

## Minutes of Gorebridge Primary Parent Council Meeting: 2 September 2020

Zoom meeting: 6.00 – 19.50pm

### Present:

Carey Fairgrieve

Erin Whyte

Hilary Bunyan

Janis Harvey

Louise Barnet

Mo Gibbs

Neil Whyte

Paula Hartley

Seonaid Barker

Steven Wood (HT)

### Apologies:

Debbie Denver, Elaine Gifford, Janine Ketruck & Victoria Storrie

## 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 New members welcomed and introductions made.

1.2 Minutes of previous meeting were circulated prior to meeting and there were no actions arising.

## 2 APPOINTMENT OF POSTS FOR 2020/21 & REVIEW CONSTITUTION

2.1 CF as outgoing chair will update the Parent Council Constitution and circulate after the meeting. No points were raised in relation to the constitution other than to note that all office bearers are trustees of the charity, bank statements are sent to and all addresses are c/o the school and a decision is required in relation to signatories to the bank account in relation to signing cheques.

2.2 The office bearers (which are also trustees of the charity) for 2020/21 were agreed as listed below, with the school year of their Gorebridge Primary children in brackets:

- Chair: Carey Fairgrieve standing down – appointment of Seonaid Barker (P2 and P5)
- Vice Chair: Debbie Denver (P7) – appointment of Louise Barnet (P5) and Erin Whyte (joint vice chairs)

- Treasurer: Janis Harvey standing down – appointment of Neil Whyte (P2 and Nursery).
- Secretary: Lynne Roy standing down – appointment of Hilary Bunyan (P2)
- Members standing down: Victoria Edmond, Carrie Campbell
- New members: Elaine Gifford (P2), Mo Gibbs (P1 and P3) and Victoria Storrie
- Continuing members: Paula Hartley (P2), Janine Kettrick (P ), Louise Barnet and Erin Whyte (P2 and Nursery)

Members:

- Steve Woods (school representative at Parent Council)

### **3 TREASURERS UPDATE SINCE APRIL 2019 – JANIS HARVEY**

Last update was in February 2020. Noted little has changed.

- 3.1 Recent income: Matched giving £302.73 in April 2019 from Bank of Scotland in recognition of staff volunteering hours at valentines' disco. Summer fair not held due to school closures in light of coronavirus.
- 3.2 Recent expenditure: resource packs provided to support home learning due to Covid-19 lockdown (March 2020) and P6/P7 hoodies (June 2020) – approx. £1500.
- 3.3 Cost of the school day fund: Fund of £8943 awarded in May 2018. Funding successfully spent to nil balance. No further grants at present
- 3.4 Treasurers Account
  - 3.4.1 The adjusted bank balance, taking the above into account gives a current balance of approx. £4500 all of which is available to PTA (ie none held in reserve for any particular purpose).
  - 3.4.2 Books submitted for examination July 2019 – complete with no issues.
  - 3.4.3 Next stage will be to arrange handover of all paper work to incoming treasurer.
  - 3.4.4 Noted re regular outgoings such as gym bags and Christmas tree.
- 3.5 Acknowledge issues relating to raising funds going forward given current circumstances.

### **4 AGM & OSCR TRUSTEES REPORT – CAREY FAIRGRIEVE**

- 4.1 The 2019/20 term continued with a stable Parent Council and PTA membership with all members being re-elected in their previous posts. We completed our third OSCR charity return for SCO45853 we have yet to renew our lottery license due to Covid-19 as it was not required with there being no Summer Fair this year.

- 4.2 We have continued to support the school on an ongoing basis including review of the School Improvement Plan and Standards and Quality Report.
- 4.3 We were able to still deliver a Halloween and Valentines Disco and provided support to the school Christmas Fair, including a Santa's grotto. As a result of the school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic we were unable to have the Summer Fair or complete further fundraising.
- 4.4 Throughout course of the year – pre and post Covid-19 closure the PTA funded numerous activities and supplied equipment to support the educational objectives of the school. Our main expense this school year was to fund Christmas Movie experience with mobile cinema setting up in the school for Christmas where the pupils chose the movie and they had a great cinema experience with treat. We also supplied golf putters and funding for the Crazy Golf course to allow the school build more holes and allow more pupils to participate; funded a Postcard project to encourage parent/carers to express views on various aspects of the school; we also funded and sourced resource packs to support pupils identified by the school with at home learning as we moved into the school closure. Post closure, in recognition of the lack of P7 leavers events and the upcoming P7s restricted responsibilities we funded school hoodies for both years which had all the years first names on the back. The question of whether this would be a rolling event for P7s was raised but cost of this noted and no decision made.
- 4.5 As the leadership team within the Parent Council and PTA transitions the exiting Chair has also written How to Guides covering all aspects of the fundraising work they complete.

