**New Machar School Parent Council**

Minutes of Meeting

Tuesday 8th September @ 6:30pm

**Attendees:**

Lawrence Thirkell (Chair), Hazel Brodie (Secretary), Annie Robinson (Treasurer), Kate Metcalfe (Vice Chair), Paul Rooke (Head Teacher), Stephanie Stephen (Depute Head), Fiona McDonald (Depute Head), Laura Martin, Suzanne Rydlewicz, Emma Pirie, Naomi Cherrie, Steven Close, Sara Kandasamy, Marie Campbell, Euan Bain, Kerry Murray, Sharon Miller

1. Welcome and Parent Council Update – Lawrence Thirkell
   * As there were a number of new attendees Lawrence asked that everyone introduce themselves for their benefit.
2. School Update – Paul Rooke/Stephanie Stephen/Fiona McDonald
   * First 4 of term have gone smoothly, Mr Rooke is grateful for the efforts of all staff. The School has a busy agenda this term. A staff meeting has been held and identified priorities for the school this year. They are school ethos, review and refresh; curriculum – launch of frameworks by Aberdeenshire Council; Numeracy - issue across whole of Scotland – resources to support numeracy; rights respecting schools, ties in with the

ethos and working of school.

* + Staffing – New Machar are currently in a favourable position. Unfortunately over the summer there was a resignation from Nursery during holidays but New Machar are currently carrying only 1 vacancy in the school. The school has lost our science and music specialist, which is almost a full time person; post is advertised as a core staffing teacher post. It is very fortunate that none of the Deputes are in class at moment and so the school are coping with the vacant posts. Looking for someone who can undertake science and music. The school are actively looking at existing staff and determining at who can support the children. Mr McLean is a musician and started guitar club, sadly at the moment the choir will have to take a backseat.
  + There will be a quality improvement visit carried out by the authority in October (5th October). All parents will be invited to contribute.

1. Nursery/P1 Induction Presentations
   * The next one is on 28th September at 9:30am. Annie Robinson will attend the meeting and give an update.
   * Going to be trialling an interactive learning diary in Nursery. This can be set up to meet individual needs; can be open and closed for parents to access. Mrs Stephen is still waiting for iPads which she ordered back in May and so is going ahead using these on desktops until the iPads are received. The reason for the delay in receiving the iPads is that there is an issue with them getting online.
2. Parent Council Year Representatives
   * Gmail accounts for each year representative?
     1. Put on hold to next meeting.
   * Representatives are:

Nursery - Suzanne Rydlewicz, Annie Robinson, Euan Bain

P1 - (Kate Metcalfe to ask)

P2 - Laura Martin, Ashley Ross

P3 - Kerry Donald, Ashley Ross

P4 - Lawrence Thirkell, Kate Metcalfe, Sara Kandasamy, Lorraine Miller

P5 - Marie Campbell, Steven Close

P6 - Hazel Brodie, Rob Bain, Elizabeth Cook

P7 - Emma Pirie, Kerry Murray, Rhona Kennedy

1. Pupil Council Reporting
   * SPTC training – Lawrence attended an SPTC training session last academic year. Another attendee was explaining that they had a representative from their pupil council attend part of the PC meetings to give an update. Miss McDonald is sure Pupil Council would love to come along to the Parent Council meetings and give an update and will take this forwards.
2. Macmillan Coffee Morning

* Hazel Brodie has organised helpers for this. All in hand.

