

Uryside School – Parent Forum

Minutes of Term 1, held at Uryside School on Thursday 12th September 2019 at 6.30pm

Present

Diane Brands (DB), Joanna Bruce (JB), Rachel Corsar (RC), Kim Dodd (KD), Alisa Foster (AF), Catherine Liebnitz (CL), Craig Johnston (CJ), Julie McKendrick (JM), Monica Martinez (MM), David Shanks (DS), Adrian Stewart (AS)

Apologies

Councillor Neil Bailie (CNB), Councillor Lesley Berry (CLB), John Cooper (JC), Dawn Carnegie (DC), Kevin Christie (KC), Tanya Doig (TD), Claire Green (CG), Councillor Marion Ewenson (CME), Lyndsey McGunnigle (LM), Jackie McBeath (JB), Councillor Judy Whyte (CJW)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

RC and JM were introduced to everyone.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Previous minutes were approved. JB asked if the minutes are still posted on the website, DS stated they were but are possibly not up to date. Action on AF to send recent minutes.

COUNCILLOR UPDATE

No update due to no councillors being present at today's meeting but the following points still need to be addressed:

Parking at Pupil Entrance

DC wanted to raise the issue of people parking at the pupil entrance at pick up right across the bump in the road. This means children are unable to cross at the designated safe crossing space. KD stated that she will try to get a member of staff up there to stop this happening. DB stated that the council had spoken about painting on school crossing/yellow zigzag lines. KD felt this would help as the fine is more serious than parking on double yellow lines. Action on CJ to send email to councillors. Also, parents are still using the service entrance as a car park and this has got a lot worse this term, DB had even seen cars parked on the pavements. DS will bring back the walk to school initiative where children earn badges when they walk or cycle to school.

Roundabout Pavement

MM asked if there had ever been any feedback regarding the low level pavement at the roundabout. This is all to do with the developers and ownership of the road, possibly Malcolm Allen. CJ to email councillors again.

Dog Fouling

The council have been very proactive with the signage around the school and although there has been a reduction in dog walkers, there is still dog mess being found on the school grounds. There is CCTV signage on the school windows but dog owners can only be fined if their dogs are fouling not if they only being walker. CL suggested that the children make up their own posters - "please do not poo in our playground" - she had seen this on holiday. JB asked if it's possible to lock the gates but KD replied not, as it is a public building. The school is actively dealing with the problem and have done everything they can.

PF FUNDRAISING - STRATEGY CLARIFICATION

JB stated there is a group of parents that have stayed on after organising the Summer Fayre, CL is also on this, and they almost effectively have another PTA that doesn't have a name. JB doesn't feel that a separate committee is required, they have got a What's App group, but feels it should be reconnected with the Parent Forum. Some of the mums have younger children but would never have been involved with the Parent Council before and it would be good to have a representative at the Parent Forum meetings. KD felt that with budgets becoming more restricted, we do need to fundraise actively for kids to get the breadth of experience and opportunities. This should be a gradual onstreaming of cash rather than the odd one off event. For example, the sponsored Readathon coming up where every child will take part. Bounce into Spring is also planned where there will be bouncy castles set up in the gym hall with a sponsored bounce and these are both fairly passive fundraising. We also have the whole year planned ahead so that families can be prepared in advance. CJ asked how drumming up support is going. DB felt that a specific person should run each event without being tied into things for a whole year, otherwise we are also isolating other parents.

KD suggested running an initiative to recruit a parent class representative for every class and this would also mean potentially having up to another 16 parent volunteers. This would improve communication and make everyone feel included, even if there was only one rep per year to start with. DS stated the reps would have to be separate from the Parent Forum group. KD also felt this would be good for visitors to the school who want to address a forum - they can approach the reps directly rather than asking all the parents and probably getting a low response. JB is to set up a google group, then send an email telling people they have been added to this group and if they don't want to be involved, please ask to be removed. JB/DB to create paragraph to put in the newsletter.

RESELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

AF has been appointed Secretary.

CJ wishes to stand down as Chairperson. JB asked if it would be worth putting out an email to everyone saying the parent forum is looking for a Chairperson. CJ feels the role could be a lot more active and also interactive with the school but he feels he is unable to commit fully to it, he also suggested approaching Andy Clegg.

DS felt that from schools point of view, it is good to have a contact that can go to when necessary. KD also felt that we need the right personality for the job who can interact well with people or it can be incredibly destructive. KD asked if CJ could stay on temporarily until the appeal has gone out. KD also suggested trying to drum up numbers to attend the PF meetings initially before just

advertising purely for the Chairperson role. CJ suggested everyone takes turns at being Chair until a good candidate comes forward.

JB asked if the school can have notice boards put up. KD replied we can but it would have to be coordinated with the council and she would recommend having an outside covered board. DS also suggested putting one on the shed at the school entrance.

COMMUNICATION

CJ stated that in the constitution that was drafted two treasury type roles were required and we really need someone to take an active lead in the second role. DB to contact KC through Facebook and find a mobile number so CJ can contact him to discuss. CJ also feels we really need to drive numbers up at the Parent Forum and specify that there's not a huge amount of effort involved, just quarterly meetings. AS suggested putting across that being an active member of the PF should be seen as an opportunity to help influence the education of your child. He also felt it might be an idea to put out an email, then another gentle reminder just before a meeting is due.

