

East Linton Primary School Parent Council

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held 6pm, 11 December, 2018

Present: Trace Ward (Co-chair), Lucy Daniels (P3), Sarah-Jane Nichol-Thompson (P2/P3), Lorna Park (P2/P7), Leigh Robieson-Cleaver (p7), Helen Macfarlane (AM Nursery), Nancy Bell (P5), Margaret McKay (Principal Teacher), Gill Gardner (HT), Tara Wright (P3), Evie Thomas (P1B), Bea Taylor (P6 & playground), Hazel Reid (Clerk).

Apologies (added post-meeting): Jane Perkins (Treasurer), Leigh Pleasance (nursery am), Claire Stewart (nursery pm), Lyn Jardine (P1A), Deborah Stitt (P1A), Lottie Brown (P4), Kirsty McKerrow (P4).

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

These were agreed.

Hazel Reid was introduced to those present as the new Clerk of the Parent Council and accepted by the meeting.

2. Chair's update

Trace said that the Parent Council website is looking very good, with lots of information about the school and many class blogs. There has been positive feedback from parents about the website and it is hoped that it will encourage greater communication between the school and parents.

Lyn Jardine has recently stepped down as Co-chair, but will remain as P1A representative. Lyn's significant involvement in helping re-form the current Parent Council is hugely appreciated.

The assistance provided by Allison Cosgrove (previous Clerk) to the Parent Council was also noted with appreciation.

Trace passed on a suggestion from a parent that a quarterly newsletter on the PC website could be helpful, to let everyone know what people are working on or involved with, and about future events.

This was discussed and suggestions were made:

- >Send newsletter out by email.
- >Use Mailchimp to record the number of hits for the newsletter.
- >Have it printed – people are more likely to read a printed version.
- >Use canva.com, a graphic design website with downloadable templates and mages.
- >Include headlines about what the PC is doing and an update on what is happening.
- >Include an explanation of the 50/50 Club and how it works.
- >Perhaps print the first one to gauge reaction.

Action: Fundraising & Events working group – with assistance from wider PC as needed.

Treasurer's report

Jane was unable to attend this meeting, however she sent a written summary:

The balance at 31/11/18 was £3,141.09.

The accounts have been signed off by the accountants for 2017/18.

Three numbers were to be picked for 50/50 for December but we can catch up in January.

There is £312 in uncashed cheques and so the balance would be £2829.09 allowing for the uncashed amount.

The December 50/50 club draw will be carried out at the January meeting.

Fundraising progress: Trace suggested that there could be a 12- or 15-month plan, showing what is going to be done, and a calendar of events.

Action: Trace & Fundraising and Events

Christmas gifts for teachers: Parents are asking whether they should be providing gifts for teachers. Gill said teachers would not expect them. They might have to declare larger gifts to ELC. The decision was that it should be left to individual parents' discretion.

3. Working Groups Update

a) Events and Fundraising

18 January – Quiz Night

See attached report.

Lorna reported that the hall is booked for 18 January from 6pm. There would be approx 110 people attending – 28 teams of 4. The hall holds 120.

A decision was made not to hold a tombola and to stick with a raffle.

There would also need to be a sum for expenses for the event and it was agreed to set aside a budget of up to £750.

28 March – Disco

It was agreed that the next event following the quiz night would be a disco, possibly an Easter Bunny disco, with prizes for things such as the best ears). It would be held for two age groups: the younger ones first (P1-3) and then the older ones (P4-7).

b) Constitution

The constitution working group has presented a first draft of a new constitution to the Parent Council for feedback (see attached). PC members are welcome to feed in, and it would be discussed in more detail at the January meeting. Once agreed, the proposed constitution will go to parents and carers for their feedback. The intention is to agree the constitution and send to ELC for input in March.

Bev Skirrow from ELC has made useful suggestions, which will be taken into account. One of these was to include equality and fairness as one of the main aims of the PC.

The quorum for meetings should be kept low so that a meeting can be held even if only a few people have turned up – the PC is strong this year, but in past years it has struggled for membership (and possibly may do so in future years).

ELC will look at the constitution from a legal perspective. The PC would need to know how long that would take.

There was a question regarding the definition of the Parents Forum – it refers to parents and carers of children at the school.

c) School Development Working Group

See attached report.

The Group has still not had written answers to the questions posed in the Position Statement sent out in June 2018.

Update 22.12.18: Letter received last week from ELC responding to the questions, this is attached.

d) Playground Working Group

See attached report.

