



Comely Park Nursery and Primary School Parent Council

Comely Park Primary School

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 7th November 2017

Attendees

Gail McEwan - Joint Chair

Mel Brookes - Joint Chair

Colin Reekie - Treasurer

Ms McLintock – Head Teacher

Mrs Thomson – Depute Head

Craig Clinton- Parent

Rachel Travers - Parent

Karen Kerr - Parent

Minutes of meeting held on 28 Aug 2017

Minutes from previous meeting were approved with nothing outstanding.

Treasurers Report

Previous balance £841.85. This included two lots of admin payments (£295 and £364 respectively) from Falkirk Council. Balance will be reduced now due to Brogan memorial awards and engraving. Colin Reekie – new Treasurer is currently receiving training. Accounts need to be finalised for the year?

Christmas Fayre 2/12/17

Parent Council to have a stall for the swap shop and glitter tattoos to raise money.

Rachel Travers kindly washed and labelled all of the unclaimed items from the lost property bin.

Volunteers wanted from PC to help out on the day.

HT Update

Staffing update:

- Mrs Thomson new Depute Head, Ms Weston and Miss Moore
- Mr McGrath started Mon 13/11. He may cover half a class. Yet to be defined.
- Music – Covered by Falkirk High staff. Mr Faulds absent – Mrs Kirton and Miss Lindsay
- Events: choir, Football tickets, festival, Under the Trees, John Muir & FHS, Storytelling festival, Cineworld visits, cross country and library.
- New Early Years Officer. Mrs Thompson was interviewing on Thurs 9/11. There will be 40 spaces in the morning and 30 in the afternoon up until Christmas, then this will change to 40/40 in the New Year. Miss Stanners will leave to go on maternity leave and she will be replaced by the new person, who will have a permanent position.

Nursery update:

- Learning Journals – Historically they have been paper. We now have an App to allow parents to view their child's Learning Journal at any time. Initial feedback is very positive.
- Intergenerational partnership working with Thorntree Mews Care Home – CPPS have linked with Thorntree . Both morning and afternoon children are involved. Very good news stories coming from this partnership with one lady benefiting so much from the interaction with the children that she has come out of her room and there has been a marked improvement in her mood.
- Scottish Association of Teachers of English as an Additional Language (SATEL) – English as a second language – 8 DVD's created to help children learn English. There are 20 additional languages spoken within the school by children whose first language is not English. Children with English as a second language are on the increase into the school.
- CPD film evidence – good practice across the authority – Mrs Wilson is doing further education studies.

School Improvement Planning:

- Standards and Qualities Report – Attachment 1 – Has been emailed to parents/carers and is on the website. Teachers will be given training on maths pedagogy. This will start early 2018.
- Pupil Equity Funding: school plan and cluster plan
 - Reading – a number of girls in P4-P7 are attaining higher than boys. A series of workshops on reading for parents/carers will be run over the session.
 - Numeracy- the PEF Pupil Equality Fund money will be used to work on the numeracy shortfalls. There will be a new National Standardised Teaching assessment in June 2018.
 - Nurture – Miss Hastons room /resource cupboard will be revamped to make it more welcoming and tidied up so that it is more suitable for nurture and support. Materials may be boxed in – cupboards introduced. £1k from the PEF money will be used.
 - Play – structured play has been introduced into P1
 - Communication and technology in the Nursery is being improved.
- School vision and values – almost complete. Every child has to know what the school visions and values are. The pupil citizenship group finalised the previous work undertaken which involved pupils, staff and parents.
- Placing requests for P1 –capped at 60. There are 6 children on the waiting list. All P1 catchment area children have placements within the school.

In-service programme:

- Scotia Books – all staff members went along to Scotia Book on the last in-service day which was beneficial in bringing focus to the reading material that the school want to focus on.
- Mindfulness and attachment disorder – all staff attended a session led by Stan Gozek.
- Numeracy Progression Pathways.
- 'Making Sense of Number'.
- 'Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning' (SEAL) approach – pedagogy
- Word Aware – extending vocabulary - Comely Park will get 12 days with Speech and language therapists to introduce Word Aware.
- Refresher training on the use of Epi-pens and Asthma will be provided to staff members.

