

MPiP Minutes Wednesday 14th January 2015 7pm, School Staff Room

ATTENDANCE

Attendees: Ruth Scott, Helena McKerron, Alastair Beaton, Lesley Buchan, Emma Davidson, Libby Davidson, Jill Thomson, Kathryn Michie, Joanne Lord, Rebecca McLennan, Fraser Edward, Laura Pirie, Jane Brown, Carol Harper, Elaine Yeats, Leah McKinnon

1. APOLOGIES

Sarah Stephen, Pauline Stevenson, Donna Sim, Joanne Evans, Hazel Fraser, Estelle Winward

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND UPDATES

P7 House Captains and P6 Vice House Captains are involved in playground improvements.

One PSA to be trained to deliver Play Leader Training. The year group to be trained is still to be confirmed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

JB reported that the current P1 and 2 playground arrangements are working well so will not change. P1 and 2 share the early stages playground between 12.30 and 1pm when most children are in the dining hall. Then from 1-1.30 P2 are moved to the quiet area where they are supervised by one of the PSAs. Before Christmas P3-7 also had access to the quiet area at lunchtime but they have now been moved to the lower playground.

P3 are managing the lunch rota system well. The introduction of free school meals has caused a smaller than expected rise in uptake and the dining staff are coping well with increased numbers.

P5 children have been selected for Play Leader training. Mrs Sharon Hall is currently being trained to deliver training to P5 pupils. By midterm P5 children should be starting to help with P1 and possibly P2 in the playground. P6 pupils are to be playground buddies offering general support to younger pupils. P7 pupils act as lunchtime helpers for indoor playtime.

The audit of playground resources is almost complete. In the next 2-3 weeks the House Captains will be deciding what needs to be ordered. The House Captains reported that the children would like a daily rota of which equipment will be brought out. JB requested funds from MPiP for initial replacement of equipment then annual maintenance. By Easter the costs of this should be known.

4. HEAD TEACHER'S UPDATE

School Roll

Our roll presently stands at 371 children in Primary and 95 in Nursery – a total of 466 children.

Staffing

Staffing shortages in Aberdeenshire remain an issue. In addition to a shortage of teachers, it is also proving quite difficult to get long term Nursery Nurse and Pupil Support Assistant (PSA) cover.

- As things stand, Mrs Brown is teaching four days per week in P4 through to the summer
- I am teaching four days per week in Nursery – most likely to Easter
- With no applications for Mrs Elder's maternity leave post (now advertised for some three months), Miss Harper will teaching full time in P1 from Easter through to the summer holidays.

The vacancy created by Mrs Hepburn's resignation is now in the process of being advertised. The Authority are moving away from teacher appointments in Nursery settings, so the advert will be for a full time permanent Nursery Nurse.

We currently have a long term PSA absence that we've been unable to fill fully, so since just before the October holidays we've been at least 10 hours per week short on PSA cover in the school, and for much of the time we've been almost 15 hours per short of our full allocation of hours.

On the positive side, we welcomed new Nursery Nurse, Gillian Simpson, to school this week – Gillian will be providing two days per week management relief to Miss Fraser for the remainder of the school year. Our new Support for Learning teacher, Lesley McCranor, takes up post on Monday. Due to Mrs Main's ill health, we've largely been without SfL input for the last 12 months. Consequently, I've been able to ensure that Mrs McCranor is with us on a full time basis for the remainder of this school year. All other posts have been filled on a long term temporary basis and we now have Lorna Thomson back as Mrs Brown's DHT Relief for one day per week and most recently, Jenny Banks has returned to provide non class contact time for our Enhanced Provision classes through to the summer – cover that until now has had to be provided by our DHTs.

Accommodation

Work will definitely proceed re the creation of our 16th classroom over the summer. Planning for this begins tomorrow (Thursday 15th) when I meet with Ed McGann (Facilities Officer), Robertson FM, ICT Officer and our QIO, Sheila Marr.

At December's property meeting, discussions and planning between the Authority and Robertson FM began re the creation of a Sensory Room as part of our Enhanced Provision resourcing. Hopefully I'll get some information re possible timescales for this at tomorrow's meeting.

Property

Resurfacing of the large tarmac area in P3-7 playground is still scheduled to go ahead during the Easter holidays.

