

Corstorphine Primary School Parent Council
*Corstorphine Primary School, High Street, Corstorphine
Edinburgh, EH12 7SY*

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting

Thursday, 9 June 2015

Present: Jennifer Ross (Head Teacher)
Audrey McCall (Chair)
Billy Samuel (Vice Chair)
Kay Barclay (Parent Member)
Aleks Tomczyk (Parent Member)
Moira McDonald (Community Member)
Shona Richardson (Staff Rep.)
Jennifer Farrar (Parent Member)
Gillian Farrell (Parent Member)
Karine Masting (Parent Member)

In attendance: Karen Lodomery (Clerk)

1. **Apologies:** Carol Christie, Elinor Waterson, Bill Halliday and Cllr Paul Edie

2. **Minutes of last Parent Council Meetings (19 March 2015) and Matters Arising**

Bank Signatories. These have now been updated. Gillian, Billy and Elinor are the three signatories.

Internet Connection. The Wifi hub is now working well in the Nursery.

Property Items. Work required on the Temporary Ramp at the West side of the school building, and to modify the Kitchen Hatch will be completed during the summer holidays. There has been no further action taken or planned in relation to the Drains or the Boys Toilets.

Sickness Bug. This has now been resolved.

Street Markings. The faded markings around the School have been reported to the Council.

The minutes were approved as read.

3. **Updates from Parent Council sub-groups**

Grounds Development. An updated report by Gilly was circulated to Parent Council members prior to the meeting. The fundraising is going extremely well. The Parent Council again stressed the importance of a strong link between the Nursery build and the grounds development project.

Parents Focus Group. The Focus group has now finalised its Life skills plan and is looking for feedback. They will now ask parents if they have any talents to share.

School Policy Group. The draft Homework questionnaire is now finalised. It will be sent out on Survey Monkey and has 12 easily completed questions. The current homework policy will be attached when it is sent out to parents. It is planned to send out the questionnaire as soon as possible and then a

reminder before the end of term. At the beginning of next term a pupil focus group will be set up. Those parents who do not have access to a computer will be invited to come into the School to complete the questionnaire.

4. Financial Update.

The current bank balance stands at £2,671. Out of this, £1,000 is committed to Mr. Wuffles. This leaves a total of c. £1,500 in un-allocated funds.

The Parent Council asked Mrs. Ross how best to spend these funds to help the School. Mrs. Ross suggested funding the annual subscription to ParentMail (approx. £700). There is also an Event Manager add-on (£199) which would be very useful and help the School administration. However, as this would be a recurring annual cost, the Parent Council did not believe this was something they would be able to fund going forward. The Chair agreed to seek clarity from the PTA as to whether this was something that they had previously agreed to fund as an ongoing commitment.

5. School Meal Provision (update by Kay Barclay)

Following previous parent comments, and in light of the introduction of free school meals, members of the Parent Council have been keen to develop their understanding of school meal provision. This was also prompted by a general query raised by Children & Families Department at a recent West Edinburgh Neighbourhood meeting where they sought feedback on property and/or facilities related aspects of school life.

Initial feedback has not been good, with mixed comments on the quality and quantity of food served. The Chair noted that the general topic had not been raised by other schools at the subsequent West Edinburgh Neighbourhood meeting. Both Mrs Ross and the Parent Council agreed that further attention was required, and that at the beginning of the new term, further feedback would be welcome, as well as beginning a dialogue with the Facilities Manager to raise our initial concerns and agree a way forward.

The Parent Council also agreed to raise this matter again at next West Edinburgh Neighbourhood meeting, to gauge whether other schools have similar feedback.

On a positive note, the hatch will be redesigned over the summer holidays to speed up serving. The School has been informed that it is to get a mobile salad bar for the dining room.

6. Head Teacher's Report (Mrs. Ross)

P1 Intake. The P1 intake will be 90 this year. The room assigned to P1 pupils has been reassessed as 40 pupil capacity (formerly it was 36); so the three new P1 classes will be 40, 25 and 25 pupils.

Staffing. There will be four temporary staff next year. Mr. Parkinson is retiring. A PSA post is currently open and it is expected that there will be hundreds of applications. Interviews will take place shortly.

P5 Class Re-shuffle. The School has decided to reshuffle the current P5 classes. Many of the other year groups have been reshuffled at some point and it is believed that this is extremely beneficial to the children, for example, as it builds resilience and prepares them for high school. Some parents have expressed concerns as to the impact on children who are settled in their current class groups, and the Chair noted a specific concern that had been raised directly with the Parent Council. Mrs. Ross noted that she was aware of the specific concern raised, and that this had also been raised with her directly. After discussing the various impacts on shuffling / not shuffling, the Parent Council agreed that the

rationale for reshuffling the P5 classes had been taken after careful consideration of the pros and cons, and that the move had been taken in the best interests of the overall year group and the school.

Nursery. The Project Manager visited the School in January and has now produced 2 possible plans which were distributed to members of the Parent Council. The key issue is in relation to the legislative requirements for the area required to be designated specifically as the outdoor nursery playground, and the resulting impact on the wider school playground. The Parent Council noted that any significant increase on the size of playground requiring to be allocated to the Nursery would potentially be to the detriment of the playground area allocated to the wider school.

Mrs. Ross had mentioned the possibility (raised at a previous Parent Council meeting) of purchasing the area of private ground adjoining the School to the Project Manager, but has received no feedback yet. The Council would like to hold another Project meeting next week. The Parent Council would like to be represented at this meeting, if possible with a parent who is an architect.

7. AOB

Boys Toilets. No response has been received on this matter. The Council has no money for works and the smell is not considered to be a Health & Safety issue. It is, however, a social problem as it has been reported that some of the younger children have wet themselves because they are so reluctant to go to these toilets. The Parent Council is extremely unhappy about this situation and will raise this formally with the Council. As this is an item that impacts pupils directly, it was suggested that the views of Pupil Council should also be sought and incorporated within feedback.

Resignation. Lesley Mason has resigned from the Parent Council.

Smart Start. Mrs. Ross advised that, with regret, this initiative will be stopping after the summer holidays. Smart Start was created as a temporary solution to address safe pupil access to the school when space in the playground was severely restricted during the building of the extension. It is not an option provided at other schools in the locality and it also impacts on valuable preparation time for teachers and PSAs. Mrs. Ross described a number of possible options that had been suggested to maintain the current approach or similar, prior to making this decision, but for various reasons outlined none of these were sustainable. In recognition of the value that many Parents have found from the current arrangement, the changes will not be introduced immediately, but rather from the beginning of the new term, which will allow time for any adjustment.

AGM. The AGM of the Parent Forum will be held in late September / early October. Audrey must now step down from the Parent Council, but will chair the AGM. Assuming all other members continue, there are now 7 vacant positions.

Lets for 2015–16. These dates need to be set.

7. Future Agenda Items:

- AGM of the Parent Forum
- Updates from Sub-groups

8. Date of next meeting: The next meeting of the Parent council will be in late August/early September 2015.