

Details of Meeting 21.03.2022

Attending the Meeting

Father Jeremy (JB)	Lindsey Swinney (LS)
Rachael Gilmore (RG)	Julie Zasada (JZ)
Louise Sharkey (LSH)	Alan Morrison (AC)
Dee Okin (DO)	
Claire Smith (CS)	
Louise McInnes (LMc)	
Siobhan Kellock (SK)	
Annie Begg (AB)	
Cheryl Evans (CE)	

Apologies from Laurentiu and Mrs McGuire

Welcome

LS welcomed us all to our first in person meeting since before covid and we introduced ourselves, Father then welcomed us all with a prayer.

Minutes of Last Meeting - LS

Nothing Outstanding

Treasurer Update - JZ

- We ended the last meeting with £471.20p in the bank, we have spent £96.93 on prayer cards, received £44.05 from easyfundraising and spent £40 getting the gambling licence which leaves us with a balance of £378.32, we are still due £88.18 from easyfundraising.
- The gambling licence came in today, we can now run bonus balls, lotteries, raffles etc, we are aware that we have done one already before realising that this was a requirement. The licence renewal is £20 yearly.
- Admin surrounding the licence consists of informing the council how much we raise (not exceeding £25.000 a year), LS to sign a letter to submit to the council stating that the Parent Council are happy for two named people (JZ and LSh) to run these types of activities.
- We lost a vice treasurer in Claire Roxburgh, JZ proposes a 2nd named person rather than vice chair to sign cheques. LSh is taking on this role as secretary.
- JZ still receiving Bike Shelter catalogues, these are going to be given to CE to look at revisiting in the future.
- JZ asked if anyone had any questions, JB asked about the possibility of restarting once a month coffee morning at the parish to raise money for funds and JZ raised the request of a duvet and film night to raise funds for outdoor equipment for her son, Daniel in P5.

Parish Update – JB

- JB shared his appreciation for CR for all her hard work and commitment while serving as parish representative of the parent council.
- Sacramental program is up and running, details are as follows: -
18 Children making their First Confession – 22.03.2022
22 Children making their Holy Communion – 20.05.2022
27 Children making their Confirmation with our Archbishop – 25.05.2022
- JB is continuing to work closely with the building of Sinclair Academy, Jim Cameron who has spearheaded the build is retiring and we wish him well.
- Normality has started to return to the church with no restrictions on numbers from August last year, the church is complying with all remaining restrictions, wearing masks, cleaning etc and there have been no outbreaks directly linked to the church, JB would like families to be reassured that the church is a safe place.
- The Parish has raised over £2000 for Ukraine and has also been encouraged to promote those with spare accommodation that could house a family coming over from Ukraine. SK added that West Lothian Council have a working group that are linking with schools to ensure children have a school to attend. JZ asked if there was a charity that links people together with families looking for homes? JB answered that FR Basil Clark is responsible for the linking of families and information can be found on the West Lothian Council or the Diocese website.
- JB is meeting regularly with SK to strengthen link between the school and parish.
- JB would like school to promote holy week prior to breaking up for the holidays and share the mass times throughout holy week.
- JB also mentioned that the Children's Liturgy supported by LMc is up and running and doing well and the children's artwork is looking good in the church, SK confirmed that Mrs Koziel is continuing to oversee this.
- JB would like to make a couple of changes to the constitution with respects to the wider community, SK confirmed that this can be done at the AGM in September.

Update from the School and Headteacher Report – (SK)

SK gave a brief update that included, staffing, school improvement and resources.

- We worked closely with the children and asked them what the vision of St Nicholas should be, they took the core message of the school vision and wrote it in their own words, the school values have stayed the same.
- SK spoke with JB regarding the motto for the school, this will possibly be in Latin.
- The children have also had an input on the aims of the school during assemblies, these have been converted into lovely posters placed around the school.
- Staffing has been challenging this term due to sickness and staff leaving the school, thankfully we welcomed back Mrs Gardiner and Mrs Quinn increased her days which has helped immensely and kept some continuity for the class affected.

- In other areas of the school
 - Mrs Gibson is currently on a career break
 - Miss McKeown is on maternity leave and is due back January
 - Interviews have taken place for a member of staff to start after Easter
 - Mrs McGuire is taking the nurture/social skills groups
 - Mrs Alvarez is returning after easter to teach Spanish
- There will be 15 classes in the new school year
- The school improvement plan has been worked on with the P7 children and they presented it to the other children within the school.
- A brief overview of the priorities this year are: -
 - Priority 1 is Health and Well-Being.
 - Trusted adult
 - Zones of regulation and emotion words
 - Shine – this is a mental health survey that the p6/7 children fill out and the results are fed back to the school to move forward
 - Building resilience
 - After school club programme is due to start after the easter holidays
 - Priority 2 is Literacy and Numeracy
 - New reading and Literacy resources have been purchased, one of which is Mighty Writer which, for now, is being used with P2 and P3.
 - Priority 3 is Employability skills
 - This is looking at developing lifelong skills useful for work, life, and learning. It is also looking at science across the curriculum and developing outdoor learning.
- Learners Participation Groups
 - This has started in person rather than virtually
 - All children involved, P1-P3 and P4-P7 make up the groups
 - One child from each group feeds back to the junior leadership team who in turn feed back to the senior leadership team and there is a clear structure for decision making and improvements.
- AB asked how we can learn more as parents about the participation groups that our children are involved in, especially for families for children who don't really share what they have been up to at school, SK suggested a post on the app announcing 'pupil participation day tomorrow' as a conversation starter for parents and children.
- JB asked, in reference to health and wellbeing, if the link with spirituality was considered. SK assured him that this is part of our curriculum that we deliver every day at St Nicholas. SK and JB thought that maybe a quiet/reflective/prayer area in the playground could be considered.

