

# Strathblane Primary School Parent Council

## Minutes

7.15pm, 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

### In Attendance:

Rachel Allen, Jamie Ballantine, Alan Campbell, Derek Fabel, Elaine Holmes, Robin Hoyle, Kim Jones, Simon Jones, Mark Lanigan, Sandra Logan, Mandy Malcomson, Lisa McAllister, Steven McCooey, Debbie McLeod, Sheena Mylles, Jenny Park, Beate Schwann, Annabel Sharp, Nicki Sleight, Anne Spencer.

### Guests:

Derek Fabel - Fundraising Committee

### 1. Welcome

Mandy welcomed everyone and explained the purpose of the meeting was to discuss fundraising, planning the Christmas Fair followed by routine Parent Council business.

### 2. Apologies:

Paul Brogan, Yvonne Brogan, Wendy Hamilton, Kristine Campbell and Traci Leven.

### 3. Minutes of the previous meeting

Mandy explained that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4/10/11 were not available and should be agreed at the next meeting.

### 4. Fundraising and planning of Christmas Fair

Derek explained that the Halloween disco had raised £400 in profit, and that it was now time to focus attention on this year's Christmas Fair. Last year's Christmas Fair raised £1000, this year the fundraising committee have set a target of £1500. The Fair will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> November.

Derek has drawn up a task list and he is now looking for volunteers to complete the jobs on the list. Derek will put the task list on the PC website and encouraged people to volunteer for any jobs not yet assigned to named volunteers.

Beate suggested that the 'class links' could also help to recruit volunteers. Mandy agreed, and advised that primary 6 was the only class without a 'class link'.

Sandra requested an up to date list of the 'class links' so that all teaching staff were aware of the parents that had volunteered for this role. **Action: Mandy**

### PC members volunteered for the following tasks at the meeting:

Collect tables from the Scout Hall -  
Help move tables from Scout Hall -  
Return tables on Friday evening -  
Chocolate fountain operator -  
Request donation of goodie jars -  
Locate an unwanted parachute -  
Raffle prizes from stall holders -

**Debbie McLeod's** husband with van.  
Derek volunteered **Paul Brogan**  
**Steven McCooey**  
**Lisa McAllister**  
**Sandra Logan** to write to parents  
**Steven McCooey** to ask at Maryhill Barracks  
Derek explained Linda has organised this

Beate was pleased to announce that the missing Santa suit had been found and requested early access to the School to set up Santa's grotto at 2pm. Sandra agreed.

Jenny suggested decorating a large tent for use as Santa's Grotto. Derek explained how something could be rigged up using old parachutes or large pieces of dark material as in previous years. Steve to ask at Maryhill Barracks. **Action: Steven**

### **Advertising the Christmas Fair**

It was agreed not to spend money in publications or magazines advertising the Fair. The meeting agreed that promotion by word of mouth and banners on the main road and a press release to the local paper would be sufficient. Alan advised that the print deadline for articles in The Blane would be too late for advertising the show.

Derek thanked the PC and moved to the GP room with the fundraising committee to work on their plans.

### **5. School Update: Sandra Logan, Head Teacher**

Sandra asked if the PC would like a copy of her report for the PC website. Alan agreed.

**Action: Sandra**

### **Health and Safety**

- The school now has six more hand driers in toilets.
- Awaiting signage has been ordered to say "No dogs allowed" and "Please keep the gate closed" ( £33.40 for each sign)
- Since Mr Bendermacher took up post as janitor- drains have been cleared to avoid flooding and reduce risk of ice when temperature drops.
- CCTV cameras now fixed and fully functioning – this will help identify the "vandals" who are leaving broken glass in the school playground
- Security Lights are out at various points around the building but this has been reported and we're waiting for the electricians to come out to repair.
- A new boiler has been fitted therefore the GP room and public areas at the entrance to the school should be a more comfortable temperature
- Fire alarms will be tested every Thursday at 2pm, and there will be another evacuation this term in the morning because last term we had evacuation practice in the afternoon.
- The gate at the Nursery garden being locked at set times 8:45 – 9:15a.m. and 3:00- 3:30p.m has really helped with the prevention of pedestrians using the school car park as their means of entering and leaving the building.

### **School Improvements –**

The focus for quality assurance this term and next is improving the pace and challenge of Maths and Numeracy. On staff development days, staff will work on teaching mental numeracy and agility strategies and challenging able children in maths. All pupils will be working on financial education during week beginning 28th November.

Pupils have been consulted on homework – next steps are to consult staff and parents and collate results of consultation.

Next term all classes will start to use learning logs as part of ongoing assessment. The working group looking at this have developed guidance. On the Monday staff development day this will be launched and introduced to classes the next week.