There was comprehensive discussion of the issues raised by the Group.

The building work for the school extension may start in Autumn 2020.

The school field is being used by the school whenever supervision allows. This area of ground is supposed to be dog-free in order to ensure the children can use it for sports and playtime, however signage is poor. A low fence, with gates at either end of the path to allow people to cut through, outside school hours, might assist. The wooded area has been fenced off by the people in the houses behind it – this is also the school's ground.

The playground working group would like parents to collect cardboard tubes for the Playpod, please.

The PC would like to work with the school to improve safe access to the school field, particularly in relation to the upcoming development. Discussed extending an invitation to ELC education and school asset team, along with local councillors to a meeting early in the new year.

4) AOCB

There needs to be a procedure for when a parent cannot come to pick up their child and asks another member of their family to do so but does not inform the school about that. Gill said if the School was not told they could not release the child to an unfamiliar person.

Bea had brought an 'ecobrick' and explained its purpose. It is a large plastic bottle – e.g. a water bottle – which can be stuffed with any non-recyclable plastic. If stuffed almost to bursting point it becomes rigid and can be used for many purposes, including building items for the playground. www.ecobricks.org has a lot of information about these. It would be good to get the School involved and build things for both inside and outside. There is also an Eco Larder in Edinburgh – perhaps someone could be invited from there to come to East Linton and talk to the children about it.

5) Date of next meeting – 29 January, 2019 at 7pm in the School.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Attached documents and reports

EAST LINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENT COUNCIL CONSTITUTION



AIMS

The Parent Council will work with the school, parents, carers, pupils and the wider community to:

- a) Develop activities which support the education and welfare of the pupils;
- b) Promote and encourage the participation of parents and carers in these activities;
- c) identify and represent the views of parents and carers on the education and welfare of the pupils;
- d) participate in the recruitment and appointment of school staff.

POWERS

The Parent Council shall have the power to do anything considered by them to be in furtherance of the aims but remembering they are there to represent the views of parents and carers of children at the school.

PARENT COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Parent Council shall be appointed at the AGM. They shall be elected for a one-year term and be eligible for re-election.

Parents and carers shall always form the majority of the Parent Council.

The Office Bearers will be Chairperson, Clerk, Treasurer and such others as may be required. The office bearers will be elected by the Parent Council at the first meeting after the AGM.

The Parent Council may co-opt any other member to fill a vacancy occurring between AGMs. The co-opted members who do not have voting rights, shall retire at each AGM but shall be eligible for re-election. The Head Teacher or his/her representative has a right and a duty to attend meetings of the Parent Council.

The Parent Council may co-opt up to two members to help carry out its functions. The co-opted members shall retire at the AGM but shall be eligible to be appointed for a further term.

Each member of the Parent Council shall have one vote and resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority vote of those present. The Chairperson shall have both a deliberative and casting vote. The Chairperson's casting vote shall be used only in the event of a tie.

The Clerk shall be responsible for keeping accurate minutes of all meetings and shall make these available upon request to any parent or carer of children at the school. Minutes will be made available through social media.

A member of the Parent Council failing to attend three consecutive meetings without reason/apologies may be deemed to have retired from the Parent Council.

The Head Teacher, although not a member of the Council, is entitled and obliged to attend meetings or send a representative. The remaining school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, should be represented on the Parent Council by a representative nominated by the staff and co-opted on to the Council by its members.

ANNUAL AND EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall normally be held in June each year. The notice calling the meeting shall be sent to the parents and carers of children at the school at least two weeks in advance.

The business shall include:

- a) The work of the Parent Council
- b) Approval of the accounts
- c) Appointment of an individual who will review the annual accounts
- d) any resolutions submitted by parents and carers of children at the school
- e) election of members to serve on the Parent Council

At all general meetings voting shall be on the basis of one vote per parent, carer or full Parent Council member present at the meeting. At all general meetings the quorum shall consist of six members.

The Parent Council or six of the parents and carers of children at the school shall have power to call an Extraordinary General Meeting.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

All Parent Council business meetings shall be open and any parents and carers of children at the school may attend, although they will not have voting rights.

At all business meetings voting shall be on the basis of one vote per full Parent Council member present at the meeting. At all business meetings the quorum shall consist of four members.

FINANCE

The funds of the Parent Council shall be lodged in a bank, building society or other account in the name of the Parent Council. Cheques shall be drawn or withdrawals made against the signatures of at least two named Parent Council members.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping accurate records of the financial transactions of the Parent Council. The books shall be brought to balance six weeks before the AGM and the accounts shall be reviewed by an individual appointed at the previous AGM by the Parent Forum.

