

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

### **Gullane Primary School Partnership Meeting**

**17<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**19.00 – 20.00**

**By Google Meet**

**Attendance:** Clare Jones (Chair), Jenny Gries (Deputy Chair), Joanna Heijmer-Mason (Clerk) Ronnie Taylor (Head Teacher), Maxine Cowie, Angus McEwan, Lynsey Bryson, LN (Fundraising Sub Committee co-chair), Cllr Jeremy Findlay, CL, CC, FM, MCB, HH, JC, KS, NM, PW, HS, TH, MG

Apologies: Nicola Smith, Wendy Spink

#### **1 Welcome from the Chair**

CJ welcomed the members and thanked everyone for their generosity in their contributions to Mrs Elderfield's leaving gift.

#### **2 Review of minutes from meeting held on 20th January 2021**

Adopted with one minor amendment (Point 4, sub-section 'Learning Conversations')- collating rather than collaborating feedback.

#### **3 Update from PTA, including spending requests**

LN reported that there is about £19,000 in the PTA bank account. Last term, money was only spent money on popcorn, Christmas party food and the virtual pantomime.

The main fundraising event in the Spring term is a Spring raffle. Local businesses have been very generous in supporting this. Tickets can be purchased through the Just Giving page.

The PTA reminded parents about the Easy Fundraising scheme (which gives donations to the PTA when supporters shop online) and the School Lottery. Sign up links are below:

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/gullane-primary-school>

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/gullanprimary>

The PTA is looking into becoming a registered charity and will update on that at a future meeting.

Events for the summer term are not yet confirmed but the PTA is considering a fun run or orienteering event. A tree planting event will also be held, with families sponsoring trees. If anyone else has ideas for good fundraising events, the PTA would love to hear them.

#### **Spending proposals**

After discussion between RT and the PTA, the following spending was proposed.

1) Books. Mr Taylor would like to boost the school's literacy programme and has already approved investment in a key phonics resource for Early Years and some additional reading material for the middle school. As he would not be able to justify any further spending on literacy for some time, he would like to spend approximately £1300 on refreshing reading books for the upper school.

2) IT provision. Mr Taylor has been looking at options to support coding and programming skills and would like to invest in 'Sphero Bolts' which are programmable coding devices. A pack of 15 (a half-class set, allowing a whole class to work in pairs), including a carrying/storage case and charging facility is £2,208.33 (ex VAT). AM reported that he has used them across P1-7 following a loan from the Council and confirmed that they are compatible with school equipment and were enjoyed by the pupils.

**AGREED – approximately £3,500 on the proposals outlined above.**

AM noted that classes had been asked to submit ideas for play equipment for use at break times and asked if this purchase was still planned. LN agreed to locate the list and provide Partnership members with cost proposals by email as soon as possible.

#### **4 Update from Mr Taylor**

RT thanked the Partnership for the delivery of delicious scones for the staff, on behalf of the parents, on the day the whole school returned from lockdown.

##### *Return to school for nursery-P3 and P4-P7*

RT reported that he was very happy with how the return to school had gone so far. Lots of work has been done around personal hygiene and new entrances and exits have improved circulation in and around the school. RT thanked parents for their cooperation in this and asked for continual vigilance.

RT reported there was a temporary timetable for specialist teachers (PE, Art, Music provision) who are currently limited in the number of schools they can attend each day / week.

While there is currently a focus on wellbeing, this is not at the expense of other core curriculum areas such as literacy and numeracy. There is increased support for learning provision in place where necessary. Lots of information is being shared across the staff team to ensure that support is having an impact.

In terms of reducing transmission risk, the main doors at the rear of the school and the door for P1/2 and P2/3 will stay open up to 9am, to avoid children arriving slightly late having to move through the school.

##### *Staffing*

Wendy Spink has been appointed as a new classroom assistant. Mrs Clare Maycock has also been recruited as an additional playground supervisor.

RT confirmed that the school will be recruiting a deputy head teacher to augment the senior leadership team given the growing size of the school. The post was advertised on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March and there is a timetable for the interviewing process, with a view to appoint in time to start after the summer holidays. Jenni Carter and Clare Jones will be on the interview panel. The new position will be split 60% class teacher and 40% deputy head.

