

West Linton Primary School Parent Council Meeting

Minutes

Monday 19th January 2015

Present:

Parent Council: Tristan Compton (Chair), Louise Fraser (Secretary), Sandie Lloyd, Gail Jackson, Morag Everest, Neil Robson, Tamsyn Weston, Emma Wood, Victoria Harburn, Ruth Doherty, Neil Clunie, Frances Little, Rachel Hall

Staff: Martin Elliott, Grace Frew, Alison Saxon

Others: Benjie Johnstone (part of the meeting)

Apologies: Emma Downie (Deputy Chair), Estelle Weipers, Carol Clapperton, Marie Botelho, Maggie Shearer, Connor Rose, Debbie Moroney, Martha Caddell, Lily Stenhouse

1. Introductions and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies noted. T Compton advised the meeting that C Clapperton and M Caddell wish to step down from the Parent Council. The Parent Council thanked them for all their hard work in the past.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 4th November 2014 were approved as accurate. Updates on actions arising were as follows:

- **Action Points 1: SPTC guidance as to the policies adopted in relation to Parent Council involvement in staff interviews**
T Compton advised that Midlothian Council do involve Parent Councils whereas Scottish Borders do not.
- **Action Point 2: HMIE member to be invited to attend PC meeting**
HMIE will not attend a PC meeting as this is not part of their functionality. The school will hold an event / open night to celebrate all that has been achieved (progress made) and to meet the new head teacher prior to her start date. (A discussion was then had regarding recruitment of the new Head. G Frew advised that a preferred candidate has been selected and T Compton and E Wood were fully involved in the interview process. Pupils also were involved). T Compton added that the panel's decision was unanimous and that they were very pleased with the preferred candidate selected and the level of involvement that parent representatives had been given in the process.

- **Action Point 5: Friendship Bench**
The friendship bench can be installed by local contractors. Property Mgt at SBC must be kept informed. 4 designs have been selected as finalists. Children are to work with parents/fabricators/SBC clerk of works to amalgamate the designs into 1 final design.
- **Action Point 7: Homework schedules**
G Frew advised that staff are working on the homework schedules. Parents should receive them very shortly. Some classes have already sent these out and some are available on the class web page. T Compton thanked the teachers for their work on this. It was also noted that the homework schedules should be available on the school website under each class page.
- **Action Point 8: Art Club**
E Wood to issue a letter to parents on this
- **Action Point 9: Football Club**
There has been an enormous amount of interest from the children in this including lots of girls. E Wood and N Clunie are to take forward the organisation of this and send a letter to parents asking for volunteers.

All other action points have been completed or were dealt with later in the meeting.

ACTIONS

1. **E Wood to issue letter to parents about the Art Club**
2. **E Wood to issue letter to parents about the Football Club**

3. Treasurers Report

R Doherty provided the meeting with an update on the Parent Council bank balances, which now stand at £764.33. £33 was spent on various Christmas presents and flowers for Margaret Hogg (auditor)

4. Development of the School Library

Staff had already discussed developing the library and it was agreed that a parental working group would be the best way forward for this.

R Doherty gave a brief presentation of ideas gained from a discussion she held with Stephen and Louisa Harris (parents of a current pupil and librarians in Penicuik).

Development ideas included:

- Restarting the Friday library sessions
- Opening early before the school day begins
- Opening at lunchtimes
- P7 monitors helping out
- Applying for grants to help improve the space
- Asking for parent volunteers
- Utilising any Library advisory services that may be available

Discussion then took place about this. Staff and parents agreed that the library needed to be a more visually engaging environment, and a more comfortable place for children to read and enjoy books.

A number of suggestions were put forward to improve both the environment and the contents of the library, and the following action points were agreed.

ACTIONS

- 1. E Wood, R Doherty, M Elliot and T Weston to form group to take this forward**
- 2. M Elliot to be staff liaison on this project and to look into grant funding**
- 3. R Doherty to ask S and L Harris to help out/advise with library project**
- 4. T Compton to invite additional ideas and volunteers from the parent body**

5. Young Engineers & Science Club (presentation by Benjie Johnson on Young Engineers Club (Scotland))

A very good presentation was given by B Johnson about the support available to schools when setting up/running a Young Engineers & Science Club (YESC) and what kind of projects could be done within a Club.

Grants are available to support clubs. YESC can put together project materials for the Club to use. Most Clubs are aimed at P5-P7 and have an enthusiastic teacher leading the project with parent volunteers helping out.