All money and property acquired by the Parent Forum or Council will be used to further the aims of the Parent Council.

CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

Certain changes will need prior consent from OSCR, e.g. name or purpose. Changes or additions must be made at an AGM or EGM called for the purpose. The proposed change shall be specified in the notice calling the meeting and be approved by not less than two thirds of those present.

DISSOLUTION

In the event that the Parent Council ceases to exist, any remaining funds should be distributed for the benefit of the children at the school and/or Local Authority as necessary, providing the funds continue to be used for the advancement of education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Constitution has been drawn from the exemplar constitution template provided by Connect (formerly the Scottish Parent Teacher Council.) It further enables East Linton Primary School Parent Council to become an Unincorporated Association charity, should it require to seek such a status.

East Linton Primary School – Expansion

Parent Council Position Statement – ELC Response to Queries in Appendix A

black text – East Linton Primary School Parent
Council red text – East Lothian Council response

Appendix A

In further detail:

1. Initial consultation – needs analysis and agreement of priorities

- e) Has thought been given to relocating the school to new site? Yes, options for a new-build school compared with expansion of the existing school have been prepared and submitted to East Lothian Council Education, as requested by the Head Of Education.
- f) Has land been set aside for this purpose? No land other than the existing Education land has been set aside. The options are to construct a new school on the existing land or find an alternative site in East Linton.
- g) Timeline for construction / forecast date by which the school roll will dictate that the classrooms must be available to use? Current roll projections indicate that the capacity of the existing school will be breached in 2022. The current project to expand the existing school has been programmed to deliver the extensions to the existing school and nursery for occupation in August 2021 (construction site start November 2020, completion by July 2021).

h) Effect on ideal current design? We are not clear what is being asked here.

2. Design / architecture – which organisation will do this? Hub South East Scotland are responsible for project management, appointment of the design team and appointment of the Principal ('Tier One') Contractor. JM Architects are the Architect and lead consultant. Graham Construction are the Principal Contractor. ELC Education and the school will be the main client group. The projects team in Strategic Asset & Capital Plan Management will be the Authority's Representative, managing preparation of the detailed brief, technical issues, costs and liaison with other stakeholders (e.g. ELC teams - Engineering, IT, Asset Management, Facilities Management, Amenity Services, Council Management Team, Communications).

Consider best practice and best value principles:

- f) Positioning – take into account future school growth and more classrooms
Considered – The existing site and building constrain the options for locations of

the extension. There will be no potential for future expansion of the existing school on the existing site, beyond what is currently proposed.

- g) Insulated Considered – The new extensions will be insulated to meet current Building Standards.
- h) Natural light Considered – The provision of daylight to the new extensions will meet current Building Standards.
- i) Solar panels Renewable energy systems, including solar panels, will be considered as part of the energy strategy for the new extensions, to Building Standards.
- j) Accessibility Considered – The accessibility of the new extensions will meet current Building Standards.

3. Consultation

- a. Share detailed plans with the parent forum, Dunpender Community Council, and the wider community. Proposals shared by school with parents on the school website, following a meeting with the design team and school on 15th November 2018 – comments invited. Proposals shared with parents at an open ‘drop-in’ session at the school on Friday 7th December from 12:15 to 14:15 – comments invited.

It should also be noted that, to date, the project team have engaged with a number of other stakeholders, e.g. East Lothian Council Education, Early Years team, Planning, Roads Network team, Estates, Catering, Sport, Countryside & Leisure, Finance, the Depute Leader of the Council.

- b. Identify any significant issues that need to be addressed prior to the build starting
The project team will identify any significant issues as the project progresses and ensure that these are addressed. Comments invited from parents at the ‘drop-in’ session at the school on Friday 7th December.

4. Final changes as a result of consultation following plans being shared The project is not at that stage yet. All input received at consultations will be considered.

- a. Changes made and approved by parent council, Dunpender Community Council, with the parent forum and wider community being able to feed in their views through either group. The Parent Council, Community Council and wider community will not formally ‘approve’ the proposals and any changes, but will have the opportunity to feed into the design process and the Planning application process.