Lynsey Bryson will be leaving during the Easter holidays and so we will be recruiting for a new school administrator with the recruitment process starting shortly after Easter.

CJ asked about funding which has been made aware for Covid recovery. RT noted that although the school benefitted from 2 days a week teaching with this funding (Mrs Dougal), this had effectively just replaced the supernumerary teacher we had had previously. Mrs Jones is providing learning support in the lower school, with Mrs Dougal now working in the upper school.

#### *Learning Conversations*

CJ noted how well the online learning conversations had gone and that the format might be useful for some parents even after COVID restrictions have been lifted. She asked about plans for learning conversations later in the session. RT noted that the working time agreement with staff meant that it would not be possible to have end of term reports and learning conversations but there could be a discussion about which parents would value more.

CJ questioned whether the number of learning conversations to be held each year that had been agreed had changed. She believed that the agreement had been for three learning conversations per year and noted that we have only had one since summer. RT agreed that a total of 3 communications was the norm and the form that they took was flexible and could take the form of a written report or learning conversation.

CL thought that P7 parents would be reassured by a learning conversation ahead of the transition to High School.

PW asked whether the working time agreement could be reviewed. RT said the working time agreement could be reviewed but would require discussion with staff.

RT agreed have a discussion with all staff about the reporting process for the rest of the session.

It was also noted that P1s haven't had any kind of learning conversation in February and parents thought that this was important. RT to consider options for p1 learning conversations.

### *School improvement planning process*

RT explained that this is an ongoing process from one year to the next and should be seen as a cycle rather than a one-off event. SIPs must be prepared before summer and approved in September. There should be consultation with all stakeholders. RT explained that he planned to introduce a termly opportunity for parents to be involved in the process.

RT noted that he is beginning to get a feel for the key areas to improve and possible targets for improvement. Literacy would be a key area. RT is also keen to engage with parents on the ethos, aims and values of the school. Another important step would be to agree a curriculum rationale. Wellbeing is another key focus and RT would like to expand work on this area. He noted his intention to use the Circle document which aims to overcome barriers to learning and improve nurturing. JG confirmed that the Circle document encourages teachers to look at their physical and learning environment and think about whether they're providing for every student..

### **5 Update on construction work**

RT reported that work appeared still to be on track for completion by the end of the summer holidays. He has requested another meeting with the construction team and will update parents following that meeting.

### **6 Appointment of new Partnership members**

No new voting members proposed.

### **7 AOB**

RT had received a response to parents' questions about improving the availability of instrumental tuition. He will forward that to parents following the meeting.

RT would like to get the website up to date and be active on Twitter, perhaps in place of the school newsletter. He planned to survey parents on how they would prefer to be communicated with and would aim to find a system of communication that met most people's needs.

JH noted that it would be good to clarify how the Google classroom platform is going to be used and for that to be standardised across the school as far as possible.

FM asked if the national tests will be taken this year. Following questions, RT explained that these tests are part of wider diagnostic assessment and parents are not informed of results. The tests were being administered this year.

JM asked about increased handwashing and whether a hypoallergenic soap could be used to protect children's hands. RT felt it was the rough paper towels rather than the soap that was causing problems. He intended to increase use of sanitiser in place of soap . He noted that

he is restricted by council guidance and there is a centralised procurement process. If pupils are suffering grievously, then they can bring in their own soap/sanitiser.

CL asked whether activity week for the P7s would go ahead and in what form, as a replacement for P7 camp. RT confirmed that he had discussed options with Miss Collins, however ELC has put an embargo on school trips requiring transport this year. Activities will be on site or in the local area.

JG asked if the lunchbreaks are still 30 minutes for lunch and 20 minutes for play. RT confirmed that children have another 10 minutes for lunch, so a total of a 40 minute lunchbreak. RT will be consulting parents about times for the school day. Lunches can be eaten outside when the weather allows.

PW asked whether the local requirements for nursery provision were reviewed regularly. The Council is planning a review soon.

## **8 Dates of Future Meetings**

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021