

MINUTES

Lairhillock Parent Council

7pm Wed 7th Dec 2022. via Microsoft Teams

ATTENDEES

Mr Crabb, Alison Gill, Donagh Costello, Jacqueline & Mark Dewhurst, Monica Tait, Sarah Benzie, Diane Abel, Jenna Patterson, Austen & Gayle Marr, Milene Grecco, Beverley Stainton, Anara Laing, Fran Philp, Alastair Struthers, Joanne Stockwell, Naila Thompson, Rochelle Sanders, Linda Fleury, Amy Scorgie, Tanya Heath, Beverley Stainton, Kate Emshoff, Kate Gwynne

APOLOGIES

Shona Grimmer, Cheryl Christoforos, Lucy Petrie, Angus Grieg, Kirsty McIntosh, Louise & Jamie MacDonald

Welcomes expressed by chair Donagh Costello. A special welcoming was given to Mr Crabb for attending his first Parent Council meeting for the year.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Donagh Costello proposed the previous set of minutes (7th Sept) for approval.
Seconded by Jacqueline Dewhurst & Sarah Benzie.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Report from Monica Tait

1. Communication received from Christine McLennan, Parental Liaison officer at Aberdeenshire Council
 - 1.1. There is an opportunity for parents/carers to be involved in a parent consultation - **Draft Guidance for Managing Substance Use Incidents involving Children and Young people**. The Guidance has been developed for Aberdeenshire school staff to ensure a clear and consistent approach to dealing with managing substance use incidents. The session

is being run on 13th December from 6.30 - 7.30pm. Please email Christine McLennan at christine.mclennan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk for the Teams link for this consultation. The Parent Council will share this information on the Lairhillock Parents Facebook page.

- 1.2. **Worried About Money Session.** There has been a change of date. Headteachers and parents are welcome to attend. Kincardine and Mearns and Marr session is on Wednesday the 25th Jan 7 - 8pm. Please contact Christine christine.mclennan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk for further details. The Parent Council will share this information on the Lairhillock Parents Facebook page.
- 1.3. Meeting notes from the meeting with the Director of Education with Parent Council Chairs on 10th October was distributed which also covered PGV information.
 - 1.3.1. There is a lot of change within the education sector just now. Scottish Government recently launched the national discussion on the future of education, called "Let's talk about Scottish Education". This ran until the 5th of December. This is the first time the government has undertaken this kind of consultation for about 20 years.
 - 1.3.2. There are also new education reforms coming soon such as the replacement of the Scottish Qualifications Authority which was responsible for exams and assessment in Scottish Education.
 - 1.3.3. There will also be a replacement for Education Scotland which was responsible for school improvement and curriculum development and new inspectorate which will be created separate to Education Scotland.
2. Greenspace Perennials for Pollinators 2023 - as part of an Aberdeenshire Council Greenspace Project, an application was submitted in October for perennials. As the application was accepted the school will be getting 60x plants consisting of Geraniums, Campanulas, Lavandulas and Salvias in February. This will require someone to pick these up from the nearest depot (Ellon/Laurencekirk).

HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Head Teacher Report - Mr Stewart Crabb

In summary - Impression I am getting is of a very supportive and enthusiastic community of children, staff and parents. Generally children are happy, keen and well behaved and we are blessed with a very hard working staff team. We are very lucky to have such an enthusiastic and hard-working Parent Council and we all very much appreciate what you do to support the school.

New Head Teacher Evaluation

For the HT report I am going to talk you through a summary of the evaluation activities I have been doing to get a picture of where the school has strengths and where we need to improve at this point. I gathered this through individual meetings with staff, group discussions with staff and children, questionnaires, using Education Scotland Audit tools and visits to classrooms by the QIM and previous Head Teacher.

Staff wanted clearer guidance, policy and direction so we are reviewing our policies for planning, learning, teaching and assessment. They wanted improved communication and clearer guidance on responding to challenges with behaviour. We have put in place a 4 stage referral system for behaviour. Picking up on the minutes from your last meeting, I have agreed with staff that we contact parents about children's behaviour when there is cause for concern and not about every single misdemeanour that happens. For instance, child not improving after staff intervention or a serious incident. We are not going down the route of sending cards or forms because this heightens child's and parents' anxieties when it's already been dealt with and over in school.

Staff felt relationships between children, staff and parents were good and the 'ready, respectful, safe' was working well. Hot Chocolate Friday was challenging to keep fair so over the course of the year all children will have opportunity for this. This has been adapted and now all children will get the opportunity to join Mr Crabb for hot chocolate and will take with them pieces of work they are proud of. There will be greater focus on House Points, for example, announcing weekly totals in assembly and having a termly treat.

As you saw from the newsletter, parents highly valued our ethos, community, environment, resources and staff. Communication was what you felt needed improvement and you will have seen I have taken steps to take this forward.

SeeSaw is being banned from the end of December whilst it is being reviewed. Parents expressed their disappointment for losing this valuable tool for means of communicating. There may need to be further thoughts about alternatives.

