

# West Linton Primary School Parents Council

## Minutes of Meeting held 5 May 2011

- Present:** Colin Gambles (Chairperson), Hilary Elliot (Head Teacher), Estelle Weipers (Deputy Chairperson), Monica Shaw (Secretary), Mirren McLeod (Minute Taker), Moira Brown, Gill Gracie, Alison Harper, Margaret Hogg, Gail Jackson, Steven Whalley and Emma Wood
- In Attendance:** Alan Vannan (HT Consultant, SBC)
- Apologies:** Sheila Warren

### 1. New School Update

Alan Vannan reported that the Council do not own the land for the new school yet due to a boundary issue, but hope that this will be resolved in two weeks and the land purchased. The CPO is still in place should the issue not be resolved. Planning permission was granted in April and has gone to the Scottish Office for approval. This should be given by mid-May. It is then published in European Journals asking for construction bids. The Council are still expecting to start building in mid-November with a "cutting of the sod" ceremony. The Linton Hotspurs have a pitch to relocate to and the Council will contribute to getting the pitch ready. The playing field in the new school will be laid asap but in the meantime the school will need a field to use that has nearby toilet facilities. It was suggested the school could use the Lower Green as there a public toilets nearby.

The issue with access gates into The Smithy is being discussed with the residents of The Smithy. Hilary Elliot confirmed that the playing field will be for school use only during school time.

Hilary Elliot has been involved with the Clovenford School classroom layout and this will be useful when designing the layout of the new school classrooms. Because of the larger footprint of the school the cleaning arrangements will need to change and new equipment used and stored in the school. The private school nursery has been allocated five car-parking spaces which are for the use of their staff only.

Offsite works will start before the school is built, namely roads widened and footpaths laid. Alan Vannan is to try and get a plan of offsite works and pass it to Hilary Elliot.

The Safer Routes to School person will come and visit closer to the build to discuss parking, bike stands and road crossings.

### 2. Minutes of Last Meeting

It should read that Gill Gracie is going to contact Marcia regarding a drama club. Gail Jackson did not attend the meeting.

### **Matters Arising from Last Minutes**

#### **a. Homework Policy**

Hilary Elliot has added annotations to the Homework Policy. Gill Gracie and Margaret Hogg are to review the notes, then meet with Hilary Elliot to discuss. Hilary Elliot will then send a finalised Homework Policy to Parent Council members. The Homework Policy will be discussed at the next Parent Council meeting. The aim is to make the new policy available to parents in August 2011 for the start of the new session.

#### **b. Music Update**

Gail Jackson has still not had a reply from Ian Fraser. Colin Gambles is to contact Ian Fraser.

#### **c. Lunchtime Clubs**

A second Art and Design group has started. A mural which the first group completed will be put up in the gym hall. Gill Gracie is to put out a communication to parents to ask for volunteers for a drama club and a football club. Emma Wood will co-ordinate the football club volunteers. Estelle Weipers is to send a thank you card to the people that helped with the Art and Design club and also to Claire Shaw for her help with the Running Club as she is stepping down from this role at the end of term. Gill Gracie is to contact Marcia regarding a drama club.

#### **d. Parent Council Website**

No-one has volunteered to maintain the website within the Parent Council so Colin Gambles is to invite a volunteer from the Parent Forum. Hilary Elliot is going to put a message on the School website calling for a volunteer to maintain the website also.

#### **e. E-mails from Gillian Simmonds**

Gillian Simmonds has given Colin Gambles permission to pass on the content of e-mails she sends to him. He has received e-mails regarding the Composite Class Policy review, Supplier Road-show, Consultation on School Dress Code and Interview Training for Parent Council members. If any-one on the Parent Council is interested in attending the Interview Training which will be in May, please contact Colin Gambles.

### **3. Music Group**

Hilary Elliot has an invitation by the Scottish Borders Instrumental Music Group for **interested Scottish Borders** school pupils to apply to join. The group meets on Saturdays in Galashiels. Colin Gambles is to send information to parents regarding this. Hilary Elliot is to laminate the invitation and attached it to the front fence.

#### 4. Eco Garden

An invitation has been extended to parents to help with the Eco Garden in the school grounds.

#### 5. Parent Reps

Hilary Elliot suggested the parent reps introduce themselves to parents at the Parent night in November. The role of the class reps needs to be explained. Various timings were suggested for this - it depends on when the reps are decided. Moira Brown is to put together some class rep information which was published at the time of the introduction of parent councils. This topic will be discussed more in-depth at the next meeting. It was decided Estelle Weipers will attend the new entrant meetings on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June as a parent council rep.

#### 6. Regular Reports

##### a. Head Teachers Report

Staffing Update: Mrs Scott returned from Maternity Leave on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Miss Bell-Jack who was covering RICCT Thurs AMs has left to take up post at Kingsland Primary. This post will be covered on a supply basis until the end of session.

The authority is currently looking at staffing across the authority and in the first instance considering compulsory transfers and transfer requests for staff currently holding permanent contracts. Once this is resolved, vacancies will be identified and filled. The process begins with NQT allocations and staff entitled to be considered for positions under redeployment rights. Organising staffing across the authority is a lengthy process taking most of May and June and often also into July and August. It is always the aim however to have staffing resolved before the end of term.

Based on current roll projections (prediction 240 P1-P7) we will revert to 10 class teachers in August 2011. Currently we have two members of staff on temporary contracts and one class teacher vacancy. In addition, a Principal Teacher vacancy will soon be advertised as Mrs Cameron will be leaving us at the end of this term.

It is hoped to be in a position to inform parents and pupils of classes and staffing arrangements by mid-June.

##### Efficiency Savings

The school continues to be mindful of the need for Efficiency Savings and as such the arrangement of operating with reduced RICCT cover will continue next session. Timetabling will be looked at over the summer to ensure all class teachers receive their entitlement to non-pupil contact time and that pupils continue to receive specialist input in the Expressive Arts.

The school will receive an allocation of Additional Needs Support sometime this term. This allocation will be based on an audit of needs across the authority and in individual schools.

As previously intimated due to constraints on the school budget, there will be a reduction in the amount and flexibility of enhanced support provided. This could impact on the following: Additional playground support over and above Playground Supervisor and Additional Needs Assistants; reduction in support staff to undertake lunch & packed lunch duty, a reduction in office hours, loss of Additional PE for groups of younger pupils.

As predicted the school has carried forward a small sum of around £2000 from the last financial year into this one. This money will go towards efficiency savings.

Recent Events

- World Book Day – Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March
- Tweeddale Dance Festival Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March (Nursery AM group, P1, P4, P5 & some pupils in P6, P6/7 and P7)
- WLPS Dance Festival Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> (Parents of pupils involved in Tweeddale Dance Festival) and 23<sup>rd</sup> March (performance by all pupils P1-P7 to each other)

**7. Any Other Business**

It was decided the next meeting's Agenda items will be New School Build, Parent Council Reps and Homework Policy.

The next Parent Council meeting is on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

The meeting finished at 9.15pm.