

Minutes of parent council meeting 14 th September

In attendance Kirsty MacCartney HT. Glynis Findlay DHT , John Wilson EO , Denise MacColl PT Scott Thomson, Karen Paterson, Jackie O' Neil Karen Paterson, Julie Urquart, Cllr Maureen MacKay , Karen Thomson , Shirley macAvoy and Amanda Skinner

Apologies - Fiona Anderson

- welcome given to all from Scott Thomson
- First item on the agenda is the inspection report. Scott on reading the report, felt that the report didn't reflect the school and that the staff et al were above average. There is recognition that there is room for improvement but that we need to work together to move forward. It was also unfair in the Gaelic department and didn't reflect the work of the early years workers. Kirsty shared a marked up copy of the report with the positives highlighted. Points to be developed were highlighted in blue they were identified as follows

areas for development	situation at present
rights respecting schools	The school had only received the first level and will be working on the second level over the next 12-18 months
target setting	The school are undertaking this at present and it is being developed further
Gaelic language	After a period of instability the Gaelic department is fully staff and is undertaking development in literacy , this is now being applied in the early years setting
pace and challenge	The school is aware of this and this would be included in almost all school reports as Education Scotland have been driving this forward as part of the national agenda.
curriculum	The work on the curriculum has been started and the inspectors were confident in the direction of travel but more development is needed.

Kirsty also showed the latest inspection advice notice and stated that the bar has been raised.

John also spoke of the bar being raised and the work that all the staff has and is doing to meeting these raised expectations and with our strong team we can move forward .

Denise Maccoll spoke about the challenges of the curriculum in GME but how we were in a program of building excellence .

Scott asked how the Gaelic parents felt about the report - anecdotally the feedback from the parents is positive.

John also stated that the inspectors can only report on what they see.

Cllr McKay added that the size of the school made it unique and that this wasn't reflected in the report and that the proportion of the report didn't match the school. The report was a sampling exercise and this was out with the standard parameters and that there isn't a comparable school.

Jacqui asked if there was any right of appeal to the report. John and Kirsty explained that they did have a draft which they challenged and that the tone was softened. Kirsty spoke about evidence and the need for triangulation.

Scott asked about evidence of attainment and asked about a purchased resource GL assessment. Kirsty clarified that this had been used but it is at an early stage and only in its first year. The school are putting it in place at P6 to use as an assessment and target setting tool. James Hamilton are also using a similar programme. The school also used the Health and Wellbeing assessment tool. Moderation is also a tool that feeds into attainment evidence.

With in the school the support for children with additional needs was highlighted as good practice.

There was discussion about the clarity of the report and the difficulty in breaking the report into all the variety of parts. There was feeling that the report was perhaps felt clumsy due to the size of the team. Feedback should be forwarded to Donnie MacLeod at Education Scotland regarding the inspection process

- The next item on the agenda is the Improvement plan which builds on these points. Kirsty explained that it has been drafted but due to the RIF timeline it has not been shared as yet with staff. Kirsty was able to give the key headings for the improvement plan. Literacy and phonics, number talks, outdoor learning - a pilot with Natalie White, Gaelic learning and teaching. The school is also involved in a creativity pilot from Education Scotland.

Scott raised a concern that the external pilots might distract from the improvements within the school. Kirsty and Denise spoke about the internal developments that they are taking on board these include

Pedagogy - higher order thinking skills, active learning, Assessment is for Learning, pace and challenge differentiation

Assessment - raising attainment and closing the gap

Curriculum - focus on literacy, tracking and target setting.

Kirsty also shared HGIOS 4 the self assessment tool which is driving the school self improvement.

Scott was keen for the Parent Council to support and contribute to the development plan and help and scrutinise its implementation.

Kirsty also shared the main themes of the RIF which had feed into the three areas above.

Cllr MacKay added that the improvement plan is far better driven by self evaluation than a inspection and that she could identify that the school has already embarked on this.

- Head teacher report

Mrs Jess retired

Andrew and Mark moved authority. Kirsty is looking at remits and staffing. Glynis added that staff have been proactive in taking over the remits left by staff.

There has been a refresh in the ICT particularly promethium boards

Heart start is continuing

Bug club parents workshops are going ahead.

Share the learning afternoon .

The curriculum over views were shared with parents and the school will be looking for feedback.

Sports hall athletics , Onthank has won the heats.

Swimming has been planned in January - parents are required to pay. Moving to P5 is logistically difficult though it is still being explored

P7 trip to the science centre

P5 to Culzean

Photographer

Kilmarnock football

Athletics lunch club and cross country.

Football

and a Feis

for Harvest we are joining up with St Johns for food donations.

litter pick

MacMillan coffee morning

World porridge day - Mary's meals

Piping kickstart weekend in conjunction with Virgin Money , the Scottish schools pipes and drums trust. -30 th September - info to follow - there is also a link to the Kilmarnock Pipe band .

A full Timetable is on the website

Karen asked what the criteria is for the clubs. Glynis explained that a selection of pupils are chosen

Parents night is before the holiday 29 th sept /4 th 9ctober a trial after consultation with the parents. Scott asked about the stop watches this is not being continued.

- PTA update

Karen said that there was no chair for the group at present.

Scott suggested that the two groups could join force but Glynis said that the numbers were good at the last meeting . Karen spoke about the Halloween party. Cllr MacKay spoke of the events that are taking place over the Halloween weekend in Kilmarnock town centre.

- Prize giving - Karen Paterson

There was concern raised about the same children being given prizes each year and that at the end of the year some children are being left out. Perhaps there is scope for a recognition of pupils relating to the four capacities.

AOCB - Jaqui - Homework at P6 was raised in particularly the active spelling. The activities come from the dyslexia friendly pack . The concern was about the time taken. Kirsty is going to seek clarity for the parents. There was discussion about the value of homework and in particular parental engagement.

Next meeting - AGM time and location to be confirmed .