- The aim of these groups is for the children to discuss and plan changes within the school and hopefully see some of these changes happen, there is the view to change groups every year although as these groups are new and have only been meeting for a short space of time that they will continue next session.
- As covid restrictions ease the children are allowed to mix and the field is also open again, at the moment parents are still unable to come into school, as the parent consultations are the last term it is hoped that the guidance will be relaxed enough by then that they will be in person rather than a phone call.
- The community police officers recently visited the school and went round the classes introducing themselves and explaining a bit about what they do, they are also intending to look at parking round the school.
- New carpets have been fitted into the classrooms that required them.
- For various reasons we have a healthy school fund, it is SK view that the fund should be used with the families that are using the school now, SK would like a parent to join a committee to monitor the school fund and decide with the parent council where the fund should be allocated, JZ volunteered to be the parent and report back to the fundraising group.
- PEF is allocated to the school, next session the money allocated to St Nicholas will be going into Pupil Support Workers.
- The equality policy is also being looked at, mainly with respects to anti bullying, SK would like a subgroup for the equality policy to look at possible changes required.
- SK would also like input in the Poverty Proof Statement and a subgroup to look at that, SK will be in touch with LS next term.
- Improvements to the school have included
 - New carpets in classes up to P4/3
 - New tables and chairs in P1-5
 - Painting in various areas
 - New smart boards are going in over easter
 - Old smart boards used in SFL and family learning room
 - Improve class and area libraries, possibly asking families to donate a book
 - Leave a legacy – LSH will look into it.
- JD asked if there was a refund organised for school camp, SK said yes and these will be handed out asap.

Uniform Update CE and CS

- The price discrepancy has been sorted out and the uniform plan has gone out on the app.
- School will do a bulk order once a year in May, there will be the option of click and collect in Edinburgh.
- As time goes on there will be samples in the office for sizing, especially for Primary 1 families.
- LSH mentioned that a P7 parent had informed her that the quality of the P7 leavers hoodie was not the best and had to be returned, CE has said she will keep a close eye on that.
- SK is also looking at restarting the Curriculum Café and potentially combining it with a uniform swap.

Communication Plan (LMC)

- Results of the survey were as follows
 - 116 people responded to the survey
 - Facebook came out highest on Q1 (Do you follow any social media)
 - School App and email preferred for Q2 (Preferred communication channel)
 - Q3 (what info would you like to see) PC activities and important school meetings/events were the top answers
- Feedback from the survey is
 - As Instagram rated quite low, is it needed? Is it creating extra work? LSh felt that it was worthwhile carrying on with as it wasn't extra work.
 - As the school app and email were preferred, it was thought that the PC should liaise with the school to ensure that everything is sent through the app/email and not just the social media accounts.
 - It was good to see that the parent body are happy to see activities that the parent council do on their behalf shared on the app
 - LMc was a little disappointed that parish news was so low down, but it is reflective of the fact we are a mixed community at St Nicholas
- LMc, CS, AB discussed and drafted the communication plan in a subgroup, this was circulated to the parent council prior to the meeting, we confirmed that most of the main points are agreed on by the parent council.
- JZ isn't comfortable with a definite timescale for the minutes as this is a voluntary role, it was discussed and agreed that within 2 months would be an acceptable timeframe to share the minutes. LMc will amend this on the Communication Plan.
- SK and RG are going to look at the website for posting future minutes and making more parents aware of it, RG talked about the website not being user friendly and certain areas unable to be easily accessed by the school.
- SK going to look at including Parent Council Information in the newsletter.
- JZ posts practical updates and LS does faith updates etc on our social media, SK and CE follows them and are happy that the posts are relevant.
- LS to continue to liaise with RG with regards to sharing PC information on the app and feedback on what posts are relevant and appropriate.
- LSh stresses that she doesn't share from the school twitter as it contains photos of St Nicholas children.
- SK mentioned that she noticed a negative comment being posted on our social media and removed by an Admin, she is happy for this to happen as it doesn't portray the correct message, LSh going to look at rules to be pinned to the Facebook page.
- SK happy that the parent council are engaging well with the parents and wants to see this continue to happen.
- CS will look into changing LS poster to a reader friendly format/leaflet that can be distributed to parents, especially useful for new P1 parents as AB commented that

as a P1 parent from a different nursery she felt that more information on the Parent Council would be useful to new parents coming into the school.

- JZ thought it might be useful to share parish news directly from their Facebook page to ours.

AOB

- It has been noted by a parent that some children are arriving at the school before 10 past 8 and not going to breakfast club, SK clarifies that there are not staff available for children in the playground until 20 past 8, children coming for breakfast club should be in the hall until the playground supervisors are at the gates.
- Parking is becoming an issue with cars parking unsafely at the junction, reminders will continue to go out to remind parents to park responsibly at the school gates, the community police are working with the school and visiting the children and will continue to do so when appropriate.
- SK thanked everyone for their hard work
- LS thanked everyone for coming
- Next meeting date to be confirmed