The school's answer machine is still not working, but I've successfully pushed for a complete new phone system. The exact nature of the work to be undertaken has still to be confirmed – with any luck the new phone system will be fully operational by February mid-term break.

The climbing wall issue has still to be resolved – I've trawled back through old email accounts and should be able to share a chronology of events with Leah by the end of the month. This will again be raised at my meeting tomorrow.

Parking issues – I'll raise the pedestrian barriers with Ed McGann tomorrow. Safer Routes to School advice now shared with Leah and we'll look to meet in the weeks ahead to plan a course of action to move this forward.

Nursery Situation

Following a meeting towards the end of last term with the Early Years Manager, our Nursery numbers have been tweaked for the remainder of this school year. Whilst our capacity remains at 112 places, we will now take 100 children across our two settings (Rainbow and Otter Rooms), with 12 places being kept for Extended Provision (whole day) places. We have approximately five further new starts after the Easter break, at which point we will be full.

5. TREASURER'S UPDATE

Our current bank balance is £12966.10. The Christmas Fayre brought in £500 more than 2013. Recent profits have come from Xmas cards, Rag Bank, Spree Books, House T-shirts and funding from Aberdeenshire Council. So far MPiP has spent funds on Xmas party snacks, restocking supplies of face paints and glitter tattoos, and gifts for the janitors.

6. FUNDRAISING UPDATE

The Christmas Fayre had a fantastic response from parents with amazing donations including £150 Meldrum House voucher and a tablet computer. Many thanks to all volunteer helpers and the 200 paying adults and their children who attended the event.

Big Rag Bag Collection on 22nd January. Bags will be sent out to parents shortly. These bags can be placed in the container in the Early Stages playground which will be open on Wednesday 21st January and first thing on Thursday 22nd.

Boden Shopping Event. MPiP has been given a provisional date of Tuesday 3rd March for a Boden shopping event. Merchandise will be available to look at and try on and orders can be taken. MPiP will be given a £50 voucher to use as a raffle prize. Shoppers will be given a 20% discount with free delivery and returns. Anyone who introduces a new customer will also be given a £25 credit incentive. More details to follow.

MAIG have expressed an interest in doing a joint fundraising event with MPiP as they did last year. LM to liaise with MAIG.

Other fundraising ideas were discussed, including summer picnic, bingo night and beetle drive. The consensus decision was that a daytime indoor family event at a weekend would be the most inclusive, possibly a beetle drive.

Halloween disco – MPiP group reps have been asked if they will take on responsibility for organising this event. They will be having a meeting in the next few weeks to discuss this.

Easyfundraising – Since going live at the start of October this has gained 40 supporters and has raised £123.97. LM to arrange a bag drop to remind parents how easy it is to use, also posters to be put up within the school.

7. MPiP GROUP REPS UPDATE

The MPiP group reps will be meeting in the next few weeks. They welcome any input and ideas.

8. AOB

An email from a parent asked how we were able to get a new bike rack installed when Robertsons are unable to pay for the climbing wall to be fixed. The bike rack was provided through Commonwealth legacy funds.

EY congratulated all involved for a hugely successful Christmas show.

EY reported that there have been problems with shortage of food towards the end of the school dinner session, some children receiving a small meal with missing components. AB to pass on the feedback to the dinner staff. LM noted that the dinner hall had been very orderly on the previous day. Mention made of the fact that juice is not included in the free school meal. Water is provided free but juice still to be paid for.

JT expressed concern about safety at the school gate at the bottom of Meadowbank. 3 separate car crashes occurred in this area over the festive break with one car ending up lodged on the post so the gate was inaccessible. This patch of road is bad for black ice and is not gritted in the mornings. AB has a meeting tomorrow so will raise the issue. LM to contact Roads Manager Philip Leiper to request a site visit and discuss options re bollards, pedestrian barriers or the like.

The path from the Meadowbank gate to the bins at the bottom of the car park is not being gritted and in the Early Stages playground only a path from the gate to the school entrance is being gritted so there can be very slippy areas which are unsafe. AB will request the janitor checks these areas and puts out grit in the morning if necessary.

NEXT MEETING MONDAY 23RD FEBRUARY, 7PM, SCHOOL STAFF ROOM