Children's View - confidential questionnaires were put out to P4-P7. Children talked positively about school but there were quite a few who said they didn't always feel safe. We are now doing a private individual questionnaire with children to dig deeper into this. What worries them about keeping safe? A lot talked about other children being mean. We need to look at what that means for them, which might be looking at their resilience or it might be something that is actually happening in the playground that we need to think about.

Learning and teaching visits always identify next steps for us to improve on and our focus will be on developing feedback children receive and the use of effective questioning skills. I also think we need to see more learning outdoors and we need to think about a progression for developing skills in learning and life.

From all the above, an action plan has been drafted with communication being prioritized.

General

1. No pantomime has been booked for this year but it is something Mr Crabb would like to look into for next year. Idea well received by parents.
2. Discussion made regarding Christmas Carol service at the school. There previously was link to Maryculter Church for the Christmas Service. Whilst the idea was generally well received there was one noted comment - whilst happy to get taught about religious education, parent was quite happy to keep kid(s) away from religious building(s).
3. Christmas parties – party food bags/treats for the Christmas parties will be funded by the Parent Council. Parent Council and parent helpers can be available to assist with preparing the food bags on the allocated party days.
4. Review of the annual calendar that was posted out on the newsletter dated the 25th November.

5. Janitorial cover has been changed so that there is presence every morning for around an hour at 8.15. This will greatly help with morning maintenance and salting of paths in winter time.
6. Education school inspection - possibly due soon. Education Scotland are carrying out an increased number of school inspections. Last one was dated 2008. Aberdeenshire Council expects Lairhillock to be imminent as Stonehaven Cluster has had two this term.
7. Query made into class trips. The Parent Council will fund one class trip a year.
8. Mr Crabb would like to increase the number of parent helpers into the school in line with PGV policy. (The PC has enrolled into the PVG scheme.)

Class Allocations

Update from teachers on spending with class money provided by the Parent Council:-

- P1 Christmas craft tools and resources
- P2 Craft, baking, new games and extra resources for classroom
- P3 Craft materials, advent, baking materials. Into the next terms it will be more craft, hopefully some fire things/ fireside food for outdoor learning
- P4/5 L Classroom resources, National Trust guest speaker
- P4/5 B Craft, bird seed, clipboards, decorations, classroom equipment
- P6 STEM challenges and resources
- P7 Prizes for Christmas parties, class treat on trip or residential, craft materials.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Report from Jacqueline Dewhurst

Opening Balance £7582.27 plus £ 271.36 petty cash

Christmas Fayre

Takings

Bacon Rolls	£204.50
Baking/Jams	£724.60
Home Bakes	£256.46
Raffle	£1686.61
Door	£1006.76
Stall Holders	£200
Total	£4078.93

Attendance

103 ticket transactions
Including 44 family tickets
Incorporating 181 adults and 159 children

Expenses £399.58

Profit £3679.35

Christmas Craft

Expenses £110.52
So far £200 (80 paid, 33 reserved, ongoing)

Other Fundraising

Co-op Community Fund Donation	£120
Easy Fundraising	£55.69
Kenyan John	£183
Donagh Costello Photography	£890
Rag Bag	£163.20

Expenses

Techfest	£203.70
Castle Fraser	£194
Critter Keeper	£400
Mr Murray Leaving Gift	£64

- Christmas Fayre feedback
- Elf Shelf Gift Stall, 9th December - nursery children will be invited to participate accompanied by parents/carers at drop off time. Possible repeat of gift stall week of the 12th December to accommodate those who have missed out.
- Nativity 14th Dec (P1-P3) - prior to the performances, the Parent Council will be offering light refreshments for a small donation.
- Winter preparedness - gritting assisted by the presence of janitor having hours and times changed recently.
- Safety - at drop off time. Aberdeenshire Council Policy is that children should not be dropped off until 8.40am. Pupil support is not in till later on in the morning. Mr Crabb will look into playground supervision provisions.
- Alistair Struthers - raised a question about the no homework policy. Mr Crabb will take this back to staff to further discuss.
- Beverley Stainton - query was made into the nursery climbing frame and slide which are reported broken. Mr Crabb will look into how these valued pieces of equipment can be replaced.
- Meikle Carewe Community Fund - application for additional play equipment for school was submitted in October. Unfortunately the PC was not successful due to the oversubscribed number of applications.
- Query made in relation to the colour preference of P7 Leaver's jumpers/hoodies and if they need to be navy blue to fit in with school colours. Mr Crabb to follow up with staff.
- Jacqueline Dewhurst made a query regarding clarification on school uniform. During COVID, the uniform policy was slightly relaxed. Mr Crabb to follow up.
- Santa visit has been organised for nursery on the 22nd Dec. Query was made for facilitating Santa visits also for the other primary classes and providing small treats for P1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- Sarah Benzie asked about the correct process for communicating with the school/teachers. Parents should either leave a message at the office, phone and ask the teacher to get in touch with you, and/or lastly email the admin account and emails can be forwarded to the relevant teacher(s).

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Dates proposed:

- 18th January 2023 - General Meeting
- 26th April 2023 - General Meeting