



Dean Park Primary School

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Registered Scottish Charity No.24582

Minutes of PTA Meeting 20th August 2013

PTA Members Present:

Tracy Kiggins (TK), Rehana Shanks (RS), Fiona Neill (FN), Sylvia Martocchi, Dawn Graham (DG), Shiva Cowe (SC), Charlotte Fleming (CF), Sonja Ranson (SR), Lynda Lennox (LL), Heidi Macdonald, Jo Myers (JM), Fiona McKay (FM),

Others Present

Ailey Aitken, Clare Dow, Sarah Harris, Wendy Zwart

Apologies:

Aileen McLachlan, Elaine MacMaster, Kirsten Murdoch, Kathryn Brignall, Amanda Russell

1. Welcome

TK welcomed back existing committee members and made apologies for those unable to attend. TK introduced those attending for the first time; Ailey Aitken, Clare Dow, Sarah Harris and Wendy Zwart.

2. Minutes and Actions from previous meeting

There was nothing outstanding from last meeting to cover.

3. Head Teacher's Report

The request for funding for the Bike Rack has been submitted. The total cost will be £12k, and if the application is successful then the grant will cover 50% of the cost, and RS asked if the PTA could match that. It usually takes 6 weeks to hear back from such applications.

RS advised that the former Clinic Building will be turned over to much needed office space and will include the Thrift Shop, music room and parent waiting area. The Harlaw Monday will continue to use their room in this building for the foreseeable future. Some office administration will move to this building, which will hopefully reduce congestion in the main reception area. The building is in need of upgrading in terms of décor and furnishings, which will take place as and when there is budget to do so.

Over the summer holidays, the new computer suite was installed and now houses 30 PCs (18 previously). General repairs and maintenance around the school grounds were also carried out.

Raised beds will be installed for the P2 sustainability project. The P2 pupils will maintain this and the P4 pupils will use the produce it generates for their Food for Thought activities. The P1 Eco Garden will change to Eco-diversity. RS will be initiating these changes with school funds but may at a later date ask the PTA to fund future costs.

The suggestion from a previous meeting about turning the communal grass field by the school and Cockburn housing estate, into a running track, was investigated further however it was established that a 400m track would not fit in the space available. However, plans for setting up a rugby/hockey pitch will go ahead which will be shared with Balerno High School.

There is consideration for a Community Notice Board to be set up assist parents to learn about things available or occurring in the village. This board could only be used for things which may be of benefit to them and their children.



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4. Treasurer's Report

Accounts currently stand at £16k with c£14k ringfenced for the website, repairs and maintenance work as well as the sports field. Highlighting the need for much needed fundraising for future expenditure.

The Giving Scheme is now back within the remit of the PTA and it was discussed how to better promote this facility to encourage more and new parents to participate. TK advised that information on the Giving Scheme and how to donate is on the PTA website. FN stressed the need to source a new treasurer for the Giving Scheme asap.

FN raised the matter whether PTA will subsidise summer outings again this year. The cost for subsidising transport in this initiative last year was £2585, and it was felt that many parents did not realise the extent of the reduction in cost to them. No decision was made at this point in time however it was agreed that when a PTA subsidy is in place, this will be clearly stated in future communications to parents.

FN advised that the bank are phasing out the type of account we hold and so we will be moved to a new current account. This will provide some benefits to the treasurer.

The year-end accounts are ready to be passed on to the independent examiner as soon as we have the final figures from the Giving Scheme account.

5. The Committee; Departures and Replacements

TK announced that the Committee will be losing several of its key members, who have all served on the PTA for the past few years:

Fiona Neil – Treasurer

Lynda Lennox – Hockey Club Co-ordinator and Community Events Co-ordinator

Shiva Cowe – former Secretary

Jo Myers – Art Club Co-ordinator.

Their departure leaves many gaps, although Silvia Martocchi intimated she will take over as Treasurer and Susan Livingston will take over as Hockey Club Co-ordinator. TK nominated Silvia Martocchi as Treasurer, which was seconded by DG. Shiva has volunteered to assist for the time being as a parent helper for the running of the Thrift Shop.

6. Class Reps

The class rep initiative came about very quickly at the end of term without formally agreeing what the role would be. This was discussed at length and it was agreed that Class Reps will provide a supporting role to the PTA Committee in all the work that it undertakes in support of the school and pupils. This means that Class Reps need not become Committee Members, but will of course be encouraged to attend meetings when possible.

TK shared her thoughts for what a Class Rep should be and proposed that she puts this into draft letter form for the Committee to agree/have input in, so that this can be formally communicated to parents.

CF has agreed to be the point of contact and co-ordinate the responses for class reps.



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7. Uniform Update

TK reported that due to the amount of 'non-regulation' uniform items being donated to the Thrift Shop, it was highly evident that many parents are not aware of the school's Uniform Policy. It is currently only available in the Parent Handbook which up until recently was only distributed to new parents. TK has since added this to the School Uniform section on the website, along with the Uniform Ordering Service and Thrift Shop details.

