**Tynewater Primary School Parent Council**

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**Meeting No. 61**

Minutes of Meeting of Tynewater Primary School Parent Council,

Held on Friday 20th January 2017, in Tynewater Primary School

Present: Shondra Riley Chairperson

Lynsey Roy Clerk

Sally Barlow Parent Member

Eileen Busson Parent Member

Julia Critchley Parent Member

Gill Penfold Parent Member

Jane Brown Co-opted Member

Douglas Lawson Head Teacher

Leona Freeman Head Girl

Josh Lothian Head Boy

Emma Diffley Parent

Sandra Davidson Midlothian Council

Apologies: Nicola Marr Treasurer

Sandra Liddle Member

**Minutes of Last Meeting/matters arising**

SR welcomed all meeting attendees and noted that our Head Girl and Head Boy will regularly attend Friday meetings as representatives of the Pupil Voice Group.

SR is conducting a poll regarding a Family Night in 2017. A Facebook poll currently shows Mystery Night in the lead. A paper-based poll and online poll will be released for those who are not on Facebook. Results will be reported in February.

SR reported that she liaised with other Midlothian Parent Council Chairs to submit collective input into the Education Scotland Governance Review. The release date of the Governance Review Report is currently unknown.

SR contacted other Midlothian Parent Council Chairs regarding the supply teaching staff shortage and the impact it has on staff and pupils. Six Parent Councils have agreed to form a statement to the Department of Education in support of Head Teachers asking this critical situation be addressed.

LR noted that a list of prices for a new Parent Council notice board is still being collated and will be presented to the Parent Council for consideration.

The final numbers from the school Christmas card fund-raising shows a healthy profit of £373.80. Breakdown as follows: Cards - £163.80, Tags - £24, Mugs - £120, Tea Towels - £66

DL is discussing Community Links with Staff in the next Staff meeting. Next steps will be discussed with SR and Karine Polwart.

DL reported that on 22 December a trial of the existing extreme weather contingency plan worked well. At 8.30 a large format notice was placed on the P5 to P7 door instructing “P1 to P7 pupils to come into school NOW using the Office entrance.” From there P1 to P3 pupils were supervised in the dining area by Learning Assistants; each class sitting at clearly labelled tables. P4 to P7 pupils were supervised by Mr Lawson and a Learning Assistant with each class sitting in clearly labelled areas of the school hall.

Classes remained in these areas until the 8.45 bell when they proceeded to their respective coat areas. This extreme weather contingency plan will be used at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

**Treasurer Report**

The current back account balance is £5,802.17

**Head Teacher Report**

DL confirmed that he aims to issue this term's Information for Parents w/c 23rd January and that the Parent/Pupil/Teacher meetings dates are currently available for booking online.

DL informed that Mrs Clarke is due back from maternity leave after the Easter break. Mrs MacInnes is on voluntary unpaid leave for the rest of the term. Mr Lawson is covering her timetable for 1.5 days per week to allow staff valuable non-contact time. This will inevitably have a knock-on effect to Mr Lawson fulfilling his normal Head Teacher duties.

DL informed that the school has bought a height-adjustable puppet theatre, which will allow Pupils to create and perform their own puppet shows. Two weeks prior to Easter, Nursery to P7 pupils will be involved in a Puppet story writing project.

The Library system has been upgraded to The Reading Cloud. SR, JB and Miss McDonald have been trained and will be able to guide Pupils, Parents and Staff on how to use the new interactive website. SR and JB noted the new system will help promote the school's priority of Reading and promote reading for enjoyment. More information will be issued by the school. For further information visit: https://www.microlib.co.uk/home/ReadingCloud.aspx

**Christmas Fair Follow up**

Feedback received from Christmas Fair Volunteers was generally good. It was clear that improvements are needed on pre-briefing and on-the-day support. It was agreed these issues will be addressed at this year's Fair.

SR suggested that the Jam Jar Tombola was not aligned with school health priorities. She asked that the Parent Council consider alternative ideas to raise funds and entertain the children at this year's Christmas Fair. It was also suggested that there be more free activities, rather than all activities requiring money.

**Activity Planning**

SR drafted a Parent Council Activity Plan, which acts as a framework for the events the Council intend to do during the year. It highlights things such as Film Nights, Garden Tidy days, Parent Council meetings and more. This will be circulated to Parents and Carers.

The Parent Council is focussing on setting goals this year, which will involve:

* Increased engagement with charities
* Working with Staff and Pupils to determine a funding project to work towards
* Improved links with the local community
* Increased Parental involvement
* Improved Pupil Engagement

Staff will compile a wish list in a bid for Parent Council funds. Pupils have been encouraged to add to this list and give their opinions.

SR noted that it was important for the school to respond to Parents who volunteer whether they are needed, at that time, or not. DL noted that the school had a system in place for doing this and that teachers had received only one volunteer form last term. It is hoped that more Parents and Carers will return the forms and help with trips and in the school in future.

**Community Links**

Sandra Davidson spoke to about her work in Lifelong Learning and Employability for Midlothian Council. Sandra noted that Pathhead can be a bit remote for people to attend classes in other areas of Midlothian and that classes could be held in the school. LR suggested that first aid classes be made available. It was also suggested that Family Learning courses would be useful. It was agreed that these should be explored further.

**Playground activities and PE during School Hours**

GP asked whether the amount of PE was being vastly reduced on the lead up to Christmas. It was understood that the gym hall was being used for nativity practice and parties and that the weather did not always allow outdoor classes. DL explained that PE classes are replaced with Scottish Country Dance classes and the amount of PE was unchanged. DL confirmed that the playground toys from the outdoors cupboard were used every day, weather permitting.

DL confirmed that the daily mile had returned to the curriculum w/c 16th January. SB queried types of shoes children should wear when doing this activity. It was noted that suitable school shoes are designed for wear during playtimes, so are assumed acceptable for running. DL made clear that the school did not expect Parents to provide another pair of shoes for running.

**AOB**

**Dog Fouling** – SR will contact the Department of Environmental Health for advice on how to tackle this issue. LF and JL have been asked to take this to the Pupil Voice Group and try to think of ways to discourage dog fouling. The Parent Council asks that Parents or Carers whose children step in or wheel through mess please take a photo of it and send it to [Tynewaterparentcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:Tynewaterparentcouncil@gmail.com). Please don’t send photos of children, only of the mess on shoes, wheels, etc. Photos will be used to demonstrate to Midlothian Council the importance of this issue.

**P1 SEAL Session** – P1 parents present were very impressed with the session on maths. It was agreed that all year groups might benefit from similar sessions.

**School Lunches** -was discussed how school lunches they could be improved. There was concern over the amount of carbohydrates and the lack of protein. It was suggested that a subcommittee could be formed to explore this further. DL reported that a large proportion of food from the School Christmas Lunch was binned. It was suggested that, to reduce waste at the next Christmas Lunch, the possibility of a buffet lunch would be explored.

**Summary of Action Points**

* SR to release Activity Plan to Parent Forum
* SR to report the results of the Family Night Poll
* LR to present Notice board price options to the Parent Council
* GP to report on the suitability of school shoes for the daily mile
* DL to explore further maths sessions for other year groups
* LR to investigate community First aid Classes
* SR to contact Department of Environmental Health re: dog fouling
* LF/JL to discuss with the Pupil Voice Group re: dog fouling

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 9th March 2017 at 6.30pm in the School Staff Room