



NEWTONGRANGE PS PC MEETING – minutes

LOCATION: Newtongrange Primary School	
DATE: 11 th September 2023	
PRESENT: Tricia McNicol, Alison Lyles, Ashwyn Melmoth, Liz McCabe, Julia Gossip, Kirstie Corbett, Ianthe Sutherland, Ashly Young, Rebecca McCosh, Kirsty Hirst, Pam Cook, Laura Cameron, Kerry Dolan, Sarah Birrell, Candice Wyllie, Michael Wyllie, Dawn Wyllie, Zorana Tasovac, Jennifer McGeachy, Lisa-Marie Thomson, Arantza Henderson, Annette Henderson, John Drummond	
APOLOGIES: Rachel Geddes, Ben Miller	
MATTERS ARISING:	ACTION
1. Minutes were agreed as being an accurate record for the meeting dated: 15/5/23	
<p>2. Elections to parent council: The following individuals were elected for the term AY 2023-24 to corresponding positions within the Newtongrange Parent Council. Each position received a minimum of 3 votes from parent council members: Chair: Tricia McNicol Secretary: Alison Lyles Treasurer(s): Julia Gossip & Ashly Young (as handed over at the end of last scholastic year by outgoing treasurer Catsy Moffat).</p>	
<p>3. School update Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent DHT appointed – congratulations to Kerry Dolan • Welcomed Emma McDougall P1MH, Jen Halliday P7HM and Alex Matthews P5H • Welcomed back Amy Dolan – Nest/Enhanced Class Teacher • Lynsey Mitchell has completed a Keeping in Touch Day and hoping to return in January. • Sally McGurn – long-term absence • Ashley Sinclair (EYP) – due to start mat leave 	



School Improvement Plan

- SIP Summary – Literacy– Kerry, Num – Sarah, Digital – Chelsea, Wellbeing – Sally and Amy
- School Priority groups – developing action plans

What has been happening? 19 days since Summer....

- Establishment Phase and Whole school project
- Assemblies – welcome back, citizenship and sharing learning
- Building resilience
- IEP and MAM meetings involving all staff
- Forward Planning – focus on all areas of the curriculum and progression frameworks
- Wider Curriculum sessions started
- Lunchtime clubs
- School Photos
- Digital Learning Technologist Visit – chrome books for P3
- ELC – Stay and Play
- ELC – outdoor area completed
- Playmaker for P7
- P7 Super 7s supporting across the school
- Depute Head Teacher Interviews
- Junior Senior Leadership Team
- Meet the Teacher

What is coming up?

- Hands Up Survey
- Big Breakfast at Tesco
- Maths Week Scotland
- P6 Bikeability
- Building Resilience Assemblies
- Moderation sessions
- Data Dialogies
- Assessments
- Quality Assurance Visits
- Harvest assembly – support from Rev Gayle



4. **PTA/ fundraising update:**

Tricia McNicol explained that there was not a large update to give following the last meeting in May 2023.

The PTA usually operate a “Teas and tissues” event for parents of new primary 1s to meet other parents from the school however with the temporary closure of the church hall (used in previous years) and timing of event, it had not been possible to secure a suitable venue this year so the event could not run. Tricia enquired as to whether the school might be able to provide a space for this in forthcoming years. Laura Cameron said she thought this would be possible.

Tricia also outlined that the Gala committee has approached the school PTA in enquire whether we would be able to run the refreshment tent for the Gala day 2024. This is to be further discussed at up coming PTA meetings.

PTA meetings are to be held the first Friday of the month at 9am within the school with the exception of the first meeting which is to be held on 22/9/23.

5. **PTA accounts update:**

Julia Gossip & Ashly Young shared an overview of the current PC accounts. Events for scholastic year 2022/23 included bake sales, Gala day, Christmas Fayre, Sponsored bounce, Christmas cards and these raised just under £8300 for the school last year. Agreed spending for this year include: primary 1 book bags, School app, Christmas panto & refreshments and the plan is to keep the expenses ring-fenced for these recurring expenses. After these expenses there will be around £5k of funds to spend for this academic year. It was agreed it would be useful for the school to produce a “wish list” in order of priority in order for the PTA to plan fundraising for the year. More information about the current PTA accounts can be found below.



photography is a feature of the yearbook content. This is to be explored further at subsequent PTA meetings but it was suggested that a yearbook committee (perhaps including some P7 learners/parents) be set up in order to coordinate the work required to put together the year books.

6. Playground group update:

Julia Gossip gave an update on the current position for the playground group in Ben Miller's absence.

Last year the PC playground task force were successful in receiving grant funding from Councillor Kelly Drummond. These funds have now been spent on play equipment and storage for the school playground in order to make it a richer play/learning environment for children.

Kerry Dolan & Laura Cameron shared that there have been some playground injuries since the return to school which is likely as a result of the unsafe playground surface. They shared that Midlothian Council have said they will commit to re-surfacing the school playground as a priority which was met with mixed feelings. Whilst the parent council views the playground as a priority for safety, it was also felt that the playground is not a fit for purpose space to enable a safe and interactive learning or play. The point was raised that the playground at Newtongrange has not been updated since the 1960s and has fallen short of similar investments that have been made at other schools which have featured mixed surface spaces and large playground equipment. Julia shared that the playground group have applied for a few grant funds recently but have not been successful in meeting the criteria which have led them to conclude that major upgrades to the playground really sits with the local authority.

The playground committee have drafted a change.org petition for parents to sign in order to try to bring about change with regards to the playground space. In light of the news that the council have agreed to re-surface the playground, it was agreed that this should be delayed until after resurfacing has occurred. There was ample discussion surrounding the approach to take with this which included both the use of an updated change.org petition and/or complaints directly to the council website via the complaints portal. The PC will share more information about the collective approach in future weeks.



Other initiatives within the playground have included the involvement of Annette Henderson & Newtongrange Guerilla Gardeners who has been instrumental in helping plan and upgrade the gardening space at the front of the school building..

LC also shared that the school has been successful with obtaining grant funding for the upgrade of cycle storage. This is due to be carried out in future weeks.

7. AOCB:

LC requested for the release of funding from the PTA to fund audio headsets for each child for individual devices to enable access to some digital technology based learning.

It was suggested that the school produce a school “wishlist” for the PTA events meeting on the 22nd September so that fundraising goals could be considered within this year’s events planning.

Playground action day: Previous meetings have suggested that it would be good to have a “playground action day” to carry out a number of small tasks that are required in order to make basic improvements and install new play equipment. It was agreed that a sub-group meeting is required to coordinate this plan. Further communication will be circulated between the parent council and the community gardening group for volunteers once a strategy and date have been agreed.

School
SLT

8. Date for parent council meetings for school year 2023-24 were agreed as:

4th December 2023

26th February 2024

27th May 2024

All to be held at 7pm in the school.

PTA fundraising meetings will be held the first Friday of every month at 9am in the school.