connor, Mrs D. Johnstone, Ms Dowey, Mrs. K. A. McAdams, Mrs. J. Carter-Dailly, Mrs. A. De Bonrosto, Mr. G. Mone.

Attendance: Mrs K. Nazarian, Mr. J. Evitt, Ms. L. Kennedy, Father P. Scally , Mr. B. Heaney, Mrs. J. Beech-Brandt, Mrs. A. Tierney, Mr. N. Thorin, Mrs. E. Farrugia, Mr. A. Crichton, Mr. S. Tait, Mrs. J. Staermose-Johnson, Mrs. M. Cresswell, Mrs. M. Saliba , Mrs. C. Daverin, Mrs. E. Meyer McKeon.

End of meeting

Bryan Heaney thanked everyone for attending. Item (9) of the agenda has been deferred. The next meeting is scheduled Tuesday 14th March 2017 at 7pm.