

MELDRUM PARENTS IN PARTNERSHIP (MPiP)

Wednesday 22nd February, 7pm, GP Room

Attendance – Carolyn Cooke, Lesley Buchan, Helena McKerron, Anna Cordiner, Susan Orr, Katrina McCartney, Ian Mitchell, Jane Brown, Carol Harper, Hazel Fraser, David Harrigan, Fraser Edward, Ruth Scott, Jenny McGillivray, Jill Good, Ewan Alexander.

1. Apologies – Nadia Blaney, Rebecca McLennan, Lana Duncan, Libby Davidson, Donna Sim.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes accepted with no amendments

3. Matters arising

4. Sylvia Harvie and 2 pupils from P6 and P7 – Zac and Cassie – the Rights Respecting Schools initiative. Pupils volunteered to represent their classes voted to elect their reps. First meeting of group – Zac elected chair and Cassie vice chair. The group name was chosen to be 'Roaring Rights'. Article 31 was chosen by the group to be the first right to be covered – this is the right to play and relax. The group intend to cover 1 article per term to get the children in the school thinking about their rights. Looking at getting parents involved and doing things in the wider community.

5. Chair Update

I'd like to say a massive thank you to all parents/ guardians who helped at the Valentines disco. All the kids seemed to have a great time. There were some fantastic dancers. The tuck shop was a real hit.

I'm unsure if the parents/ guardians are aware that Aberdeenshire Council are currently undertaking a public consultation on permanent traffic measures which ends on 3rd March. See attached document for more information.

A bag drop was done on Friday for house t-shirts. The cost has risen but MPiP decided not to increase the retail price as we feel £6 is more than enough for parents/ guardians to pay. We'll still make a profit however from them.

Education City renewal - We've decided to remove the homework package as this is underutilised. With the way our funds are at the moment this is definitely the right thing to do. We will continue to pay for the classroom package.

Mrs McCartney discussed bike ability at last meeting. June Andrews will do a training

session for volunteers on 22nd March. We'll get a fb post requesting volunteers to help. This is a fantastic initiative to get kids active and make them road wise.

Lesley Buchan put in an application to Tesco Inverurie this week for funding from the carrier bag charges. This is to raise funds for the dual purpose basketball and netball court and equipment and for after school clubs to be set up. The application is for £2500, if we are put forward to be one of the 3 options to be voted on we will be guaranteed a percentage of the funds. Other possible options to raise the necessary funding – grant application through the Meldrum Café for the Making Meldrum Better charity, Rotary Club could possibly fund a bag of basketballs and netballs, Formartine Partnership also provide grants to communities for good causes.

6. Head Teacher Update

Staffing

There continues to be changes around staffing with initially, my starting as Headteacher but we also welcome Jo Dawson as our new admin assistant in the school office.

Mrs Sally Eames has now left us and will be replaced by Ms Sam Crawford. Unfortunately because of staffing shortages Ms Crawford will not be released from post until after the Easter Holidays. Mrs Eames duties are being covered by Mrs Brown and Miss Harper until the upcoming holidays at the end of March.

The initial staffing return has been submitted and the role is predicted to remain at around 366 with 102 in the Nursery. If current predictions stay as they are this will mean that staffing levels will be similar to last session though there will be some changes that will impact on this. e.g. Aberdeenshire policy of moving of teaching staff from Nursery.

In-Service Days

We had two very productive INSET Days. Day 1 was a cluster event where all of the teachers received input about ADHD, followed by further information relating to ADHD, ASD and using digital technology to support literacy and numeracy.

Day 2 was for school based staff. The focus for the school was reviewing the Culture & Ethos. We looked at GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) and how effectively we are supporting wellbeing in the classroom and in other parts of the school. We revisited our school expectations as a staff and the children

will be doing the same activity during the next few weeks so we can ensure consistency in expectations around the school.

We looked at the Aberdeenshire Curriculum Frameworks, as these are the guidance for schools in delivering the pace and progression in learning for children in Aberdeenshire. We also looked at the Professional Curriculum Tool which supports effective learning and teaching in our schools.

We also managed to find some time for resource cataloguing, and two of our school working groups finalised their presentations for supporting staff in Writing and Circle Time respectively.

Improvement Plan

Our Priorities for improvement this session remain as:

- * School Culture & Ethos
- * Raising attainment in Writing
- * Nursery – Staff capacity building in learning, teaching and assessment

Good progress continues in all of the areas and we remain on target for this session.

QIO

Mrs Gaye Stevenson has been asked to take over the role as Quality Improvement Officer for the Meldrum cluster until further notice. Mrs Stevenson is a Headteacher who is currently part of the Curriculum Support Team and has previously acted as a QIO for another cluster of schools.

