

**Kings Park Primary Parent  
Council Meeting  
Kings Park Primary School  
7th May 2019**

**Apologies:** Kate Bremner, Louise Duff, Jasmine Maillet-LaPointe, John Hackett, Jillian Phair Howitt, Emma Wilson.

**Present:** Leanne Banks, Phil Bowen, Laura Cockram, Teresa Docherty, Karlyn Durant, Vicky Haylott, Tamara Kennedy-Milne, Aoibhe O'Callaghan, Zoe Orr (Depute), Robbie Pearson, Laurinda Renton (Head Teacher).

**Glossary:**

**ASG – Associated Schools Group (cluster primaries)**

**ASN – Additional Support Needs**

**COSD – Cost of the School Day**

**HT - Head Teacher**

**SMT – Senior Management Team**

**STEM – Science Technology Engineering & Mathematics**

**VV&A – Vision Values & Aims**

**Sub Groups update:**

**COSD:** AO priced homework kits and they have come in under cost, totalling £640.

Uniform and Kit spend to date: £34.50 has already been used towards loaned uniform for the choir instead of school ties, because there was already a supply of ties for loan, and £84 on wellington boots and waterproofs.

COSD funding allocated towards school trips will begin to be offered after Easter. It will be an opt-in option for parents on the permission slips.

As COSD is a one-off payment it will not be an ongoing or open-ended funding period: once all the funds are allocated/spent then it finishes. It is anticipated that the budget will deliver funds until 2020 with the trips that have been planned for so far.

AO is going to talk further to JD to ensure distribution is equitable and transparent and request a communication to parents/carers of the system used to access the funds.

**Inclusion & Wellbeing Subgroup** - No formal update from KB and EW.

EW wanted to pass on that the school is happy for the parents of children with an ASN to use the nurture room to informally meet up.

VH added that she has helped pick up soft furnishings for the Nurture room.

LR added that Corrie Thompson has created a letter re Nurture for the website for parents to access. Class teacher will communicate with parents re. Nurture groups.

**Pupil Reporting Subgroup:**

LR - Reporting will all be coming under See Saw, there are 2 classes piloting the seesaw app at the moment in P5 and P6. All classes will then get to pilot See Saw. Teaching staff

will support each other within this change. It will launch in August 2019. LR will gain feedback from the parents and all passcodes will be given out on Curriculum evenings.

AO mentioned that the parents in attendance at the sessions on Paul Dix and the See Saw app were very appreciative of them and the efforts of LR and staff in running them.

LR - we are taking on board the parents' feedback and trying to include this.

LB - asked if there will be guidance on usage for parents when See Saw launches?

LR - Yes, a FAQ will be available and guidance will be provided.

### **Head Teacher Report:**

**Behaviour & Relationships:** LR and teaching staff ran an evening session on the Paul Dix approach with some parents from Parent Council. This was to engage with the parents in small groups using excerpts from the book. Parents took part in small group activities and gave feedback. This feedback will be looked at by the SMT. LR will show what has been generated at a later date.

Important to note that while not all children suit the Paul Dix approach, this is the approach that the school feels works for the majority of children and the school ethos. The school is committed to working with children and parents/carers for whom the approach is not as appropriate.

From this feedback and input from staff and pupils, LR is aiming to have a behaviour & relationships blueprint ready for August 2019.

The Vision, Values and Aims has been looked at by the Educational Psychologist. These were linked to at the recent school open mornings and also an activity on the topic was sent home with pupils to be worked on with parents/carers. All the info will be collated and will feed into developing King's Park's VV&A.

**See Saw app workshop:** Parent feedback on the piloted version of the app was positive and it is seen as helpful in that it will fill the 'gap' of information on their child's progress at school between parent-teacher consultation evenings. This tool will help maintain consistency in reporting throughout the year.

The school aims to launch the app in August 2019.

**Playground:** JD is meeting with support staff. He will talk to them about engaging with the children within the playground.

PTA has offered to help with sourcing playground equipment. School can't plan for any playground changes in layout or landscaping/structures until there are more details of the school extension.

Some staff have been on Loose Parts play training but all staff need to be trained in this before it can get rolled out.

AO mentioned that the playgrounds have lots of litter lying around again, can school organise the children to take turns on a class basis to pick this up?

Would it be possible to reinstate the rota of class litter-picking that was done in past years?

LR will speak with JD on this as he oversees the playground.

ZO – wanted to note that litter picking is on the Huddle agenda and the topic is regularly discussed with children in terms of keeping their environment clean and respecting their school.

VH - could there be poster about litter picking?

KD - can we stop having dogs in the playground, even being carried?

LR will make parents aware by Pigeon that No dogs are allowed in the playground unless they are assistance dogs.

AO - illegal parking at school remains a problem, especially at busy times - nursery pick up at 11.30am and again at school pick up at 3.20pm. Drivers collecting children are parking in disabled spaces, up on pathway kerbs over double yellow lines and in the 'no turning or parking' space at the end of Croft Street outside the school on double yellow lines. This causes congestion and a safety risk, especially to children leaving school on foot.

There is also a problem mornings and afternoons with congestion and illegal parking in the council car park at the rear playground at the Abbey Road end of Croft Street.

Suggestion that we could have a Sub group next term to look at getting a message to drivers re safer parking. There will be further discussion on this.

LR has asked for assistance from Parent Council in getting the shows stopped from being held in the park so close to school grounds, after the school was damaged over the 2 weekends they were sited in Kings Park.

Others commented on the sexual content of some of the advertising used for the rides, parents felt it was unsuitable for a location right beside a primary school.

AO will look into this further with council.

### **HT School Priorities:**

Good headway been made with the School Improvement Plan. Staff training is going well.

