**Parent****Council**

**Thursday 12th November 2015**

**7 pm, School Staff Room**

**Attendees:** Margaret Ferguson (MF), Nicola Cameron (NC), Robin Critchard (RC), Carrie Heddle (CH), Alec Reid (AR), Anna Conniff (AC), Annmarie Graham (AMG), Alison Green (AG), Hazel Innes (HI), Lesley Robertson (LR)

**Apologies:** Heather Baxter (HB)

1. **Welcome and apologies**

RC welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. **Previous minutes**

The previous minutes were agreed.

1. **Head Teacher’s report**

MF asked for any feedback on the October newsletter, the new format incorporating and highlighting the school values. General approval was expressed.

**Staffing update**

* Congratulations to LR who is Mrs Hodson’s replacement
* Karen Reid Science Specialist is leaving the cluster. She will be greatly missed.

**Curriculum**

Curriculum for Excellence stresses importance of the ethos and life of the school as a community. MF talked about needing to develop creative ways of delivering education within this framework (using as an example the school’s approach to Children in Need as a cross-curricular activity), and making use of the things that the wider community has to offer. She shared the Ethos and Life of the School as a Community mind map which covers staff, rights resecting, visits, trips and social, active school, community links, parents, transition, enterprise etc.

Having recently addressed the school’s vision, values and aims, MF wondered about asking the pupils (and parents) to come up with a motto for the school. This was met with general agreement.

**Action** – MF to set Fishermoss family homework to come up with suggestions for a school motto.

**Playground issues**

A discussion was held around the idea of introducing a weekly mile at Fishermoss, to be covered within the school playground. It would be possible to map out a route and indicate where the mile mark is. There was general agreement with this idea.

The yellow springy toys have been removed from the playground they were deemed dangerous. Something else should go in their place.

MF reported that the Pupil Council had wondered whether the monkey bars could be lowered, and whether astroturf for a football area could be provided.

AR queried whether Landscape Services had topped up the bark under the monkey bars again recently (has been topped up twice already). He asked how serious the pupils were about lowering the monkey bars. He has all the fixings needed to do this, but we would have to agree to fund the labour for this.

**Action** MF to take query over monkey bars back to the pupil council, plus options for springy things replacements.

MF queried how to fund improved surfaces for football area. Sharon Burr’s husband could possibly give advice/examples. Pupils don’t want what’s at the Academy.

MF commented that the playground asphalt needs work.

AR said that what is needed is a slurry seal, as the asphalt is nearing its end of life.

**Action** – MF get someone out to have a look at the school playground surfaces (asphalt and grass) for quotes.

AR commented that the issue with playground surfaces should be going into Aberdeenshire’s school improvement plan and needs to be raised with Maria Walker.

The observation was made that the astroturf area would have to be fenced off with a gate if it’s to be a multi-use area.

AR said that we should be looking at the area outside the school – where sports day is held. The biggest stumbling block to this will be that it’s owned by Robertsons rather than Aberdeenshire Council.

**Action –** AR to put together e-mail to arrange meeting with key stakeholders (Parent Council, Fishermoss Football, Jean from KDP, football officer at Aberdeenshire Council etc).

**Parent Council/PSA possible merger**

The Parent Council discussed whether to further the possibility of merging with the PSA, in light of the difficulties both bodies have in attracting membership. AR queried whether there should be a special meeting to discuss the merger, and whether to open this issue up to the wider parent forum. However, RC said that the first step should be to have an initial chat with the chair of the PSA.

**Action** RC to have chat with chair of PSA

AR said that Lesley Tullock is happy to have us go along to one of Newtonhill’s meetings.

**Safe routes to school and parking**

AR reported that the bowling club resistant to have bollards installed on the path. He stressed the importance of maintain the relationship between the safe routes to school coordinator (Joanna Stewart) and the parent council.

There was general agreement that we need an action plan over continued parking issues around the school.

AMG wondered whether we could have a safe school drive? “we walk safely, we drive safely”. HI suggested we could paint footprints to indicate where pupils walk, to discourage parents from parking near these.

The Parent Council discussed whether to send out a survey to the wider parent forum on the issue of parking, and it was agreed that AMG would take this forward.

**Action** – AMG to progress questionnaire to parents on issue of parking

AR said that white lines had been painted to stop parking where steps are, but wondered whether we should start lobbying for double yellow lines.

MF reported that the police did came along to speak to her about her concerns about parking, but they don’t have time or resources to deal with this.

RC said we should get the pupils involved. MF asked whether there should be little flyers for kids to hand out for events?

NC asked whether we could get lines painted in the car park? AR said he would raise this at the next PCC meeting.

AR said that there needed to be someone else to raise these issues at PCC, so that it wasn’t always him speaking up. AMG said she was happy to do this. AR said it would be necessary to write a letter first to the PCC Chair to get this on the agenda

**Action** AR to raise line painting at next community council meeting

**Action** AR to get in touch with new head of roads re lines outside Bourtree Park

**Action** AMG to write to chair of PDCC to get Fishermoss parking issues on next agenda. Letter to cover dangerous/inconsiderate parking issues, lack of lines painted in car park etc.

1. **Review of Pupil Support Assistant posts**

MF explained how PSA’s are divided up amongst the cluster, and implications for the future.

**Action** All to express concern about what happens with new school coming in, PSAs are invaluable etc.

1. **National Improvement Framework**

RC asked all to complete a survey on the National Improvement Framework by the following Monday, commenting that it was disappointing that the timescale was so tight.

The main concerns were that it’s becoming result-oriented; lack of time to provide feedback; health and well-being link missing; meeting children’s needs – is that to cover all children with additional support needs?

AMG asked whether Aberdeenshire will pull their incas and epips and replace with the NIF?

MF replied that the main concern is that it will be an add-on. Not meant to be onerous but will be if have to do both.

RC observed that parent councils are not directly referenced, and asked for comments to be fed back to the parent council.

1. **Hillside School Workshop**

MF reported that details have been emailed to all parents.

AR commented that the new school has officially been named Hillside School.

1. **AOB**

MF regretted only being informed the previous day about a retirement presentation for Flora Munro the coming Saturday, leaving the school no time to prepare a meaningful contribution.

AR commented that the school had missed out on Rotary Donations too.

AR raised the issue of pupils not getting the school lunch they had asked for, due to other pupils being allowed to change their mind on the spot.

**Action –** MF to follow up on fact that not every child is getting what they asked for at school lunches due to pupils being allowed to change their minds.

**Date of next meeting:** Thursday 25th November 7pm