Hands Up Travel Survey

This year's Hands Up Survey shows a slight increase of 68% of our pupils either walking, cycling or Park and Striding compared to last year's 65%.

Attendance Procedures

Aberdeenshire Council guidelines for school attendance have been updated to reflect GIRFEC and the continued expectation of good attendance as an essential feature of our children reaching their full potential.

When children fall below the 90% attendance with insufficient reason for the absence then schools are now expected to follow this up. Lateness will also be followed up after 3 occasions.

If children are not in school or nursery by 9.30am follow up calls and texts will be sent to families. This is to confirm the child is safe and again is a responsibility of all schools in Aberdeenshire.

7. Fundraising Update

Valentine's disco was a huge success, raised £249.54.

Upcoming events include Rag Bag collection on 7th March, Car Boot Sale – possibly on a Sunday – JB to check whether this can be booked, Summer Picnic – possibly in August once the school is back.

8. Treasurer's Update

Income: Valentine's Disco £249.54

Nearly new school uniforms £35

Expenditure: Christmas Fayre £290.47

Football Team £63.03

Valentine's Disco £350.60

9. AOB

P7 Leaver's Party – JB advised letters will be put out at Easter with further information and requesting parent volunteers.

Lochter road to be closed for 2 weeks from 13th March and Inverurie road to close for 2 weeks from 27th March. Diversions will be in place.

Early Stages Playground – pavement outside is crowded with parents after the first bell in the morning, causing obstruction to children attempting to enter the playground. Children sometimes have to go out onto the road to get past. The roadside barrier will go in at Easter, will reassess after this.

School office staff have had some parents report that they are unable to contact the MPiP email address. We are currently looking into changing email provider. Recently sent out contact info slips and have added another 106 new email addresses to the database.

Parent email regarding school meal puddings-

'The government recommends (these are NHS guidelines) that free or added sugars (these are sugars added to food or drinks, or found naturally in honey, syrups and unsweetened fruit juices) shouldn't make up more than 5% of the energy (calories) you get from food and drink each day. That's a maximum of 30g of added sugar a day for adults, which is roughly seven sugar cubes.

Children should have less – no more than 19g a day for children aged 4 to 6 years old (5 sugar cubes), and no more than 24g (6 sugar cubes) for children aged 7 to 10 years old.

The Aberdeenshire School Menu is available online and does provide nutritional values. In general the puddings provide on average 15/17g of sugar which is close to the recommended maximum. In the summer menu there were some shocking examples noted below:

Lemon drizzle 23.6g
Jammy swiss roll 20.6g (Summer menu)
Chocolate Cracknel 20.4g (Summer menu)
Sticky Toffee 31.7g (Summer Menu)

The current menu has been slightly modified to reduce sugar but Aberdeenshire Council only appear to be doing the bare minimum. As a consequence children in P1 & P2 could potentially be consuming close to the daily recommended limit by simply eating a school pudding!

Sugars also occur naturally in foods such as fresh fruit and milk, but we don't need to cut down on these types of sugars.

I have contacted Lynsey Fogg at the Scottish Government who has policy responsibility for school food provision and food education. She advises that the rules for school lunch provision are set out in 'The Nutritional Requirements for food and drink in schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008' (the Regs). These regulations include strict upper limits in relation to sugar and caterers must plan their menus to make sure that the food and drink on offer over a school week average out to meet the Regs. However, these rules appear to be out of date and bear no relation whatsoever to NHS guidelines detailed above.

She also advised me that they have a dossier of correspondence from other concerned parents/carers but not sufficient for the Government to make changes. If we as responsible parents wish to make changes then we must make our expectations clear to Aberdeenshire Council about the type of meals they provide to our children. In some areas parents have successfully made councils remove puddings from the menu altogether and replaced them with yoghurts and plentiful amounts of fresh fruit.

The only way the lunches can be changed is by parents placing pressure on Aberdeenshire Council as we have a right to expect a healthy lunch for our children.'

Aberdeenshire Council Catering Dept is responsible for choosing menus so this should be the first point of contact. MPiP have requested that this parent keep us updated so we can provide support as necessary.

EA asked whether Active Schools could organise activities within the school during lunch break. Active Schools provides activities outwith school hours and will support the school to run activities within the school. The Early Stages Playground has equipment out for the children to play with including cars and chinks and P5 children have been trained to run playleader games. P6 buddies will also play games informally. For P3 and upwards there is

equipment out in the fields and the climbing wall. Lunchtime clubs have ceased as teachers were finding it hard to have their lunch and do the required preparation for afternoon lessons.

HM asked whether Restorative Approaches would be rolled out to parents. JB spoke about space in school currently being at a premium and it is difficult to find a location for the 9 meetings required. Aim would be that all 9 would be completed by the end of the summer term.

Next meeting Monday 27th March 7pm, GP Room