

MPiP Minutes Wednesday 3rd September 7pm, School Staff Room

ATTENDANCE

Attendees: Leah McKinnon, Elizabeth Buchan, Morag Jessiman, Joanne Evans, Kathryn Michie, Jenny Davidson, Paula Harkins, Fraser Edward, Lesley Buchan, Libby Davidson, Helena McKerron, Gary Donald, Elaine Yeats, Estelle Winward, Bruce Thomson, Hazel Fraser, Pauline Stevenson, Katrina McCartney, Carol Harper, Ruth Scott, Alastair Beaton, Jane Brown

1. APOLOGIES

Kirsten Laing, Michelle McClinock, Donna Sim, Tracy Cadger, Gillian Low, Katie Robertson, Philip Michie, Derek Evans

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND UPDATES

Minutes of Last Meeting and Updates – Playground Supervision/School Bus Drop off Time “Bus pupils only able to access the building or shelter if it is wet” amended to “Bus & taxi pupils only able to access the building or shelter if it is wet”.

AOB

“Aberdeenshire Council policy for offsite excursions is that they need to be very clearly linked to projects/topics being done in class” amended to “Aberdeenshire Council policy for offsite excursions is that they need to have clear learning outcomes linked to curricular work in class”

“They would hope that they would go on at least one trip however sometimes due to the subject matter of the project it just doesn’t fit in” amended to “They would hope that they would go on one trip each year, but this does not always occur due to a variety of reasons”.

“JB – This is part of the risk assessment on excursions and it depends on the number of PVG checked and how many unchecked” amended to “JB – this is part of the risk assessment on excursions and it will depend on a number of factors”.

3. TREASURER’S UPDATE

Due to underspend in bus trips, library books and class allowance the current balance is £7520. EW to organise date with management team to organise budget for the forthcoming year.

4. MATTERS ARISING

A. School Communication – School Website

This is a work in progress. The school newsletters will be available in the next few months on the website once technical issues are resolved. Glow is no longer being used by the council and access for schools will be removed completely from October.

B. Feedback on New Funding Proposal Procedures

It was agreed to implement the new funding procedure.

5. Head Teacher’s Update

School Roll

There has been a steady trickle of new entrants across the school this term and our roll presently stands at 370 p1-7. Nursery is oversubscribed with more applications than we have space and whilst all January starts will get their spaces (on present application), some of those with January onwards birthdays will have to be offered their 2nd/3rd choice.

School/Staffing

We are currently 1 ½ days down on our SFL support following Mrs Main's retiral at the summer. We have 2 new SFL teachers from the cluster, Mrs Bolton and Miss Knaack – each will be working 1 day per week and this is likely to remain in place until Christmas. Once our issues across the cluster are sorted I would hope to get Mrs Mains post advertised by October. We've one Nursery Nurse vacancy that is currently live and that should be appointed this term. Management wise I have Carol Harper and Jane Brown non-class committed for the year ahead so there will be no disruption this year to DHTs in/out of classes. However, they both might end up in class should we have staffing shortages as there are still significant teacher shortages across the shire.

Property

Our 15th classroom and new Enhanced Provision P1-3 classroom were completed (just) over the holidays. In July 2015 work begins on the conversion of our computer suite to create our 16th and final classroom.

Curriculum Developments

A pilot is due to start shortly across all Meldrum schools – with Academy staffing coming down one afternoon per week to team-teach French in our P6 and P7 classes. This is part of a national initiative that will eventually see a language taught from P1 right through the school (long term aim).

Graham Chalmers has returned this session and will be teaching guitar to all four P4 and P5 classes over the course of the year. We have not been advised that this funding is to be withdrawn.

Nursery – Increased Nursery sessions. We now have 16 full and part time staff working in nursery. Very much coming to grips with different way of working in the setting – but the same issue for all large nurseries. We do appear to have a parking issue and the janitor will monitor the car park from 8.45am. We are concerned that we might also have issues at 3.45pm close.

Concerns were raised by parents about unsafe parking on the streets around the school and Mr Beaton suggested contacting the local councillor. It was flagged up by a number of parents how ineffective the new speed bumps are and this too is to be raised with the local councillor.

After October holidays, Mr Beaton will start the lengthy consultation process regarding the potential change of school hours.

Action: LM to contact Paul Johnston regarding parking issue and speed bumps.

The volume of P1 children having school dinners has caused problems at the beginning of the school year however this has calmed down and five more tables have been requested from Robertson's. The kitchen has two hot serveries, this number cannot be increased and this limits the number of children that can be served at one time.

6. Fundraising Events

Spree books – these were sent home with the children. If you do not wish to purchase a book please return it to the school. Update: The Spree fundraiser closed on Wed 10th September if you have not already done so please return your book.

Meldrum Café – MPIP were approached to run the café on non-café days during NEOS week.

It was deemed too short notice to organise a team but EY to register our interest for next year.

House TShirts – Houses have now been allocated to P1's. An order form will go home with children at the end of the week.

Christmas Fayre – The date for the Fayre is Saturday 29th November. EY is currently approaching stallholders and volunteers are sought for the day.

Cauliflower Cards – Agreed to use Cauliflower Cards again. EY had considered Fun Mats but uncertain if this would raise the same funds as the cards. Last year's cards raised £678.

Rag Bank – this is still well used and a great fundraiser for the school. It brought in £1400 last year so please continue to use the rag bank in the car park.

There was a discussion about whether to have a Halloween Disco this year and the committee would consider this for the next meeting.

AB to contact photographer for this year's school photo. As last year was class photographs, this year will be individual photographs.

7. YGR Role

The YGR initiative is no longer supported by Susan Orr and Kirsten Laing due to work commitments. LM to send out an email to YGR's to have a meeting to discuss the way forward. Action: LM to contact YGR's

8. AOB

Community Learning Fun Day

The Community Learning Team have organised a free Family Fun Day at Meldrum Academy on Saturday 27th September 10-2pm. Leaflets will have been sent out home to pupils and it was agreed to send out the digital version of the leaflet to MPiP distribution list.

Playground

A parent expressed concerns with the situation in the Early Stages Playground. Parents are not staying clear of the children's class lines at the start of the school day. Parents are crossing between the lines of children as they are going into the building. It was felt that the noise and volume of parents now in the playground can make it a very unsettling place for some children.

Action: AB to reiterate in the newsletter playground etiquette required by both children and parents. The janitor will mark out in the playground the area that parents are requested to stand in so that the exit door is not crowded.

Purchase of School Dinner Tickets

A parent expressed concern about their P1 child taking money into school for school dinner tickets. AB – it is always preferred that children come in with a cheque rather than cash. The parent is welcome to hand the envelope to the school office. School dinners will be free for P1 – P3 children from January onwards.

Donation

MPiP kindly thanked Mr Rose for his donation of £450

The next meeting is the AGM. The positions of Secretary (EB stepping down) and Treasurer (EW stepping down) will be available.

Date of Next Meeting: AGM Monday 29th September 7pm School Staff Room