JB suggested parents should know what's coming up in the fundraising calendar as there was a struggle getting helpers on the day of the Summer Fayre, this is the type of things class reps would be useful for. As previously the volunteers were all parents from the same classes/age groups which made it harder to find new people. This year there is the Readathon on 25th Sept, then the Halloween disco which is being run by the p7's. Also the Poppy Tea which the p5's are organising as an enterprise project, then Xmas Jumper day and finally the Christmas Fayre which will definitely require helpers. DB suggested informing parents where the funds raised are going i.e. the Readathon will go towards buying more books and the Big Bounce will go towards PE or outdoor equipment.

HEAD TEACHER REPORT

- The reviewed PF vision and values had been distributed, we have kept the same text agreed by stakeholders a few years ago but given each value a label and simplified vision. Over this year we will make it almost like our branding - at Uryside U R Kind, U R Smart etc it's giving the children empowerment (you are doing it). Everything we do in school will review back to the vision, values and aims.
- We have changed how we organise behaviour strategy - Golden Time has changed and is now called Excellence Time. Instead of using part of the Friday afternoon as a free playtime we are now offering different opportunities for things the children have a passion about - i.e. choir, knitting, construction, art. Hopefully in the future more community members will become involved. We also now have "thinking time" with DS for 10 minutes at the start of lunch break where the children can think about things they probably could have done better - this is going well. The parents wouldn't be informed about this unless it becomes a regular occurrence.
- The Standards and Qualities Improvement Plan is in its final stage. We have a new Quality Improvement Officer called Alwyn Fraser (AF) and are working with her on refining this. We are conducting a school improvement visit on Thursday next week Thursday, LM is now Assistant Deputy Head and we can now achieve a lot more. KD, DS, LM and AF will carry this out with two teaching staff. We also need to have some parent input with questions about how the school is doing and also a kids group, teaching group and non teaching staff

group. This will be concentrating on three main things: reading, leadership at all levels and curriculum. HIME are also visiting the school on Wednesday to ask about consultation on rezoning and want to discuss this with some parents. We will be looking for a group of 6 to 8 parents to answer questions for both of these visits.

- Community is another focus at the moment and we held our first Community Cafe this week. This is not a fundraiser but purely to bring the community together and help prevent social isolation. Primary 4a did this week's cafe, also good life skills for the children. We will also be building Community afternoons after October on one Friday per month. This will involve doing things for the school or local/wider community - i.e. sorting out library, weeding, planting bulbs, visiting elderly complexes etc. We are trying to build more links with the community, for example the local pastoral team for collective churches who will visit from time to time and also links with the Rotary Club and Uryside Park. We've also had community volunteers starting clubs, we held a Chinese Club that 48 children attended who all made lanterns and had a great time. We are also starting up a coding club, art club, and lunchtime football club among others. We are also expanding voice groups as well as the pupil council and have redeveloped the house system with children attending SLT meetings. They are being very proactive with brilliant ideas. Teachers are leading languages, health, music, reading and nurturing development and we have a couple of teachers actively engaged in leadership qualifications.
- The Seesaw app is our new communication device and profiling platform. Parents will get a much more immediate reporting strategy of your child filtering through. This is much more personal as parent feedback was that they would rather have less wordy school reports.
- This is Reading month, our open afternoon is on the 25th September after the Readathon in the morning. There is a big drive on reading with lots of fun activities planned.
- We have two probationary teachers Miss Stewart and Miss Patterson and also Miss Jack has started teaching p1. We are also lucky enough to have an additional teacher Mrs Kelman at the moment as an extra resource and also an additional PSA, Mrs Berkitt.

TREASURER REPORT

CL presented the treasurer's report. KD felt we should try and spend money while fundraisers kids are still at school. She stated lots of effort goes into these fundraising events and they really need to make a profit. For the Poppy Tea it was suggested maybe selling tickets in advance or an entrance fee as donations had been low. Or possibly send the children round collecting donations with buckets.

It was also suggested sending out reminders for events as people sometimes just forget and many people don't carry cash on them these days. CJ asked how it stands with donations from local businesses. KD confirmed the school can accept donations but have to be careful who they are taking them from, as long as it doesn't conflict with the school ethos. CL asked if we are keeping two separate bank accounts, it was agreed that these should be amalgamated into one. CJ to also discuss with KC. The school's liability insurance has been paid for and sent by the council, action on CL to pay to update this to cover stallholders.

AOCB

JB asked if it was frowned upon for children coming to play on the school grounds at night. DS replied not at all, it should be an open ground, it's just the MUGA that is locked.

JB asked if the P7's are being given ties this year. DS stated that we are just waiting for them to arrive. KD added that hoodies will have to be paid for this year. We will still be paying for the swimming buses though.

DB now has the Additional Support Group up and running. About 8 parents had attended with the next meeting being held next Thursday. KD felt this was a great development.

CL stated that the Restart A Heart Campaign is on the 16th October and she can buy 30 inflatable mannequins for the school to teach pupils CPR. CL and DB are both trained in CPR and would be able to take 10 or 12 children at a time for maybe half an hour demonstrations. This could be for Primary 1 upwards and they will require two helpers. Everyone agreed this was a great idea.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 28th November 6.30pm