

Gordon Parent Council Meeting 16th November 2021

Present: Mr Wilson, Mr Devlin, Mrs Cargill, Roni, Gill, Mariana, Yvonne, Lucy, Amanda, Fiona, Louise, Maria, Amanda.

Staffing update

Kevin Wilson has been made permanent Headteacher at Gordon and Earlston Schools. Robbie Devlin has had his contract extended until the summer.

Carol Forrest is joining the nursery team, this will enable Gemma to focus on more Nursery improvements.

Mr Sutton moving to teach at Edenside and Yetholm Primary Schools. Nicola Broad will take over on an interim basis until January, and is meeting with Mr Sutton on 17th November to help with the transition. The post is being advertised at present.

Headteacher's Update

Scottish Book Week is taking place this week. P1/2/3 have received a Book Bag. Whole school is focusing on a book called 'Flotsam', which is all in pictures. Staff have been using the book to make links with COP26. There will be a wall display in the school to show how different classes have interpreted it.

Showbie – small group of parents have volunteered to be part of a group to trial Showbie. Content will vary between classes: P1/2/3 will have examples of their topic work plus one aspect each of literacy and numeracy within Showbie; P4-7 will have their topic work plus two aspects each of literacy and numeracy. The general curriculum overview will sit inside Showbie. The target stated within your child's Showbie account will be specific to your child, and you will see examples of what they are doing towards this aim. Showbie shows a snapshot of work, the aim is to roll this out to all parents in January.

Children relief day – all pupils can come to school in casual/dress up clothes. Suggested donation £1.

Nursery has developed aims and values recently. The Primary has aims of 'ready, respectful and responsible'. After discussions with staff and children, four key values have been identified: creativity, inspiration, community, nurture. There will be a chance for parents to share their views – more information will be sent in the newsletter.

Nursery project to have chickens has managed to raise £1000 from Tesco. Some concerns raised last year around security has been addressed by the CCTV which has now been installed at the school.

Other issues raised:

- Rats and mice being attracted to the chicken coop, so would need to keep the area clean.
- Neighbours would have to be consulted.
- What about letting chickens out and putting them away? Much of the responsibility would fall to the nursery children.
- Chicken coop would have to be moved around.
- Need to consider bird flu, etc.
- Query raised about what happens when chickens die? Learning opportunity on how to deal with loss, but this may not be appreciated by all parents/carers

Can also ask other schools for advice (e.g. Morebattle). Location of coop still to be decided, but could be in the back left corner of the wildlife garden. The Tesco grant can be tweaked, but will still have to benefit the community and enhance the learning opportunities within the school and nursery. Could introduce some other project to attract wildlife instead? Decision will have to be made, so if anyone can help out or give advice, please contact Mrs Cargill and the nursery staff. Amanda noted that she knew of a nursery which had an agreement to have eggs from a farm. The nursery then incubated the eggs and the chickens were returned to the farm. Mrs Cargill to consider way forward.

10 new laptops will replace the old ones, also 10 new iPads received for P1/2/3 for the children to share in class.

Treasurer's Report

Little fundraising to date. Easy fundraising has sent the missing cheque for £23.55 and also a cheque for £18.36 for donations in the second quarter. £86 received from Ragbags in September, and there will be more funds to come after the bin was emptied last week. Current balance is £2,718.05

Fundraising committee

Playground Pennies scheme is doing well - £115.91 raised last week. This money has been added to the Just Giving page.

Christmas number board - £2 per entry to have a chance of winning one of five or six prizes. Trying to be careful of the amount of handling being done (cash, raffle tickets, etc.) this Christmas.

The theme for the Christmas event is 'Christmas by Candlelight', which is scheduled to take place on Thurs 16th Dec. Mr Wilson to check with High School, and may use Wed 15th as main day, with back up of 16th. Any profits will be split between the School and Parent Council. Gazebo near the gate will provide mulled wine, juice, hot chocolate, mince pies, shortbread, etc. with donations going in to a bucket. Gazebo will need to be able to plug in extension lead (possibly through nursery window). Parents would stand along the outside of the fence, pupils will be at the front of the school. Need to consider risk assessment before the event. Looking for outdoor lighting, possibly generators, PA system with two speakers and a few other things. Mr Wilson to confirm list. May have some seats just inside the fence for people who need to sit down.

Christmas funding has been confirmed for Nursery to P3 (approx £1.50-£2 per pupil). Mrs Lochhead and Mrs Cargill to liaise. Parent Council to fund snacks and small prizes for the Christmas parties (approx. £20 per party). Two parties this year; one for Nursery to P3; another for P4 – P7.

Thursday 16th is the date for Christmas lunch; pupils to wear Christmas jumpers. Any old Christmas jumpers would be gratefully received by the school in case anyone is without.

Communications

Some emails are slow in coming out; people are not being kept informed e.g. not knowing when after school netball sessions stop, etc. Athletics competition in Gala coming up; the Parent Council has part funded transport for the children who are able to attend (numbers limited to 20 per school).

Noted there were some upset children at Halloween, since the primary was not allowed to dress up, but nursery was still having fancy dress. The reasons given for not dressing up in the past include; some costumes are too scary for nursery children, equity (not all children having Halloween costumes) and pagan festival so some cannot take part. May have to have some guidance if the school does allow it next year e.g. spare costumes in school, no full mask, etc. Lack of evening

Halloween party probably led to the issue this year. Noted that other parents could possibly help with Christmas/ Halloween outfits.

Parents are welcome to bring forward any suggestions to Mr Wilson or Mr Devlin at any time. School and community do not seem to work together well at the moment. This is seen as one of the things to improve. Noted the bowling club is holding a primary school Christmas party. Leaflets were handed in to the school to be handed out but nothing has happened so far, and needs to be done as soon as possible.

Can Easy Fundraising be added to the newsletter? Spin to win on this month. Maria to email Mr Wilson a few words about Easy Fundraising and Roni to pass on information on how to access the Co-op fund. Very easy to do on the Co-op app. Maria/ Roni to give update on how much has been raised so far. Co-op funding is for the garden and runs for the year.

Covid update

Parents of some children in ELC and early years can support their child if necessary. Parents can also come into the grounds and work with small groups of children providing social distancing etc. is observed. School lets can take place for organised groups such as Cubs, etc.

Any other business

Aim to have another fundraising meeting in the next fortnight to consolidate the Christmas event.