In the Nursery class the main focus is making the learning more visible to parents and carers through the documentation approach. Brian Hartley has worked with staff and the children in an afternoon session on how to take effective photographs as part of this process. Staff have started to take this forward and will work with Mr Hartley on the Monday staff development day.

The learning wall for the Nursery is in the corridor between the early years' rooms and the main entrance and this public shares some of the children's learning and experiences. Parents and carers are reminded to look at the wall when waiting to collect their children.

On Tuesday of the staff development days Nursery Staff will be working with other colleagues from the Balfron Cluster on how to improve the documentation approach.

### **Whiteboards update:**

Whiteboards are now installed and in full use in the primary 1 and primary 5/4 classrooms. To date classrooms with interactive whiteboards:

- Primary 1
- Primary 5/4 room
- Primary 6/5 room
- Primary 7/6 room
- Reduced Class Contact Room
- Computer Suite

There are now only two classrooms that don't have an interactive whiteboard. Sandra emphasised how this has really enhanced the learning experiences for all children in the school.

Simon asked if the interactive white boards could be used to display the agenda items and minutes at PC meetings. It was felt that this would be a useful demonstration of the equipment whilst also saving paper. Rachel agreed the next meeting could be held in her classroom (P6/7). Jamie to provide minutes in pdf format. **Action: Rachel/Jamie**

Simon asked if the Skype could be used in the classroom. Sandra confirmed that this was indeed possible and also explained that the equipment meant the teachers could now access a far wider range of learning materials for free online. For example, material produced in conjunction with the children's laureate Julia Donaldson.

Rachel suggested that parents should see how the children are using the whiteboards, in particular how some of the activities develop problem solving skills.

### **School Update Continued... Other items**

Willow Tunnel – Willow can't be planted until December at the earliest because the plants must be at their most dormant which means waiting until all the leaves are off trees. Anne Spencer has planned a meeting with Callum week beginning 14<sup>th</sup> November. Jenny to meet with planting group. **Action: Jenny**

£101.98 was spent on Christmas (Santa) Gifts for the children in Nursery, Primary 1 and Primary 2

The school has been assigned two student teachers from two different universities. Mrs Abigail Moffat, who has been placed in the Nursery Class. Mr Kevin Curtin, who has been placed in The Primary 7/6 Class.

Rosellen Dick, Nursery Teacher, will finish her six week block at Strathblane Nursery class on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November. Rosellen has asked to come back once a fortnight to gain further experience as she will be working at the part time Fintry Nursery.

A grant requesting funding of £200 has been applied for to the National Science and Engineering Week Grant Scheme for Scotland

Picnic bench now installed and being well used by pupils during the school day. Unfortunately, it has been abused by former pupils in the evenings who have used for skateboarding and scooters, and although only two weeks old this has caused some damage. Sandra suggested that an article should be put in the Blane to raise awareness that the bench was donated and is now being abused.

Cathie Moir is working as a Parent Volunteer. She is working with children in Primary 3/2 class on Mondays. Anne Horrocks and Christine Baume are working with Primary 6 pupils on cycle skills on Tuesday afternoons. Another parent has volunteered to work in the Nursery class on Friday afternoons; we are waiting on PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) checks to be completed. Although we welcome volunteers in the school, there is a cost implication because we need to pay for every PVG disclosure check carried out.

A discussion took place about the charges for disclosure checks and the value added by volunteers. The PC agreed to pay for future disclosure checks to allow parents to continue to support the school as volunteers. **Requests to be agreed by Parent Council**

## **6. Treasurers report**

Cheque signatories will be changed this week, so that all three signatories will be parent members of the PC. No report on the current financial position was tabled.

Alan asked the PC for views on what to do with the money raised at the Summer Fair, approximately £900. Alan advised that Linda Barclay is currently checking with local voluntary groups to see which groups want to donate their share to the school and which groups want to keep their share for their own activities. **Action: Linda Barclay**

Mandy told the meeting that a letter had been received from the nursery class. The children have requested outdoor play equipment, such as hula hoops etc. The children would also like an extension of the climbing frame and some of their faulty computer equipment replaced. The meeting agreed they would fund requests for equipment from the nursery up to the value of £100. Any amount above this level would have to be considered further by the PC.

## 7. Parent Council Priorities

The PC has now received letters from each of the classes about their priorities, as well as feedback from its own members. The current PC priorities are to support learning by fundraising, supporting extra curricular activities, contributing to the School Improvement Plan and continuing to develop parental involvement. These priorities will be advanced by the four key work stream areas.