LR aims for staff training to be very focused and staff feel that they know the school's priorities. Main priority in teaching and learning is to **raise attainment**.

This takes the lead from Midlothian Council's own primary education priorities:

1: Improvement & Attainment. The aim from Midlothian Council is for this to be at 90% in P1, P4 and P7. School will continue to work to raise attainment. The focus will be on Literacy and Numeracy.

2: Closing the attainment gap – a PEF consultation questionnaire will be sent to all parents.

3: Improvement in children's Health and Wellbeing – includes introducing focus on employability from primary level to school leavers.

4. ASG STEM: School has signed up for the training in this. 2 members of staff have been picked. KP has got funding for a teacher mentor. Focus will be on upskilling and training up staff and having a clear progression in STEM from nursery to P7.

AO - the recent P7 STEM experience day with cluster primaries at Edinburgh College was a great collaboration.

5. Achieving Consistency: Consistency of Approach will be a focus, particularly for Homework where staff will be looking at assessment and moderation (this comes in under learning & teaching).

Parents are feeling that Homework is not consistent over the different years. There will be a focus on this next term and in-service days will be used as a discussion point on this.

Parent Council could help with a subgroup on this next year which would help with parent feedback and ideas.

LB mentioned that she is happy to lead on STEM events due to her professional background.

Kings Park 2019/20 Priorities will be:

- Literacy & Numeracy
- ASG STEM
- Consistency of Approach
- Looking at Assessment & Moderation

LC - asked about the new P1 parents introduction evening.

ZO - due at the end of May, letters will go out on this soon with the exact date.

Parent Council could talk at this and also have an information stall?

**ACTION:** ZO to let AO know re date for P1 info session

AO to arrange for Parent Council representation at the P1 info evening.

LC asked about what council cuts are being made within education.

AO felt that the recent consultation was not fit for purpose and suggested we put the council's consultation questions out to parents.

RP Attended a council meeting in Feb. Spending savings need to be made due to the reduction in local govt budget from government, and the demands of a rising population in the area.

AO mentioned that local Councillor and parent JH would be willing to give more info on this, AO asked whether those present would welcome more information from the council or perhaps a tailored session to address the budget cuts that will affect education. This was welcomed by those present.

LB helped to facilitate groups run by the council and people's views were sought. Council employee Annette Lang is leading this.

**ACTION:** AO to invite JH to attend a separate meeting and/or investigate the possibility of having a session delivered by the council specifically for parents and Parent Councils.

**School Comms:** Parent Council brought parent feedback regarding lack of consistency of school communication across all channels with some letters or school info being communicated by letter but not on Pigeon.

LR had thought that information was being adequately passed onto parents. In the light of this recent feedback from PC, all the communications stages have been revised by the SMT. In the case of families with more than one child at school, the older child will be the one to get the letter home.

LR met again with office staff who weren't aware that all letters must go on the website, as well as Pigeon. This has now been clarified. LR apologised that this hasn't worked well this year. This will be improved from now on. A pigeon post will follow detailing this.

The issue that staff are having with uploading content to the website in school bag drop is that for a file to be uploaded it needs to be changed from word to PDF. This adds extra steps to the process when teachers are under time pressures.

AO - could the school bag drop have all the letters uploaded in one place listed by date in order of publication so that parents could select the one relevant to them from an entire list?

PB - In theory all letters should go by year group, with whole school letters uploaded in all year groups. 1000 characters is available in pigeon if the letter is shorter, rather than being attached as a link.

AO - can school publish a calendar of school events in list format of all known dates and events, covering each class and whole school events, including in-service, mid-term and holiday dates etc?

Could this be available on the school website home page and also sent out in hard copy to parents/carers on a termly basis rather than yearly, with any changes or new content added in a refreshed version each term? It would be useful for parents to have the hard copy version on noticeboard at home to refer to for significant dates/events.

**ACTION:** ZO has agreed to do this.

LC mentioned that communication between the school and parents seems to come up a lot. Would it be useful to have a PC subgroup on Communications next year?

LR agreed to this.

VH asked if parents could be informed of dates on the calendar? VH would like to be on the Comms sub group.

ZO will inform all new P1 parents of the new Comms approach.

AO asked about the session dates for 19/20. Due to the children finishing school very close to Christmas this has concerned some parents but due to the dates already being set there is nothing that can be done now.

AO asked whether the SMT could bring term/holiday dates to the PC for discussion for future years as this is an area where PC should have input.

ZO and PB have met to discuss the best way forward re the website.

PB will deliver training on this to staff. This will show the staff how to upload photos etc. The use of See Saw will help with this next year. The school staff are limited to what they can amend on the website as any pics or photos need to be converted to a different file format before being uploaded to the website. This might be why it's not happening, as teachers are used to the quick functionality of uploading directly from their phones.

ZO is also working on the School Handbook.

There will be an A-Z for parents on things such as uniform. Behaviour will be touched on in the Handbook but a specific policy won't be referenced.

There will be a hard copy and an e-copy of the handbook. Most will access the e-copy, and new P1 parents or those who join the school later on, will receive the hard copy.

**ACTIONS:**

**LR to send messages out on Pigeon: detailing comms policy within the school and reminding No dogs in playground.**

**LR to speak with JD re playground Pals, support staff, equipment used/needed and consider resumption of litter picks.**

**ZO to collate dates for the terms and put on the calendar, will inform new P1 parents of new comms approaches, and continue work with School Handbook.**

**PB will deliver training to staff on website.**

**AO will discuss further with JD regarding the COSD.**

**AO will discuss further how to deliver message re. parking safely.**

**AO to contact council re damage to school property during fairs**

**AO to contact Annette Laing at council to discuss possibility of extra budget consultation session.**