



Comhairle nam Pàrant - Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce

Meeting note

29 Màrt / March 2021, 19:15 – 20:15

1. Welcome and introduction from the Chairs

SS, Co-Chair: The PC would like to thank staff for all they continue to do to operate safely and effectively in the context of heightened staffing pressures in this phase of the pandemic, welcomes the school leadership and parent forum, and thanks everyone for flexibility regarding the meeting date change. Our thoughts are with everyone who is unwell at this time.

Apologies: Caroline Daye

24 attendees

2. Matters arising from and approval of minutes of previous meeting

Actions and matters from last meeting include small sums funds being made available to successful applicants; new covid-19 guidance being issued; the PC parent involvement survey was launched, with 40% of respondents indicating that they would like to become involved with the PC; and the importance of the class rep role is becoming ever more apparent especially regarding the statutory consultation etc. We are still looking for Class Reps for **C1G, C1P, C3R, C3S, C5A, C5R & C6/7**. To put yourself forward email: chairs@parantantaobhnairce.org.uk or sign up via Classlist: <https://app.classlist.com/parent/#/school/details>

The parent involvement survey will also remain open till the end of term, after which point potential volunteers will be contacted. The survey can be found here <https://forms.gle/TeNhbTWZBoYJsQ359>

3. Headteacher's update

IB, Headteacher: We would like to say a big thank you to parents and carers for continued patience, and a huge thank you to staff who have rallied round to keep the school operating in the face of staffing challenges. Well done to the Benmore team, who put in incredible work to make that happen despite the current challenging circumstances.

New public health guidelines

We are currently following outbreak management guidance due to the number of active cases in school which are linked. Public health guidance now reflects the lower link between levels of infection and serious illness. When we make changes we will nevertheless very much be retaining the good practice we have in place. Warn and



inform letters are coming to an end but will continue into April because on April 18th the asymptomatic testing programme will be ending.

Although we are moving into a 'living with Covid' phase as a country, at the moment we have pressures due to staff absences. For adults in school social distancing and masks will still be in place. We have been reviewing the staggered pick up that has been in place the last two academic years, and we hope to start a Bonnington Road pick up to replace the current Pilrig Park pick up. Info will be issued before the holiday to parents and carers to update them.

Staffing

We are pleased to welcome Mairi MacPhail as our School Support Assistant, and welcome back Mrs Sarah Moore in her role of PT Expressive Arts.

School renewal

Ms S MacIntyre, our Strategic Lead for Digital Learning, and Mr J. P. Vitry, our ICT Coordinator, are working to ensure TnP is ready for the rollout of 'Empowered Learning' which will include iPads as part of our digital technology school renewal planning. School renewal planning has not moved with the pace we would like; our priority very much has been ensuring that the school remains open.

Parent Consultations

Parent Consultations occurred online last week, overall a positive experience with this medium, will gather views and info going forward to decide whether or not to return to in-person consultations, and will perhaps embrace a hybrid model. Tete-a-tetes will go ahead for C2-7 before the end of term, with summative reports going out in June 2022.

Playground Development Consultation

LY, Deputy Head: Learner groups have been established, and Small sums scheme- playground equipment has arrived courtesy of the small sums scheme, waiting for storage for this and it will be in use next term. Consultation with learners went well, they were asked to do blue sky thinking on it, and a social area and quiet area are the most popular ideas. Bogsa-cluich is being cleared out by learners and staff at the moment, very popular and exciting to get that going again.

School estate works

IB: We are pleased to announce that the nursery acoustic treatment is scheduled for the Easter break, and next stage will be to get the large classrooms upstairs done,



hopefully during the summer break. We hope to have further detail on the programme of work in the near future.

Progress is underway with taigh dorsair: building warrant drawings are being finalised, site visit for architectural assistant and interior designer scheduled for Easter break, no timeline as such but hopefully after Easter.

