

Lairdsland Primary School

Parent Council

Meeting Date: September 09, 2025, 06:02 pm via Teams

Attendance: Nigel Rooke (Chair), Emma Alkirwi, Kirsty McEwen, Andrew Mawston, Sravan Kumar Vadaga, Katie Edwards, Fraser Gallacher, Janet Paterson, Mhairi Sermanni, Lesley Davidson (Head Teacher), Libby Bradford (Deputy Head Teacher)

Apologies: Deniz Uster-Harrup

Notes

Introduction

- A welcome and introductions were made.

AGM

- NR stood down as Chair and LD conducted the AGM. No new nominations for Chair or Vice Chair received. NR had indicated he would be prepared to continue if no other nominations were received. It was therefore agreed that NR would remain as Chair for 2025/26. NR asked that in the event he was unable to attend any meeting that someone else be prepared to chair the meeting.

General Report

- School has resumed well with all children appearing settled. No major issues apparent.

Playground Safety & Organization Restructuring

- **Major segregation implemented** with **Primary 1 & 2** students assigned dedicated playground space until 1:00 PM daily, physically separated by cones from older students
 - Decision driven by **individual pupil needs assessment** and health/safety risk assessments, not behavioral incidents
 - **Trim trail access** restructured with P1/P2 exclusive use until 1:00 PM, then P3-P7 access from 1:00-1:15 PM
 - **MUGA area** now operates on daily rotation system with each year group (P3-P7) receiving designated day access
 - **P6 buddy system** accommodation through scheduled time slots for older students to interact with P1s in designated area
 - **Positive impact reported** with considerably fewer playground incidents and improved supervision capability in compact designated space

School Capacity & Physical Space Challenges

- **Agile learning space utilization** houses **P3/4 composite class** with maximum capacity of **25 children**, representing ongoing space shortage solution
 - **East Dunbartonshire School Planning Team** makes capacity decisions without head teacher or staff consultation, its based on guidance.
 - **Historical context** shows space previously accommodated P1 class for approximately **6 years** until recent reconfiguration
 - **Operational disruption** in previous dinner hall location required relocation due to lunch service conflicts and subsequent P1 classroom leak
 - **Parent concerns** regarding **screen visibility issues** for children at back tables and **noise amplification** in double-height space
 - **Resource parity maintained** with space equipped identically to standard classrooms despite physical limitations. Children should not experience detriment due to learning space.

Communication Barriers & Parent Engagement Restrictions

- **Working Time Agreement constraints** eliminate evening curriculum meetings, forcing daytime-only "**Share the Learning**" sessions that exclude working parents
 - **195 annual contracted hours** for teachers includes only **two evening parent consultation** sessions agreed
 - **Union negotiated agreement** prevents management from mandating additional evening commitments
 - **Parent frustration** regarding lack of curriculum transparency and home support guidance. This is compounded by no evening curriculum evening.
 - **Alternative solutions explored** including video recordings (difficult due to GDPR/child confidentiality), additional daytime sessions, and parent council funded facility lets.
 - **October parents evening** will display textbooks and resources for parent viewing as partial solution.

Homework Policy Transformation & Academic Support

- **"Not mandatory" homework policy** implemented causing significant concern among parents, in particular **parents of older children** nearer to high school transition
 - **Current guidance** limited to generic website links (**Sumdog, BBC Bitesize, Top Marks**) no relevant or level specific resources given. Concern to some links being American therefore spelling concerns etc
 - **Research justification** cited by head teacher referencing **John Hattie's** findings on limited primary homework academic benefits
 - **Parent council debate** on this citing mixed educational research and requesting structured, relevant assignments as detailed in the homework policy.
 - **Evolving framework** promised with homework becoming more specific to individual learning levels as assessment baselines are established

- **Assessment focus** currently prioritizing rigorous evaluation across **spelling, reading, numeracy** to identify learning gaps and establish baseline so that value-added measurement and appropriate learning can be given.

Strategic Communication Improvement Initiative

- **Comprehensive communication gap identified** across multiple school operations including learning environment changes, curriculum expectations, and policy modifications. This is a key function of Parent Council to be a consultative body.
 - **Parent council consensus** that significant changes occurred without adequate explanation or flexibility for families
 - **Emotional impact** noted with parents feeling disconnected from children's learning journey and unable to provide appropriate support. There is a general sense of frustration within the parent community.
 - **Pro forma development commitment** for enhanced class newsletters including specific **Curriculum for Excellence levels** and study topics with resources.
 - **Multi-faceted solution approach** combining improved written communication, resource display at parent meetings, and consideration of access alternatives for working parents.
 - **Next meeting prioritization** of behavior policy discussion and continued strategies for improving communications scheduled for **September 30th** meeting.

Action items

Lesley Davidson

- Check screen visibility for all children in P3/4 agile learning space
- Consult with line managers about possible evening access to agile classroom space for parents or use of other means to demonstrate the space
- Develop pro forma template for staff to include specific curriculum levels and possible parental support activities in class newsletters.
- Ensure homework guidance becomes relevant, productive and meaningful for learners.
- Consider how to improve communication of changes and provide learning environment information to parents (unless prevented due to a requirement to maintain pupil confidentiality)

Nigel Rooke

- Review AI meeting minutes with Emma Alkirwi after meeting
- Contact absent parent council member to confirm continued participation

Parent Council

- Reconvene for next meeting on September 30th instead of October 7th due to parents evening conflict
- Carry forward behavior policy and Orbis discussion to next agenda

- Future meeting dates
 - 30th September
 - 11th November
 - 9th December