West Linton PS are the only Peebles High feeder school NOT to have a Young Engineers & Science Club.

A discussion was held about the best timing for the club, so that pupils and parent helpers could be available. It was agreed to assess the level of demand for the club from the pupils, and if sufficient demand and staff and parental support was available more than one group could meet at different times of the week.

Action Points arising from discussions held after the presentation were:

ACTIONS

- 1. G Frew, M Elliot to talk to staff to identify anyone willing to lead the club**
- 2. G Jackson to take forward the setting up of the club and to email parents asking for volunteers**
- 3. G Jackson to ask children & parents how many children would be interested in attending and the most suitable times/days of the week**

6. Head Teachers Report

Staffing Update:

Mrs Debby Whyte was granted Early Retirement Voluntary Severance (ERVS) and finished with us at the end of December. As she had been absent for some time she was only in school for 1 week prior to the end of term. G Frew thanked Mrs Whyte for her considerable contribution to the school. We will miss her and wish her well in the new chapter of her life.

Our staff team has new additions this term. We welcome:

- Mrs Michelle Fraser, Wednesday to Friday P3 teacher
- Mrs Lorna Doran, additional teacher Tuesday and Thursday
- Mrs Gill Durrington, classroom assistant Wednesday to Friday

Developing the team:

The staff team are working collegiately to share and further develop good practice across the school. Mrs A Saxon and Miss J Wight will be released one day per week to lead this development. Mrs Doran will cover P6 on Tuesdays and P7 on Thursdays to allow this to happen.

School Lunches are now free for all P1-P3 pupils. There has been an increase of around 40 children taking school meals since January. For P1-3 this is an additional 20-30 children daily. A discussion around school lunches was held resulting in G Frew agreeing to ask the SBC officer responsible for nutrition to give a talk to Parent Council on how the menus are put together.

5th March – World Book Day: There will be a special assembly held and planned activities taking place on World Book Day. It would be nice to try to have some of the library improvements made before this. N Clunie agreed that perhaps PTA could fund some beanbags or decorations.

Work on the school Vision, Values and Aims (VVA) is now complete. These were created with pupils, staff and the Parent Reference Group. Two versions have been created – one for adults, and a more child friendly version. A copy is attached.

ACTIONS

- 1. G Frew to ask SBC officer responsible for nutrition to give a talk to Parent Council on how the menus are put together**
- 2. G Frew to confirm what PTA are asked to fund for the library in time for World Book Day**
- 3. N Clunie to confirm PTA funding for some library improvements in advance of World Book Day**
- 4. T Compton to contact the Community Council about lighting outside the Community Entrance**

7. Updates from sub-groups

PTA

The Christmas Bazaar was a great success.

A request has been received by the PTA for funds to purchase active maths resources totalling about £900. PTA will discuss this at their next meeting and because it is over the financial limit for PTA-approval, Parent Council members will be asked to vote via email on the proposal.

Early Learning

G Frew explained that staff follow the Early Level of the Curriculum and 'Building the Ambition' (national practice guidelines) which states: 'There is no need to formalise the curriculum to reflect the early stages of primary school. If this happens it is likely to narrow the young child's experiences'. Formal phonics programmes (Letterland) are not appropriate at this stage. Staff carefully develop the learning environment to allow children to engage in experiences and through this sounds are learned in incidental ways.

A discussion around communication then took place.

It was also advised that PTA still await the equipment wishlist from the staff in Early Learning.

Community Use of School

The first meeting of the Management Committee was very successful. A date in January is to be set for the next meeting. The agenda for this meeting is to agree the Constitution and to identify those who will populate the committee. Regular users of the school facilities will become members of the committee. Anyone else able to participate should contact G Frew or T Compton.

Snow/Winter Resilience

Report attached

8. Other meetings attended/planned

School Travel Plan/Road Safety

The Travel Plan is still being worked on by SBC. The A702 speed survey will not be carried out until the flashing signs are working properly.

A "Twenty's Plenty" zone is to be introduced on Deanfoot Rd, and signage improved.

Bin lorry timings are to be revisited with the Council.

The missing pavement on Deanfoot Rd between Croft road and The Smithy is still an issue but SBC felt the road was not wide enough to have any pavement here. It was the most mentioned issue in the School Travel Survey. T Compton is to take this back to the group and to the Community Council as Parent Council are unhappy with the response from SBC.