Partnership with Parents:

- Parent appointment booking system (closed at midnight on 29th October) – was not as successful as the first parent's night. Not every parent booked an appointment via the online system. The system has the option to remind parents a week before the deadline (which is Sunday night at midnight), to book an appointment. Using this reminder to chase parents who have not made appointments will be looked in to ahead of future parents nights. 56 parents/carers did not make appointments out of 415.
- Home Learning consultation. A Staff meeting was held 7/11. Home learning guidance notes have been issued to all parents.
- P1 Curricular evening was really well attended.
- Learning Journals workshop was not as well attended.
- Meet the Teacher event was well attended. Parents enjoyed it and especially being child led.
- Newsletter and twitter. Newsletters are all on line. Not all Teachers are comfortable Tweeting.
- Group call emails are free, texts cost the school. It is the school's preference to email and save money that can be used elsewhere. However, not all parents have access

to receive texts and not all parents have given out their mobile numbers or email addresses, so both methods of communication will be used in the meantime.

- School app will be launched in 2018. The school can send unlimited messages using this format. Although there is a license fee, this is less than current costs incurred by Groupcall, so a cost saving in comparison to texting. It will contain news, dates for diaries, useful information for Parents and Carers. School apps have been trialled in other primary schools with great success and the feedback from parents is that is great to have one porthole to access all school information that they may need.

School Building/Grounds:

- Pitch – partnership with Falkirk Football Foundation going well, only issue is litter. FF are doing their best to keep the pitch clean and tidy, but out of hours use by children who are not part of FF and have not hired the pitch seem to be causing the worst of litter issue. When FF have the long term lease of Woodlands Games Hall and move their junior academy to the Games Hall and Pitch permanently, which is imminent, this issue will improve.
- Playground – Falkirk Council have decided not to offer the £10k grant that the PC was going to apply for to help pay for the new outdoor area at the turning head (outdoor classroom/play area). The Tesco grant application has been accepted and Gail will be notified as soon as we have a slot in the Falkirk Store to begin collecting Tokens. Further funding will have to be found and Gail will talk with Art Berg from Falkirk Council and Stephen Barr from SGS to find a way forward.
- Gates – being kept closed to stop General public using the school as a thoroughfare and helping reduce/get rid of litter/broken glass and dog fouling
- Lets issue now resolved. The school have full use as agreed during school hours and for one hour afterschool.

School Success:

- Excellence in Headship – Ms McLintock has been accepted onto the Leadership and Excellence in Headship course which is great news for the school.
- Strathclyde University: Early Childhood in Education - Mrs Thomson, Miss Cain and Miss Ramsay are undertaking this.
- B.A. in early childcare – Mrs Wilson is undertaking this degree.
- Central Scottish Partnership with West Lothian, Stirling and Clackmannan – staff continue to access professional development provided by this group.
- Falkirk Community Schools Charity – awarded £1000 grant which was applied for by the Parent Council.
- Community Playgrounds – awarded £1000 grant – applied for by the PC.

Forthcoming events/activities:

- Partnership visit to be hosted for cluster at Comely Park on 21st November
- PTA Christmas Fayre
- Reading Workshop P5-7 parents 1st Dec 1.45-2.45pm “So You Can Read, What Now?”
- ‘Word Aware’ vocabulary workshop for nursery to P2 parents. 19th January 1.45-2.45pm
- NSPCC workshops and assemblies
- Pneumatics and Hydraulics training was provided recently to staff.

Comely Park Parent Council Contact Details



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Attachment 1



FALKIRK COUNCIL



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Comely Park Primary School

Standards and Qualities Report

Session 2016-2017

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As you probably know, each year the government and Falkirk Council publish information designed to show how well Schools and Local Authorities are improving pupil performance year on year.

In similar fashion, we would like to tell you how we are progressing in Comely Park Primary School. This leaflet has been designed to do just that. It is our "Standards and Quality Report" for Session 2016-2017.

The report this session is set out in a new format. This is in response to guidance from Education Scotland. Their intention is to streamline these reports and as a result it is very likely that this format will be amended again next session.

