

Haddington Primary School Council and PTA Meeting: Minutes

Tuesday 26 January 2021 at 7pm via Zoom

Present:

- Parents: Kenny Fearnside (School Council Co-chair), Victoria Murray (School Council Co-chair/Minutes), Caitlin Stott (PTA Chair), Andrew Murray (PTA Treasurer), Jo McClure, Kate Kyrousis, Pete Easterbrook, Emily Paton, Kay Marshall, Martyn Pegg, Sue Langlands, Jenny Ziltener, Andy McGovern, Helen Wylie
- Teachers: Willie French (HT), Brian Smith (DHT), Kirsty Murray (DHT), Sally Murray (DHT) Donna Guy
- Others: Cllr John McMillan, Cllr Craig Hoy

Apologies:

- Cllr JShamin Akhtar

1. Welcome and Introductions (Vikki)

2. Update from Parent Council (Vikki and Kenny)

- Co-chairs had meeting with school about feedback on survey and initial feedback on remote learning issues discussion included
 - children's wellbeing and having responsible adult to speak to - all teachers can fulfil guidance role not like a secondary school - school trying to make sure this is still available through lockdown;
 - Parent consultation reports well received generally though still a desire from both sides for face to face meetings if possible;
 - Other items in survey likely to be best tackled when children at school;
 - Request to circulate home learning tasks in advance of 9am on Monday morning;
 - Indication of time to spend on each task;
 - Reduce tasks where information has to be printed out.
- Kenny attended East Lothian-wide School Council meeting for a useful update about handling of Covid-19 outbreaks in schools, main points from the meeting of 26 January were that ELC was waiting for an announcement from Scottish Government on 2 February around return to school. Multiple outcomes being considered from Easter return, phased return to full return after February break. Potentially a further update if changes are made with the meeting likely to be held the week after February break.

3. Update from PTA (Caitlin)

- No PTA activity since last update due to lockdown restrictions

4. Update from Head Teacher (Willie)

- Recognition of challenges faced by all throughout the school with the remote learning.
- Much higher levels of engagement and awareness compared to last lockdown.
- Google meet/ live engagement more challenging for younger year groups.
- Bear in mind different teachers have different skills, interests and commitments and therefore engagement will vary from class to class.
- Very high volume of feedback, generally positive, sadly not possible to implement it all, but much appreciated by school. Some comments on volume of work being posted as too high - everyone aware of pressures and doing the best they can - no pressure on parents to complete all tasks.

- Evidence that this lockdown is proving much tougher than the spring/summer one in terms of impacts on family life etc. - make sure everyone takes time to put their wellbeing first.
- Google meets ideally at least 3 times a week and seen by most as most enjoyable element of learning.
- Feedback has been passed to teachers to try and improve suggestions from parent forum.

5. Feedback on Home Learning and support

- General feedback that online learning was much better than previous lockdown.
- Thanks for teacher efforts/engagement
- Provision of learning grid info earlier than Monday morning appreciated by parents
- PTA offer to fund laptops if it would assist
- WF advised school already received 50 chromebooks with a further 20 requested through government fund

6. Infant Campus Outdoor Classroom

- Sally Murray advised that there had been some minor changes to the scheme to keep to budget with some areas of slabs and bark. Works now being done by ELC and should be completed during the February break so this will be a resource for whole school to use, particularly if they are able to get buddying system back up and running - subject to Covid restrictions.
- Advice on resources has been sought to develop a mix of motor skills including sand pits and mud areas

7. P7 School Trip

- PTA keen to organise some sort of event for P7s leaving the school this year.
- Kay Marshall advised she had spoken to some parents already about a potential event within their 'bubbles'- possibly Fox Lake - general feeling they had missed out on a lot of P7 privileges and experiences this year.
- WF/BS agreed that there were lots of events and teams etc missed and would be keen to engage with interested parents on this with a meeting suggested after the February break - BS/KM and PTA to co-ordinate
- Martyn Pegg highlighted offer from Outdoor Learning for a local 'camp' but wasn't taken up on cost grounds so need to be conscious event is inclusive - Outdoor Learning happy to look at options to provide services locally
- Cllr McMillan highlighted other potential funding sources Rotary Community Chest and East Lothian Education Trust - to be explored further

8. Any other business & date of next meeting (All)

- Access to school grounds: PTA has items to drop off at school - the staff can arrange to collect this from parents outwith the school building.
- Google Classroom meets and Internet Security: Concern had been raised around the Google meet being available at any time and have video chats outwith Google meets with share screen etc. - WF advised that this is correct and ELC IT position is that these should be available for pupils to interact outside of school meets etc as it is monitored and controlled with contacts/chats limited to those within the council group and no commercial google accounts can access. View taken that this was better than making pupils use commercially available chat facilities elsewhere where there would be no monitoring. All members joining a meet need to have the link invite and in the event it is clear this has

been shared inappropriately it can be easily reset by the meet organiser (teacher). Jo McC indicated she hadn't been aware that this would in effect be open to all people with an edubuzz account could some guidance be circulated to parents on how the Google Classroom works - WF confirmed this to be the case which allows for interaction between high school and primary pupils particularly around transition events. There haven't been any reported incidents in the 5000 sessions held in the first 2 weeks of January but happy to try and circulate something to parents on this - KF suggested worth checking if other schools have done this. WF agreed to write to parents and carers setting out the situation.

- Cllr MacMillan thanked everyone for making this work but wanted to highlight the importance of non-screen learning and getting outside and active as children to learn. This was echoed by all teaching staff
- Martyn Pegg wanted special thanks to ELC IT for getting and keeping Google classrooms up and running so effectively.
- Jo McClure suggested that the school should be able to draw on a wider pool of parents who have developed new skills and understanding of the curriculum.
- WF confirmed after the February break the Letham Mains pupils will relocate to their own school. There are currently around 30 families in the Letham Mains catchment attending HPS and it is awaited whether any seek to move once the new school building is up and running. It was confirmed there are no out of catchment requests being permitted at Letham until the completion of all housing on the site.

Date of next meeting: provisionally 2nd March at 7pm via Zoom

Post meeting note: The Scottish Government announcement has indicated that subject to confirmation in 2 weeks time P1-P3 plus nursery will return to school full time from 22 February. Further information on return of other year groups will be set out in 2 weeks time.