

FRIENDS OF CULTERCULLEN SCHOOL MINUTES

TUESDAY 7 December 2021

Teams Online Meeting

7:00pm to 8:15pm

Present: Jane Brebner (Chair), Vikki Jannetta (Secretary), Cllr Jim Gifford, Cllr Hassan, Mike Whyment, Shona Gray, Mrs Gagne (Head Teacher), Mrs MacArthur (Head Teacher), Gemma Laing, Amber Gifford, Erin Dickson, Helen MacPherson, Jenny Fyall, Laura Barron & Sarah Aiken.

Apologies: Emma Garrow, Sam McGregor, Rhona Marr, Allison Hume, Cllr Powell, Joy Davies (Treasurer), Lynsey Ayton, Katie Barnes, Amber Reaper, Annie Grant & Megan Hicks.

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

- Jane Brebner welcomed everyone to the meeting, all mics to be muted, use hand icon or the chat function to contribute. Apologies were received.

2. Minutes of Meeting - 14 September 2021

- Minutes were approved.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Joy Davies sent FOCS and Football accounts to Lindsey MacKenzie to audit.
- Mrs Gagne had contacted the **police to carry out a speed awareness operation at school pick up time**, unfortunately they attended on the in-service day. They should be back to the school before Christmas to try again and give the school feedback. At that point the school could get in touch with Amber Sinclair.
- Cllr Hassan advised that the faded **30mph speed limit markings will be replaced**.
- **Raffle Licence is still to be renewed**. A registered raffle licence with the council is needed in order for FOCS to host a fair or a raffle.

4. Chairperson Report

- Jane Brebner is chairing her last meeting, a new chair / joint chair is needed.
- Thanks to Gemma Laing, Lynsey and Andrew Ayton for organising the Halloween Trail, the weather was stormy and rainy and a brilliant £295 was raised.
- It's important to keep doing the fundraising. It appears to be working well with families taking forward their own individual family fundraising ideas. Thanks to Cameron Marr for his family fun fundraising. The Rag Bag continues to do well providing extra income.

5. Treasurer Report

- Jane Brebner provided the update, the balance is **£5114.46**. Income came from uniforms, family fundraising, halloween trail, easy fundraising and rag bag. Quite a lot of money is to be debited from the account amounting to **£3754.46**, waiting for cheques to clear for i pads, charges, planters, education city, mental health resources p1/p2, school trip and kids and co uniform. This will give us a forecast balance of **£1448.29**. **Joy Davies is looking into setting up on-line banking asap**. The new Chairperson will be asked to be a signatory.
- Football balance is £480. Fees have been collected this term (the first time since 2019). Footballs, trophies and goals have been purchased.

6. Head Teachers Report

Mrs Gagne advised the following:

- Questionnaires were sent to parents asking for feedback which will influence the improvement plan (SQIP Document). Unfortunately only 6 responses have been returned, they have all been very positive. **Please could parents complete the questionnaire by the end of term**, it is important the school incorporates parents feedback into the improvement plan. Questionnaire Link: <https://forms.office.com/r/WwYqz1pxLt>
- The school has received commemorative coins for the Queen's Jubilee. Coins cost £2.99. Would FOCS consider purchasing a coin for each child if interested? It was agreed that the school would inform parents about the opportunity to purchase a coin and FOCS funds would not be used to purchase. There has been no confirmation about a day off for the Queen's Jubilee. **Cllr Hassan to enquire about this**. As soon as the school receives any feedback parents will be informed.

Mrs MacArthur advised on the following:

- The Standards & Quality & Improvement Planning (SQUIP) to be reviewed. Feedback from the questionnaire will be used to update the SQUIP. Under each Quality Indicator the school is graded, the grade is used if the school is inspected. The grade is also compared to other schools and is reviewed by the QIO. At the last inspection the QIO concluded that the school is grading itself accurately.
- The focus of the Improvement Plan is on the transition from nursery to P1. Mrs Dow has been leading this and will be in contact with parents to find out thoughts on the transition. Currently Mrs Dow is looking at adding Health and Wellbeing as a focus in the packs in order to learn about the child before starting school. Mrs Dow is looking at developing a communication strategy with other settings and looking into if children need extended transition. There is a major change in 2023, kids who are not 5 by the start of school will have the option to defer for that school year.
- The 2nd item on the improvement plan is reporting. The School, in line with Aberdeenshire Council policy, decided to move reporting and communicating on-line to See Saw. Aberdeenshire Council had approved this at the end of last session and Miss Smith set up the free See Saw trial with the intention of moving straight from the trial to using the system. However there is now a data protection issue and the Aberdeenshire Council have advised that any school not already using See Saw cannot now use it. Any school currently using See Saw can continue to use it. Due to the data protection issue Accelerated Reader cannot now be used and when Sum Dog subscription expires the school will be unable to use that also. Mike Whyment would like a formal response from Aberdeenshire Council to the Parent Council outlining what the problem is, why are we potentially losing systems we already have in place and the time for resolution. Vikki Jannetta stated this was unacceptable letting the staff and children down. It's like a postcode lottery, 3 schools within our area operating in different ways with different systems, it was suggested **FOCS write a letter to the council on behalf of the parents**. Mrs MacArthur advised to send the letter to her and she will forward onto the Council. **Mike Whyment also to email his concerns directly to Mrs MacArthur**. Cllr Hassen requested local Councillors are copied into correspondence sent to the Council regarding this matter and they will do what they can to help.
- PEF Funding (Pupil Equity Funding is government funding; each school is allocated with the specific purpose of bridging the gap, for children that don't have the same opportunities as others due to circumstance) has been used to contribute towards the Cluster Support Worker, this person provides support to pupils who need it, each school in the cluster contributes to this funding. Big Maths was purchased with great success, assessments

are done through using iPads and the teachers receive constant feedback as to how the children are performing. The children enjoy Big Maths but there are a couple of glitches to fix like can't hold the iPad landscape when doing assessments.