The Uniform Co-ordinator is currently revising the order form to include Mrs Watson's request to have tshirts with the school number on the reverse (for upper school pupils taking part in competitive events). It was agreed that to simplify matters, that the pale blue gym tshirt be removed from the form. Children are still permitted to wear them, until they are phased out completely, but new ones will not be available to order.

TK to speak to Mrs Watson for clarification of what is required in terms of the numbered tshirts, so that the form can be updated and published on the website.

8. The Thrift Shop

TK announced that the Thrift Shop is now ready to open for business. Many donations have been made and are being added to daily, but TK stressed the momentum needs to be maintained in order to keep the shop filled with stock. TK reported that the majority of donations have been of a reasonable standard, some even brand new and those which were not fit for resale have been placed in the RagBin.

TK has purchased a petty cash box and has requested that a record of all items sold are noted on the relevant sheets. A receipt book has also been purchased so that a receipt can be issued if necessary.

It was agreed that a dedicated co-ordinator is required to oversee the running of the thrift shop, including co-ordinating the volunteers' rota and banking the money on a weekly basis. Until such a person comes forward TK will continue to take the lead and will be present most mornings after school drop off.

RS mentioned that the BHS pupils may be able to assist running the Thrift Shop as part of their JASS community service requirement.

The suggestion of selling non-school clothes i.e. jeans, dresses etc. in the thrift shop was put forward, but as space is already tight, it was agreed to put this idea on hold.

9. Funding Requests

- a. Mrs Watson has requested that JASS folders for the P6s and P7s be subsidised at £2 per child.
- b. RS requested the Janitor's Petty Cash float be topped up to enable the continuation of repairs and maintenance.
- c. RS requested that the PTA dress the open plan non-pupil areas such as the main reception area and the open area in the Clinic Building. The PTA would like to use a wall in this area for PTA related communications.
- d. PTA members requested that the staff photo board be updated and all teacher names displayed.



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10. Club Updates

TK confirmed that the Club Summary has been updated with all the changes in classes and times. This is available on the website and will be distributed via schoolbags shortly. A summary of clubs with spaces will be put out early next week.

JM advised that an additional Art class has been organised to cater for the high demand for this club. There are currently spaces on the Thursday 4-4:45pm class for P1s and P2s. Art Club fees are the only ones to not increase this year due to an administrative error, however this will be revisited at the end of term.

TK advised that Recorder Club will now cover the cost of the book, which is reflected in the fees. TK would like someone to be the PTA link for recorder club to ensure the Tutor is kept informed of any PTA developments and changes which impacts her club.

The procedures for P1s and P2s changing for football on a Friday after school have to be revised as the P1 and 2 area is no longer an option, due to it still being a working environment for staff and problems with noise and disruption arising regularly. TK to meet with AR to discuss this.

For other clubs, children can now get changed at the Clinic building.

TK reported that Forest Club children will now meet at, and be collected from the designated woodlands site, so they will no longer be at the school on a Friday afternoon.

TK raised the matter of running a Maths Club again and whether the use of the Music Room in the Clinic Building could be an option. RS agreed to this. TK to get back to the tutors to discuss options.

11. Matters arising

Fun Run

LL confirmed the date of this year's Sponsored Fun Run as Sunday 8th September and as ever parental support is greatly needed on the day to ensure it runs smoothly, safely and successfully. LL expressed her concerns as only a handful of volunteers have come forward so far. JM has kindly agreed, for the third year in a row, to ensure the path is clear of any dog fouling. Clare Dow has agreed to distribute courtesy letters to residents close to WalkMill Loan.

LL asked RS to help push the event and encourage as many pupils as possible to take part.

TK secured £200 funding from C&B News which will contribute to the cost of the medals and trophies. Kirstie Armsworth has arranged for water bottles to be donated by Edinburgh Marathon Festival, which leaves the purchasing of the chocolate Freddos. Equipment will be provided by the Balerno Gala Assoc.

Christmas Cards

To ensure delivery in time for Christmas, the process of creating, printing and distributing the children's personalised Christmas cards starts early September. Mrs Sinclair (P5B) will organise for the artwork to be done in the classes, which works best when a parent volunteer can go into the classroom and assist the teacher. Those keen to help to email LL their details – LL will advise the dates in question.

Letters will be sent out shortly in school bags to inform families about the cards and costs August. The artwork will be completed and sample sent home to parents along with order forms. All orders must be returned to the school by 20th September to ensure they are submitted to the printers in time for them to turn them around in time for Christmas.



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Autumn Fayre

There is a possibility of using the Clinic Building for allowing independent sellers to have a stall during the Autumn Fayre. If this goes ahead the stall holders will be asked to make a donation to the Fayre.

DONM – Tuesday 10 September 2013, 7pm, Staff Room