

## Minutes: Tynewater Primary School (TPS) - Parent Council (PC) Meeting 90

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 18:30 – 19:30

### Online Teams Meeting

#### \*Action point (\*AP)

#### 1) Welcome and apologies

Apologies: Fiona Hayes, Stevie Blackwood, Sana Malik, Anna Davanna, Matt Elliot  
Present: Emma Diffley ED (Chair), Julia Critchley JC (Secretary), Aurora Mancini AM (Treasurer), Clare McCallum CM (Headteacher), Isobel Leonard IL (Principle teacher) Laura Mackay LM, Laura Else LE, Jane Brown JB, Mairi Milne MM

#### 2) Minutes of last meeting/Outstanding Actions

(1) The minutes of the previous meeting (89) were accepted

(2) Outstanding actions:

- (a) Road safety: PC to contact Gillian Bathgate Travel Plan Co-ordinator & School Crossing Patrol Supervisor, Midlothian Council, regards congestion/safety. ED updated the PC that this is in progress.
- (b) Garden Volunteering: Survey of parents regards volunteering with garden and forming a steering group. ED updated the PC that this has yet to go ahead.
- (c) Antisocial behaviour: Community meeting planned to discuss youth antisocial behaviour in Pathhead. ED updated the PC that this meeting is yet to be held due to difficulty securing a date. Date now rescheduled for April to accommodate Mrs McCallum. ED/CM will report back at next PC meeting
- (d) Dogs in school grounds: CM has reminded parents/carers on behalf of the school not to bring dogs into the school grounds. **AP: CM will approach Skanska about permanent no dog signs.**

#### 3) Chairperson's Report

- a) Afterschool club survey: ED feedback results. This time 9 responses compared to 21 last survey. Mayfield/Lawfield/Tynewater Afterschool Club (MASC) do not have staff to come to Tynewater on Friday afternoon. Lisa at MASC has space at Mayfield Primary School on Friday afternoons and suggests if transport from Tynewater at 12:25 could be arranged then Tynewater pupils could be accommodated at Mayfield branch of MASC. Parents/carers would need to arrange to collect children from Mayfield. Interested parents should liaise directly with Lisa at MASC. ELONSC (who run breakfast club) have not replied regarding Friday PM provision. PC will resurvey parents at end of summer term in case circumstances change.
- b) Covid restrictions. P6 are petitioning to alter covid restrictions to allow parents to attend the production of 'The Mould that Changed the World' their Charades show which is a combined P5/6/7 production. On behalf of the children and school ED will raise this at the Parent Council Chairs' meeting. ED will also question the need for masks in the playground.
- c) Headteacher post: ED updated the PC that this position remains unfilled and has been re-advertised. A nice video was created to aide recruitment.
- d) Donation of PC funds: PC are keen to support the Charade's performance and to balance out and support years 1-4 then possibly playground equipment.
- e) Lost property: Volunteers required to lay out lost property for collection. Proposal is to do this Friday mornings until end of spring term. Items not collected by Easter break will be recycled appropriately. **AP: ED to collate volunteers for lost property sessions**

