



PARENT COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday 23 January 2025, 17:00
Gorebridge Primary School

Present (Parent Council): Neil Whyte, Lori Cassidy, Amy O'Toole

Present (Gorebridge Primary School): Stephanie Palmer (Headteacher)

Apologies: Erin Whyte, Paula Hartley, Lisa Stenhouse

1. Welcome & Apologies

With both Co-chairs sending apologies for the meeting, NW chaired the meeting. With three members of the Parent Council present, the meeting was quorate.

NW welcomed all present.

2. Treasurer Report

NW presented a summary of the accounts at current date. He ran through the performance of the Christmas Fair and Santa's Grotto, both of which financially performed within expectations.

SP asked if it would be possible to run Santa's Grotto a little later in December – within the last two weeks of term. It was agreed that pushing to the last Friday of term would be infeasible, so the week before is the better option. Friday 12th was agreed (as always, pending enough volunteers to run it).

3. Headteacher Report

SP provided the following updates to staffing:

- Kelly Hunter returning after secondment to Midlothian Council digital team back to P4H, covering Mondays & Tuesdays.
 - Will continue focused digital work Wednesday-Friday for all pupils.
- Louise Penman moving back to Support for Learning (SfL) full time.
- Miss Morrison, who was covering SfL to P3, leaving at end of contract.
- Mrs Muir, LA, returning to work part-time after maternity leave

SP also mentioned that the school has put a lot of work into a new website. Intent is to make it a useful resource for longer-term projects (e.g. the School Quality Improvement Plan – SQIP – is on there) but not necessarily have day-to-day updates. That should mean it is more easily-maintained and relevant. Currently, the old website contains a link to the new one, located at gorebridge.midlothian.education.

SP provided an update on the four goals:

- Goal 1 – Raise Attainment & Achievement
 - Staff improvement teams set-up, where activities like peer-review of jotters takes place. These sessions are going well.
 - Collegiate Activity Time (CAT) are sessions that allow staff to come together and share best-practices.

- Staff also involved with the Associated School Group (ASG), a network of staff from all the primary feeder schools into Newbattle High School.
- Goal 2 – Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion
 - Broadly, this looks at school behaviour and overall wellbeing (alongside the more traditional numeracy and literacy)
 - MidPhysch held a workshop on how to deal with learners with additional needs, and also supported wellness ideas for staff.
 - Ensuring consistency of visuals and daily timetable across the school. This is audited by REACH Ambassadors (pupils) who check that things such as visual timetables & cosy corners etc are consistent across classrooms.
 - Sessions with CAT and ASG on how to deal with transitions from break/lunch times for optimum learning outcomes.
 - Outdoor learning: walking outdoors and promoting wellbeing through outdoor activities
- Goal 3 – Strengthening Learning, Teaching & Assessment
 - Local authority did a quality assessment, identified focus areas as challenge, pace and engagement
 - CAT sessions covered Learning & Teaching approach/policy at Gorebridge
 - Identified further areas of improvement in teaching practices
- Goal 4 – Promoting Positive Relationships
 - Worked on Behaviour Improvement Team training during recent in-service (restorative conversations, de-escalation strategies)
 - Consultation held with school community during parent's evening helped guide the path
 - Attempting to simplify expectations from kids

Next steps: continue on journey, re-assess and adjust as required.

SP was asked about the recent change to Fridays, which has seen assembly moved later to make more of the morning for learning. This has been universally loved by teachers who enjoy getting a bit more focused teaching time back in the week, and by parents too. The intent is to shift the mindset that Friday is not a 'throwaway' day – there is currently a big dip in attendance on Fridays and this is all about shifting the mindset.

SP was also asked about the process for school closures due to extreme weather, due to the imminent arrival of Storm Éowyn. SP explained that this is a Midlothian Council-level decision which is communicated via email to headteachers. There is no template letter provided which might have been useful when it came to communicating out further with parents.

4. Expressive Arts Room

Mrs Laidlaw is asking the children for ideas on how the room could be kitted out, with a competition that will be running until Easter. Will extract common themes and provide a wishlist.

Thoughts about running a dedicated fundraising platform (e.g. JustGiving or similar) to get funding for this specific project. NW to look at best options here.

Potential also for grants for this type of activity. Again, NW to look.

Hope is to have a ribbon-cutting event in August at the start of the next school year.

5. AOB

NW said that the PTA website is progressing well and should be ready soon. SP suggested to get in touch with Yvonne in the school office to have a reciprocal link put on the new school page.

6. Date of Next Meeting

1 May – 17:00