

CULTS PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL Annual General Meeting

Monday 4th September 2017, 7-9pm

Red Unit, Cults Primary School

Attendees:

Iain Mearns, Chair (IM); Tiana Walker, Treasurer (TW); Caroline Johnstone (CJ), Morven McKay (MM), Mark Raistrick (AM); Nancy Anderson (NA), Jane Setter (JS), Alison Stewart (AS), Laura Haxton (LH), Julie Anderson (JA), Julie Baghurst (JB), Suzanne Smithwhite (SS), Alison Murray (AM), Ann Smith (AS), Catherine Smith (CS), Shobha Jaganathan (SJ), Nancy Anderson (NA), Jane Setter (JS), Mathew Korakunju (MK), Chachi Chaladi (CC), Mini Chaladi (MC), Nazym Freeman (NF), Karla Richteroua (KR), Soraya Abdullah (SA), Andrew Hunt (AH), Donagh Costello (DS)

Apologies: Sonya Angus (SA); Phillipa Smith (PS), Hannah Mearns (HM), Rachel Soplantila (RS)

Agenda items	Updates and discussions	Action
1.	<u>Welcome and Apologies – IM</u> A large number of new and returning parents attended the meeting allowing the number of committee members to be increased	
2.	<u>Previous Minutes were approved</u>	
3.	<u>Objectives of the Parent Council (PC)</u> IM explained the objectives of the Parent Council: to promote contact between parents, staff and Aberdeen City Council; to represent all parents and be inclusive; to support the school in its efforts to raise attainment. Parent teacher Councils are set up by central government statute. Cults Primary Parent Teacher Council reports to the Aberdeen Parent Council Forum	
4.	<u>Treasury Report</u> TW summarized the bank balance of the Parent Teacher Council The closing balance was £1271.50, TW noted that funds are available to cover babysitting for PC members The primary use of this year’s funds was for banners that surround school fencing; promoting improved driving and parking behaviors. Accounts now approved 01 October 2017 Comments from attendees included a desire that the PC should seek to discharge all its funds in the interests of the school in each school year. Holding a reserve balance is of no obvious use. Note that all funds should go towards activities that raise attainment	PTC
5.	<u>Highlights from the Past Year</u> IM ran through the highlights of the parent teacher council activities from the past school year 2016-2017 1. School Grounds project. An illustration of the overall plan was shared with attendees 1.1. The design phase of this important project was completed in early 2017. £8000 from the Tesco ‘Mud No More’ funds were used to tackle drainage problems affecting the southwestern part of the playground, so far these seem to have been successful 1.2. There was general agreement that the next phase should focus on pathways, in particular wheelchair access 1.3. Significant funds been committed by the PTA for the next phase – approx. £20k 1.4. A call will go out to convene a stand-alone discussion group to progress school ground works	PC

2. Travel Safety

2.1. Achievements over the past year include: dropped kerbs near to the peripheral road entrance, double yellow lines, the footprints that highlight walking routes, and the banners that remind parents of the parking guidance and regulations

2.2. All of the above are viewed as having a positive impact although continued efforts are needed to improve awareness, many of those attending the meeting recognized the challenges of accessing the school and the need to remind parents of their responsibilities

2.3. There was some discussion on the best approach when delivering kids:

A number of parents enquired about the introduction of a staggered start to the school day citing positive experiences from previous schools: *CJ noted that we are already staggered with Cults Secondary and that staggered starts would impact on timetabling, break and lunch times, staff contractual hours and arrangements for staff development.*

Could classroom teachers be available for kids to be dropped earlier (0830 onwards)? *No. Teachers are not contracted to supervise children before school and supervision of pupils out with class time is not within a teacher's remit. CJ reminded attendees that the Hillview Church parking is free and nearby. Other suggestions from attendees included "walking buses" collecting children on established routes*

2.4. Volunteers are needed to manage the banners; keeping them fresh and so ensuring they are taken notice of.

3. Temporary Classroom – Purple Unit

3.1. The original intention was a more permanent temporary unit attached to the main school building at the green unit; the installation of this unit was supposed to take place in the summer of 2017. Additional works planned for summer 2017 were: interior AV unit renovation, reconfiguring of the school reception area and toilet refurbishments were tendered as one. When the funding for the reception area works was withdrawn none of the planned works could go ahead. Some of the work was to be funded through developer funding, which is ring-fenced for increasing the capacity of the school, however it will not be possible to progress the project until the council is able to re-tender.

