

Blackhall Primary School Parent Carer Council
Meeting – 11 September 2024
Minutes

Members Present

Kate Chandler	P1 rep	Jane Browning	Chair
Amy O'Brien	P2 rep	Kate Walker	Vice Chair
Julia Pearson	P3 rep	Colin Chisholm	Treasurer
Chloe Riddell	P4 rep		
Emily Orr	P5 rep		
Gavin Munro	P6 rep (in lieu of Sine Munro)		
Caroline Irvine	P7 rep		

Other Attendees

Kirsty Martin	Head Teacher	Eric Jackson	PSA
Anna Hazel Dunn	Depute Head Teacher		

1. Welcome, apologies and appointment of members for 2024/5

Apologies were received Councillors Hal Osler and Max Mitchell. Kate Chandler, Amy O'Brien and Emily Orr were confirmed as class reps as noted above. The Chair noted that the roles of Secretary and ASN rep were both vacant. The minutes of last year's AGM had been circulated to members for information, noting in particular the proposal to merge the Parent Carer Council and Parent Staff Association, in order to provide more resilience around priorities, fundraising and running of events.

2. Action points from last year

The Chair noted that she has actions to contact Cramond PS regarding how they ran their road safety audit, and also to chase up the Council regarding the school travel plan. There was also an outstanding action point on providing support materials around the Promise and support for care experienced families. The Chair, Vice Chair and P4 rep undertook to work together on this.

Actions: Chair to chase up Cramond PS and Edinburgh CC re travel
Chair, Vice Chair and P4 rep to work together on materials for care experienced families.

3. Head Teacher Report

The presentation is available on the school website. The following points provide additional information to the slides.

Attainment

Attainment meetings have taken place for the reporting years (ie P1, 4 and 7). Meetings for other year groups will follow. There is some work to be done with the current P6 cohort; however the figures are still well above the national average. Any parents/carers who have concerns/whose children are not

on track can speak to the school directly. There is a new city-wide pupil tracking programme for attainment.

Finance Committee

The Committee had had its first meeting of the school year. Budgets are extremely tight with no carry forward from 2023/4 being allowed. There was some discussion as to whether parents/carers could help contribute materials to the school eg stationery. The financial situation is also likely to have an impact on costs for certain excursions eg the Pantomime.

Action: Chair to work with year reps on wording of email to parents/carers about making donations to the school.

School roll/staffing

The school roll is currently 368. Overall numbers are continuing to drop; however the lower end of the school is very busy with 2 full Primary 1 classes and a composite P2/1. Primary 1 and 2 are going to trial having a shorter lunchtime with an afternoon break.

Anna Hazel Dunn had taken up post as the Depute Head Teacher; Andrew Gardner will resume his role as Principal Teacher/P6 class teacher. PSA support is limited across the school which has an impact on general classroom cover and playground cover.

Parent/carers support to the school

There was some discussion about reading support for the school via parents/carers coming in to help with reading groups. It was noted that parents/carers could also help to provide classroom preparation support for teachers (eg photocopying) and that this had been done before Covid. Any parent/carers who wishes to do this would need a PVG check and can contact the school if they are interested.

Action: Chair to liaise with year reps on wording of ask to parents/carers.

Priorities for the year ahead

The School Improvement Plan for 2024/5 is now on the school website. Priorities for the coming year include: planning; outdoor learning; leadership of learning (for both staff and pupils) and resilience. There may be an evening run by the school on how to help build and support resilience, particularly for pupils that have been affected by Covid.

Parking

This continues to be an issue, with a number of parents/carers continuing to ignore communications from the school and parking unlawfully. The impact on the children's safety was noted. It was suggested that a restorative approach, with a map of areas that it would be acceptable to park in, be circulated to parents/carers and the school agreed to do this. There had also been a suggestion of a Walking Bus. The Junior Road Safety Officers will also be working on this issue. The school agreed to consider whether they could afford to buy any flags/cones/parking pals to mark out the unsafe areas, noting that budgets were extremely tight.

Actions: School to issue map of areas that are lawful/safe to park in

School to consider whether any items can be bought to assist in marking out the unlawful/unsafe areas.

Issues raised by year reps

The school is operating with relief janitors at the moment and it was noted that playground rubbish seems to have increased. This is thought to be more down to squirrels than children! Relief janitors have been asked to do all that they can.

The school is going to abandon its Twitter/X site and look for an alternative platform to share school news, most likely Teams.

The quality/health of Friday packed lunches and associated waste was noted. This is a Council-wide issue which has previously been raised by the Pupil Council and can also be raised directly with the City Council via parents/carers as needed.

Class mixing continues to be a source of anxiety for some children/parents and carers. It is likely that decisions on this will continue to be a mixture of child and teacher input/judgment.

Playground Improvement

Plans for Phase 1 of the works have been submitted to the Council and a date for the works starting is awaited. A parent had offered to help paint the playground surface to help provide activities for children.

Action: P5 year rep to contact parent who volunteered to help paint playground.

4. Parent Carer Council Priorities for 2024/5

The priorities for the PCC in the coming year are likely to be: playground improvement; parking; and restructuring of the PCC/PSA. All of these had been discussed earlier in the meeting and it was likely that further discussion on restructuring of the PCC/PSA would happen at the next meeting.

5. Deputation to City of Edinburgh Council re data protection

There had been a recent deputation to the Council (from Junpier Green Primary) regarding an anonymous, Council-wide Health and Wellbeing survey that took place where there are now concerns that children can in fact be identified from the data. Further details are available from the PCC if needed.

6. AOB

It is likely that mobile phones/campaigns about their use in childhood will be discussed at the next meeting.

Date of next meeting: 13 November 2024 in school – all welcome