

PPG MEETING MINUTE

Rothienorman Primary School

Thursday 9th May 2024

In attendance

Cheryl Henderson	Lyndsey-Anne Prue	Arlene Cheyne	Kirsty Stewart
Michelle Strachan	Cuca Santa-Maria	Wendy Harris	Jenni Clark
Rachel Lorimer	Lindsey Mann	Laura Geals	Elizabeth MacIver
Mel Dundas	Faye Morren	Yvonne Craigmile	Tim Prue
Leanne Masson	Kate Murray	Lisa Jenson	Jackie Gray
Sarah West	Laura Thomson	Cheryl Elmslie	Cllr Anne Stirling

Item	Description	Actions
1	Welcome Cheryl welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed thanks for attending. It was great to see a healthy turnout.	
2	Apologies Joanne Kinghorn Cllr Alastair Forsyth	
3	Previous minutes – review and acceptance Agreed by LA confirmed by Cuca.	
4	Head Teachers report As per attached. In addition volunteers would be welcomed to take part in a working group to review and provide feedback on the updated Positive Behaviour policy. Mrs Strachan will send out information about volunteering and volunteers to contact school directly. Discussion took place regarding suggestions for individuals/companies who may be able to come into school with a focus on health. In addition to what is already in place suggestions were given for the Garioch Kitchen and yoga.	All
5	Review of recent fundraising/finances We have a total of £6,144.22 in the bank. Fundraising income total is £4,630.60 (not including ticket sales for upcoming Annie Moon event) with current outgoings of £1,049.74. Fundraising profit so far is £3,580.86. Our Rothie Rainbow Razzle Dazzle event raised £1,857.94. The change in the amount was due to the microphones being put under fundraising when they should have been under equipment.	

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	<p>We received £70 from the Rotary Club of Oldmeldrum for helping with the Santa run.</p> <p>PPG purchased a sound system, speakers & mics which can be used for school concerts / discos / fundraising events etc. The cost of this was £872.10.</p>	
6	<p>Fundraising</p> <p><u>Rainbow Razzle Dazzle</u></p> <p>This was a great event and well received by all making a fantastic sum of £1,857.94.</p> <p><u>An Audience with Annie Moon – 7th June</u></p> <p>We have sold out this event. We do have a handful of tickets remaining due to non-payment should anyone still wish to attend.</p> <p>PPG to provide teas, coffees and home bakes for a donation. Deans of Huntly have kindly donated shortbread.</p> <p><u>Shorts and Shades disco – 13th June</u></p> <p>Disco to take place on 13th June using similar format to previous discos. PPG will DJ for the event using new sound system and will create suitable playlists and will involve the children in selecting the music.</p> <p>Tuck shop to be provided with sweetie mixes and crisps and juice. Tattoos and glow sticks also available. Discos are typically run to cover costs only. £2 ticket price agreed to remain with assessment taking place before next disco.</p> <p>Parent volunteers will be required. PPG to arrange a rota.</p> <p>Communications need to be clear regarding collection/pick up arrangements. Pick up will be from within the hall as per previous discos.</p> <p>Discussion was held regarding a request from P7 for them to be able to take photos. Mobile phones are not permitted within the disco and discussion will take place between P7 parents regarding how a photo can be arranged.</p>	<p>PPG</p> <p>PPG</p> <p>PPG</p> <p>PPG/School</p> <p>P7 Parents</p>
7	<p>AOCB</p> <p><u>£1500 Windfarm Grant</u></p> <p>Laura Geals has done a lot of work in relation to identifying and applying for grants which the PPG are very grateful for. Laura has applied for funding which we hope to be able to use to cover the cost of upcoming school trips.</p> <p>Foundation Scotland have gifted a grant in the region of £1500 to both Rothie and Fyvie schools and the use of this has been put to them for consideration. Class trips have been suggested and detail has recently been provided on these trips to parents via class newsletters. We hope to hear if this has been a success shortly. Alternative money is available if necessary.</p> <p>On behalf of the school Laura has also applied for £1000 to cover the panto which has been arranged for later in the year.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding funds to go towards swimming but grants are rarely open to fund things which the council have withdrawn.</p>	

