

# **WEST LINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS' COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 13 May 2008

Present: John Barrie, Glenda Barton, Sally Bowie, Moira Brown, Calum Greenhow, Mary Gunn, Gail Jackson, Gerry McLachlan, Michael Pryor (Chair), Laura Robertson, Claire Shaw, Chris Tate, Alastair Young.

In attendance: Hilary Elliott, Denise Halcrow (Clerk).

Apologies: Emil Berthelsen, Katrina Culshaw, Tom Davidson, Cathy Grant, Margaret Hogg, Jane Quinn, Sheila Warren, Steven Whalley.

**1 Minutes of the last meeting held on 18 March 2008 were accepted and signed.**

## **2 Matters Arising**

- I. Additional Needs Assistant hours - Claire has received a reply to her letter of January, but feels it is inconclusive, with reference to the forthcoming "Transforming Childrens' Services" consultation. Chris will circulate a copy to the PC.
- II. School Centenary 2009 – Calum reported that a group of 10, including one pupil had met on 1<sup>st</sup> May and several ideas were suggested including a school song, which will be composed by Ronald and Gerda Stevenson, a photo of past and present pupils, a stall at Whipman and a coffee morning in August. A further meeting has been arranged. It was suggested that the committee be set up as a sub-group of the Parent Council.
- III. Role of class representatives – this was accepted, and is to be added as an appendix to the PC Constitution at the next AGM and to go in the back of the school handbook for parents of new pupils.
- IV. SBC cuts update – Michael has written a letter to the councillors who attended the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> April and to Glenn Rodger. Laura complimented Michael on the wording of the letter and Mrs Elliott thanked the PC for their support and for the civilised way the meeting was conducted. Parents have been sent a copy of the letter and are urged to write to the Council themselves to express their personal concerns.
- V. New School update – West Linton Community Council are holding a meeting tomorrow about the provision of any community facilities within the new school. Steven Whalley will attend on behalf of the PC.

## **3 Composite Classes**

Michael stated that they are a necessity, and that organising them by age is to be preferred over alphabetically or by ability. He accepted that there was a concern about older children joining a class with younger children but felt an information evening for parents would help allay parents' concerns.

Laura pointed out that organising composite classes strictly chronologically means that, in the course of their school career, some children may repeatedly be in a class with younger children, some may be repeatedly in a class with older children, and some children may never be in a composite class. Therefore, she feels the system should not be referred to as 'fair' since it does not provide equality of opportunity to all the children.

Mrs Elliot responded that she didn't think she had used the term 'fair', but that the benefit the chronological system has from her perspective is that it uses an objective criterion rather than her subjective judgement, and so is not open to parental challenge on an ongoing basis. She then told the PC that there is to be an SBC consultation on Composite Classes. Michael will involve himself with this.

#### **4 Key Issues from Parent Forum Consultation**

Those remaining to be discussed are as follows:

- #4 Provision of Music and Language Teaching – for a future meeting
- #6 More Involvement in Development of Personal Learning Plans – to be reviewed in 6-12 months
- #7 Improvement in School Environment – affected by cutbacks and likely new school.
- #8 Development of a School Website
- #9 Promoting Best Practice and Ensuring Quality in Teaching and Educating Parents – next meeting
- #10 Support for Boys in School – next meeting
- #14 Boys and Girls Line Up

#### **5 Head Teacher's Report**

Mrs Elliott expressed her thanks to all adults who accompanied the recent P7 and P5 residential visits to Winmarleigh and Innerwick which had been very successful and most enjoyable. Mr Murray's post in outdoor education may not be in place next year, which would have implications for future P5 residential trips to Innerwick.

There were several successful day visits with transport costs subsidised by the PTA, for which Mrs Elliott is very grateful.

Mrs Elliott is currently organising classes for next session. The estimated school roll is 260 and with that an additional teacher is to be appointed. As there will be no additional classroom available, one year group will be accommodated in a single classroom with two teachers and the dining room utilised as an overspill teaching area.

Forthcoming events: 21<sup>st</sup> May – Nursery Parents visit and County Sports Evening. Well Being/Stress Management Evening for teachers and parents to be organised. P7 and parents visits to Peebles High School in June, also P1 new entrants school visits. 16<sup>th</sup> June – School Sports and 25<sup>th</sup> June - P7 Leaving Party.

#### **6 PTA Update**

Sally reported that there was enough money to help fund transport for class outings this term and for the purchase of 5 laptops. More funds will be raised in the lead up to Christmas such as the sale Christmas wrapping paper, culminating with the Bazaar. Saturday Morning Bacon Butties is

ongoing. The next big event is the Green/Eco Day next Saturday 17 May from 2-4pm which is educational as well as a fundraiser. Helpers are still needed. The Junior Whipman Disco will be held on Tuesday 10 June.

Sally said the PTA really needs more parents to be involved, to which Glenda suggested that PC class reps could try to rally more support.

## **7 Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- I. Safe routes to School
- II. Promoting Best Practice and Ensuring Quality in Teaching and Educating Parents
- III. Support for Boys in School
- IV. Transforming Childrens Services.

## **8 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June at 7.15pm