

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

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting

Thursday, 9 June 2016

Present: Billy Samuel (Chair)
Bill Halliday (Parent Member)
Gillian Farrell (Parent Member)
Karine Masting (Parent Member)
Carol Christie (Parent Member)
Jennifer Ross (Head Teacher)
Elinor Waterston (Treasurer)
Jen Farrar (Parent Member)
Kirsty Moore (Parent Member)
Shona Richardson (DHT)

In attendance: Karen Lodomery (Clerk)

Apologies: Moira McDonald, Aleks Tomczyk, Angela Lawson, Kay Barclay, Elizabeth Gillies, Susan Murray and Cllr. P Edie

2. Minutes of last Parent Council Meetings (11 May 2016) and Matters Arising

Sports Provision. A sub-group of the Parent Council will liaise with Mrs Ross and provide input as required to the development of the School Improvement Plan.

PE. A letter is going out to Parents of the new P4s requesting new volunteers for the P4 football team. The information sheet drawn up by the Parent council will be given to new p4 parents who are interested in volunteering.

The minutes were approved as read.

3. Items for Discussion

Parent Questionnaire. A summary of the results was circulated. Mrs. Ross will be organising a meeting with parents to discuss the results next week. The next step will be to distribute the results to parents and seek further parental input on some of the issues relating to communication – there was an increase in the numbers of parents who felt that aspects of communication with the School could be improved. This issue will hopefully be addressed in a large part through the new profiling approach and further developments will be discussed with a parents' focus group next term.

CCwP. The Chair attended his first meeting 2 weeks ago. The key issue discussed was attainment, and how this was measured. An update was also given on the school closures throughout Edinburgh. Corstorphine School has been recently added to the Rising Roles programme and the Council are currently looking into the feasibility of creating additional classrooms within the Lantern Wing.

Local Development Plan

Mrs Ross and the Chair will be attending a meeting next week on the Local Development Plan arranged by the Council. This meeting will discuss recent developments on plans for house building, provision of schools and possible changes to catchment areas.

4. AOCB

Parent Forum. There will be a number of vacancies (possibly 8) for the Parent Council by the time of the Parent Forum in September. Carol will be standing down as she will no longer have a child at the school. Billy thanked Carol Christie for her contribution over a number of years. It was noted that some members had served the maximum term allowed and would be required to stand down in line with the Constitution. It was queried as to why we had a limit on the length of service of Parent Council members. Billy commented that the limit of 2 terms of 2 years had been a historic feature of the Corstorphine Parent Council Constitution, and had not been significantly altered during the recent review of the Constitution (other than to extend the potential tenure of Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer). Billy further noted that he had taken soundings from other Parent Council chairs at the CCwP and noted that they had no such restriction. It was noted that the current restriction may mean that willing members were unable to continue in office, whilst there were significant vacancies on the Parent Council. It was requested that the Constitution be reviewed again. Billy undertook to come up with proposal(s) for the next Parent Council meeting in September to discuss. Proposal(s) can then be put to the Parent Forum for approval.

Billy suggested that it might be a good idea for everyone on the Parent Council to have a particular area of interest, this will be looked into. In an attempt to increase attendance at the Parent Forum, it was suggested that it be combined with a social/fund-raising event. This will be considered.

Sports Day. Both Sports days went extremely well and were enjoyed by pupils, parents and staff. Timings of the P1-3 event need to be adjusted as the events were finished earlier than scheduled meaning some parents missed some of the event.

School Residential Trips. Mrs Ross explained the new policy of reducing the number of residential trips from two to one; in P7. Mrs Ross explained that Corstorphine was the only cluster school who had been going on two trips in two years and concern had been raised over the cost involved and numbers of pupils attending had also been falling. Feedback from Craigmount High School had been that parents had reported to them that there was unreasonable financial pressure arising from being expected to fund trips in three successive years, P6, P7 and S1. Because of this, from next session P6 classes will no longer go on residential trips but will have a week of outdoor learning organised across the cluster as part of the transition process e.g. hiking trips to the Pentlands. The P7 trip will become an important part of the transition process to Craigmount and they will attend Lagganlia along with at least one other cluster school– this will be explained to parents in a newsletter.

Toilets. Parents are still extremely unhappy about the lack of any action being taken by the Council to address regarding the smell in the boys' toilets. This is not an acceptable situation and no adults would ever be expected to have to use such toilets in the workplace. The Chair has raised this repeatedly at North West Locality meetings, although despite positive soundings no corrective action has been forthcoming. Karine volunteered to contact

Cllr Edie and ask his opinion on the best way to proceed - it may be necessary to organize a petition, contact local representatives etc.

Parentmail. Attention was brought to the subject lines of some Parentmails which contain each pupil's name and can alarm parents. Mrs. Ross will mention this to the office staff.

School Lunches. Many complaints are still being received from parents on the provision of school meals, i.e. running out of puddings and only having fruit, portion size etc. The School will continue sending feedback on these issues to the Company who are responsible for the organization and running of the school meal provision. Complaints were also received about the Salad Bar which provides portions of vegetables in plastic pots – not very environmentally friendly.

5. Financial Update

The invoice for Mr Wuffle's has now been received from the Council. The final figure was £866.12, which was slightly lower than expected.

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

P1 Intake. It looks like there will be 3 P1 classes next year for 83 children, although this could still change with appeals, etc. Next year the School will be almost full with only places available in the upper school.

Staffing. Ms Kent is being seconded to Moray House for one year. Ms Nelson is leaving to work full-time at Balgreen Primary. The part-time post of Support for Learning is now being advertised. Next year one teacher trainee will be with the School for a whole year, instead of shorter placements.

Maintenance. The old dining room is being demolished over the summer holidays.

Corstorphine Park. The School is making good use of the park this term. This would not be possible without the parent helpers. It was suggested that next year a list be drawn up of parents who might be able to help at very short notice.

Pupil Profiles. From this coming year, every child will have a personal profile to record their learning journey. A working group has been created to organise this new programme and it is hoped this will help address some of the problems with communication raised in the recent questionnaire by parents. Information on each child will now be more relevant and up-to-date.

Language Provision. Languages are now being taught in primary schools on a cluster approach. All children in P5-7 will now study German, with one lesson per week with a trained teacher. All classes from Nursery – P7 will also learn French, this will not be with a trained languages teacher but will be with class teachers acting as language facilitators and teaching through a web programme. In Craigmount, pupils will now be able to choose which language they study; French, German or both.

Uniform. With the support of the Parent Council, a letter will be sent to parents reminding them of the School uniform policy: no nail varnish, leggings only as tights with a skirt – not as trousers, black shoes/trainers, no temporary tattoos.

7. Future Agenda Items:

- School Meal Provision
- Boys toilets
- Parent Council Constitution

8. Date of next meeting: The dates of next meeting of the Parent Council and the Parent Forum have yet to be decided, and will be communicated separately.