**Tynewater Primary School Parent Council**

32 Crichton Road, Pathhead. Tel. 0131 271 4710

**Meeting No. 60**

Minutes of Meeting of Tynewater Primary School Parent Council,

Held on Thursday 1st December 2016, in Tynewater Primary School

Present: Shondra Riley Chairperson

 Lynsey Roy Clerk

Nicola Marr Treasurer

Gill Penfold Parent Member

 Jennifer Gardiner Acting Principal Teacher

 Douglas Lawson Head Teacher

 Jane Brown Co-opted Member

Apologies: Sally Barlow Parent Member

 Julia Critchley Parent Member

 Sandra Liddle Parent Member

 Eileen Busson Parent Member

**Minutes of Last Meeting/matters arising**

SR opened the meeting by welcoming those present for our final meeting of 2016.

**Review actions of previous meeting**

**School Notice Board** - LR provided pricing information for a new Parent Council notice board. DL noted that the school could source at a better price.

**Family Night -** In the New Year, SR will conduct a poll regarding a school family night.

**Friday Art Club** - SR and Liz Crombie discussed delivery of the creative sessions in detail. The sessions began on 18 November, they have been popular and feedback has been positive.

**School Wish List -** DL informed that the staff will provide the Parent Council with a wish list after the school holidays now that there is a full complement of staff in the school.

LR noted that there has been no further contact with Matthew McDonald regarding the “Skills for Learning, Life & Work” research project since the last Parent Council meeting.

**Community Links -** DL has discussed community links with staff and a further meeting will be held next term to discuss how it can be taken further.

**Christmas Fair -** LR and SR reported that all plans for the Christmas fair have gone well and that there are many volunteers to help on the day.

**Deputy Chair Appointment**

It was agreed that all parent council members will act as Deputy Chair when the occasion arises.

**Head Teacher's report**

DL reported that there is now a full complement of staff in the school and that they are working brilliantly as a team. The School and Parent council would like to welcome little baby Connie to the world and wish many congratulations to Mrs and Mr McCabe on the birth of their daughter and little sister for Adam and Imogen. Mr McCabe and Miss Gardiner were welcomed by the Parent Council.

DL informed of the escalating teaching staff shortage across Midlothian. This means there is a shortage of suitable qualified candidates, which stalls the recruitment process. It causes schools to be understaffed, leaving existing staff overworked and using weekends to catch up on planning and marking. This was discussed at length and agreed that further discussion is needed about how Parent Councils in Midlothian could help. SR will contact other Midlothian Parent Council Chairs to discuss supporting schools in the aim to gain attention to the matter and resolving the staff shortage crisis.

**National Education Governance Review**

*“We believe that decisions about children’s learning and school life should be taken in schools. We want to empower teachers, practitioners, parents, children and young people and communities to have a stronger voice in Scottish education and to become key decision makers.”*

-The Deputy First Minister, John Swinney MSP

SR attended a meeting regarding the National Education Governance Review where those in attendance were to be given the opportunity to discuss the Review. SR will liase with other Midlothian Parent Council Chairs to form collective input into the review.

**Adverse Weather Policy**

Due to the recent weather conditions, parents have voiced concern about the lack of protection on school grounds from the elements. The possibility of using the dining hall on extreme weather days was discussed. It was agreed that this will be looked into further. In the meantime parents and carers are asked to refer to the school handbook regarding adverse weather conditions. This can be found on the school website.

**Christmas Fair**

All plans for the Christmas Fair are going well with many volunteers coming forward. It is planned that there will be time on Friday 2nd December to set up in advance and all volunteers are welcome along with their children.

N.B since the meeting, the Christmas Fair was held and it was a huge success. Funds are still being counted and expenses being deducted. A final total will be available in the New Year. A huge thank you to all those who helped to make this year's Fair such a success.

**Treasurer’s Update**

Due to the amount of fundraising activity, such as Christmas Cards and the Christmas Fair, funds are still being confirmed. An exact balance of the Parent Council Bank Account will be reported for the next meeting on 20th January.

**AOB**

It was discussed that the information in the Standards and Quality Report shows the scores to be very positive. Further information will be distributed to parents and carers by the Scottish Government.

The school has been approached by Be School Wear asking us to consider changing suppliers for our school uniforms. It was agreed that we will stay with Image Scotland, who provide excellent quality uniform at reasonable prices. They also provide the school sweatshirts for the P7s at no additional charge for the change in printing.

It was was noted that the Edinburgh company, who prints school Christmas cards and suddenly went out of business, was not the same company that Tynewater Primary uses.

N.B since the meeting the children’s orders from Class Fundraising have been sent out and have been a great success. Total funds raised will be in the Treasurer's report on 20th January.

Children are encouraged to take home uneaten food in their lunch boxes, but some are taking it to the extreme, i.e.returning half opened yoghurts. DL clarified that children are asked to use the buckets provided in the lunch hall, when appropriate. Children are asked to take home uneaten food to make parents aware of what is being eaten and what is not.

Tynewater Primary Parent Council have signed up to Easyfundraising.co.uk to help raise funds for the school. It’s a simple case of parents/carers registering then when they wish to shop they can go to their chosen website via Easyfundraising.co.uk, at no additional cost to the user. The companies, of which there are tens of thousands, then donate a percentage of sales to the Parent Council.

**Summary of Action Points**

* SR to conduct a poll regarding a school family night in 2017
* SR to liaise with other Midlothian Parent Council Chairs to form collective input into the Education Scotland Governance Review
* SR to contact other Midlothian Parent Council chairs to discuss teaching staff shortages
* LR to get price quotes of a new Parent Council notice board
* LR to confirm the total profit from the school Christmas card fundraising
* NM to report finances in next Meeting
* DL to further discuss Community Links with staff
* DL to update the Parent Council on shelter in extreme weather conditions

**Date of Next Meeting**

 Friday 20th January 2017 at 11.00-12.15 Tynewater Primary School (Room TBD)