School Uniform Suppliers

Parent Council agreed to invite an alternative supplier and the current supplier to both come in to pitch to school management and representatives of the Parent Council. T Weston indicated her willingness to participate in these discussions.

SPTC training for PC Members

T Compton to arrange date based on members responses to availability.

ACTIONS

- 1. T Compton to take issue of missing pavement on Deanfoot Rd to Road Safety Group and Community Council**
- 2. T Compton to remind SBC of previous commitment by refuse department to avoid rubbish & recycling collections at school drop off time**
- 3. T Compton to arrange date for SPTC Training**

9. Any Other Business

The next meeting of the Parent Council will be held on Tuesday 10th March 2015 at 6.30pm.

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

- 1. E Wood to issue letter to parents about the Art Club**
- 2. E Wood to issue letter to parents about the Football Club**
- 3. E Wood, R Doherty, M Elliot and T Weston to form group to take forward library improvements**
- 4. M Elliot to be staff liaison on library project and to look into grant funding**
- 5. R Doherty to ask S and L Harris to help out/advise with library project**
- 6. T Compton to invite additional ideas and volunteers for the library project from the parent body**
- 7. G Frew, M Elliot to talk to staff to identify anyone willing to lead the Young Engineers & Science Club**
- 8. G Jackson to take forward the setting up of the club and to email parents asking for volunteers**
- 9. G Jackson to ask children & parents how many children would be interested in attending the club and the most suitable times/days of the week**
- 10. G Frew to ask SBC officer responsible for nutrition to give a talk to Parent Council on how the menus are put together**
- 11. G Frew to confirm what PTA are asked to fund for the library in time for World Book Day**
- 12. N Clunie to confirm PTA funding for some library improvements in advance of World Book Day**
- 13. T Compton to contact the Community Council about lighting outside the Community Entrance**
- 14. T Compton to take issue of missing pavement on Deanfoot Rd to Road Safety Group and Community Council**
- 15. T Compton to remind SBC of previous commitment by refuse department to avoid rubbish & recycling collections at school drop off time**
- 16. T Compton to arrange date for SPTC Training**

Our Vision

At West Linton Primary our vision is to create a safe and happy school, where we are all challenged in our learning, encouraged to learn enthusiastically, to always do our very best and become successful and confident lifelong learners.

Our Values

Together we will be:

- Fair
- Kind
- Friendly
- Honest

Together we will:

- Think about how others feel
- Try our hardest
- Take responsibility for our actions
- Include others
- Never give up
- Help each other
- Be ready to learn

Our Aims

- To experience high quality teaching
- To work together and be given challenging learning activities
- To have fun and make connections while learning
- To make sure everyone is included, valued and respected
- To make the most of everyone and everything in our community to help us learn as much as we can
- To be active and make healthy choices
- To be prepared for life as a grown up

Our Vision

At West Linton Primary School our vision is to create a safe, happy learning environment, fostering an ethos of care and respect which nurtures the individual and encourages everyone to achieve their full potential as confident and motivated life-long learners.

Our values

Together we will develop:

- Fairness
- Kindness
- Honesty
- Compassion
- High expectations
- Responsibility and accountability
- Inclusion
- Positive Attitudes
- Curiosity
- Perseverance
- Openness to change

Our Aims

- To provide high quality learning and teaching which is active, connected and fun
- To work collaboratively to support our learners and develop their creativity, motivation and ambition.
- To be inclusive, embracing technology and communicating effectively
- To create a happy, challenging, innovative child-centred learning environment where all members feel valued and respected
- To make the most of all the resources in our community (skills, environment, people).
- To encourage active lifestyles and promote healthy choices
- To equip our children with flexible and transferable skills which prepare them for our fast changing world.

West Linton Primary school Parent Council / West Linton Resilient Community Group

Snow Clearance report Jan 2015

The list of parent volunteers was updated, with 14 parents offering to help. These names have been registered with Scottish Borders Council.

Volunteers were called out on Monday 15th Dec to help grit the school playground so that the children could get out to play. Four volunteers helped (Gail Jackson, Emma Wood, Fiona Mair and Deb McCaffe) for 1 hour. An old wasp nest was removed from the shed. Mat Wood assembled the grit spreader and snow shovel.

Emma Wood

West Linton Primary school, Parent Council Member

West Linton Resilient Community Group coordinator