

Minutes of the meeting
Humbie Parent Council
15th January 2015
Held at Humbie Primary School

Present – Iain Lawrie (Chair), Mary McCall (Head Teacher, Pencaitland), Karen Prudence (Principal Teacher), Helen Rawlinson, Luke Dalrymple, Jennifer Edwards, Sally Heaphy (Clerk)

Apologies – Jill Yates, Pippa Murphy, Fiona Harvey, Lynne Irons, Tracy McCullagh

Iain welcomed everyone and Mary McCall for coming to the meeting and for her help overseeing Humbie until the new HT takes up her post after Easter.

HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Mary McCall introduced herself as the HT for Pencaitland and will be overseeing Humbie. She has had two visits to the school so far and has been made to feel very welcome by the staff and the pupils.

Mary McCall has lots of experience working with composite classes, her first teaching post was in a two teacher school where she taught P1-4, she has also taught at Saltoun, Innerwick and was head at Dirleton for 6 years.

She plans to be at Humbie once a week usually on a Tuesday afternoon where she will have a weekly management meeting with Mrs Prudence. She will be involved in monitoring forward plans, classroom observations and sampling pupil's work. She will also speak to pupils about their learning and next steps.

The Management Team aims to continue to deliver quality teaching and learning and to follow actions set out in the School Improvement plan and will be maintaining standards and making sure the school is in a good place for handing over to the new HT.

Children's University

Children's University is a free national scheme for children aged 7-14 whose school is part of Queen Margaret Children's University. Children are awarded credits for taking part in out of school activities which are recognised by QMU i.e. guides/scouts, sports, drama, music etc. The pupil is given a passport where a credit is given for the number of hours of learning completed. The child can build up credits to achieve awards at different levels:

- Bronze award for 30hrs of learning in one or more activities
- Silver award for 65 hours of learning with at least 5 hours credit for a different activity.
- Gold award for 100 hours of learning with at least 10 hours spent doing something new.

The Ross High cluster decided that they would put it on their development plan to enable interested pupils to take part. MM will forward leaflets.

For further information www.childrensuniversity.co.uk

MM showed pictures from the first graduation where six pupils from Pencaitland had graduated having a great time.

KAREN PRUDENCE – UPDATE

KP sent out the Jan/Feb newsletter and explained how the teaching would work. Mrs Bancroft would teach P1-6 on Monday and Tuesday to allow KP to deal with day-to-day items and liaise with MM. KP will be in class Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Mrs Ritchie will continue as before covering Wednesday and Thursday morning with specialist teachers for art on Thursday afternoon and P.E. on Friday morning.

SCHOOL MATTERS

Iain thanked Helen Rawlinson on behalf of the Parent Council for her help sitting on the interview panel.

Well done to the PTA for their successful Winter Market which has received lots of positive feedback and everyone enjoyed it.

Humbie Church donated £1,005 raised from the Christmas Eve Service and the Community Lunch raffle and donated it to Humbie Primary School.

The PTA has raised lots of money with their recent events and they hope to sit down and discuss how best to spend the money, this meeting will be arranged after Burns Night.

NATIONAL PARENT FORUM OF SCOTLAND

Iain asked if anyone would like to join. NPFS offers lots of bits of good information and support for parents through their website www.parentforumsotland.org and discussions through regular local meetings. Carol Snow is the East Lothian Rep and has offered to come to any parent council meeting to explain the role of the NPFS more fully.

ELAPCM MATTERS

Training Requests

Feedback from the meeting asked if there were any requirements for training. It was discussed that Food Hygiene, Risk Assessment and First Aid were needed. A First Aid kit for the PTA should also be bought, so they have their own kit to cover their events. It was also discussed that money could possibly be secured from the Wind Farm fund for a community Defib. – Helen Rawlinson to ask Grant if he could explore this possibility.

Supply Teachers

ELC are looking to trial employing permanent supply position teachers. MM said they use to exist. It was thought they would be based at the secondary school and available within the cluster.

New National Qualifications

New National Qualification Training/Information Evenings for parents P5, 6 and 7 will take place soon with invites being sent out from Ross High. These evenings will explain to parents how the new national qualifications will work and how many subjects will be available for each year i.e. S1 & S2 would cover 15 subjects, S3 would cover 10 subjects and S4-6 would cover 6 Nationals + 5 Highers. Each secondary school would decide which subjects they would offer with perhaps schools favouring areas i.e. music, arts etc.

ELC Budget

ELC has been asked to find savings in the budget over 3 years of £600,000 for secondary schools and £200,000 for primary schools and Parent Councils have been asked by Darrin Nightingale to view the saving suggestions which are being considered by other local authorities (not ELC) and give their feedback and suggestions. Iain handed out the list below:

List of potential budget adjustments/savings being considered across Scotland

- Move free school transport to statutory three miles
- Reduction in the number of teachers in nurseries
- Reducing the number of subjects offered at schools at Higher/Advance Higher
- Looking at class sizes
- Charging for music lessons/service
- Exploring flexible working
- Change number of hours young people are taught by teachers
- Close small schools
- Reduction in the number of schools
- Reducing teacher numbers
- Stopping Advance Highers
- Consolidating subjects taught

NOTE: The descriptors above are suggestions that are being considered across the country and are issued for general feedback from Parent Councils.

This caused a lively discussion of potential money saving ideas which ELC could adopt with the less controversial ones listed below which Iain will forward as Humble Parent Council suggestions:

1. Ask Holyrood for more money as they have underspent on their budget
2. ELC to review their procurement policy for transport
3. Change the rules for preferred suppliers i.e. money could be saved from perhaps not using suppliers from the preferred supplier list if an item could be bought cheaper from an online store i.e. Amazon. Savings could be split 50/50 between the school and ELC.
4. Review the catchment areas so savings could be made on out of catchment taxi trips.

PARENT ZONE

A new website has been set up to give information about how you can help with your child's education. www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone.

AOB

Luke Dalrymple offered to come to school to talk about English and Drama.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 4th June 2015 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm

NB: There is a crèche available with Mrs Anderson, please ensure you inform her in good time of the meeting if you require her.