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	<p>There was discussion regarding other grants that may be available. For example Balfour Beattie and Tesco. Locally Tesco have recently supported another school by providing funds for a P7 trip in a neighbouring cluster. PPG and Laura would be keen to explore options for next years P7 trip.</p>	PPG/Laura G
	<p>School have been successful in securing a couple of small grants to support with the upcoming P7 trip and details will be shared with the P& parents in due course.</p>	School
	<p>Whilst there are grants available suggestions will need to be made for projects/ideas which funding could contribute to. It was discussed that it would be helpful if any suggestions could be made.</p>	All
	<p>Mrs Strachan advised that school are in the very early stages of looking at a new phonics program which costs in the region of £11,000. She has submitted a grant application for consideration. The existing Phonics International program has been in place for 18 months or so and has unfortunately not had the desired effect in relation to attainment.</p>	
	<p>“Essential Letters and Sounds” offer a phonics programme. Tarves School uses this locally and children are making really good progress. Whilst the data at Rothie is showing progress with Phonics International school had hoped that there would have been more progress. The existing programme was free.</p>	
	<p>There was discussion regarding £11,000 being a large sum of money and whether this would be of benefit given the last program was pitched to parents as a better means to improve learning for children. If a new phonics programme is introduced this would be the third programme in 3 years. It was expressed that this can be unsettling for children and parents are unsure how to support their children. Mrs Strachan advised that it is not normal practice to swap and change as it is not good for children nor learning and teaching but the existing scheme is not having the impact school had hoped for.</p>	
	<p>Mrs Strachan was unsure when school would hear regarding the grant she has applied for but if there was available money this would be something school would be keen to secure funding for. In addition there are always many things school would love to have but struggle to fund. Mrs Jenson discussed her wish to make the school library a warm and inviting place for children to come and read.</p>	PPG/Mrs Strachan
	<p><u>Spending (class trips)</u></p>	
	<p>As above – linked to windfarm application currently.</p>	
	<p><u>Parent Volunteers</u></p>	
	<p>School are very keen to encourage parent volunteers regularly within school. Regular volunteers would require a PVG check. Further discussion to take place between Mrs Strachan and PPG office bearer on payment of any PVG’s.</p>	
	<p>One suggestion made for volunteers would be in relation to concerns in the playground and whether there could be a parent volunteer in the playground before 9am. Parent volunteers could be visible by wearing a high vis vest. Children would know to come to the volunteer if assistance was required. At present bus children have no supervision until school starts at 9am. If PSA’s were to undertake this it would have an impact on class time and learning time as there are no funds to increase their contractual hours.</p>	PPG/Mrs Strachan

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	<p>Another suggestion discussed was for parents to help in the school library. This was successfully in place pre-covid. Volunteers could also come into read stories. P7 are also sewing at present and parent help would be good.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding little notice being provided when volunteers are requested but also discussion that at time no volunteers come forward and how we can all support one another with this. It was suggested that a timetabling of activities may help with providing notice and that if parents were able to volunteer and offered to volunteer this would help with scheduling this on a regular basis. School will issue a communication to parents regarding volunteering and PPG will share.</p>	
	<p><u>Communication</u></p> <p>PPG are in place to provide a voice for parents and to facilitate communication with school so everyone has a positive experience.</p>	
	<p>There was discussion that some staffing changes in classes are not communicated very well. Whilst significant staffing changes are generally notified in the newsletter communication regarding short-term changes generally does not take place as it is not often known how long the change is required for. Some children can be unsettled by not knowing who their teacher is and communication in this regard would be of benefit in supporting parents to support their child.</p> <p>School discussed that they can put information regarding planned absences/changes via message in learning journals and consider how to communicate such changes in future. It was raised that continuity for learning has been difficult for some of the younger classes in recent times with multiple staffing changes.</p>	<p>PPG/Mrs Strachan</p> <p>Mrs Strachan</p>
	<p><u>Safety within school</u></p> <p>There was discussion regarding what can be discussed with parents in relation to incidents within the classroom and recent reports from children that classes are “evacuated”. If there is an incident staff do try to make a call home or catch parents at pick up to alert them but this does not cover communication to the wider parent group due to having to respect the dignity of the children and parents involved in any communication. At times there was agreement at the meeting that communication could be improved.</p>	<p>Mrs Strachan</p>
	<p>Cllr Stirling raised concern regarding evacuations happening in schools on a general basis and highlighted that support is available from numerous sources – the network Quality Improvement Officer and Educational Psychology were given as examples. Cllr Stirling encouraged Mrs Strachan to reach out to colleagues to share learning and seek support. Mrs Strachan confirmed that school are in contact with other partners who offer assistance including educational psychology, social work and health colleagues.</p>	
	<p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>Matters in school recently have meant that all staff are working pro-actively to support the school and lots is taking place to support children get back on track. Mrs Strachan outlined that she has been spending time directly supporting children, both in classes and outside at break and lunchtimes, alongside other school staff.</p>	
	<p><u>Learning journals.</u></p> <p>Learning Journals continues to pose challenges for parents and staff. There was discussion regarding settings which may mean that communications to parents are not being delivered immediately and helpful information from teachers is not being received until much later. PPG and school will look at this.</p>	<p>PPG/Mrs Strachan</p>

