

FRIENDS OF GLAITNESS SCHOOL (PARENT COUNCIL)

Thursday 19th January 2023 7pm

(In person meeting with V-scene link)

Present:

Steven Johnston (Chair)
Cheryl Gould (minuting)
Barbara Brown
Maggie Henning
Chrystall McBaron
Michelle Kennedy
Ingrid Rendall (Head Teacher)
Helen Killeen (Business Manager)
Sharon Muir (Deputy Head Teacher)
Shaun Tulloch (ELC Manager)

Online:

Karen Rorie
Katy Firth
David Johnson

1. **Opening** of meeting and welcome
2. **Apologies** for Absence noted from: *Donna Reid and Emma McConnachie*
3. **Approval** of Previous Minutes 3rd November 2022: *agreed with not changes.*
4. **Action Log** Updated. Re *recruitment of new netball coach volunteers, Helen K to get Alice Peace's PVG No.*
5. **Communication** with parents

Parents had made a request to discuss methods of communication used by the school and clarify the reasons for using each. Ingrid gave a summary: Groupcall – all messages go to main/primary contact. All Parental Contacts can be selected for particular messages. Bulletin to go out at the beginning of the term. SeeSaw is for teachers to share info with parents.

Parents were keen to make it easier to know where to go back to check for information, such as dinner menus. It was proposed that a communication overview sheet could be produced for parents and this will explain what platform used and parents agreed this would be helpful. Information sheet to be uploaded to website.

Members discussed how often parents would like to see bulletins and agreed monthly at start of month. Parents to contact us if they think they are not seeing everything on Seesaw. The sheet will include information on how to contact school if parents are not receiving information.

A parent query was received about the timing of updates for a pupil with Additional Support Needs (ASN) who is in mainstream class, e.g. review meetings. Ingrid responded that this is completely individual based on each child's needs. A child in P7 will have a meeting in November to discuss transition to Secondary. There may be a meeting in Term 1 for children transitioning to P1. There are often other services involved. Each child has at least an annual meeting, some children have a meeting every 5 weeks.

6. **Head Teacher's Update:**

Staffing – Linda Besant started today as part of the auxiliary team. Last week, Lauren Currie, Support for Learning Assistant, 5 days a week. Carol McGee is now fully in the office, term-time. Karin Spence's maternity leave – Richard West, Karin's job share partner is doing Karin's 3 days until the end of the school session.

Pupil voice – Rights Respecting School Award – various children across the school are involved. The P7s have started in different roles. Ingrid met with the Ambassadors this afternoon. Amongst the Junior Leadership Team, pupils were very excited with good ideas about different things – they don't just want to talk about things but do something about them. Ingrid said it would be nice if they could meet with the Parent Council. The Health and Wellbeing Group – whole plan for their work. Will be doing a parent presentation and they hope to do something at the next Parents' Evening in March. Wellbeing baskets will be put in every classroom, items decided on by the pupils and appropriate to the children in those classes. They have been considering the replacement of items as they are used. Zelda from ORSAS is going to help with making motivational cards. The pupils will come back with a proposal. The DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) group are looking at reading in school, the library and books.

Drop in: Tomorrow morning (Fri 20th Jan), Ingrid is hoping some parents will come in for a chat and a cup of tea. Ingrid will vary the days and times this is offered to parents.

Internet safety: The online safety policy is good to go and will be sent to all parents. This needs to be dynamic and updated fairly regularly. Might tie in quite nicely with communications with parents and from parents. Internet day is on 7 February so this might be a good chance to launch. Document to be put on the school website.

Net Zero Heriot Watt programme – launch before Christmas well attended. This term there are 3 main things for focus on: 1) Walk to School Day at end of March; 2) workshop sessions delivered by Florian Ahern and 3) booklet ‘Stories for Change’ has been produced and will be launched. There will also be an art installation which will be in school dinner hall with a theme of Kirkwall in the future. Parents discussed school transport and raised the possibility of allowing pupils who travel by bus half the year to travel by bus the whole year instead of individual cars being taken. Parents are simply told that they are not entitled and they should be grateful for what they are getting. If 1.5 miles out, child can have bus half the year and it is frustrating when the bus is empty. The bus for Glaitness is huge for a small number of pupils, and the KGS one does not meet their numbers, so overspill onto the public transport. Parents suggested an electric bus might be used and wondered if the Heriot-Watt team could help use their influence to achieve this.

7. Early Learning & Childcare Update

Staffing and numbers – not many changes but Anne Marie is back. Shaaron Kennedy and Katy Ross are now permanent Senior Practitioners making the leadership stable. 3 permanent Early Years Practitioner posts have just been advertised. Between full and part-time folk, there are 23 staff – 90 children on the nursery roll, including overspill from Papdale. We open for the most time during the week – early morning and later day. 11 of the 90 children are aged 2. The maximum number of children we can have in the building at the same time is 90. Nursery staffing/funding is based on registration numbers. Nursery registration starts in February, which is when the staffing required for the following session.

Improving mealtimes is a current nursery priority – new guidance has come out about what mealtimes should look like, being more homely and less institutional. More funding has been accessed for new nursery dining room equipment and the children

using glasses, becoming more independent in choosing their food. Children serve the food themselves. It arrives to the children's key group table and they help themselves and they try to cut the food. Lunch takes longer but it is a much nicer experience. The children behave differently with real equipment, i.e., glasses and forest school tools. Shaun is trying to get feedback from parents, pupils and staff and would like to encourage the children to try new things. Even children who take packed lunches have access to the snack items too.

