**Parent Partnership Meeting**

**13th June 2019**

In attendance: Amanda McConnachie, Leigh Henderson, Debi Black, Hayley Birchmore, Darren Aitken, Susan Henderson

Apologies: Marna Mesbahi, Heather Biggs, Melissa Thomson, Jenny Donaldson, Elaine Campbell

**1) Committee Positions**

Secretary - required

Treasurer - Wendy has resigned from her role as Treasurer, many thanks for all your hard work Wendy

It is hoped that Marna Mesbahi and Susan Duthie are going to take on this role and it is understood they are currently organising access to the account with the bank

Current balance thought to be around £2500

Vice Chair - Marna to continue in this position alongside her role as joint Treasurer, otherwise we will need to appoint someone else

Information regarding the PPG has gone out in the new P1 intake parent packs. It is hoped that we will be able to recruit some new parents via the new Groupcall email or at the planned P1 & P2 social event (see later).

**2) School Update**

Head Teacher

Notification was sent out last Friday (7th June) regarding Ms Donaldson’s departure from Midlothian Council

The Head Teacher position is currently advertised (TES, myjobscotland) with a closing date of 24th June

The children may be involved in the Long Leet interviews. Staff will help with preparation; speaking with them about what they would like in a Head Teacher and will support them in formulating questions

There will be PPG involvement with the Short Leet interviews, training will be given

Realistically, the successful candidate is unlikely to be in post before October, possibly after Christmas, and the senior staff will continue to act up until then

New P1

The new intake P1 parents attended the induction meeting at the school today. Amanda and Leigh suggested trying to make this a more informal event next year, to make it less intimidating and hopefully encourage parents to ask more questions.

Hayley suggested parents would like to meet the teacher at this event. Staff said this was the intention and will try to facilitate this for next year

Darren spoke about a school in Bonnyrigg where the children made a film of the Head Teacher and Class Teachers being “interviewed” by them to show to parents, this was well received

Staff acknowledged that P1 parents do want to meet their child’s teacher early in the academic year, for reassurance. They will consider scheduling a “Meet the Teacher” date earlier in the first term or at least invite parents to a Shared Learning morning or afternoon soon after they start at Strathesk

Reports

New format reports will be issued soon. The children were asked to comment on their biggest achievement and their future plans, there have been some very interesting responses

Staff are looking for feedback on the new style reports. Are parents looking for a summary of all their child’s learning or a snap shot of their child as a learner with comments on their progress and some suggestions about how to encourage them?

Communication

The school has been working with Midlothian Council in preparation for using Groupcall email. It is anticipated that this will be in use by September/October and should improve communication and reduce paper waste.

Those already using Classlist find it user friendly and can see the benefit in continuing to use it in addition to the Groupcall email for sending reminders. The PPG will continue to use it. Debi will look into using it in the nursery and Hayley will try to find an opportunity to encourage the new P1 parents to use it

Sports Day

Simpler format this year with children competing in their house teams

Parent feedback: Good atmosphere created by Chaplins Disco

Teachers were good sports

P7 helpers were exemplary

Unclear to some who were teachers and who were parents (staff will address this for next year)

P7 Fundraiser

Great success.

Sufficient money was raised for the P7s to pay for their Prom with some money left over. The children have intimated that they would like to give some of the money raised to charity. Staff will discuss this further with them.

Help still required on the afternoon of Wed 26th June to set up for the Prom, letters have gone out to parents

The Prom will be a Ceilidh this year but the plan is to consult with the pupil council regarding their wishes for next year

**3) Nursery Update**

Chicks

The first set of eggs did not contain live chicks and were replaced. The second set of eggs hatched quickly, early one morning. This was all captured on film and shown on the smart board. The children were very interested and the event generated lots of discussion and led to further learning. They enjoyed handling the chicks and once they were old enough, the chicks left to live with one of the little one’s grand parents.

Reports

Ready to distribute and are in the format of describing the child as a learner (see above)

Sports Day

Was somewhat stressful due to the weather. The morning sports took place outside but it was cold. The afternoon sports were moved into the gym hall due to the threat of rain (which didn’t transpire) and had a negative impact on the atmosphere. For next year, staff propose to incorporate the sports events into the planned nursery trip to the beach

The nursery have their trip to Almond Valley next week and will thereafter be focusing on their graduations before the end of term.

**4) Fundraising**

It was agreed to have monthly dress down/dress up days:

First Friday of the month

Themed but low key; creative, using items commonly available at home

Nursery keen to be involved

Last event (Hawaiian theme) raised around £200

There was talk, previously, about organising an end of (academic) year fundraiser however, the recent P7 Prom Fundraiser did involve the whole school. It was felt it would be a significant task to organize something over and above this and be too disruptive to the children who are already excited with the end of term looming.

Amanda said she was keen for the children to have a Christmas Party. It was suggested that the timing of the Nativity Play could be brought forward to free up the hall for parties. Parties could be held for atrium groups, P1 and 2 could have a visit from Santa.

Darren suggested there may be other opportunities for parties/themed events to tie in with learning projects within the atriums

Christmas Fair planning to start after the summer break. Last year’s event raised around £3000. There is lots to do. It would be helpful to speak with Wendy to obtain a list of those who donated a raffle prize previously so that we can approach those businesses in the first instance.

Leigh to discuss a possible date for the Fair with staff (Friday afternoon vs Saturday morning?)

Some school funds raised to be gifted to a nominated charity. Previously this was CHAS due to a personal connection between this charity and the school.

Staff are keen to continue to support Children In Need as this charity has benefitted the school previously (takes place in November)

Those present liked the idea of the school supporting one charity for the academic year, to be nominated and chosen by the children. Staff will liaise with the children about this.

**5) AOB**

P1 assessments

Have been completed by Miss Brown

The results of the annual SNSA assessments are used to support teacher judgement and school progress, they are not generally given out to parents but can request these if they wish.

They were completed during the school day with minimal fuss so has not to put pressure on the children

The assessments are compulsory and can be helpful for teachers to gauge progress but staff present agreed the assessment tool has it’s limitations, particularly in this age group, therefore the results are considered as part of all other observations

P1 & P2 Social night

It was agreed to try and organize a combined P1 & P2 social night, aim for September

Hayley will look into possible venues

Benmore camp

Amanda raised a concern regarding the affordability of the P6 trip to Benmore

Currently it costs around £300 per pupil

There was a short discussion regarding ways to address the cost:

An alternative (cheaper camp), although it was acknowledged that Benmore is legendary and many kids look forward to this trip as a highlight of their Primary School years

Setting up a pre payment scheme to spread the cost

Fundraising specifically for this/donation from the PPG (but likely to require a substantial amount to make a significant impact)

? Grant application

No decisions were reached but those present agreed it was important to think on this and revisit it at a later date

Susan Henderson

**Next meet scheduled for Thursday 12th September at 6pm.**