

Blackhall Primary School Parent Carer Council

Meeting – Wednesday 10 September 2025

7.00-8.30pm Blackhall Primary School

Meeting Notes

Present

Colin Chisholm
Kate Chandler
Jane Browning

Emily Orr
Morag Waller

Kate Walker (Chair)
Amy O'Brien

Kirsty Martin

Anna Hazel Dunn

Max Mitchell

Hal Osler

Frances Ross

Natalie Moffat

Apologies

Julia Pearson
Catherine Campbell

Chloe Riddell
Sine Pedersen

1. Welcome

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. Jackie Ried and Robbie Crockett were noted as going to be joining the meeting at 730pm to discuss the petition heard at the Education Committee last week.

Emily Orr was nominated and seconded as the ASN rep on the Parent Carer Council. All noted that this was welcome, as there has not been an ASN rep on the council for the last year.

The role of Secretary is still vacant. All year reps were asked to encourage parents to consider taking on the role.

2. How to engage the Parent Carer Council

The Chair reminded all that there is guidance on the school website on how to engage with PCC and how to take issues forward with the school. Not all items need to come to PCC for discussion. If unsure what to do, the Chair is happy to be contacted.

3. Priorities for the year 2025/6

Priority for next year will remain the playground improvements.

It was noted that there have been two grants to support improvement works. One around improvement of the pond area and a growing grant which will include the planting of fruit trees at the front of the school. Both of these grants have some specific requirements, so detailed spend plans have been developed to support the work.

Thanks was offered to the RBS volunteers that came into school before the start of term to paint the outside wall. This was also supported by the supply of free paint from Johnstones.

Thanks also to the P2 parents who have been undertaking some gardening and maintenance in the playground over the last few weekends.

To support the growing grant, there are some tree stumps that require to be removed. This was not part of the funding received. A proposal was made for PCC funds to support this to the sum of £336. This proposal was supported.

4. Head Teacher's Report

Please see attached slides for more detail. The main points covered are summarised in the bullets below. Issues raised by the class reps were incorporated into the presentation.

- Feedback requested on the new time for the 'meet the teacher' event. Reps noted that it was easier for pupils in younger years as they could attend and show their parents round the classes. The time did not interfere with bedtimes.
- School role is 364, which is approximately the same as last year, but there is one less class. All year groups have 2 classes. No year group is full.
- School priorities for the coming year are; assessing writing, embedding numeracy, introducing literacy pathway and resilience.
- P1 class photos were retaken. Apologies were given for the issue/confusions with permissions.
- P3 raised concern about the email about private assessments for additional support needs. School will consider cases on an exceptional individual basis. It was noted that on day 1 there were 5 requests received, and each report is very time consuming to complete for the class teachers.
- P4 had asked if lunch breaks could be longer, this is not possible without adversely impacting on the length of the school day or on teaching time.
- P5 had asked about whether a PE teacher would be better than a separate outdoor learning teacher. The background to this request was not clear.
- P6 had raised a concern about inappropriate YouTube adverts being available on the iPads. This has been raised with the digital learning team and class teachers have been given guidance on what to use instead of YouTube. It was noted that P6 pupils have not yet had their individual iPads issued.
- P6 also raised an issue about free time in class. Mrs Martin was not sure what this related to – free time is not something she is aware of in class.
- P7 has raised concerns about the lack of communication while the children were in Lagganlia. A midweek check in from staff will be considered for next

year. If there had been any concerns staff would have been in touch with parents.

5. School Playing Field

Guests: Jackie Reid, Service Director of Education/Chief Education Officer and Robbie Crockatt, Strategic Asset Planning Manager, City of Edinburgh Council were welcomed to the meeting.

Following a short introduction by the Chair a Video presentation prepared by some Blackhall pupils was shared. This was a great way of hearing children's voices in respect to the playground.

There was an invitation to Council representatives to make any comments. There was a good discussion from all in attendance. The following bullets are a summary of the main points raised.

- Parents were thanked for all the hard work that has happened until now to improve the playground.
- It was acknowledged that children have the right to play and a right to outdoor learning.
- Robbie Crockatt has been requested to look at fully costed options as part of the output of the Education Committee.
- Maintenance of any improvement works is also required and the cost of that needs to be taken into account.
- Council officials keen to work with parents and children, so a working group including all parties will be established.
- Discussion about what would be offered if the school was a new build and how that compares to what Blackhall PS currently have
- Agreed that outdoor space needs to be multifunctional – to support play but also a learning/teaching space.
- Noted that there is no extra budget given to school for outdoor space, and funds need to come from within the school budget.
- Acknowledged that future works are likely to rely on parent fundraising or grants.
- The other report required for the Education Committee is to compare facilities across all the schools in Edinburgh.
- Elected Councillors present offered support to ensure that this issue continues to be given the importance it deserves.

Council officials were given a timeline of all the work undertaken by PCC and PSA over the last 2 years and a selection of photographs showing what the issues are.

6. AOB – Digital Reference Group

Over the summer a request had been received via the PCC Chairs email group for a survey to be completed on use of technology in classrooms. This has been completed and returned. Responses were based on the conversations that have taken place at PCC over the last year.

A request had also been made for a representative of PCC to join the Digital Reference Group. Emily Orr agreed to be PCC representative for Blackhall on the Group.

Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 19 November