

MPiP Minutes: Tuesday 15 March 2016

Staffroom, Meldrum School.

Attendance: Leah McKinnon, Kathryn Michie, Alastair Beaton, Helena McKerron, Sara Campbell, Kerry Urquhart, Julie Farquhar, Rebecca McLennan, Hazel Fraser, Carol Harper, Jo Lord, Estelle Winward, Libby Davidson, Lesley Buchan.

1. Apologies: Ruth Scott, Donna Sim, Jane Brown.
2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Updates: Approved with no amendments.
3. Matters Arising:

Lesley Buchan updated the group on the Scotrail Arts and Sports Grant with a view to applying for funding for new sports equipment (basketball hoops/mobile stands) rather than refitting the ones in the gym as has been discussed at previous meetings.

There was discussion around the available options: £100 investment would allow us to purchase a reasonable quality stand; £250-£300 could allow the purchase of a better quality stand that meets the height requirements as set out by the Scottish Basketball Association. £1000 investment to purchase the professional level equipment – although this was felt to be better suited to pupils in the Senior Phase at Academy, rather than primary level players. Purchasing the mid-range (£250-300) stand would mean that this equipment could be used at any future tournaments to be held at the school. We are still awaiting a final costing for the marking out of the playground for basketball/netball games, although initial pricing had come in at approximately £682.50. AB to seek will contact Aberdeenshire Council to request that RFM provide a quotation for marking out a court.

The Scotrail Grant is available for up to £5000 of equipment. Lesley felt that if we could keep the budget to under £2000 then we may be in with a more secure chance of getting the funding from this organisation. There is a deadline of 31/3/16, although other dates are available in the future should this deadline not be met. There is still some netball equipment in the school building from before the 2002 building work that might be fit for purpose, although this will require further investigation to identify whether it would be suitable for competitive matches. AB will get the janitor to take stands out of store and assemble to see if this equipment would meet need.

4. Head Teacher's Update

School Roll

The roll in Primary continues to grow and we currently have 371 children. Nursery roll continues to creep up and we will have some 103 children in our setting in the coming days, giving a total roll of 474 children.

Staffing

Our class structure has been agreed at 15 classes for next session (2016.17). Staffing for next school year was pretty much in place until a few days ago when the Early Years Manager advised that Mrs McKee would return to Nursery when her maternity leave comes to an end. So we're now planning Nursery staffing around the prospect of Mrs McKee and Miss Fraser having a job-share type teaching commitment next session.

We have concerns about staffing ratios in Nursery next session for children with severe and complex needs and this is currently being pursued with the Early Years Team.

Buildings and Grounds

Our Sensory Room is now complete! The equipment was installed just over a week ago.

I met with my Robertson's Facilities Manager on the 23rd of February and began with a walk around the school car park. There were very few instances of inconsiderate parking to be seen that morning, but as a first step, Robertson's have now instructed Mr Doyle to issue slips when cars are carelessly and dangerously parked. There was talk of parents being taken to task by RFM if cars are parked on the grass verges/kerb stones and subsequently cause damage to school grounds. Car park issues will remain on the agenda of my monthly meetings with Robertson's, and it's likely that there will be a meeting in the near future with Robertson's, PTU and Burns Coaches regarding car park congestion – parents parking in the bus bay, using the disabled taxi bays etc.

There was discussion regarding the school policy for pupils being in composite classes. Whilst there are no definitive "rules" about this practice, AB clarified that the school would generally try to avoid pupils being in composite classes year after year.

A meeting scheduled to take place with parents, Public Transport Unit and Burns' Coaches was rescheduled from February and held on Friday 11 March. PTU have suggested that Burns utilise 2 coaches to manage the routes to school, as there are recurrent issues with the winter route being employed on the Airyhillock/Thornton stretch of the road. There have been 21 occasions this session when the Winter Route/Main Road Pick-Up has been used; five times more than Local Authority statistics for any other route in Aberdeenshire. There was no clarification during the meeting as to what constitutes the necessity for the Winter Route to be taken. AB to raise at his meeting with Craig Clement (Head of Service: Resources and Performance) on 16.03.16. It is thought that the two coaches will be used from after Easter until Summer at least. Parents will be informed in due course of any change of pick-up location or time.