Mandy emphasised that there was an excellent turn out by parents at the Halloween Disco, particularly by parents of nursery children. Alan said it was important to sustain parental involvement, as in contrast to the disco, turn out at the AGM was low. Feedback from parents suggests that people are happy with the School and the PC, however the meeting agreed more needed to be done to recruit active members so that the same volunteers are not left to do all the work.

Sandra suggested keeping fundraising meetings as part of the PC meetings may help to attract and sustain parental involvement.

Simon offered to facilitate a session with parents during parents evening when people were waiting or finished with their appointments with class teachers. Simon offered to conduct these sessions, capture people's views and ideas and report back to the PC.

**Action: Simon**

Robin offered to write a more catchy description of this session, avoiding using the term 'consultation session' which was agreed to be an uninspiring term.

**Action: Robin**

## 8. Workstream Updates

### a. Extra Curricular Sports

Steven McCooley is keen to run a P1 'mini-kickers' football club on Wednesdays but is unable to commit to every Wednesday – we would be keen to hear from any parent that would be willing to help (or ideally a number of parents on a rota basis).

Steven also suggested exploring the possibility of making links with local amateur sports clubs. Steve suggested the Bowling Club, the Tennis Club, Strathendrick RC and West of Scotland RC. Robin advised that Strathendrick had worked with the School before. Simon agreed to contact the Bowling Club and West of Scotland Rugby Club, Alan to contact Tennis Club. Simon also said he knew two local men who were training to become football coaches, he agreed to make contact.

**Action: Simon and Alan**

Sandra offered to contact Neil McQuarrie, PE teacher at Balforn High School. Sandra suggested that S5 / S6 pupils may be able to volunteer to do supervised sports coaching as part of their Higher P.E. programme. Sandra also reported that Linda Barclay was organising cross country running.

**Action: Sandra**

Christine Baume is currently delivering curricular cycling proficiency training to P6 together with Anne Horrocks, and following this Christine plans to run an after-school table-tennis club (not sure to what year group). Netball will follow in the New Year.

## MONDAY TOPS:

Last term Traci, Suzy Ure and Rob McCutcheon delivered a block of Tops (multi-sport) to P2. This term Traci will deliver Tops to P3 together with Suzy Ure and Chris Breslin. Monday Tops will be offered to different year groups throughout the year – Tops gives the opportunity for whole year groups (rather than composite class groups) to come together at the clubs. Traci also hopes to run a block of cheerleading in the New Year too (probably for P5 and P6).

Alan reminded the PC that we rely on parent volunteers to help at all sessions and would be interested to hear from any parent who was willing and able to help out at clubs – and also any parents who would like to start up new clubs!

### **b. Eco**

Jenny submitted an application to School Orchard Projects for 8 trees and a half day training. Jenny expects to hear the outcome of this application by 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011. Sandra advised that grants between £200 and £500 were available for prioritising and improving school grounds. Submissions must be returned by February and if successful, allocated funds must be spent by April. Sandra to provide details to Jenny.

**Action: Sandra**

Jenny reported she has also discovered that grants are available from the Central Scotland Forest Network for wildlife projects. Maximum grants available is £500, deadline is 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011. The meeting agreed that Jenny should apply for this money to help pay for the Willow tunnel project.

**Action: Jenny**

Elaine Holmes advised that Julie Wilson, from Education Scotland can provide support and information for people looking to become wildlife leaders. Sheena advised that the School had been working with the allotment group.

**Action: Jenny and Sheena agreed to take forward the eco issues at a separate meeting.**

### **c. Website & email list update**

Alan reported that 8 new people had joined the email list this year, bringing the total to 73 people on the list. Alan explained that this amounted to less than 50% of the school's parents having registered for website and email updates from the PC. Simon suggested PC members could ask parents to register at the next parents evening. Sandra said that it must be clear what exactly parents were signing up for, i.e. information updates.

Simon suggested facebook for the PC. Sandra commented that moderating a facebook page may prove difficult. Robin suggested setting targets for getting more parents registered with the email mailing list. Sandra pointed out that some of those currently registered are parents of former pupils who have not de registered.

#### **d. Parent Class Links**

Mandy told the PC that Primary 6 was now the only class without a class link. Mandy will ask Pamela Smith and Rhona Jack if they would like to volunteer. Mandy will give the up to date list of class links to Sanrda. **Action: Mandy**

#### **9. A.O.C.B.**

Mandy thanked all the teachers for attending the Halloween Disco, and noted that their costumes were spectacular.

Jenny asked if the PC could fund play equipment for wet play times. Mandy explained that each class had sent the PC a letter which identifies what equipment people would like. Mandy has asked each class to price their preferred equipment and respond. Funds are limited due to the costs of the whiteboards. Sandra suggested that families donate unwanted games after Christmas (when children will get new toys and games).

#### **10. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2012.