

MPIP Minutes Tuesday 25th February 2014

ATTENDANCE

Attendees: Jane Dickers, Kathryn Michie, Jill Good, Pauline Stevenson, Hazel Fraser, Jane Brown, Derek Evans, Melania Walker, Jane Nicoll, Kathryn Rintoul, Estelle Winward, Philip Michie, Alastair Beaton, Elaine Yeats.

1. APOLOGIES

Elizabeth Buchan, Carol Harper, Jill Thomson, Donna Sim, Katie Robertson, Emma Strathdee, Jenny Davidson, Kirsten Laing, Katrina McCartney, Leah McKinnon, Joanne Evans.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND UPDATES

Approved

3. MATTERS ARISING

Nursery Canopy/Doors

Meeting held with Aberdeenshire Council Facilities Officer, Ed McGann, and with Geoff Begg (Representing the owners of the building – Infrastructure Managers Ltd). The owner's fire strategy plan has been checked and Geoff Begg has advised that the inner doors at the entrance are not required as a fire break. They will be removed during the Easter break. The outer doors will remain as they are, as they are fire doors on a designated exit route and he will not change these. There was some discussion regarding the fitting of a push pad to make entering the building easier for all parents/children to access but this is not under consideration at the moment.

HOUSE T-SHIRTS

There will be a further order of House t-shirts to be ordered by the end of March. Leah McKinnon to co-ordinate the ordering of these.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

The school website is now up and running, although there are a few technical issues that have resulted in some pages not being fully populated with information as yet. School newsletters will also be added to the website for parents to access.

www.meldrum-pri.aberdeenshire.sch.uk

4. HEAD TEACHER'S UPDATE – ALISTAIR BEATON

Teacher Shortages

- Parent Council Chairs received a letter from Maria Walker, Director of Education, Learning and Leisure outlining the current issues relating to problems with staffing across Aberdeenshire. The pertinent issue arising from the letter is that staff shortages are prevalent across Scotland, but acutely realised in Aberdeenshire schools.
- There are a series of measures in place to try and fill vacancies. These include: moving temporary staff onto permanent contracts; offering class teaching secondments to staff (such as SFL teachers); offering supply contracts to recently retired staff; recruiting staff from

Ireland and Canada; offering relocation packages to probationers to encourage them to continue working in Aberdeenshire.

- Aberdeenshire Council is working in partnership with Aberdeen University to offer an opportunity for interested, and appropriately qualified, staff to apply for a post graduate course in teaching. This is an 18 month distance learning opportunity. 19 employees began the course on the 3rd of February 2014, with a view to graduating in Summer 2015. Following their probationary year all will be guaranteed a post in an Aberdeenshire school. Mr Beaton is involved in the pilot along with another Head Teacher and Officer as co-tutors.
- Meldrum School still has the 2 uncovered long-term absences for an SfL teacher and Intervention and Prevention teacher.
- The Management Team are covering as many absences as possible: in the first five weeks of this term (25 school days) the school management team covered 30 days

School Buses

Burns coaches have cancelled the Bourtie/Airyhillock route five times during the winter due to icy road conditions. However, the frost has often lifted by the time parents have taken their children to school. Under the contract agreement, Burns are not obliged to then take these children home in the afternoon if the morning route has been cancelled by bad weather conditions. It is believed that this is the only bus route to have been affected by these conditions across the 'Shire this winter. AB met with Principal Transport Officer, Colin Young and with Senior Transport Officer, Paul Reid to discuss the issue.

Action – There is to be a meeting with Burns to agree a collection point for families along the route affected. The Transport Officers are going to look into flexibility regarding collecting pupils from school in the afternoon when road conditions have significantly improved from the morning.

