

## Papdale Parent Council Meeting

Monday 08 February at 7pm

Virtual Meeting

[https://app.vscene.net/cr/2NOF\\_A](https://app.vscene.net/cr/2NOF_A)

Present: Lorna Robertson (chair) Joanne Tait, Olivia MacPherson, Ashleigh Gillespie, Dawn Stanger, Dawn Williams, Inez Thomson, Kevin Balfour, Lesley Bews, Lisa Gibson, Elaine Bain, Rachal Thomson

1. Apologies – Katie Croy; Marraine Clark

2. Minutes of the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November – Proposer: Olivia Seconder: Lisa Gibson

3. Matters arising from meeting on 23 November 2020 -

A reminder to all that Kevin needs the last photos of parent council

4. Head Teacher Report

Many thanks to the parents for their efforts during this difficult time of home schooling.

### Virtual Papdale

Staff have been working hard to ensure consistency of approach between classes, with the weekly learning grids, and shared school topics. We have spent more time tailoring working to the individual groups this time and have been keen to ensure that learning is not lost. The use of videos by teachers to support learning has been reported to us as being really helpful.

Staff are finding that the use of assignments make their workload more manageable as the returned work is all in one digital place. We have also found that by using assignments families are less put off as some of the things families are handing in whilst beautiful can make others lack confidence in the super job they are doing.

We have encouraged online working this time as paper hand outs were difficult to manage and we have not had the staff to support this. However, a couple of packs have been made.

### Digital Connectivity

We have so far handed out 54 devices and ¾ digital data packs. We have done this through the Government scheme. Parents have approached us who have been having trouble or no connection and we focused on those who did not engage during the first lockdown.

We have supported families to help them set the devices up.

Currently there is very limited numbers of devices left but our understanding is that the OIC have applied for more.

## Pupil engagement

We have had significantly more engagement this school closure time. Our data suggests that we have 98% engagement of pupils, the 2% of pupils who have not engaged with us online have had a tailored approach to learning to suit their particular needs.

## In school

We have been open for key worker pupils or those pupils and families that the school believes require support. We were given a list from the government of criteria to consider and staff used their knowledge to highlight those pupils. This number has grown as the time has gone on.

We have been urging keyworkers to use the school only as a very last resort as childcare should be sought in other ways. Where we have been aware that the resource has not been used as such we have spoken with the families. At present our numbers have been steadily increasing and we have on average 100 pupils attending per day.

Whilst cases in Orkney are thankfully low we are keen to ensure that as a school we are not complacent and the health and wellbeing of each member of our community is paramount.

Whilst we would like to have everyone back in school we are keen to keep numbers low for two reasons. Our understanding is that the older the children are in school the more likely they may be of passing Covid to the staff team, and should we have large numbers of pupils in school then it compromises our online learning.

Our teaching team work closely in year groups to plan the learning, the learning in the school is the same as the children would have at home.

We have concerns that demand will increase once the P1-3 cohort are invited back.

## February 22<sup>nd</sup> Return P1-3

The government will confirm on the 16<sup>th</sup> Feb if schools will indeed return on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. At this time we anticipate this to be the case and have been planning for this. P1-3 will remain in their class bubbles, we will continue to operate staggered break and lunch times. The team working with P1-3 will be as consistent as possible. In P1 staff who attend other schools will not work with the P1 children as we know that P1 will not physically distance themselves from the staff. So they will not receive PE at this time with Mrs Smith but will continue to have PE with the class teachers.

We anticipate that we will continue to support families in P4-7 as we have been currently doing, and that staff will continue to support online learning for these children.

## Staff Testing

Staff will be issued testing kits, this is not compulsory for staff to do but it is encouraged that staff will test themselves twice weekly. This may result in more staff absences and we will need to watch this space.

## Looking to the future

We would like to see the whole school returned prior to the summer our focus for learning with all be literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing. At this time the DHT staff are working in class and online to support learning in P6&7 and in P3. Prior to the summer we will be supplementing our staff with COVID teachers who will provide additional support in Literacy Phonics and numeracy.

## Sounds Write

By March we will have had 18 staff trained in the Sounds Write Approach, this ensures that all P1-3 staff excluding probationers have been trained to teach phonics in a way in which supports pupils through a systematic programme, which extended beyond P1, as this is the main draw back with other approaches. We have also purchased a new set of reading books which totalled £4000 using Parent Council and PEF funding. This amounts to 10 copies of each book but we really need to have the same order placed again.

## Staffing

As mentioned the DHTS are fully class committed at the moment which means that I am taking their tasks. I will be attending all review meetings in their place and Miranda Johnson will support this.

We are expecting Mrs Kennedy to return to school after the Easter holidays. Mrs Rona Humphreys who has been covering for her maternity leave has taken up a post in Eday so Mrs Viven Flett will cover the class until Mrs Kennedy returns. Mr Mappin will cover the probationer days in P4/5 when we return to pupils in school and Mr Mappin will become part of the P5 face to face teaching rota when we are closed.

Ms Paige Archibald has joined our staff team in P5 until the summer. She is covering Mrs Learmonth's job share whilst she has some time off work.

Mrs Gemma Morris was appointed as class teacher in P1 until the summer.

Mrs Linzi Chalmers has a post with P3 to cover Miss Suttie's probationer day.

Joyce Gray retired after many years' service to the school, we were sorry to say cheerio to her in December. Mrs Fyona Stout now works Mon – Wed and Ms Claire Miller works Thurs– Friday in the role.

Alice Flett joins us a COVID support teacher she has been working whilst the school is closed in P3 but will work in the P2-3 team once the pupils are returning.

## In service Day

Our Inservice day this year will focus on our own Health and Wellbeing. Staff will be given a talk about how to keep themselves healthy and can spend the day as they choose best, some staff no doubt will choose to spend this day sorting their classrooms. It is more important than ever that we look after each other so that we can support our wider community and I hope that you will agree with the decision that I have made for the staff as a whole.

Some support staff are attending First Aid training so that their First Aid certificates continue to be in date.

## Classes next year

Our numbers are such that we will have to change the classes again next academic session. We expect some groups to be changed in their configuration next year due to the number of teachers we are expected to have.

We are going to do this based on pupil ability groupings to ensure that there is a mix of learning ability in classes. Research suggests that mixed ability groups impact more favorably on all abilities

of pupils and this is the principle which we will be following. We will as last year not be accepting any changes to the classes once these have been set by the staff.

We must take this policy as if we change for one pupil, we must do it for all and the groupings of the classes are compromised. Parents will not be consulted on the composition of the classes prior to the classes being sorted.

5. Constitution – circulated around; ours is very lengthy; abridging would be good; Jo and Olivia have made some corrective edits.

- a. Item 2 – add staff I
- b. Item 4 – changing to one year;
- c. Item 4 – how many people to be quorate
- d. Corrections made were information inaccurate for and out of date
- e. Added in process if the chair left during year;
- f. Item 7 – numbers; advertising to parent council;
- g. Number 8 – co-opted members; Add in Business Manager and Head teacher – as advisors; Feedback by 05 March 2021.

6. Fundraising – Various ideas briefly discussed, will require to continue to have an online focus; Discussed a virtual step/walking/distance challenge – Dawn Williams agreed to progress this idea

7. Funds – no up to date bank balance available. Funds believed to be in the region of £2,000. Need to provide updates to parents about fundraising totals from last couple of fund raising events

8. Homeschooling - Wendy asked for feedback from PC – general folk felt it was going well and positive experiences were reported

9. AOB – none

10. DONM – 26 April 2021 @7pm