3.2. An attached unit and a more permanent solution is still the desire of the school and the City Council and to this end, conversations between IM and the council representative (Andrew James) are ongoing. *It was noted that the local authority is under more severe financial pressure than ever before*

3.3. The work required will be very disruptive and as with most major works in the school requires a longer holiday period, typically the summer break

3.4. Two P3 classes are now accommodated in the purple unit, a 'Portakabin' facility on the hard-standing area outside the Nursery Unit. *CJ shared some pictures of the purple unit and reported that, as of the date of the meeting, teachers, pupils and parents who have are very happy with the temporary solution*

	<p>4. Scottish Government Initiatives</p> <p>4.1. School receives £18k from pupil equity fund, based on number of pupils entitled to free school meals</p> <p>4.2. Scottish Government Consultations; in late 2016, early 2017a subgroup of the PC put a significant effort in responding to the ‘Governance Review’ a consultation on future governance arrangements for schools in Scotland and the role of local authorities</p> <p>It also asked about the support teachers and practitioners need to do their jobs well and how this can be improved. The document was extensive and complex for lay readers and the committee applauded the effort of the working group. Analysis from the Governance Review has been published on the Scottish Government website http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/06/6880</p> <p>4.3. The next Scottish Government consultation; ‘Fair Funding to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education’ has a deadline of 13th October 2017. This consultation seeks views on the Scottish Government’s future approach to school funding. The consultation invites views on the way education is currently funded in Scotland, the purpose of developing a new, more consistent approach to school funding, and the principles that should underpin any changes. It also sets out and seeks views on possible future approaches. <i>It was noted that the cost per child at Cults Primary school is one of the lowest in Aberdeen City. Most additional funding is currently allocated according to levels of deprivation across the country, rather than any other level of need</i></p> <p>A request has been made inviting a select group of parents to coordinate a collective response on behalf of the school, this is currently being progressed with help from parents from our associated schools group</p> <p>4.4. House System. Houses are named for local castles and include: Balmoral, Crathes, Dunnottar and Drum</p> <p>4.5. Fundraising: DVDs of the school performance were sent out last school year to raise money, it was felt this was successful and could be repeated</p> <p>4.6. Communication: the main means of communication is by Groupcall (which is limited to one main contact number per child to receive texts and emails). The website and class blogs are extensively, though variably used. There was a request to maintain the website with up to date data</p>	PC
5.	<p><u>Head Teachers Report; the Year Ahead</u> Priorities</p> <p>1. Learning, Teaching & Assessment to Raise Attainment. As detailed in the improvement plan raising attainment in literacy and numeracy is a key priority for us. Most recently we have been working on moderation* of writing with the local Cults associated school group (ASG) and Hazelhead ASG primary schools. Data on individual schools’ CfE attainment was gathered last year and was described by the government as “experimental”. Data has been gathered again this year. This year the new standardized assessments will be introduced for P1, P4 and P7</p> <p>*moderation of writing across the ASG refers to teachers working together with colleagues across different schools to ensure a shared understanding of, and consistent approach to, assessing children’s written work at all levels</p>	