5. Construction

- a. Expected duration? Eight months (as noted in 1c above)

- b. Proposed temporary changes/fencing to playground to ensure children are kept away from the construction area, but are able to access a play area that meets minimum regulations? **As discussed at the drop-in session on 7th December 2018, the construction site will be fenced off to prevent unauthorised access and there will be a temporary play area formed on the grassed area to the west of the school, for use by the school during the construction period. The area required, method of fencing and surfacing of this area requires more detailed discussion with all relevant parties. A detailed drawing showing the site compound and a traffic management plan will be prepared by Graham Construction, at the appropriate stage of the programme.**

- c. Target date for completion to minimise impact on staff and students? **July 2020 (as noted in 1c above)**

East Lothian Council

13th December 2018

Working Groups reports

Fundraising Team Update.

Hall Booked for 18th January from 6pm

Have spoken with Maree Winter from East Lothian Council re licence and will hand in form plus £10 tomorrow. All OK timewise.

Poster has been completed by Leigh.

The Mart and Barney's coffee shop have agreed to sell tickets

Teams of up to 4, £10 per team.

Hope to do whisky roll and raffle or tombola

Chris Park agreed to organise questions and compère.

Approx 28 teams of 4 @£10 a team which would leave 8 spaces for helpers. (Hall capacity 120) Tara ?

going to ask Pete and Jenny from Rouge Gallery if we can borrow lights and sound.

Tara has offered to do Cosco run for snacks.

Think we should decided on next event tonight and get it booked in, then in January can sort out rest of years events.

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### **School Development Working Group**

**December 2018**

Attending: Colin Carroll, Deborah Stitt, Trace Ward (Lead), Kirsty McKerrow (Lead), Leigh Pleasance (guest), Lyn Jardine.

Absent: Nil.

During the meeting it was agreed that we will:

- i) Contact Fiona Robertson (Head of Education @ ELC), referring to Tas's original correspondence, requesting that a written response to the Position Statement sent in June

2018 be provided, answering the questions which were laid out in the statement (particularly Appendix 1).

- j) Invite all three councillors + Fiona Robertson + relevant East Lothian Council staff to attend our January Parent Council meeting, where we will a) run through the Position Statement b) share any new information not included in the Position Statement, and c) invite ELC to participate in an informal discussion with us regarding the school development process and the topics covered in the Position Statement.

There was general agreement that the children should have access to the playing field during lunch breaks and also for P.E. It would be good to seek the wider PC's view on this.

Space issues during the development work are also a consideration.

(Update: The current suggestion seems to be to fence off a small section of grass alongside the school.)

There was an awareness of the ongoing issues with dog foul, and a desire to improve the security of the playing field and also reduce dog foul – both of which could be achieved with some sort of boundary fence.

We would like to work in line with best practice around engagement of school stakeholders, with the support of organisations like Architecture & Design Scotland (a free service provided by the Scottish Govt to help facilitate community involvement in school development). We are actively seeking engagement with the Community Council in order to understand their key concerns.

(Update: An informal discussion post the DCC meeting suggested that there was a fear that all access to the school field would be cut off if it was fenced, or that the fencing used would be 10-foot prison fencing, which has happened in other areas.)

There is an awareness that the playground working group will require clarity on the schools' ability to locate improvements within the school grounds in order to make any significant progress.

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Meeting of Playground Working Group

7pm 4th December 2018

Attending: Sarah-Jane Nichol-Thompson, Deborah Stitt (Lead), Trace Ward, Bea Taylor (Lead).

Apologies: Lottie Brown, Claire Stuart.

Topic 1: Enrichment

Discussed area of school available for placement of enrichment items – it is currently unclear what space is available to the school in practice. It is difficult to make decisions without knowing this.

Outcome 1: Ask East Lothian Council to clarify the space available for placing enrichment items such as an outdoor classroom, stage, willow den, etc. Request information on the temporary arrangements proposed for the construction process.

Topic 2: Health and safety of access to school field

Discussed how previous generations of primary school children could access the field and park. There is a desire for more space for the children to run around, play sport, have access to nature, and locate an outdoor classroom. The Dunpender Community Council Minutes from April 2006 explain that the school children were no longer allowed on the school field due to ongoing issues with dog foul.

Current situation is that the school field is not subject to public access: it sits outside the open spaces policy, meaning that dogs are not allowed. However there is no signage indicating this is the case, so no one knows!

Football classes are starting up again in January – it would be great to have a clean pitch!

Outcome 2a: Suggest requesting signage from East Lothian Council, outlining the dog-free zone. Suggested nice wooden signage such as that found at the park in Gifford.

Outcome 2b: Suggests we request the painting of a yellow line to demarcate the school field (dog-free zone), leaving a path along the side to ensure dog walkers can easily access the park without going onto the pitch or school field.

