

Blackhall Primary School Parent Carer Council
Meeting – 14 January 2026
Minutes

Members Present

Morag Waller	P1 rep	Catherine Campbell	P6 rep
Kate Chandler	P2 rep	Sine Munro	P7 rep
Amy O'Brien	P3 rep	Emily Orr	ASN rep
Julia Tapsfield	P4 rep	Kate Walker	Chair
Chloe Riddell	P5 rep	Colin Chisholm	Treasurer

Other Attendees

Kirsty Martin	Head Teacher		
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1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Hal Osler, Jane Browning (Vice Chair)

2. Approval of minutes and action points from last meeting

Minutes of the last meeting were approved. It was agreed that various action points had been or could be closed.

3. Playing Field Update/Discussion (30 mins)

The meeting between Kirsty Martin, Kate Walker, Councillors and Robbie Crockatt on 11th December 2025 was discussed. At the meeting a variety of options were considered but no resolution was reached.

Robbie Crockatt from Edinburgh Council has prepared a written report for the Education, Children and Families Committee with four options. The preferred option, option four, reflects that the PCC would be expected to cover the costs, estimated at £150,000.

The PCC raised concerns about the accuracy of the report, especially the assertion that the PCC or parent carer body has the required funding available or is able to cover the costs.

The PCC have prepared a written deputation to submit to the Education, Children and Families Committee in advance of their Meeting on 20th January 2026. It was felt that it was important to share this to make clarifications and represent the views from children, parents and carers. The deputation will reflect concerns about the accuracy of the report and offer commentary on the four options. It will also highlight the impact of the lack of adequate play space on the children, in particular their right to play, and ask for:

- Further information about option 4.
- Specific information about timescales and interim solution.
- Clarity that if a drainage issue has been identified the costs to resolve this specifically will be covered by Edinburgh Council and not the PCC.

The PCC also discussed a potential commercial offer, which has stalled at the moment.

Action: Kate Walker (Chair) will discuss the report and written deputation with Councillor Osler.

Action: Kate Walker (Chair) will make the edits to the written deputation and share with the Council in advance of the deadline on 16th.

4. Head Teacher report (including year rep issues) (KM; 30 mins)

A number of issues were discussed, including:

- School roll: currently 368 pupils. Average class size 26.
- Recently had lots of gardening and volunteering help.
- Reminder to parents and carers waiting for children not to let younger children go near the pond area or throw things in the pond. Teaching is often still ongoing. Please can the children take care in the garden.
- Lots happened at the end of term. Excellent feedback from P6 parents who attended church at the end of term.
- Coming up: P7 show, world book day, Bikeability.
- Attainment figures are available in the Head Teacher slides and are positive.
- Coffee, Chat and Collaborate mornings are going well and all are welcome.
- Parent Carer consultations are in March.
- Finance Committee meeting was in December. Hopeful that PEF allocation will be increased from next year given that the number of low income families have increased significantly. Inclusion Support Team is now funded centrally but managed by LC Schools.
- Concern about the increasing cost of school trips. Discussion about shortfall for panto.
- Netball going well, with thanks to the teachers leading this.
- Parking. Council has agreed to additional traffic calming measures.

Staffing update:

- Two new PSAs have been appointed, another PSA is now permanent but currently on leave.
- Mrs Craig is leaving her P6 class at Easter break. A different teacher will be in place for the final term. Mrs Craig will be there for parent consultations and will leave substantial notes to inform written reports for her replacement.
- Mr McCutcheon, the Janitor, will be off on long term absence from the end of this month. A replacement will be provided.
- Rachel Noonan will be returning from maternity leave in March and will job share with Miss Chrystie.

Answers to questions from year reps:

- LED lights in the big hall will be replaced.
- Changes have been made to ensure parents and carers are informed when additional support is being considered, offered or stopped and staff change. The communication process should not be clearer.
- Teachers have been provided information about breathing exercises and mindfulness in the class and some are trying this out.

- Teachers and PSAs are trained in neurodivergence.
- The PCC discussed the importance of tools and support for children according to their unique needs.

Action: PCC to add specific agenda item to next meeting relating to support for low income families given the increase in number at the school.

5. Digital Reference Group (EO; 10 mins)

Emily Orr provided an update from the Council's Digital Reference Group. Some concerns were raised about school ipads. The next meeting of the Group is 13th February but no one is able to attend. The PCC will be kept informed of the discussions at this Group.

6. AOB

Quote for pond fence (£460) was considered and approved.

The spending plan for the Growth Fund, including wildflower turf and topsoil was considered and approved.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 1 April 2026 in school – all welcome.