

## **Minute of Meeting of Lairdsland Primary School Parent Council**

**Location: MS Teams**

**Date: 10 December 2024, 6pm**

Present: Libby Bradford, Annamarie Conway, Katie Edwards, Andrew Mawston, Fraser Gallacher, Nigel Rooke, Hannah Topalian-Loban.

Apologies from Deniz Uster-Harrup, Maria Kerr, Kirsty McEwen, Sandra McEntee

### **Introductions**

NR welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised of apologies as above.

### **Matters Arising/Minute of Last Meeting**

The minute from the previous meeting was agreed.

### **School Leadership arrangements**

AC announced that she will be leaving her post as interim head teacher due to securing a long-term post at Bearsden Primary School. AC advised that she is sad to be leaving Lairdsland and has enjoyed working with the staff team and children, acknowledging the ongoing hard work and commitment of the staff team. The parent council wished AC well in her new role.

NR has spoken with Greg Bremner (Chief Education Officer) who has informed that a new interim head teacher has been recruited and will start at the beginning of next term. This is very recent and so Greg is not yet able to confirm the name of the appointed person but was able to tell NR that this is an experienced head teacher who is already working in EDC. Letters will follow advising of the appointment.

### **Headteacher's Report**

AC began by advising of a recent quality assurance activity involving a pupil leadership group, with the school achieving a silver award and receiving positive comments about the leadership skills of the pupils involved.

AC updated on the CIRCLE framework in regards to improvements being made to the school environment. This has been a collective effort to identify and improve the learning environment for all children, and has involved improvements to the sensory areas including the nurture room and sensory room. This has included the use of natural materials which has created a very calming space.

KE asked how the nurture room is accessed. AC advised that this was designed by educational psychology. There is a set criteria for children to access and there is a nurture group in place to provide support. The overarching aim is to encourage engagement within the wider class, so this benefits everyone.

HTL asked whether this is a feature of all schools and AC advised that 13 out of Scotland's 32 local authorities have identified 'nurture schools'. Lairdsland have a designated 'nurture teacher' who works closely with the pupils who utilise this space.

AC spoke of the school budget, and that teachers are working together to cover additional days where required to compensate for current vacancies.

Discussion took place regarding PEF funding (Pupil Equity Funding). This is being used in part to fund staffing and is in place until at least February 2025. It is normal practice for this funding to contribute towards staff costs. For example, the nurture teacher post mentioned above is funded via PEF.

There is clear condition of spend attached to PEF with an evidence base required. KE asked about potential impact on the wider school budget, and AC advised there is a target of a 10% reduction in all school budgets, but there is a commitment to protect teacher levels which is the majority of the school budget. The wider council budget will be finalised early in the new year which should provide clarity.

**Action - Further update on school budget to be provided by new headteacher once in post.**

AC advised of a positive new staffing appointment, a 'housekeeper' who will be based in the dining hall with the children during lunchtime. This will begin in January, and their working hours will be 10am-2pm. The role will involve setting up for lunchtime, helping the children as required, and helping to tidy up.

There has been a change to lunch arrangements. All children now eat in the lunch hall whereas before packed lunches were in the classrooms. This seems to be working well and feedback from the children is encouraged.

KE referenced the most recent Care Inspectorate report which carries over from the last meeting. Lairdsland was graded 'adequate' in terms of staffing but KE feels unclear what the issues were. AC advised that the focus seems to be on staff retention rather than any concerns around the quality of teaching or care and support of the children. Concerns around staff retention in schools are reflected nationally.

## **Chair's report/future agenda items**

NR noted that Sandra McEntee, vice-chair of the parent council, will be stepping down from this role. Please email NR if you would be interested in taking on this role.

NR advised that the parent council is currently at capacity. KE asked if there is a waiting list for new members. NR will check this.

Dates of Meetings for 2024/25

28<sup>th</sup> January

11<sup>th</sup> March

6<sup>th</sup> May

10<sup>th</sup> June

KE asked about a future agenda item being around class structure/composite classes, as she would be interested to know how decisions are made around this and any constraints. E.g. – how decisions are made about which classes are to be upstairs/downstairs, etc.

AC provided some initial feedback, advising that there is guidance on this but no specific policy. Decisions are impacted by a number of factors such as the size of the school and the square footage of classrooms. AC acknowledged that composite classes can cause anxiety and welcomed further discussion on this.

LB added it can be very challenging to arrange classes because of the above factors. This was acknowledged and also that school are the experts re this. AM pointed out that his children have always had positive experiences of being in composite classes

**Action – for further discussion at a future meeting. LB to discuss with the new headteacher, possibly for discussion at the March parent council meeting. NR advised this would be a discussion around the principles of class structures and not for any individual issues. Guidance to be circulated.**

## **AOCB**

AM has a contact at the Kirkintilloch Community Sports Complex and advised that they would be happy to allow Lairdsland access to this for next sports day, free of charge.

**Action - LB to contact the centre to confirm.**