Item	Description	Actions
	<u>Opening doors to school</u>	
	<p>There was discussion that both parents and Mrs Strachan would like for parents to be able to come into school more and to build a positive community relationship. This will take time to develop but with things such as volunteering, recent class assemblies and an upcoming open morning this is something that can be built on.</p>	All
	<p>There was discussion regarding an event that nursery are to be holding shortly and they are considering if and how this can be opened up further to those in the community.</p>	Nursery
	<u>Sports day – teas and coffees</u>	
	<p>Everyone was in agreement that providing teas and coffee for a donation at sports day would be good and mirrors what we have done over the last couple of years. PPG have ordered ice cream for all children and staff. Faye will contact those responsible for the hut at the football pitches so we have access to hot water.</p>	Faye Morren
	<u>Hall funding – any ideas for children’s events?</u>	
	<p>PPG were recently approached by the village hall committee who were asking for ideas on how the hall could be used to benefit children. They have an opportunity to secure funding. If anyone has any suggestions please get in touch.</p>	All
	<u>Reward and recognition</u>	
	<p>There was discussion that this can be a contentious issue among parents and children and that there can be a lack of understanding as to why certain things are or are not in place. It was hoped that discussion relating to reward and recognition and the sharing of information would help explain why things are or are no longer in place.</p>	
	<p>Hot chocolate Friday was in place when Mrs Strachan came into post and children have expressed that they miss this. Mrs Strachan outlined that she felt that there was an inequality as children behaving all of the time were not necessarily being the children who got the hot chocolates. 90% of children are regularly adhering to school rules and values and would not be picked. There is also a strong government focus on healthy eating.</p>	
	<p>An example was discussed that some children in class have iPads as they need digital technologies to support their learning. Some children have questioned the fairness of this. iPads are not a treat and children are using them to support them in accessing their learning and carrying out their school work. There was discussion that other children do have access to iPads to support their learning on a regular basis too and that school would love to have more iPads available. PPG and Mrs Strachan to discuss.</p>	PPG/ Mrs Strachan
	<p>There was discussion around golden time as this had been something that has been used previously and some schools will still use this. In Rothie the school day can be busy and feedback from staff was that timeout for golden time can be wasted learning time. Some children do have challenges that may mean they would get no golden time. Some children are dysregulated and can’t help it. There is also a view that matters should be dealt with in the moment rather than storing it up and using restorative practice and emotion coaching.</p>	
	<p>House tokens continue to be used with a collective aim and there is ongoing discussion with children through the pupil council as to what this may look like.</p>	
	<p>In addition there was discussion about what school can put in place that ties in with ongoing work on the positive relationships policy with discussion regarding use of stickers and certificates. Mrs Jenson highlighted the use of “ask me why” stickers which parents thought could work well at Rothie if introduced. Some children are proud of stickers and it’s a good communication starter with parents to ask what the stickers are for.</p>	

The positive relationships policy will look at how we praise when children do things right and what do we do when things don't go well. There was discussion that children are often not being noticed when they are behaving all the time and not getting recognition and that good behaviour should be recognised and rewarded. This can mean different things for different pupils and there needs to be a recognition that all children are learning and we need to recognise when they have done well.

Good pieces of work are regularly shown by children to Mrs Strachan.

There was discussion regarding what happens when children are not following the rules or displaying values and behaviours that School want to see. What happens depends on each situation but in the first instance the class teacher will speak with the child, there will be restorative discussions and they may go to see Mrs Strachan. In addition parents may be contacted so that they school and parents can work together.

There was discussion about what would happen if the restorative approach did not work. It may take time for this to be of benefit and parents and other relevant partners/agencies would be involved. There was discussion about whether children can excluded and Mrs Strachan confirmed that this is an option in Aberdeenshire.

There was discussion regarding information that is shared from school to parents in relation to behaviour and a desire from parents parent to be told how it is if it was in relation to their child's behaviour rather than sugar coating it.

There was also discussion regarding what is shared/discussed with children regarding the general needs of their peers in an age appropriate manner. Many parents will have positive discussions at home regarding everyone's needs being different and there was discussion about the messaging in school. In general terms the messaging is that everyone's needs are catered for and everyone gets what they need when they need it.

Bike ability

Mr Wood

P6 parents to hear more about this shortly from Mr Wood. Bike ability will start on 15th May and parent helpers are required in the latter stages.

Next meeting

AGM – 6.30pm 5th September.