1. Parent Council Fundraising
   * School disco – Wednesday 4th November
     1. Nursery
     2. P1 to P3
     3. P4 to P7
     4. Letter to go out the week before the October holidays – Kerry Murray will liaise with Miss McDonald about the letter and getting it out. Volunteers for tickets – Marie Campbell, Sharon Millar, Kerry Murray, Suzanne Rydlewicz. Volunteers List – Hazel Brodie. Emma Pirie will organise the crisps and juice.
   * Christmas cards
   * Marie Campbell will organise, has looked into several suppliers, Marie would like to be able to get the orders back from parents before the October holidays. Cards can be sent home for children to design at home or put into a class activity. Put them out on a Monday and get them home for 7 days to give all parents an opportunity to complete with their children. Do we do Nursery this year? Yes, Nursery will be given the opportunity to complete.
   * Changes to the School Fayre
     1. After last School Fayre we had a meeting to discuss what went well and what we felt needed to be changed or amended.
        1. Zorbs… look into further. Look for safer ones.
        2. Look into having a couple of parents – climbing wall – look into costs. Climbing wall into the car park.
        3. Permission to have the BBQ in the nursery area - School are content.
        4. Move all the stalls from the car park into the playground.
        5. School content for us to use their PA system.
        6. Band playing… Live music… school content for us to look into this.
        7. Photos of events that are run by Parent Council so that we can put onto the Parent Council website. School has an updated letter and if we could send the photos to school then school could confirm that the photos are ok to go on the website. Lawrence will send an email round the Parent Council and take it from there.
        8. Summer Fayre poster competition. Would like to have the competition a month before the Fayre and every child gets an A3 sheet home for a week and then the Librarian is asked to choose a winner. Then the entries are posted somewhere that parents etc can view the winners – we will ask the Librarian to display in the Library. Photo of the children with the 3 winning posters could be included in Newmachar News. There is one that comes out near the time of the Fayre – will need to check when it is due for distribution in 2016.
        9. Could the photo of the winners also go in the school news as well and winners are asked to draw a raffle prize and a prize is given to all the winners.
        10. Parent Council apologised again for the state of the classrooms. Staff were generally fine, the only problem was the bread knife.
        11. Football Tournament – Mr Moir runs the tournament. Ask if they are willing to be photographed and put the results of the tournament on the PC Facebook page, the school website and also Newmachar News. Mr Moir – need to liaise with him to confirm.
2. Hardship Fund
   * A fund provided by the Parent Council to the school to allocate discretely to parents who might not be able to afford to participate in events. Comes out of a school budget at the moment and the school would at the moment deal with.
3. School Uniform Bank
   * Eco Committee run a school uniform bank, when children have grown out of their uniform and it is still not full of holes and the Eco Committee sell it for a minimal amount with the money used for Eco Projects. Run it as a recycling project – Eco stall in general at events. Leave it with Mr Cole-Hamilton.
4. Homework consistency – number of words to make a sentence, words for spelling each week, amount of reading.
   * Seems to be quite a different amount of homework dependant on the class children are in and some parents are concerned that their children may be falling behind. Should there be consistency?
     1. Literacy has been a huge development over the past few years in the north east. At the moment there is not consistency across the school, because the management have not yet provided the teachers with guidance as to the consistency because it is a very fluid process at the moment. IT is part of the schools improvement priorities and will be looked at but Mr Rooke does not feel they are as yet in a position to provide teachers with this consistency guidance.
        1. Last year lower stages were given guidance as to the amount of words expected to be gone over in a week.
        2. Upper stages started working 2 years ago with active literacy. Spelling in 4-7 should be a bank of words and two activities in a week given out on a Monday and handed in at some point that week.
        3. Reading activities are set according to ability etc. upper stages were given a delivery of books which they have had to categorise. This is still very fluid and being looked at.
        4. Mr Rooke would hope that by Christmas this year something is put in place to allow them to put out to parents something that will give guidance on what should be expected and how it will be delivered.
5. A.O.B.
   * Funding – outdoor suits and helmets for Nursery. Mrs Stephen asked if previous permission to purchase still stood. Confirmed that is was still valid.
   * School Uniform – Navy was removed as it was felt it is better to have the school all in one colour and red was chosen.
   * Discussed what could be done about children eating their packed lunches on benches, unfortunately no solution could be found at present.
6. Next Meeting – including setting dates for rest of academic year.

27th October - Next meeting

4th November - School Disco

3rd December - Parent Council Meeting

28th January - Meeting

23rd March - Easter Eggstravaganza

1st March - Meeting – Summer Fayre

26th April - AGM

19th May - Meeting