**Actions:**

1 None

**5 HEAD TEACHERS UPDATE – STEVE WOODS**

SW shared power point with the meeting. He gave thanks to the outgoing Chair and all retiring Parent Council members.

SW noted a good return to school with staff and kids settling well and good adherence with new measures. He noted P1 functioning well and staff levels were good (in relation to attendance). SW updated on new staff members including Jamie Dougal (PT), Marjorie Pride (learning asst) and Craig Wilson (NQT) all of whom he viewed very positively and he noted a good ethos within the staff.

The initial focus is on wellbeing and recovery as well a reflection on the Covid crisis. Classes now moving to routine work and topic work. The focus will move on to assessment of kids, finding gaps and addressing issues. SW referenced school group management visit in relation to where school is and what is predicted.

## 6 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, STANDARD & QUALITY REPORT - STEVE WOODS

The School Improvement Plan was shared in advance of the meeting and SW spoke to some of the points covered by the plan at a high level with some further details discussed.

There were four priorities identified in the 2018/19 plan and there has been some progress in each area. Incomplete projects are to be rolled over with the focus being on health and wellbeing:

### 6.1 Priority 1: Wellbeing resilience and nurturing

Key work on therapeutic support and behaviour and relationships policy noting various tweaks required. Changes relating to Educational Psychologists had proved challenging.

The SB raised questions regarding outcomes and explained that these come from the overall Midlothian Council Plan. Looked at the example of exclusion levels. Noted that there were some in 19/20 session but aim to keep that low and try to have it at zero and none so far this term.

### 6.2 Priority 2: improving the consistency of teaching and learning including key action "The Excellent Gorebridge Teacher"

SW covered the 3 points listed in the plan and noted that these changes had been made but not yet embedded. Focus had been given as a result of the recent inspection and that there would be developed in practice. School would be looking to revisit and refresh and link to the new values.

Again, the SB asked about measurable outcomes in relation to attainment levels and where were the school with those? SW said that because of schools being closed since March the attainment data was not confirmed and accurate as it would be normally. Some assumptions could be made from predictions that were made, however these predictions could have improved with interventions we had started to put in place. The school was not asked to submit data for P1, P4 and P7 to the Scottish Government as it would normally. Predictions indicated positive progress in P7, similar attainment in P4 as previous session and a slight drop in attainment in P1. SW noted introduction of the Read Write Inc programme in relation to phonics and assessments for session 20-21

CF noted the need to engage at nursery level with literacy as well as play and to involve school pupils in linking with nursery. CF asked if the drop in numeracy was due to the lack of a teacher within the nursery but SW advised that this was not the case and that intervention had been put in place prior to lockdown to address the gap and focusing on specific children. This intervention was called 'SPRING' Priority 3: translate revised vision, values and aims

SW also spoke about how we have now established the new school vision, values & aims – REACH your potential Be the Best You Can Be. Need to now embed the vision and ensure that it is lived in the school and to develop the curriculum map.

### 6.3 Priority 4: improve attainment in literacy and numeracy.

SW noted who would be leading each priority within the improvement plan and how each priority picked up on points identified through the inspection for example, word problems

within numeracy, moderation within literacy and numeracy. Each improvement team will meet to discuss and develop the plan further. SB asked if there was going to be a greater emphasis on writing within the SIP as attainment not as good in this area. SW advised that this would be looked at further when the improvement team met. Within the current plan there was plans for developing moderation and introducing Read, Write Inc, It was noted that (i) the education element of the PC was important and there was a need to consider how issues can be tackled and in what way the PC can help to increase focus or fund something such as more regular updates or a parent/carer engagement plan eg newsletter and (ii) that educational achievement was key eg 1 to 1 reading (parents/volunteers) and that the PC should help with planning to be ready to provide and call for help when social distancing measures permitted this.

In considering an action plan for the PC various items were discussed including (i) disclosure checks (ii) action plan – SW to identify what school requires eg readers, extra helpers (iii) ways to engage and get volunteers ie very specified roles/times (perhaps make a video to appeal), HG referenced example of newsletter with selection of options/times as utilised at Moorfoot – SW to source.

### **Actions:**

- 1 MG to report back on disclosure process from her own current application.
- 2 SW to identify school requirements
- 3 PC to consider ways to engage with parents/carers as well as identifying ways to get necessary volunteers when circumstances permit.

