Minutes from Parent Council Meeting 9/9/20

Welcome – Mrs O’Donnell

Mr Preston

Amanda Howat

Katy Sweeney

Councillor Brown

Councillor Cowie

Cheryl Burnett

Father Dougan

Apologies – Kelly Summers

Donna Owens

Gillian Aitchison

HT update

All children settled well and plans working well. Entry, exits and breaks staggered to minimise contact between classes.

Curriculum recovery plan to focus on 3 key aspects – literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

SLT in contact with parents during lockdown and a record of engagement has been kept for those engaging in learning during lockdown.

Additional staff allocation to support Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC), Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and School recovery plan (Mr McLaughlin and Mrs Mowbray). Focus this session on Nurture, Raising Attainment in Literacy and Parental Engagement. All very appropriate at this time.

Nurture: Mrs Haggerty retiring and Mrs McBride (currently on mat leave) will take on her role.

Each class are receiving 2 blocks of time to provide nurture support (some of this team teaching).

Parental Engagement: Mr Preston has taken on the role of looking at parental engagement within the school. Mr Preston has time allocated on a Thursday to look at how best to further develop parental engagement. Initiatives he updated on included Save the Children initiate to promote Nursery and P1 parental engagement, Google Classroom and Chromebooks. He has also introduced a Trinity High School support transition programme to P7’s to make their move to secondary as seamless as possible.

Raising attainment in Literacy: Literacy support in place includes writing support, Catch Up Literacy, 5 minute box and IDL spelling Progamme.

There is further cluster support in addition to this.

SLT are carrying out focus discussions with each stage. These have focused on recovery and return to school – good feedback from pupils.

All classes working on Google Classrooms and children spending time getting used to it in the class. This will be rolled out for home use shortly. There is a need to look at supporting those families/children with no access to technology. Chromebooks have been given for families in this situation but lack of WiFi still remains an issue.

Teachers are carefully supporting individuals and classes, assessing learning needs post lockdown.

Councillor Brown asked if there were any restrictions on the PEF money. No changes to the normal spending process have been mentioned. It is going currently to additional teaching.

Uniform recycling – Mrs O’Donnell agreed she is keen for this to happen to help with the cost of the school day. Items of clothing left in classes before lockdown have been bagged up and moved to the new classes. As no one is allowed in the school for the foreseeable future, Father Dougan suggested the church hall would be available to use for at least the next few months as the building of the new hall has been put on pause. Parishioners could help with this and if necessary a washing machine could be put in place.Further discussions will happen at another time for this in the near future but everyone is keen for this to happen.

Food Bank – suggested term to donations to local foodbank. Food bank is now up and running more normally after Covid. SLT conscious of the needs within the school and wider community. Food bank has given a list of items they will require and suggested each class takes one item off the list to focus on. Further discussions to be had in near future with PC and HT with a view to have this up nd running in November.

Pick up/drop off times – discussion around siblings starting/finishing school at the same time. Advised there is an adverse weather strategy in place and an early entry system and these have helped minimise crossover between classes. Park and stride is being encouraged, as it always is, and staff are allocated to be at various parts of playground and car park. Community police have been at the school as more cones have appeared on the street.

Communication – asked if the new systems in place could be reinforced on Twitter/website and school app as felt these communication tools are not being used to their potential. Advised a newsletter is coming out shortly. Mentioned by PC that social media could be used to communicate a range of things in addition to Covid related things. Mentioned that other than P1, no other class has had anything on Twitter. Parents would like to see the set up of the school and classrooms and seeing photos would alleviate some anxiety about children being in school once again, but also just to keep parents informed as to what children are doing. Mrs O’Donnell advised she has mentioned to staff about putting something on Twitter for each class on a weekly basis.

PC will make a leaflet to distribute with new details on it.

Timetables – concern over lack of daily outdoor learning in line with government guidelines. Also there has been no set PE days given as of yet. Concern over this as due to guidelines and focus on Health and Wellbeing, it is quite late into term 1 for this not to be happening.

Mrs O’Donnell advised that a degree of flexibility is required in regard to PE lesson times to take account of weather, so parents were asked to ensure all children wear appropriate clothing to allow for both PE and outdoor learning on any day. Pupils can wear polo shirts on any day. Mrs O’Donnell will discuss a set timetable with staff. Mrs Sweeney was concerned that majority are losing out on this because a minority do not have appropriate clothing and suggested the stock of lost property could help with this as well as using the app to continue to reinforce children coming dressed for outdoor learning in all weathers. Mrs O’Donnell advised she would reinforce this with the parents and remind all teachers to engage in outdoor learning experiences as often as possible.

Virtual meet the teacher suggested as normal circumstances don’t allow for usual format. Mrs O’Donnell will speak to class teachers about this. There will be SLC/Union advice around Parent’ Evenings and Working Time Agreements for teachers will take this on board.

Covid contingency plan – PC asked how this is being managed. Advised that blended learning plans are still in place if need be. Google classroom will be up and running shortly and a ‘how to’ sheet will be provided. Children currently practicing this in class. Teachers are looking at ways to support children in self isolation and are happy to provide work. PC suggested something needs to be given to children quickly to ensure they don’t miss more of their learning than already have done so.

Sacraments – letter advising of postponement has been done.

App – School have paid £480 invoice for this. Mrs O’Donnell had understood that Parent Council would contribute to this. PC happy to contribute to the cost as it is a valuable resource, however funds are low so would need to look at ways to boost these.

Mrs Lynagh retiring in October after 23 years.

Councillors happy to help manage parking issues and to help in any other way they can. Other schools have some of the same issues.

Proposed date of next PC meeting 7th October.