5. Restorative Practice Update:

JB (Carol Harper gave JB's update in her absence).

- Every class has now developed their own set of classroom expectations in line with UNICEF's children's' rights and have these displayed within their classroom
- Class Expectations from across the school have been collated to form the new Meldrum School Expectations and these have been shared with staff.
- Meldrum School Expectations will be launched across the school during an assembly before the end of term and will be distributed around the school to be used from Easter onwards.
- Glossy well designed posters of the School Expectations will be produced in the summer term and distributed throughout the school
- Copies of the expectations will be sent home in the next Newsletter along with a link to a Restorative Approaches Video on line as requested by the YGR
- Plans for the weekly relationship building sessions are well underway and by the end of term, plans should be in place for these sessions to be launched to pupils in the first week of term and to commence in week 2 of next term

6. Treasurer's Update:

Two cheques given to HMck. Easyfundraising £105.63, raising the total since starting eighteen months ago to £489.39. Rag Bank cheque for £98, raising the total it has raised to £681.20. Both of these ongoing fundraisers were highlighted for their relative ease of use and ongoing income benefits.

7. Fundraising Update:

There have been parental and staff queries about a further Boden Shopping Event at the school. LMck has arranged for Thursday 5 May as the date for the next event. Clothes will be dropped off on the Wednesday and collected again on the Friday morning. It is envisaged that the event will run along the same format as last year: morning, afternoon and evening sessions. Some assistance will be required in both the setting up and packing up of the clothes. The committee would also appreciate support for raffle prizes and home baking to help boost this fundraiser. There was some discussion around the best way to advertise the event. It was felt appropriate to keep the event fairly local to our own parents/community during the school day; with an invitation for those out with the immediate school community to attend in the evening. LMck to discuss with the Boden co-ordinator about an email to this effect. Other advertising will take the form of bag drop, posters, email and social media.

Joint Fundraiser with MAIG. Philip Michie has been in touch to discuss the possibility of holding another Race Night fundraiser with the local community group. Philip will email Donna Sim directly about organising this event.

8. Group Reps Update:

JF raised that the Reps were hoping to organise a meeting soon to look at how to move this aspect of MPiP forward, especially in terms of participation at forthcoming induction events for Nursery and Primary One pupils/parents.

9. AOB: Discussion regarding a recent incident whereby a young pupil (P1) managed to leave the school grounds in the morning. The pupil was upset and trying to reach their parent who had already left the playground, as per the current playground procedures. Other parents managed to stop the child from crossing the road, but the incident was not reported to the school or to the support staff on duty. Pedestrian barriers had been discussed with the Roads Manager, Philip Leiper, and agreed to in principle, along with bollards that were to be placed on the pavement at the Meadowbank entrance to the school. A gated barrier would need to be in place outside the entrance to the Early Stages Playground to allow vehicular access when necessary. There has also been discussion about modification of the 'baffle' entrance to the Early Stages Playground, to create a different flow in/out of this busy area. AB to meet with the QIO and QIM and Building Support Officer to discuss this and other issues regarding the school procedures. There was further discussion on the success of the new playground procedures and those present agreed that it may be counterproductive to simply have parents wait at the bottom of the playground area as this may still prove too much of a distraction for children lining up to get into school. Staff reiterated that the new procedures are having a positive impact - pupils are entering the building with less distraction and generally able to get in and on with the business of learning at a far better pace than before this procedure was implemented.

Changes to Lunches: AB raised the positive feedback regarding pupils having a direct line of contact with an adult at lunchtime to deal with any lunch issues. A meeting with the Catering Advisor raised the issues of portion sizes and under provision of certain meals. The online system for managing payment of school lunches is to be operational by June.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 18 May at 7pm