Primary 1 transition – next week we will be looking at numbers. The new P1 deferral legislation has come in and no-one has to start school if they are not 5 on the first day of school and are then entitled to more time in the nursery. All parents of children born Aug to Feb have been written to and will come in to discuss. There might be less Primary 1s and might be older if they stay in the nursery longer. Our current primary 1's can be vastly different in age. The nursery are also starting the process for school. If children are in a composite, is it possible that siblings would be in the same class as but would depend on parent/child preferences. Nothing is promised, but consideration can be given depending on the parent and pupil's wishes. There are many factors to consider in class make-up. In school, the number of teachers we have are defined by the number of pupils we have in P1-P7. The same with Support for Learning Assistants (SfLA) to an extent, but this is led by the needs of each child. Smaller groups from nursery have tended to transition to P1 together. A lot depends on the number of P1s and the number of P7s leaving.

8. **Treasurer's Update:** the commission for Christmas gifts is still to come but the current balance is £4,366. The Lottery going well with the last call for people to join led to more folk joining.

9. Fundraising

- 9.1 FOGS are in the Blue Door w/c 23rd Jan. Donations currently being gathered with more welcome during the week, directly to the shop. Volunteers turn up and receive their instructions. Posters drawn by P7 pupils to be put up in window of Blue Door. There is tea and coffee but we need to provide milk. There have been a number of raffle prizes donated and a photo will be arranged when they are displayed so the providers can be thanked with a post on Facebook. SR Paterson (local plumbing company) have showroom

items to donate worth hundreds of pounds, which is really appreciated. A message is to go out to wider school body for folk to do baking to sell and for volunteers. These are to be delivered to the Blue Door any day, packaged and priced to sell. Blue Door give a cheque after the week has concluded.

10. **Extra-curricular sport:** Netball – P5s are starting on Monday for 3 taster sessions.

Nothing to report from Babminton and Football with all going well.

11. AOCB

11.1 **Fundraising for P7 trip** – they are currently focussing on the raffle for the Blue Door. Items will be dropped off on Saturday. There is also a Gin night being planned for March. *Some payment has been taken already from parents, with some yet to pay second instalment. Level of parent council subsidy yet to be decided. Steven asked that this could be agreed soon to ensure parents know what to expect and don't over pay and need a refund.*

11.2 There was a Question from a parent who noted that the College have a breakfast club and with the cost of living crisis some parents were having to work more - Has this been considered by Glaitness School? It was noted that this was raised a number of years ago at the parent council but there still isn't the provision in place for this across Orkney. Staffing (with funding) and accommodation would need to be arranged. There was also a question about whether children be dropped off earlier for workers who start at 9am and if the school day be changed. This has been compounded with the loss of the Peedie Breeks nursery. It was highlighted by Ingrid that Glaitness have many pupils from all over the mainland and some of our buses are used for KGS and public transport and this has a bearing on our start time. Shaun noted that by end of this Parliament, more funding is being looked at for out-of-school care and nursery for 1 and 2-years, possibly means-tested. Shaun will research this more. This could be something FoGS could consult on in the future and feedback to OIC.

11.3 **Admin support** – Helen had found an individual who might be able to provide paid administrative support for FOGS. The rules around this state that it cannot be a parent or OIC employee. Funding is available from OIC for parent

council running costs. Members agreed for Steven to contact this person to see if they could offer support.

11.4 **School photos** – Parents asked about whether school photos could be arranged. It was agreed that whole class photos would be more straightforward but individual photos for children/siblings might be more challenging and possibly need to be done out with school time. Editing and preparing all of the photos takes a lot of time and might be difficult to get a photographer to agree to without some guarantee of sales. This will be explored further.

11.5 **Parking** – a plea was made to remind parents to stop parking across disabled or keep clear areas in the car parks. The school could add this to the monthly bulletin.

12. Correspondence: *None*

13. Date of next meeting agreed: **Tues 21 March 2023 at 7pm.**

14. Closure of Meeting at 20:45

Action Log 2022/23			
No:	Owner	Action	Date Due/Complete
3	SJ/EM	Recruit new netball coach volunteers.	Alice joining. Continue to try for another.
9	SJ	Add <i>2023/24 P1 handbook</i> as an agenda item for last meeting of 2022/23 to allow parents to provide suggestions on useful content	Due term 4
10	SJ	Add <i>Sports Day</i> to agenda in new year to discuss approach for 2023.	Due term 4
14	All	Photos. Class photos might be possible. Individual/sibling photos more difficult. Need to explore option.	TBC
Recently Completed Actions			
1	IR/BB	Arrange Citizens Advice presence at parents evening to help parents with finances. Also ensure uptake of free school means so that the school gets the right level of Pupil Equity Fund money.	22 nd + 24 th Nov.

2	IR/SJ	Arrange meeting between P7 parents and school to discuss residential trip	Oct 22
4	SJ	Thank sponsors of football/netball via Facebook	Oct 22
5	HK/GD	Purchase Shuttlecocks for badminton training	Sep 22
6	SJ	Gather volunteers to organise Halloween Disco	Oct 22
7	SJ	Contact Rotary Club to see if FoGS might provide some hot drinks and food on bonfire night – not happening.	Sep 22
8	SJ/school admin	Advertise lottery to try and gather more participants	Sep+Oct 22
11	SJ	Reminder to parents about conduct in private social media groups and to be respectful.	FB message posted
12	All	Arrange to wrap Christmas books once they arrive.	Done.
13	Emma	Create small group to co-ordinate Blue Door stint	Due w/c 23/01/23