

**King's Park Primary School**  
**Parent Council**  
**Zoom Meeting Minutes 30th September 2021**

**Present:** Serdar Abaci, Kate Bremner, Emily Cairns, Karlyn Durrant (Secretary); Teresa Doherty, Clare Gamble, John Hackett, Sarah Kane, Bianca Nicol (Acting Principal Teacher), Heather McIver, Aoibhe O'Callaghan (Chair); Zoe Orr (Deputy Head); Jill Phair, Leila Raeburn; Laurinda Renton (Headteacher); Jillian Tully.

**Actions from previous meeting:**

**HOMEWORK POLICY**

**ZO:** As part of the Learning and Teaching group I met with Jill Phair. Questions were looked over that would be appropriate to go out to parents in a questionnaire.

Thoughts were, Google form via the school app, pupils will be asked in class for their thoughts, and teachers will also be asked for their views.

Skills were developed during lockdown amongst the staff group around the use of Seesaw. We said that Seesaw will be used as a learning journal to share work. Some classes have given out homework however we agreed as a staff that there would be no homework until after the September holiday.

Teachers plan homework together with their stage partners (ie other teachers in that year group). Will meet again with Jill P. to keep parents involved, we need to get as many views as possible from the parent body via the survey. We need to gain views on what the challenges are around homework for families and also what people feel homework actually is.

Once the policy is written we will share with the parents and continue this throughout the academic year.

**JP:** Could there be a policy around Seesaw? Also visibly see the Seesaw usage.

**ZO:** Seesaw is used to record learning across the curriculum. However, moving forward it might be used in a little bit of a different way.

**LR:** The long term aim is to profile the learner's progress. What the next steps are for learners.

**ZO:** Twitter should help parents and carers see what is happening in the child's class day to day and across the school week.

**LR:** Pupils are and can learn in all different ways, via experiences and extra curricular clubs etc.

**SK:** We are aware that the expectations of homework will increase as we go further up the school.

**ZO:** The questionnaire does ask for parental opinions on the demand for homework. Happy to share the questions.

## **ASN SUPPORT GROUP:**

**AO:** We held a meeting before the AGM as some parents of children with ASN (Additional Support Needs) had voiced that they had felt a sense of loneliness within the school community. The parents felt that it would be helpful to use the school as a base to create a parent/carer group to share support around caring for and issues affecting their children with ASN. There has been great communication from King's Park with regards to ASN. If there are any other parents that want to discuss this further then please email me. We will try and gather other parents around this.

**AO:** Would it be helpful if parents/carers were signposted to this group during Child Planning Meetings (CPMs)?

**LR:** Yes we could make parents/carers aware of this at any point and also during CPMs. As the need has arisen from parental views, it needs to be hosted and run by parents & carers. The vision that we have is a coffee morning type approach, however Covid is not allowing this at the moment. Once up & running, we would be hoping to link in with outside agencies, ASD outreach and SLT (Speech & Language Therapy) would be happy to pop in by invitation to chat to the group during these meetups.

**AO:** Covid restrictions, can we have face-to-face meetings or groups in school yet?

**LR:** We have been told to continue to be cautious. We are hoping there may be some ease after the October holiday.

**JT:** This is something that might be of interest to myself and I know it would be to other parents within the wider parent body.

**ZO:** Just need to be aware that we don't exceed the current limit of 20 participants if in school.

**AO:** Will chat with JT to organise this for the coming months.

**LR:** Happy to help drive this forward and to get the ball rolling.

**BN:** Happy to support this also. I will be making links with identified children across the school.

## **HEADTEACHER UPDATE:**

### **Staffing:**

We have employed 2 new Support for Learning Teachers for the school. Mrs Gill Mitchell and Miss Karen Dodgson.

Jill will be attending the CPM's and focusing on literacy and Karen will be focusing on Numeracy. Each SFL teacher will meet with the class teachers. Bianca Nicol is our Acting Principal Teacher covering the maternity leave of Mrs Kay. Bianca's role is to focus on Nurture across the school as part of the authority-wide prioritisation of the nurture approach. There are also 3 Learning Assistants that have been employed to work alongside Ms Nicol.

There is an additional Principal Teacher joining us, Ms. Kerry Goodman. Additional staff members strengthening our senior leadership team is always a good thing! One-off funding from the Scottish

Government to the Local Authority means that we are getting a 3rd Depute Head teacher for the year also.

**Targeted Interventions:**

There is a **Digital priority**, and this is authority-wide. Our digital lead for the school is Zoe Orr. The authority have changed their email system as part of the new digital rollout.

**Nurture:** This is also an Authority wide intervention. All schools will be getting training in this area. King's Park is already in a good position with Nurture with interventions and supports already underway and some staff members have attended training from Nurture Scotland.

**Raising Attainment:**

Writing, we will be looking at assessments and how we can further upskill teachers. We will be focusing on where children are within their literacy journey. We will also be making sure that parents will know where their children are within their learning. We will be using the Talk for Writing literacy programme. We will also be looking at how we can share information to parents.

**Quality Interventions:**

Numeracy will be led by Julie Findlay and will also have one of the SFL teachers working alongside. There will be a focus on the upper school as they are not exposed as much to new Learning and Teaching styles.