Outcome 2c: Work towards fencing the pitch and school field in order to ensure the ability of dog walkers to allow their dogs off-lead without risk of fouling on the school field.

Outcome 2d: Consider setting aside a strip of grass along where the train platform is likely to be placed, in order to retain access for dog walks to Memorial Park by walking alongside the school field / football pitch.

Outcome 2e: Assess whether the current provision of bins and dog poo bags is sufficient.

Outcome 2e: Request Dunpender Community Council help raise awareness of the dog-free zone within the yellow lines, and support the school to improve the condition of the school field for the children.

Topic 3: Playpod

Feedback from kids was really positive about the playpod! Questions regarding if / when it is going to be open to all children.

Outcome 3: Ask Gill to confirm whether the goal is to allow all children access every outdoor lunchtime to the playpod, and what the timeframe is for working towards this.

Topic 4: Security

Parents have mentioned that the large gate at rear of tarmac pad is not secure, and children may have gone out of the school grounds. Also, request to clarify process for people other than parents

to pick children up from school – what procedures are in place to make sure that children are only picked up by approved people?

Outcome 4: Raise this at Parent Council meeting in parent rep update?

Quick Wins!

1. Allow all children access to whole playground – mixed ages;
2. Organise for the children to be able to use the greenhouse space to plant seeds – part of ecoschools? Link to curriculum? Sell seedlings as a fundraiser in spring?
3. Paint additional four square (2/3/4?) on an appropriate place in the playground away from the playpod – discuss with Clare and Gill and the children to work out the best location;
4. Free up circulation beside playpod by letting kids know to use an alternative four-square, instead of the one outside the playpod;
5. Contact men in sheds – see whether they may be willing to help out with raised beds/garden boxes by front railings;
6. Request that the school replace the planter/seating area at front of school – men in sheds may be able to help with this if maintenance budget is short?
7. Request recycling bins in the front and back playgrounds – from East Lothian Council, or failing that BeGreen;
8. Establish a location for a replacement stage, perhaps movable so that it can be shifted during the upcoming construction.

Additional questions

What is the name of the contractor proposed for the upcoming school development? (Update: Graham Construction). What local projects have they been involved in previously (see their website for examples).

What are the options for dealing with the school boundary issue at the rear of orchard?

Current outdoor seating is insufficient – where could we locate adequate shelter /outdoor classroom and seating?

Ideas

Could the dead-end road be closed off at the crossing to allow children access to the playground opposite the school during the development?

It would be great for the children to access the library during break and lunchtime, and for the library to have an outdoor view and flow. This could be proposed as part of the school development work / renovation work. It would encourage children to read without the pressure of being in class, and could help the school to meet the requirement to provide seating and soft, quiet areas for children to retreat to during break times.

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Working Groups

Why working groups? Working groups allow us to make faster progress by having smaller groups focus on specific goals. We can draw additional skills and expertise from the wider community – working group members don't all have to be from within the Parent Council.

Working Group	Objective	Membership	Notes
<i>Constitution</i>	To review the constitution to ensure that it reflects our objectives and activities. To propose changes where these may help the Parent Council to be more effective.	Lead: Lyn Jardine Lead: Colin Carroll Kirsty McKerrow Trace Ward Leigh Pleasance	Two Parent Council members from each working group to be identified as lead contacts.
<i>Playground</i>	To enhance and enrich the school environment, propose new resources e.g. outdoor classroom, sports equipment, playpod, garden etc., with input from children, parents and staff.	Lead: Bea Taylor Lead: Deborah Stitt Claire Stewart Lottie Brown Trace Ward Sarah Jane Nicol Thompson	Lead contacts to take notes on key decisions/action points from meetings & share with wider parent council.
<i>Events and fundraising</i>	To coordinate events for the purposes of building the school community, fundraising and enhancing the children's social experiences. Applying for public funding and grants where possible, to support the wider school goals.	Lead: Lorna Park Lead: Evie Tait Lucy Daniels Tara Wright Kirsteen Roberts Leigh Robieson-Cleaver Nancy Bell	Working groups to bring all new proposals (for events, playstructures, constitutional changes etc.) to wider PC for approval/funding.
<i>School development</i>	Consult with East Lothian Council regarding the upcoming school development. A tentative start date for construction is summer 2019, with completion in time for the new school year in August 2020.	Lead: Kirsty McKerrow Lead: Trace Ward Lyn Jardine Colin Carroll Deborah Stitt	