The report details a brief description of the main things we set out to do at the start of last session and also our evaluation of how well we managed to achieve them. Whilst we make many improvements in the course of a year, we have focused on what we consider to be the most important areas to give an overview of the progress we have made. We have also included an outline of the School's main priorities for next Session.

I hope you find the leaflet helpful. If you have any questions about it, please do not hesitate to phone the school office for an appointment. I will be pleased to offer clarification.

Laura J McIntock

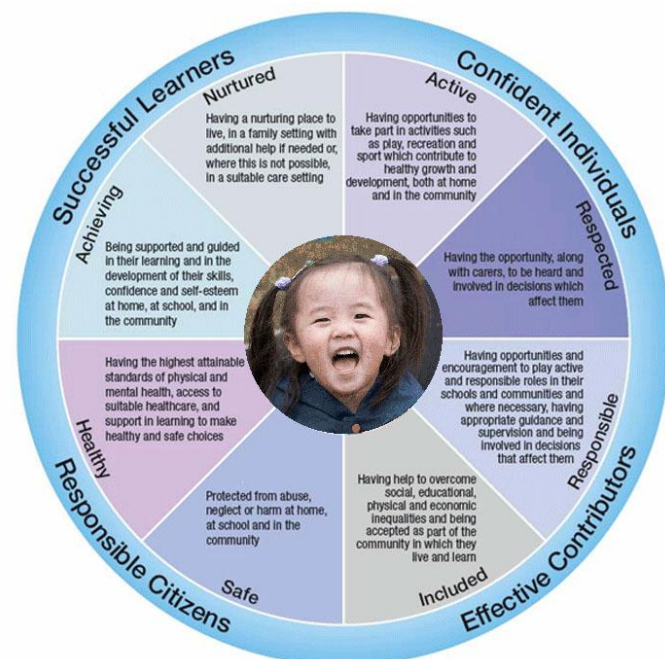
Headteacher



Our vision and values reflect the skills that children will need in the workplace of the future. We aspire to be an active learning and teaching community with strong partnership links in our local area. We strive to ensure learning is fun and all pupils experience success. We seek to develop **confident, resilient** young people who are **composed, collaborative, compassionate** and **creative**.

In all aspects of our work we:

- ✓ Conduct our business with mutual respect, tolerance, fairness and equality.
- ✓ Embrace diversity, promote inclusion for all in a proud, safe and welcoming environment.
- ✓ Communicate and listen in order to involve everyone.
- ✓ Move forward as enthusiastic, life-long learners through partnership with parents, carers and the wider community.



Context of the school

Comely Park Primary School is situated in the heart of Falkirk town centre. The school has existed on this site since 1873 and it is highly regarded by the local community. We receive a significant number of placing requests into the school each year. This session we had fifteen classes, one of which was a composite class P2/1.



Our teaching cohort comprises of full and part time staff supported by PE and music teachers from Falkirk High School. Our new Senior Early Years Officer (SEYO) and a new



Early Years Officer (EYO) were appointed this session bringing our nursery staff complement to five. We began the session with one Support for Learning Assistant (SfLA) but were fortunate to have two others redeployed to our school during the session. We have two part time clerical staff and a janitor. The senior leadership team (SLT) consists of the Headteacher, Acting Depute Headteacher, one permanent Principal Teacher and one Acting Principal Teacher.

Staffing was a challenge this session as two teachers left the authority and only one was successfully recruited. There is ongoing change within the SLT due to the acting posts. Although the Depute Headteacher post was advertised twice, no successful candidate has been appointed. The SLT have covered staffing vacancies this session to ensure there is no diverse impact on pupil learning. This has reduced our management time.



We are in a built up area which allows us to enjoy close links with many of the businesses and facilities in our locality. We are frequent visitors to Callendar Park where we can access outdoor learning in a more natural environment. We benefit from effective partnership working with both our Parent Council and our Parent Teacher Association (PTA).



Our Parent Council have been instrumental in ensuring a £200,000 upgrade of our school pitch through partnership with Falkirk Football Foundation. Our PTA raised funds to support a long awaited upgrade of our playground equipment and the introduction of ipads into the school. In addition to this they have provided a range of events for pupils, parents and the wider community throughout the session.

