

Juniper Green Parent Council Meeting May 10th, 2021

In attendance: Alexa Pope (Head), Ingrid Donaldson (Depute), Lee Picken (chair) Dee McIntosh, Catherine Salmond, Helen Black, Lianne Gordon, Mhari Hargreaves, Naomi Barton, Serena Broadway, Sarah Crole, Sonia Rutherford, Kirsty Cumming with apologies from Neil Rudrum, Dani Dinwoodie and Ruth Gaffney.

Head teacher report

The school are given very direct covid rules which they have to abide by. The management team aim to do all they can within the rules.

Revising school vision statement.

30 families of previous pupils, now from across S1 to S5, were contacted with feedback questionnaire. The new statement made with thought to race and equalities is being reviewed with the house captains.

Parent consultations

Teacher communication will be longer than previously with emphasis on where children are at and where they are going. Friday the 1st of June a new format of reports will be issued. Focus given on learning next steps and being written to the children rather than parents and in a motivational way. No pastoral comment - instead this will be done in conversation with the teacher. Pre-school has already started this and on the 31st of May reports will be completed for sharing with other schools as needed.

Staffing

14 classes are currently being planned for next year. The current composite class will not be needed next year. As in previous years, all classes currently in P1 and P2 will be reshuffled as a result of them moving from 5 classes down to 4. No other year stage is planned to be reshuffled at this point.

New High School Design

An opportunity has been taken for some p5s and p6 pupils to be involved with internal design of the new high school. Such success from the weekly meetings on the interior design has enabled a move now onto the landscape design.

Homework

Homework is like Marmite, you either really want it or really don't want it. There were some negative comments about homework over the holiday weekend, but staff felt it was best to be continued. Feedback will be requested on the more general topic of homework with a survey to follow.

Covid

Following council restrictions pupil bubbles are to be continued. Currently bubbles will also be planned for August. Staggered starts may need to be continued but we can look at adjusting this.

Primary seven end of year celebrations are still to be decided upon by council in order to comply with covid restrictions, but there will be an outdoor event. Over the next couple of

weeks we will hear more and make as fabulous as possible. The epic day events that have been awarded to some primary schools in Edinburgh council have been allocated by cluster high school group and based on SIMD groups. CCHS cluster (Juniper Green, Currie and Nether Currie primaries) was not selected for. The planning for P7 leaving events will be left to the last minute so advantage can be taken of any restriction lessening. Transitions to high school have to be virtual. There is a 3 Day online visit arranged.

Primary one transition

Much more involved compared to last year last year. Although last year was very restricted it went very smoothly, and children did really well and took it all in their stride. The P1 classroom can now be used at the end of the day to familiarise nursery school children with the room, and they are now allowed to access the gym hall. Information continues to be given in the nursery newsletters. As ever the children often find transition easier than the parents. Primary one this year are a very confident and independent group of children. With Ingrid spending more time in the nursery she has got to know the lovely children very well.

Safer routes to school

The council has proposed a no entry road in Juniper green, where the lolly-pop lady stands, in order to reduce the rat run effect. The community council has a deputation with Edinburgh council on this matter.

A planter has been placed at the Baberton end of the school. Initially there was no signage, no lights and it is in the middle of the road up to the school. (There are lots of planters planned and installed in other schools.) This has been installed under the banner of covid spaces for people. There has been a problem with access to the school, such as the school lunch lorry was unable to get to the school with mounting of pavements. The council is now looking at moving it slightly.

Baberton grass – Community Council

There was a discussion on whether the community want to make use of the Baberton grassy area in a more organised way. There didn't seem to be a huge amount of support for this on the call.

Fund raising monies

The parent council had been asked to support the school with monies for pe equipment. Lots of fun stuff requested. We have £2000 that we can commit in full to provide the school with the equipment that they want.

A question was asked around whether there are any covid funds the school could access to help with such funding requests, especially given the children are using the PE equipment more as there is a greater focus on outdoor learning and health and wellbeing. The management team informed that they have been awarded a grant of £4000 to help bridge the COVID gaps. However, there are very specific rules around what this money can be used for and it was not felt that PE equipment would be allowable. The school already have plans for how the £4000 will be spent next year.

Fundraising for the year

An email has been sent to all parents to request volunteers for a new fundraising group. Ideas are another treasure hunt, gin tasting, virtual disco, race for life and walk around the world.

AOB

The nursery have now issued letters for those families whose child have been allocated a space in August. The council have introduced a new requirement for space allocation this year and that has generated some feedback for the school. There is still no requirement to allocate spaces based on catchment, however, this year spaces are to be allocated as a priority to those children who already have an older sibling in the school. The council have introduced this new requirement to help keep bubbles together in the same area and to avoid parents having to drop children off at different schools. Secondary to this requirement, spaces are to be allocated based on age. This, therefore, means that there are some older children in the area that are giving up a space they would have been awarded last year, to a younger child who has a sibling in the school.

There was some discussion about organising outdoor class photos for the end of the year. The management team were going to speak to Tempest about this to see if we still had time.

Next Meeting

Tuesday 15th June was proposed.