We will also be promoting more outdoor learning.

Learning and Teaching: We will be looking at target setting, making sure that the children know what their next steps are. There will be learning conversations and teachers will be explicit with the children in informing them of their known targets.

We will be profiling more, we are aware that parents are keen to know more of what is happening with their child's learning.

Seesaw: We need to examine how we can make links with parents again, due to covid there is a sense of the parents feeling less connected to school and the learning and fun taking place in school as on-site visits are restricted. (We are able to host a limited number of in-person meetings with parents/carers for specific needs, child planning meetings etc.)

We will also be looking at the marking policy, how we are marking the children's work? Aiming for more comments rather than ticks etc.

Miss Nicol's Acting Depute role allows her to lead our efforts in trying to close the attainment gap with the disadvantaged children within our school community. This may be a poverty related gap.

Bianca will look at the SIMD scale, children accessing free school meals and the readiness to learn. We need to be aware that some of our children don't have certain experiences and there will be links made with the Attainment Advisor

We want to improve the school ethos and we will be revisiting our behaviour blueprint to examine what is and isn't working well.

In school we are all aware of the lack of opportunity to engage in person and welcome parent/carer visits, open days etc, however despite the ongoing challenges and restrictions we are keen to keep working with our parents as much as we can. We are supported in this by our Parent Council and we value the good working relationship that has evolved over the past 4yrs.

**AO:** Thank you for keeping going, and for keeping us all going!

**SA:** I'm a new parent to the school with a child in P1 and am very happy to help where I can due to personal expertise within IT. It's great to see all the teachers contributing here this evening and it is encouraging to hear from LR.

**AO:** Colin McCabe is looking for parents to help with the digital changes for the Authority.

**AO:** Laurinda could you clarify for me, I have written that the SIP will cover Literacy, Numeracy, Attainment, Nurture and Digital.

**LR:** There are 3 areas, Digital Technology, Nurture and Raising Attainment. We will also be looking at play within P1&2 and exploring the new pedagogy around this.

**KB:** Will the nurture room be up and running again?

**BN:** We will be re-examining Nurture within the school. We will be looking at the traditional model and there will be core groups of children. We will be linking in with parents and looking at what the children are achieving.

**KB:** The PTA will be happy to provide a good level of support for nurture initiatives.

**LR:** The Nurture room was not removed during lockdown. We have a small sensory area within the room also.

**KB:** Could info around the Nurture room be shared on Facebook?

**AO:** That should be ok to do.

**AO:** Emily is going to speak about the parent questionnaire around internet safety.

**EM:** It is ready to go out if people want to see it and add comments.

**AO:** Happy to support this, we could maybe look at transcribing this to a Google form.

**SA:** It is a good idea to involve parents. Online surveys are not for everyone, there may be parents that don't have access to the internet.

**ZO:** We could put it on the school app and also on Seesaw.

**KD:** We could also utilize the community police officer or make contact with the officer that is based at Dalkeith High.

**ZO:** Within school we are basically dealing with the fall out of home online access and issues are brought into school even though they may have originated outside school.

**AO:** We may need to look at future topics for the PC meetings. We could use break out rooms for sub groups.

**JH:** Future topics could be what is happening at the moment within Health and Social Care, the changes that are coming within the Social Work and Children's Services.

**AO:** We could try and get someone from the Authority to come and talk to us about these changes?

**JH:** The plans are now to disintegrate and reshape the services. This will impact how schools will access services.

**LR:** When we hear more information we will communicate with parents.

**JH:** There is a big push on estate development and the King's Park extension. 27 school expansions in the authority. Might be good to invite a development worker along to the next meeting to give accurate timelines of the extension? There are improvements coming to the council's Community & Lifelong Learning department also.

**LR:** CLL is important moving forward. We could use this to provide learning to our parents and use the school as a base to help with this. Would like to use the school as a community and use the wealth of expertise that we have within the parent body. I want us to be proud of what we are and who we are as a school.

**AO:** PTA We aim to work more closely with the PTA this year by offering support to the new committee and having joint meetings with the SLT a couple of times per year.

**AOB:**

**L RAEBURN:** Will the class changes that happened this last June be happening every year?

**LR:** This does depend on the school roll and number of classrooms available for teaching each year. We currently have 18 classes. We were aware that the news was short notice for the children and the parents and that the way it was communicated caused upset. We spoke to everyone who contacted us and raised concerns at the time, took on board the feedback and we will change how this was communicated for the next time.

**LRAE:** How do we communicate with the class teachers?

**LR:** The best way to do this is to email or phone the school office and they will communicate with the class teacher, in turn the teacher will either email or call you back.

**AO:** At the time I spoke to Laurinda about the impact and nature of the comms and suggested that for future scenarios parents/carers are consulted for feedback on suitable approaches. Thanks to the SLT for listening to the concerns of the parents regarding the class changes.

**ACTIONS:**

**ZO:** To email the Homework policy questions to **AO**.

**AO:** to send out email to PC mailing list to gather parent views /help on the Homework survey.

**EC&KD:** Social media subgroup - develop q's for parent/carers questionnaire/survey.

**AO & LR:** Thanks to everyone for joining the meeting and contributing.

**\*\* NEXT MEETING: Wednesday November 17th 2021 \*\***

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