

Balhousie Parent Council
7pm, Tuesday 29th September 2020
Minutes

Welcome and apologies:

In Attendance (Virtual meeting via Zoom): Fiona Whittet (FW) Head teacher, Lianne Gibb (LiG) staff representative, Heather Tough (HT) chair, Lynn Gibson (LyG) Treasurer, Daniele Sheperd (DS), Lisa Buist (LB), Eilidh Stirling (ES), Atanaska Dzhumayyova (AD), Satinder Sidhu (SS), Neschka Martin (NM) Secretary.

Previous Minutes:

None, there being no previous Parent Council to hand over to this one.

Chairman Report:

The Parent Council re-convened after a 6-month spell with no Parent Council for Balhousie Primary.

The main item that has pre-occupied the Parent Council this year has been to regain access to the bank account and implement the correct protocols for Parent Councils, such as creating a Constitution. The new Constitution was emailed to all Parent Council members. There will be an ongoing protocol for the Constitution to be shared with every new member that joins the Parent Council.

The greatest challenge facing us this year was dealing with the signatories on the bank account, as there were no remaining signatories to authorise the new signatories onto the account and there were an unknown number of unknown parents' signatures on the Parent Council bank account. The relevant mandate form was filled in with copies of minutes explaining why there were no remaining signatories attached, and sent to RBS. After a 4 month battle with RBS to get our new signatories applied to the account, we finally prevailed and £200 was credited to the account for bank error.

We have now found out who the previous signatories were, have completed the appropriate mandate and are in the process of getting those signatories removed.

We received a lump sum from the Insurance Company in respect of the money that was stolen by a previous Parent Council member.

Money has started coming in from the Court which is gradual repayment from the convicted individual and appears to be either £30 or £40 per month. These payments are sent with a covering letter from the Perth Sherriff Court to the school office. They are then handed over to the appropriate person for banking. We are going to keep a separate note of these amounts that are being paid in because it is unclear whether the Insurance Company will seek to claim back from us the amount they paid out. There is a separate polypocket in the finance box file containing the covering letters so that we can keep track of how many payments we have and are receiving.

The box files for the Parent Council have been organised and there will now be one for finance and one for minutes, the Constitution and other administrative items. Minutes must be approved by the Head Teacher/Chair of the Parent Council and then sent to the school office for adding to the website. A copy should also be printed out and kept in the relevant box file.

There have been no fundraising activities this year, mainly due to Covid-19 Lockdown.

It is unclear when or if there will be further fundraising in 2020-21 due to the Covid-19 economic situation.

The Parent Council has funded scientific calculators for the p7 leavers, 'Learn to tell the Time' clocks for every class in school and paint for the nursery playhouse.

Usually Parent Council post-holders stay in post for 2 years. On this occasion, all post-holders had to step down after a year due to children moving on from the school or work commitments. There should be discussion about whether the new post-holders will be happy to stay in post to see Balhousie Primary School through its merger transition with North Muirton in an anticipated 18-months' time.

HT thanked the Parent Council for their excellent teamwork and thanked the other postholders who are stepping down.

FW thanked HT for getting the Parent Council onto a solid footing for moving forward.

Head Teachers Report:

A healthy school roll with 105 children from p1-7.

11 new pupils enrolled over the summer holidays which meant the p7 class had to become a p6/7 class. A lot of pupils are still choosing to come to Balhousie. (FW) very happy as it shows that Balhousie has a good reputation, but numbers will have to be capped due to class sizes, particularly p1, which is now full.

Strong Start 2s are now full with all 10 spaces having been filled. They have a child to staff ratio of 5 children to 1 ECP.

The ratio in nursery for children aged 3-5 is 8 children to 1 ECP.

Staffing:

Mrs Dormer returns to work tomorrow, taking over from Mrs L Hutchison who was filling in.

Miss McPhaden is in post as a probationer with the p5/6 class.

Term1- Ensuring feeling of well being from coming back after lock down. Focus also on Numeracy and Literacy. Students and staff were happy to get back to school. Risk Assessments were done, no Covid concerns. Parents were put at ease.

However, seeing more pupils off school due to sniffles and colds. Parents still hesitant and cautious, they have been reassured and encouraged to bring kids to school as per Government guidelines of Covid symptoms. Six months was a long time for kids to be taught at home due to lock down. Some of the children did well with home learning by teacher interaction on Seesaw, however there were families where little to no interaction was found. 50% good engagement, 25% sporadic engagement, 25% not engaging at all. This

term was focussed on recovery by filling in the gaps. The school improvement plan has been planned till end of January.

Term 2 will be looking at what the school needs to do and in January we will be looking at what the government needs schools to do.

Treasurers Report:

Income: £1203.22, made up of Insurance payment to cover money stolen in 2017, RBS goodwill payment for bank error with signatories, interest, and repayments coming from the Court (£30 or £40 per month).

Outgoing: £778.50, made up of fees for school website, fees for library online management system, clocks for classrooms and calculators for p7 leavers.

Balance to date: £954.41, however only £854.41 can be spent as £100 of that is repayments from Court.

HT to check with Mrs Beattie to find out what Insurance Company are expecting in terms of repayment.

Any payments to the Parent Council account can be made through cash machine - you don't have to wait for bank to open.

Election of New Members:

(ES)- New Secretary, (NM) proposed and (LB) seconded it.

(SS)- New Treasurer, (LB) proposed and (HT) seconded it

(DS)- New Chairman, (ES) proposed and (LyG) seconded it

(AD) new member

5 Parent forum and new teacher representative (LiG)

***Post Meeting Change: 30 September 2020**

(SS)- Changed to New Chairman

(DS)-Changed to Treasurer

Next Meeting:

17th (Tuesday) November 2020- Virtual at 7pm.

New and old members thanked for their roles by FW.