Comely Park Primary Nursery School

Our nursery had an unannounced inspection by the Care Inspectorate in November 2016. They reported that children were happy and confident in our nursery. Pupils in primary one were able to explain that they had the same buddy who visited them in nursery and they enjoyed this. Parents also commented positively about the nursery. They said that communication was effective; that staff changes had impacted positively on the nursery improving experiences for children; that children enjoyed a variety of activities and that the environment was nurturing supporting children with their development.

The Care Inspectorate reported the involvement of families in the service was very good ensuring positive outcomes for children and the support needed to achieve their potential. Partnership working resulted in parents and carers helping with outings, taking part in stay and play sessions, developing the service including the outdoor area and agreeing next steps for children. Effective communication supported the sharing of information and included

children, parents and carers. Families with English as an alternative language were included in the setting by steps being taken to ensure that they received correspondence in a suitable format.

The use of natural resources and loose parts play had been developed following a consultation process. Individual needs were met as a result of the information gathered in consultation with parents and careers and a persona plan developed and regularly reviewed.

Children were engaged in planning their learning experiences. Self-evaluation for self-improvement was very good. Parent's played an active role in influencing the quality of the service. The use of *How Good Is Our Early Learning And Childcare* supported the team to evaluate the quality of the service and identify areas for improvement. Effective continued professional development supported staff in extending their knowledge and awareness of best practice. The senior management team had a calendar o planned monitoring for the setting.



The Care Inspectorate graded our service as:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| • Quality of care and support | 5 – Very good |
| • Quality of environment | Not assessed |
| • Quality of staffing | Nor assessed |
| • Quality of management and leadership | 5 – Very good |

Review of progress for session 2016-17

This session we worked more closely with our cluster schools. We worked together on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing targets. Staff across the cluster agreed shared aims and worked collaboratively throughout the session on cluster network groups. This allowed us to participate in professional dialogue and share good practice.

School priority 1: Vision and Values

Progress and impact: At the beginning of the session we worked closely with 'Single Steps Learning' to begin to focus on our values. Staff considered all the latest advice from Scottish Education and over the session this work was extended to pupils and parental views were gathered during parents' evenings. Our vision and values align with the aspirations of the National Improvement Framework, HGIOS²⁴ and 'Getting It Right For Every Child' (GIRFEC). They reflect the skills that children will need in the workplace of the future.

Next steps: Our pupils are currently finalising our vision and values statements in a child friendly format. We will ensure our vision and values are shared with our wider school community and embedded in all that we do at Comely Park Primary School.

"You think you begin with vision, you don't, it grows." Michael Fullan

School priority 2: To raise attainment within numeracy.

Progress and impact: The 2016 Teacher Judgement Survey and analysis of attainment data highlighted that there was a need for changes to be made in our learning and teaching approaches in numeracy. The focus therefore was to raise attainment in numeracy and maths throughout the school. Following the publication of the National Benchmarks and the draft version of Falkirk Council's '*Curriculum for Excellence Numeracy and Maths Progression Pathways*' we have begun to use these to inform planning and develop children's learning experiences. The team also responded to the Benchmark Consultation on Education Scotland. We have identified some resourcing issues and the Benchmarks indicate a need to increase pace at all stages. The trial use of the Progression Pathways as a planning tool has been well-received by staff. The audit also confirmed the dip at First Level, the resource gap at P2 and the need for improvement in pupils' basic skills and understanding the language of maths.

- ✓ Planning was reviewed, trialled and improved with the implementation of the Progression Pathways and Benchmarks and overview of groups and resources.
- ✓ Detailed audit completed which has helped point the way forward.
- ✓ Common assessment approaches and record keeping format was agreed
- ✓ Staff have been given resources which can be used for assessing numeracy skills: end of level resources on staff share
- ✓ Basic Skills tests made for P7 – for transition with FHS
- ✓ Lots of sums practice booklets prepared and shared with staff
- ✓ Assessment Folders being used by all staff
- ✓ Maths Pedagogy - Maths Recovery Books and CPD/TLC in place for next session
- ✓ Starting next session with 3 weeks of basic skills so that jotter layout is not inhibiting progress and an agreed standard is shared with all staff.
- ✓ Problem Solving Planner revamped

Next steps: All staff will participate in training in the SEAL approach to numeracy. The 'Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning' is a model that we can use to help us understand the development of children's numerical knowledge. A Teacher Learning Community (TLC) will be established to support this development.