Transitions

KR, Deputy Head: A large Clas 1 intake is on cards but numbers are not currently finalised (we need to bear in mind many on the list have applied for deferral) and we are planning for 3 classes. The City of Edinburgh are basing a transition project around 'The Bookworm' which staff are translating; a number will be joining C1 from nurseries outwith, and they will have covered this book which is a good starting point. We are hoping this year that the transition will look more like pre-pandemic transitions which would be a big step forward.

IB: The P7 transition process is well underway, with our Pupil Support Leader Ms Caitlin Garrett and Gaelic Curriculum Leader Ms Donna MacIver having completed their first transition meeting with the HT and having met with P7. A spreadsheet with pupil information from TnP has been shared and a pupil 'about me' MS Form will be shared with our Pupil Support Leader.

In-person transition has been approved from Primary to Secondary but to manage expectations it is worth saying that most likely it will be a virtual transition this year. The P7 Gillespie's Games @ Meggetland will go ahead on Monday 13th June 2022. Enhanced transitions for children who have been identified for them will go ahead in person after Easter break.

SS queried potential future parental access to school and classrooms, IB advised the school would like to welcome people back into the building, but it's an evolving picture at the moment. The first steps will probably be to recombine classes and get people moving around the building again, and perhaps a summer fayre.

4. Treasurer's update

LI, outgoing Treasurer: we are in a healthy position in terms of the bank approx £9.5K balance, with a payment due to Christmas Cards. £4k funds are still retained for acoustics, upon commencement of the Council improvement work from Easter we will



review this. We are allocating funds for the playground through small sums and potentially to support playground improvements and will be very excited to see this in use.

5. Òganan update

Alasdair Cameron was invited to give an update but was unable to be here. Natasha (Co-Chair) read the highlighted update in his absence (Alasdair's Òganan update is available as a separate attachment to these minutes).

SS advised work is ongoing with the Council to ensure Òganan is included in the list of early years provision options that is sent to parents throughout Edinburgh.

6. CnP update

Orla Hobson, Treasurer- Comann nam Pàrant: It has been great to get more people on to the CnP mailing list. Since the last Parent Council meeting which followed the Education, Children and Families Committee (ECFC) decision of 24 January not to proceed to statutory consultation on the Liberton option for the GME high school but further consider options and implications of the SNP manifesto commitment (following the CnP deputation and Councillor engagement) there were a further 2 meetings with Officers and Councillors. These included an introduction to the new Executive Director Amanda Hatton. CnP emphasised the need for meaningful engagement with parents and full exploration of options. In advance of the 1st March ECFC the Council wanted to discuss the impact of pausing the statutory consultation including potential cap on GME numbers, a new placing policy for the high school and or review of catchments.

Following a CnP verbal and written deputation and further discussion a cross-party amendment was agreed on the 1 March to review a range of sites, review items relating to potential disadvantages to the Liberton site and how these might be mitigated.

A further action related to CnP pushing for further engagement from the Scottish Government and Cabinet Secretary Shirley-Anne Sommerville, CnP has sent a follow up letter to the Cabinet Secretary seeking clarification of the intent behind the SNP manifesto commitment.

On other activity - CnP endorsed a Green amendment at the 3rd March meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee to prevent the Council signing a development MOU



for the Haymarket - Russell Road site with developers until a full assessment of GME secondary potential sites is complete.

There is a pause now on engagement with local Councillors due to the local elections.

In advance of the elections, virtual hustings with a focus on Gaelic and GME will occur on [25th April @ 7pm](#); these will be live streamed with a chance to ask questions in advance.

In other positive news, a job advert has just been published online today for the position of Deputy Head Teacher (GME) for James Gillespie's. Along with the Parent Council we have written to the new Gaelic Champion - Cllr Lesley Macinnes, welcoming her and seeking an introductory meeting.

SS - We encourage parents to get involved with hustings, it was interesting at the last Holyrood election to hear cross party support for GME.

7. AOB

P7s are organising whole school fundraising activity for Ukraine, including a danceathon, sponsored silence and wear blue and yellow on Friday 8th April - donations can be made at: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tnapukraine>

8. Date of Next Meeting - Weds 18 May 2022 7.15 - 8.30pm on Teams