Extension of Nursery Hours

The Scottish Government passed the Children and Young People Bill last week. This means that from August 2014, Nursery sessions will increase to 3hrs 10 mins (both morning and afternoon). The Local Authority is currently proposing that Nursery starts 0845 – 1155, a 25 minute break, followed by an afternoon session from 1220 – 1530. This has the following implications for Meldrum School:

- There needs to be consideration to reconfiguring the school day. It is not viable for there to be half hours wait for parents dropping off children at nursery and then the rest of the school staffing.
- Increase in Nursery staffing – there will be 12 Nursery staff by August 2014.
- There will be a significant change in the way in which Nursery teachers are deployed. They will have to complete their class contact time within 4 'teaching' days in school, and other staff will be needed to cover their mandatory non-contact preparation and correction time.

Enhanced Provision

The school will continue to provide Enhanced Provision although there is to be further standardising of the resource across Aberdeenshire. A sensory room is due to be installed by the end of next term. From this summer all support staff working in Nurseries/Early Years settings in Scotland have to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. There will be some change to certain classrooms

within the school to provide better accommodation and additional space for ASN/EP pupils. There will be further updates on this during March.

This led to further discussion regarding the projected increase in school role. Over the next four years, it is projected that the school role will increase:

August 2015 – 390

August 2016 – 401

August 2017 – 418

August 2018 – 428

These figures do not include children using Meldrum Nursery, for whom the projected role is expected to be around 100 pupils over the course of the school year.

There will be a need to consider how to accommodate this increase in the number of pupils. It is most likely that the current computer suite will be converted into a classroom.

TREASURER'S UPDATE – Estelle Winward

- £300 received from Shell for the purchase of football equipment. This is a restricted fund.
- £189 received between Jan/Feb 'Rag Bag' bins.
- £186 received from the 'Rag Bag' collection.
- £118 received as a donation from the Ladies Pamper Night held by Envy (Hairdressers).

The accounts continue to look healthy for the year ahead. We should start the new school year with a fund of approximately £4000. The 'Rag Bag' bins continue to provide an excellent source of income. There was some discussion regarding the purchase of bigger bin, to be funded by MPIP. However, it was felt that this may lead to on-going issues with regards to repairs.

Education City Homework

There was some discussion regarding whether Education City was providing the best 'value for money' for both teachers and pupils. JB and HF will ask staff if they feel that this is the best educational tool for MPIP to continue to fund, or to highlight any other resources that staff may feel would be more beneficial. This issue will be revisited before a final decision is made in May.

5. FUNDRAISING EVENTS – Elaine Yeats

EY brought attention to the generosity of Emma Strathdee in organising a Ladies Pamper Evening as a fundraising event for the school, as well as providing a raffle prize for the forthcoming Race Night. JD to arrange a 'thank you' card from the committee for ES.

Dress Down Day

- There are 2 Dress Down Days planned. One in aid of Sports Relief. Another to be held in the summer term as a House Event. Pupils will be allowed to wear their House colours.

Race Night

- PM reported that there have been 46 tickets sold by MPIP so far. It is hoped that YGR will continue to encourage ticket sales amongst all parents.
- Posters for the Race Night have been put up throughout the village.
- Horse Sponsorships are still needed.
- 30 horses need to be sold in total.
- Raffle Prizes (of any size or value) would be greatly received and should be passed Leah McKinnon.

Summer Event

This will be carried forward to the next meeting.

6. YGR Update – Philip Michie

YGR will serve teas and coffees at the Open Evening on the 21st May. They will also be in attendance at both P1 and Nursery Induction evenings. It is hoped that this will continue to raise the profile of the Reps around the school and with parents.

7. AOB

- There was some concern regarding inconsiderate behaviour from drivers in the school car park. It was suggested that a one-way system may be helpful in structuring the way in which drivers use the car park. AB will check the rules regarding this with Robertson's. It was accepted that behaviour in the school car park should be more courteous.
- There has been an increase in the amount of parents using the disabled parking bays for picking up/dropping off their children. These parents are not necessarily entitled to make use of these parking bays and this has led to instances where pupils/parents with mobility issues are forced to park further away from the school. It was felt that a reminder should be issued to all parents that the disabled parking bays should be kept clear for those drivers who are entitled to make use of them.
- Music Tuition – issue to be raised as an Agenda item for the next meeting.

Next meeting: Tuesday 26th March *7pm*** Please note new start time! School staff room.**