School priority 3: To refine our planning, tracking and assessment processes.

Progress and impact:

✓ Planning, tracking and assessment processes are streamlined.

Previous work on Planning and Tracking provided a brilliant start for us to begin reviewing the process this session. In addition, the publication of the Progression Pathways and various curricular Benchmarks have provided guidance. Planning resources have been streamlined and there is a reduction in the volume of paperwork to be submitted by staff. Where appropriate, staff are only required to highlight key pieces of information and whenever possible, create a stage forward plan. This promotes collegiate working, professional dialogue and a reduction in paperwork and duplication. Our Tackling Bureaucracy audit was informative, highlighting areas of good practice.

- ✓ There is consistent use of data by all staff and confidence in using it is increased.

The decision to have all staff engage twice annually in teacher judgement ensured fairness and promoted awareness of achievements within a level, making use of recently published documents to inform decision making. Through staged planning opportunities and professional dialogue, staff will become increasingly familiar with key documentation to support effective learning and teaching, and thus more confident in their approach to planning and tracking.

✓ High quality analysis and dialogue of assessment evidence to inform tracking meetings. Staff will be better informed when engaging in tracking and impact meetings. Staff will have a working knowledge of assessment data and be employing this data to inform/support planning, tracking and reporting.

Next steps:

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) must review the manner in which staff are recording and sharing Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. We have also agreed to trial a reduction in the number of times per session the forward plans will be submitted to the SLT. There have been a significant number of changes to planning and tracking. Whilst this is intended to support effective learning and teaching, we recognise the need as a SLT to monitor closely the implementation and adherence to new procedures.

School priority 4: To improve resilience across the school using the *Bounce Back* approach.

Progress and impact:

Bounce Back is fully implemented into all classes. Teachers within our school are now using this as their main resource to address various Health and Wellbeing (HWB) topics, with the focus particularly on developing resilient pupils. The Bounce Back acronym is now part of daily school life, with monthly focuses on specific parts of the acronym, and teachers, pupils and parents referring to it regularly. Baseline assessments carried out throughout the year have shown an improvement with pupil's thoughts and feelings on life within and outside of school, thus proving pupils resilience has increased throughout the year. Bounce Back progression planners have been created which take into account Curriculum for Excellence HWB experiences and outcomes, and ensure continuity across the stages. Our Health and Wellbeing open night provided an opportunity for parents, carers and the wider community to come together to learn more about Bounce Back and ways to support and improve children's Health and Wellbeing. In addition to this, two leaflets were distributed throughout the year with information on how to develop resilience and how to support the Bounce Back programme within the home environment.

Next steps: All staff will use a nurturing approach to further develop nurture within the school. Create a nurture room for pupils to access.

Key priorities for improvement planning 2017-2018

School Priority 1: To engage more pupils in reading for pleasure.

The evidence on reading for pleasure:

- ✓ Research suggests that there is a positive relationship between reading frequency, reading enjoyment and attainment (Clark and Douglas 2011).
- ✓ Reading enjoyment has been reported as more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status (OECD 2002).

Tracking and monitoring processes in school indicate that reading materials in school need to be reviewed and enhanced to positively impact on children's independent reading. Our reading materials do not fully represent the diversity of pupils in our school. We will work with pupils and other professionals to ensure that reading resources in school are engaging for all children, particularly boys and children with English as an additional language.

School Priority 2: Numeracy

All staff will participate in training in the 'Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning' (SEAL) approach to numeracy to improve attainment in this area.

School Priority 3: Nurture

We will continue to develop a nurturing approach in all classrooms. In addition we will establish a nurture base within the school to help reduce and remove the barriers to learning which some pupils experience.

School Priority 4: Play

We will develop play based learning in primary one, including greater use of outdoors.

School Priority 5: Communication and technology in the nursery

We will implement online learning journals to share and celebrate success in the nursery. We will continue to identify methods to communicate with all of our parents, in particular those with English as an additional language.

All of the above priorities will be supported financially with our Pupil Equity Funding.