	<p>2. Parental Engagement and Partnership Working. This includes formal (PTA/PC) and informal means of engaging with parents. <i>CJ reflected that the school benefited from a talented parent group and recognized that the school was continuing to develop its approaches to sharing learning with parents e.g. through learning journeys</i></p> <p>3. Improvement Plan and Quality report. CJ shared this document with those present. A recent development is the establishment of Cults Partnership Forum, a group including representatives from all ASG schools, Community Learning and Development, Police Scotland, NHS and Social Work. One of the functions of the group is to consider how the needs of the children and young people in the area can best be met by working together and pooling/sharing resources across the ASG. The importance of early intervention was noted.</p> <p>4. Improving Health and Wellbeing. Our whole school promoting positive behaviour policy is based around a Quality Circle Time approach and following our Golden Rules. All classes have the same approach and the rules are consistent across class, dining room and playground to ensure the children know what is expected of them and are rewarded for good behavior. This approach was revisited and refreshed during the May in service day and followed up with a training day in school involving both staff and pupils working with Jenny Mosley, a guru and trainer in this approach. We are also committed to and following the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Programme</p> <p>5. Others: The 1 + 2 roll out of modern languages is continuing, with P4 and 5 now learning French; there is a regular focus on Scots language, with a dedicated area in the school library and various events throughout the year. <i>CJ noted the concern of some parents that general information is not available in an easy to access central point, this is the intended function of the school website, however this will be looked into</i></p>	
6.	<p><u>School aims</u></p> <p>The school aims are bullet points that set out the key aims for Cults Primary School. The vision statement sets out our shared vision for the school. The extended aims serve to illustrate how the school will achieve/achieves the stated aims.</p> <p>A group exercise took place in which attendees discussed and reviewed the school's aims and gave recommendations on how these might be made as meaningful as possible to the wider school community</p> <p>Action on the PC to identify key topics from the school's aims that we could focus on at subsequent meetings</p> <p>Mapping was also suggested as a means of understanding and communicating the key values from the school's aims.</p> <p>There was a suggestion to make these revised aims small and clear enough to fit on the back of a teacher's identification pass</p>	<p>PC</p> <p>CJ</p> <p>PC</p> <p>CJ</p>

	<p>Some related issues that were mentioned by the attendees included practical application of the school's environmental principles and the process by which induction for new pupils takes place (a number of attendees noted the absence of an induction pack). <i>There are different processes for new P1 pupils starting and pupils at other stages who join the school at various points throughout the school year. P1 pupils have an extended induction and an induction pack is issued to each pupil/family. In the interests of economy and saving resources an induction pack is not routinely issued to all families either enquiring or enrolling at school, rather they are directed to the website where all relevant information, including the school handbook are readily available. Anyone requesting hard copies of any of the information is provided with these.</i></p>	
7.	<p><u>PC Membership</u> Many thanks to those who have contributed to the Parent Council over the past year, new committee members were elected. In alignment with the Parent Council Constitution, the membership will number twenty or less. The list below reflects the current membership:</p> <p>Office Bearers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Iain Mearns Chair 2. Katrina Stewart – Vice Chair 3. Mark Raistrick – Secretary 4. Tiana Walker – Treasurer <p>Members</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Rachel Soplantila 6. Hannah Mearns 7. Laura Haxton 8. Julie Anderson 9. Julie Baghurst 10. Suzanne Smithwhite 11. Alison Murray 12. Ann Smith 13. Catherine Smith 14. Shobha Jaganathan 15. Nancy Anderson 16. Jane Setter 17. Alison Stuart 	
8.	<p><u>AOB</u> PC functionality; some clarity on roles and the need for a quorum to conduct PC business are required, do we have a charter or other constituting document that we can share? Yes, there is a Cults Primary/Nursery School PC Constitution, which was reviewed 2013</p> <p>There is a need for ongoing responses to Scottish Government consultations - the current consultation is on funding proposals (Fair Funding consultation) an ad-hoc meeting should be set up to formulate a response to this as responses are required by 13th October 2017.</p> <p><u>Date of the next PC meeting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 7th November 7-9pm <p>Any parent of a child at Cults Primary/ Nursery is very welcome to attend any Parent Council meeting. (The Parent Council can be emailed at PCCultsPrimary@aberdeencity.gov.uk)</p>	<p>IM</p> <p>PC</p>

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