### **Pupil Equity Fund**

SW advised that PEF (Pupil Equity Fund) awarded in excess of £100K to fund continuing projects. Some of the money is still to be spent (approx. £40K) and is being held in reserve to use depending on circumstances and events. The PEF is currently funding: the home school practitioner SFL Teacher to work on nurture and early intervention, Read Write Inc, summer hub (£7K but GPS families did benefit), therapeutic support such as art/play therapy and drop in support (currently for 6 cases but could invest more as required).

From this CF asked about improvements in health and wellbeing or whether any issues on return from holidays. Since return the majority had returned well without a significant number of new wellbeing concerns. Continued support was being offered to families to support wellbeing and financial challenges.

The remaining funds are to invest into gaps that arise going forward.

### **7 BLENDED LEARNING**

- 7.1 SB raised the issue given we are not out of the woods yet regarding the pandemic and it is important to talk about blending/home learning. SW advised 2 surveys undertaking (one parents/one teachers) and whilst those were not to hand for the meeting some comments were shared.
- 7.2 Inconsistencies/quality of understanding of Seesaw. Originally school working with basic programme, now upgraded to allow SW overview and pupil engagement (confirmed to be a school funded cost). PC noted that it was reactive when introduced but JH spoke to several

examples of issues and functionality of the tool. PH mentioned that Seesaw are looking at various areas including sorting/assignment of tasks. PH also advised how o/s tasks can be archived. CF spoke to carrying out a post implement review to identify and address issues that could be done better another time and to ensure that Seesaw is used to the best of its ability.

- 7.3 Lack of direct engagement with kids or staff demonstrated engagement eg through videos or individual messages.
- 7.4 Both positives and negatives should be identified across GPS and other schools so that blended learning/use of Seesaw can be better ready if required in future. SW advised all that information was available and he would look at the data and do some following up. It was noted that there would be challenges but that it should be seen as an opportunity for life long learning/skills beneficial beyond any lockdown.
- 7.5 Other ICT programmes were also discussed including Sumdog and Top Marks. A library of blended/home/e-learning resources would be useful going forward.
- 7.6 The meeting discussed was of supporting blended/home learning such as postcard sent to pupils with the PC providing cards/stamps to be used to encourage/interact with pupils.
- 7.7 A working group between the PC and school was suggested to work on this and develop it to be best resource possible. Physical resources were discussed including hardware The Council have announced proposals for the 1 to 1 model with each pupil having a chromebook (some are available and will be provided to school). It was also noted that the school fed into a high school that was a digital school for learning and there should be an emphasis on the upper school to ensure acceleration and transition to high school. Other practical learning to support e-learning was also discussed and what the PC could do to support that as there were lots of parents with expertise in this area and who may be willing to volunteer. SW noted that the school is working towards GPS becoming a digital school.

#### **Actions:**

- 1 SW to follow up in relation to the positives and negatives relative to Seesaw with a view to identifying best practice going forward.
- 2 SW/PC to liaise re working group to allow PC to support blended/e-learning.
- 3 PC to consider suitable resources it could support such as postcards etc so as to be ready should blended learning be implemented again.

#### **8 REVIEW OF PTA ACTIVITY AND MINUTES**

- 8.1 Meetings are usually 1 per month at a time/day to be arranged (varying to ensure attendance across the board so far as possible). A message regarding availability to be sent out.
- 8.2 Lottery licence application to be kick started as soon as possible. Discussion regarding Stobhill lottery and consideration of whether that would work in GPS. SB noted there were different options regarding the lottery but further work required.
- 8.3 Other ideas put forward for activities included:

- 8.3.1 a Halloween Trail consisting of a treasure trail with small prize. CF suggesting incorporating the Beacon (perhaps as final stop where prize collected). Group noted good idea and that fancy dress could also be worn. A small amount of entry charge would raise modest funds and more importantly would hopefully engage pupils/families and perhaps wider village.
  
- 8.3.2 a virtual Christmas market/outdoor market (although issues relating to weather/ongoing social distancing noted). PC interested to know what other schools were planning for Christmas (noted that Christmas cards to come out) but what about the items pupils make and sell and fair. Other suggestions included virtual messages from Santa, ascertaining what Made in Midlothian were planning and Christmas hampers (with request for prizes from local business where possible).

**Actions:**

SB to circulate dates and times for PTA in order to develop Halloween Trail and other events.

**9 AOB**

- 9.1 SB mentioned attending Midlothian Council Parent Council group meeting. Noting a more structured approach required events overtaking plans and SB undertook to keep PC updated.
  
- 9.2 A proper send off for retiring Chair and retiring members and welcome of new required when circumstances permitted.