- The Scottish Government had awarded £5k funding to the school to fund an additional member of staff, 1 day a week, up to the end of March, term 3, to support staff, help pupils, support assessments and various areas of the curriculum as a result of covid. It has been decided to use the PEF funding to continue funding the cluster support worker (as suggested by parents). This will enable the support worker to come in for 2 days a week in term 3 and to be there until the end of the session. PEF will also be used for Big Maths which has had overall positive feedback and to purchase a Sensory Tent. It was found that some children were struggling to settle into the school environment after returning from lock down and the sensory tent might help. The extra staff support has enabled Mrs Dow to support P2 pupils transitioning to P3 it has also allowed staff to support children returning to the school after isolating with covid.
- Each class now has 8 iPads and a charging station.
- The school is in the process of purchasing 4 standing desks for the P5-P7 class. Children are finding the transition hard from being at home to being back in the classroom and it is hoped the standing desks will help for children who feel they need to move around.
- In the process of updating the morning activities the teachers set out for the children, this is part of the 'soft start' programme, the children get to choose an activity and the teachers have the opportunity to speak with the children.
- Funds have been dedicated to Miss Smith to investigate how play can enhance learning and teaching in the upper class.
- Mrs MacArthur is working from home due to children and husband having covid. Mrs Croft will be covering in the classroom.

7. Udney Paths Update

- Mike Whyment provided contact details for Kenny to Cllr Johnson. Cllr Johnson is to set up the first meeting of interested parties. **Mike Whyment will chase up.**

8. Fundraising Events & Ideas

- There is a long list of ideas produced, the new Chair to take forward. Helen MacPherson felt it would be good to reinstate Bags to School. **Helen MacPherson to investigate this.** Continue to use EasyFundraising when making purchases online.

9. Christmas

- Parents are happy with gifting to the local food bank rather than sending gifts in for teachers and staff. There will be a collection point at the school for the foodbank. Jenny Fyall queried if kids would be allowed to bring in a present on top of donation to the food bank? Mrs Gagne advised the idea of gifting to the food bank and not individual staff members was to take pressure off parents, but if parents did want to take in a gift that would be allowed and the gift would be quarantined for 72 hours.
- Mrs Gagne stated it is not actively encouraged for classmates to give out Christmas cards, it is not eco friendly in line with eco schools.
- Christmas jumper day will take place next Friday.
- Cauliflower cards - mugs have been received and labels and wrapping paper delivered today, the artwork is being dispatched tomorrow.
- Thank you to Sarah Aiken, Vikki Jannetta and Helen MacPherson for sorting out the Santa gifts. Presents need to be handed into the school prior to Christmas parties on 15/16 December.

10. Committee Roles to Appoint - Chairperson

- Chairperson role needs to be filled, either by one or two people. The main tasks include Chairing the meetings, helping organise fundraising activities and sourcing agreement from the committee on how to spend funds.
- Christine McLennan, Education Support Officer at Aberdeenshire Council advised that a rolling chair could be appointed to host each meeting. The person would host the meeting and take participants through the Agenda points. This would not be ideal long term but could be implemented in the short term, there are a few parent councils who do this.
- Jane Brebner thanked Emma Garrow for offering to take over the Chairperson role. **Could parents have a think and could someone come forward to do a joint Chairperson role with Emma, this person would need to help host the meeting and take participants through the Agenda.** Full support will be given by Joy Davies and Vikki Jannetta.

11. Any Other Business

- Annie Grant is in the process of speaking with the Co-op in Pitmedden to see if the school can get a soft plastics collection bucket for recycling soft plastics.
- The power is currently cut off at Cultercullen due to the storm. It is hoped to be restored by 10pm. As soon as there is any update the school will let parents know.
- The school is complying with covid regulations and when the children are in the building the windows have to be open to keep the building well ventilated. Some of the children are finding it cold, they can take heavy fleeces to put over school clothing, **Mrs MacArthur will send out communication to parents regarding this.**
- Some parents are having trouble getting children to wear appropriate winter clothing. Mrs MacArthur advised the staff are always nagging at the children to get their jackets on.
- Hill of Fiddes provide grants up to £500 (without having to match fund) for local communities, the deadline for the next meeting is end of January,

12. Next Meeting - either 1st or 2nd February or 8th or 9th February (Virtual Meeting)

- **Vikki Jannetta to source availability and set up the next meeting.**
- Jane Brebner thanked everyone for attending and stated it will be 14 years helping the school out when Jamie leaves in 2022, she will miss it.
- Helen MacPherson thanked Jane for all her massive help over the years, for going above and beyond on so many occasions and doing it quietly and under the radar.
- Vikki Jannetta thanked Jane for her hard work on the committee.

Minutes Issued: 9 December 2021