

Underbank Primary School
Parent Council Meeting
Thursday 30th January 2025

Present: Lorraine Cameron (Vice Chair) Margo Millar (HT), Mhairi van der Kaars, Natalie Dow, Lindsay Speirs, Ellece McCabe, Chrissie Finnigan

Co-opted Member: None present

Apologies: Scott Martin, Jonathon Gibson, Krystal McNicol, Jenny Parry.

Councillors: Poppy Corbett (Apologies)

Minutes: Susan Jackson

Welcome & Apologies - LC welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting and shared apologies received.

Previous Minutes.

Proposed – MvdK

Seconded – LS

HT Report – See Appendix 1

MM welcomed new parents and explained the delay in the first meeting of the academic year. She shared the HT report and answered any relevant questions to her report. A short discussion took place between all present regarding the change in ownership rights of X (formerly Twitter) content. Concern was raised regarding continuing to use this platform to share pupil photographs. LC advised that her place of work has stopped using X and LS advised that some schools have changed to Google Drive as it is secure though lacks option to comment. CF raised question of historic content ownership. MM advised that school was awaiting advice from South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) but is considering only using photos that do not show pupils faces.

CF asked for explanation of PEF and when it was expected to finish. MM covered acronym, criteria for receiving funds and history of amounts awarded to Underbank Primary and a summary of how the awarded amount is spent.

DW asked if during school closures such as the recent red weather alert closure, could teachers use platform to engage with pupils. MM, LC and LS explained Teaching Union stance on 'live' learning, legalities, logistical challenges of ensuring all pupils have access to electronic devices and 'internet poverty'.

EMcC raised concerns about school transport using a route where there is damage to trees and a power line posing a potential danger to road users. She has contacted the bus company and police but has no confirmation of who takes responsibility for pupil safety on school transport. CF advised emailed Councillor Poppy Corbett as well as Richard Robertson, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) Director of Transport Operations and Valerie Davies, SPT Chief Executive. CMcC advised that she will not allow her child on school transport until the road is made safe or transport route is changed. MM made all aware that changes to pupil use of school transport must be passed to the school office.

Funding Update

LC explained that many funding providers require a bank account under the name of the group receiving the funds. This Parent Council has no bank account and discussion surrounding opening one raised the concerns of time and necessity. MvdK explained that she had approached the PFA with a suggestion that their account could be used but this was turned down. LC explained that who should apply for funding is blurred ie between Parent Council applying for grants and PFA being responsible for local fundraising. CF volunteered to formulate a structure for proposing, voting on and applying for funding. All present agreed this would be effective as well as needed to avoid duplicating funding applications by PFA. All agreed PFA should be approached to clarify reasoning for refusing use of bank account. CF suggested a bi-annual working group. LC suggested creating a comprehensive list of grants that may be suitable for Underbank to make bids to.

LS raised suggestion of 'rural poverty' and MM explained that 2 recent applications had been rejected. EMcC suggested another attempt at applying for Community Fund.

Participatory Budget

MM explained that this should be at least 5% of a school's PEF amount and that for this session it was agreed that we would fund access to Times Tables Rock Stars & Numbots for all pupils to access.

MM shared that Times Tables Rock Stars is a maths programme that aids the learning times tables and has a proven track record of boosting children's fluency and recall in multiplication and division, and Numbots promotes interactive mental maths skills.

School Chaplain for session 2024-2025

MM updated group that due to the retirement of Mr Steven Reid, Ex-Minister of Crossford Church, a Chaplaincy Team has been formed. This team comprises of Fiona Anderson, Minister of Dalserf Church and Roberta Hutton, Interim Moderator of Crossford and Kirkfieldbank Church in the village.

School Improvement Plan Summary – see Appendix 2

MM shared a paper copy and advised that all parents had been informed that this is available on the school website.

SLC Curriculum Rational

MM issued paper copies to all present.

MM explained that due to SLC no longer funding Rights Respecting Schools Awards, Underbank Primary will not progress towards the Silver Award due to the restrictive cost. CF asked for an explanation of Rights Respecting Schools and MM shared this with all present.

Cost of School Day & Our School Budget

MM confirmed the policy was updated a year ago by LC, is SLC approved and is on the school website. ND asked who monitors the cost to the school day as due to schools low PEF budget, more cost is on the parents. MM assured all of mindfulness concerning fundraising events, dress down days etc and that often pressure is removed from parents as 'donations' are suggested. LS confirmed she felt there was little pressure put on parents for money. ND agreed flexible and optional donations were best e.g. hot beverages at events, KUA Fund options.

CF suggested philanthropic funding. MM explained school cannot advertise a business therefore goods rather than monetary donations were welcomed. This would need to be discussed with PFA as they approach local business for raffle prizes. LS suggested an auction and EMcC volunteered to look into licences for this type of event.

MM used cost of P5 swimming lessons as an example that parental contributions far from cover overall cost. She also highlighted annual expense of licences and copyrights costs now funded through the school budget and no longer by SLC, as well as, essentials such as toilet roll and paper towels.

LS suggested businesses supplying at lower cost or donating. EMcM asked if PFA could buy the toilet roll, and LS and LC explained PFA funding was used more for extra-curricular activities and resources. LS suggested businesses such as Asda may give vouchers to spend in store and could be used for the essential consumables.

PC Constitution

Document available on school website and last reviewed 2022. CF agreed to review and was given a paper copy.

Distribution List for PC members

CF agreed to be added to list. MM hoped for a representation across the school and is aware that there are no P1 parents on list.

CF commented that there appeared to be no gender balance in group. LC assured all that the Chair of the Parent Council and another member were male, but unable to attend this evening. The KUA was a male member's suggestion and his absence tonight was due to organisation of community running Crossford village hall.

EMcM enquired why school do not use village hall more and MM explained cost and accessibility part of the reason. She confirmed that some pupils were joining the Coffee and Chat group in the hall next week and that she would mention the village hall in our Friday Update.

AOCB

LC thanked school staff for considering the parents request for a residential trip and the commitment of staff to provide it. MvdK asked about uptake of places for the trip and MM advised that the majority of P6

& 7 pupils were participating. LC appreciated the payment plan for this residential trip as a benefit to parents.

AGM

LC acknowledged that the AGM was overdue and that she will discuss this with the Parent Council Chair (SM) so that the next meeting includes the AGM. Chair and Vice Chair need to attend. MM assured all that the PC date does not need to align with the next PFA meeting on occasion this can be beneficial for reducing the number of school lets required. SJ to apply for let for 8th May.

Next meeting: Thursday 8th May at 1830hrs.