- f) Easter egg competition: Thank you for Jane for agreeing to judge the school Easter Egg competition. **AP: JB to liaise with CM about timing of this**
- 4) Treasurer's Report
- a. AM reported on recent account activity and currently approximately £4700 in PC account. However some expenses are waiting to be processed.
- 5) Headteacher's Report
- a. Assessments: CM updated us on the Scottish standardised assessments (SSA). The assessments have started in P1-4. These assessments provide valuable attainment data for the school
- b. Outdoor play: Children are enjoying the outdoor play equipment such as skipping ropes, hoops and building bricks. Classes are taking turns to have MUGA time. P7 buddy system is back running with P7 and P1s.
- c. Play Midlothian: are currently working with P5 and also delivering valuable school wide staff training on inclusive play.
- d. Drumming: external teacher has been in with P3 and P4 and gave great feedback on how engaged the children are with the activity
- e. Staff Absence: Covid-19 is having a significant staffing impact. 11 staff absences since February break. Most staff needing to be off for 10 days. Having 3 teachers off at once led to whole classes needing to close. 2 classes closed and if this happened again school would ensure different classes were affected. Teachers have pulled together to ensure learning has been minimally compromised. CM thanks her staff for their efforts.
- f. Supply teacher: Mrs Jackson is enjoying supporting the school. She is a retired class teacher with experience of various age groups. This is a help to the school which is now in week 4 of continued staff absences.
- g. Teacher for P6: Previous P6 class teachers are currently sharing the Principal Teacher role. As no replacement P6 teacher has been secured Mrs Jackson will stay at the school full time until June to allow Mr Watson to be a consistent class teacher for P6 until the end of the academic year. Mrs Leonard and Mrs Clarke will transition the class over to Mr Watson over the next 2 weeks.
- h. Mobile phones: Small minority of children are using phones in school. CM will ask families to remind children that the phones go into the school phone safes until the end of the day. School has purchased appropriate phone safes for the purpose.
- 6) Gardening Volunteers and Garden priorities
- (a) It was agreed that raised beds should be prioritised.
- (b) The PC and staff all feel that the children should be involved in garden maintenance as well as choosing and tending to the plants
- (c) **AP: LE will arrange a survey to establish what days parent volunteers can come in to help during the school week**
- (d) Big garden tidy proposed for a Saturday afternoon over the next month or so. **AP: LE to look for appropriate date**
- (e) P3 children and their teacher Mrs Cruikshank are keen to do a project with plastic bottles and build a structure. Parent volunteers would be helpful.
- 7) Playground Equipment
- a) Parents have raised concerns that outdoor play equipment is lacking. **AP: ED and CM to explore this further**
- b) ED reports that the playground may be due a playground refurbishment. She is uncertain when this is due and will investigate with the council. It seems unwise to invest PC funds on the playground when refurbishment is perhaps due. **AP: ED to liaise with Skanska/Midlothian Council to establish what refurbishment is planned and when**

8) Reading Schemes

- (a) LM raised concerns about lack of variety provided by the available reading schemes. Oxford Reading Tree (ORT) is very good but limited and not always engaging. Mrs McCabe had previously suggested Songbirds as a potential alternative. PC agree that to progress with reading children should be being exposed to different characters and genres.
- (b) ED had spoken to Mr Lawson and Mrs Clarke about using PC funds for purchasing supplemental reading material. PC could donate a substantial amount if they could identify appropriate reading material to fill gaps.
- (c) PC members overwhelmingly agree to use PC funds to purchase whatever books the school staff would like.
- (d) CM updated the PC on the various strategies available to encourage reading. She reported back that we do have other schemes available – including Dandelion and Songbirds. **AP: Staff reading champions are going to review the school material and identify gaps and also appropriate books.**

9) P7 transitional activities

- (a) CM discussed the planned P7 transitional activities. Online events are already happening. Including a social studies teacher from DHS teaching P7 online this week. The 2 day visit is planned to ahead. Covid restrictions are to ease and it is unlikely that in-person visits will not go ahead.

10) Residential Trips

- a) ED asked CM whether any residential trips were planned.
- b) CM reports back that a residential trip is unlikely to go ahead this academic year and this is mainly due to the lack of time to appropriately plan such a trip.
- c) IL outlined the various residential trips the school has run in the past – Lowport for P5, Glasgow for P6 and London for P7.
- d) CM and the staff will look into planning trips for next year.

11) AOB

- (a) LE raised disappointment regarding the new devices. For example although they have arrived in school they were unavailable for the recent covid class closures. CM explains the many issues getting the new iPads on line. The delays with getting the devices home are mostly due to difficulties with agreeing the acceptable use policy. CM apologises for the delay in the roll out of devices.

12) Date of next meeting and close

The next meeting will be: Friday 29th April 11:00 – 12:00

It is planned that the next meeting will be held in person and in school. CM requests we limit the number of in person attendees to 6 adults (not including members of school staff). To allow more numbers to attend a virtual option will be made available if required.

Future dates: Tuesday 24th May 18:30 – 19:30  
Friday 24th June 11:00 – 12:00