**Parent Council meeting**

**Monday 11th May 2015**

**Present:**

Elspeth McIntyre (Chair), Liz Mahindru, Amparo Ruiz-Prado, Melanie Unkles, Claire House, Russell Bridges, Anne Fishwick, Justin McNeil, Carol Miller, Phil Goodlad, Selwyn McCausland.

**Apologies:**

Shona Barrie, Anne Lowe

**Attending the GCPF:**

Fiona Hunter, Jackie Clarke, Humera

**Glasgow Parent Council Forum items:**

**Breakfast Club**

The consultation closed on Friday 8th May, results will be published on 25th June.

The PC emailed the parents and asked for their comments.

47 parents responded with an overwhelming wish to keep the breakfast club provision. The majority of responders opted for option 2 which was to pay an increased cost with a reduction for siblings. Most parents felt that clustering of breakfast clubs was only an option if there was an escort provided to accompany the children to their own school.

There were concerns noted around what the cost increase may be and assurance sought that there would be a cost reduction for siblings.

There was also a suggestion that there should be a rate for regular attendees with ad hoc attendees paying a higher rate.

The PC submitted a response on behalf of the school and advised parents that they could also respond individually using the survey.

**Administration Changes**

Stephen Sawyers has been tasked by GCC to save £5 million in administration costs. £3 million has already been saved by not replacing posts and centralising services including HR.

There is recognition that administration staff in schools are struggling to cope with the burden of duties expected of them. To address this some tasks are being removed and centralised. One of which is absence reporting.

A new absence reporting system across all schools in Glasgow begins on 8th June 2015. Parents reporting their child’s absence from school will now have to phone a central number rather than contacting their school directly. The call centre will be able to take calls between 0800 and 1100. This system has been piloted in 11 schools across Glasgow (including 3 large secondary schools). Feedback from the pilot was that 97% of calls were answered in <15 seconds and that parents were happy with the system. Schools however felt that there was loss of engagement with the parents. There will be a letter sent to parents from the council about the new reporting system.

There are 138 primary schools and 29 secondary schools in Glasgow.

Merrylee has a robust system already in place for recording absences and parents are reassured by it. There are concerns that this new system may not be as effective and may delay the parent being contacted if their child is absent from school. Teachers are responsible for absence and attendance monitoring for each child in their class. Staff have yet to receive training on the new process.

The letter from the council to parents will detail when parents will phone the call centre and the exclusions which will require the parent to revert to the old system and telephone the school directly.

As staff have not had training, it was not possible to clarify the following:

* When will the absence be reported to school?
* Who is responsible for contacting the parent to find out where the child is if no absence has been reported and the child is not at school?

As the pilot was a very small cohort, the PC would like further information from GCC :

* 1. When will the school be informed that a child is absent?
  2. How long after receiving the parent’s call will it take to report the absence to the school?
  3. How many phone calls from parents were taken during the trial?
  4. How many of those parents completed the survey?
  5. Are there other councils using this system for comparison?
  6. Who is responsible for tracing children not reported to the call centre who are absent from school?
  7. How will this be done?
  8. Would GCC consider monitoring the call centre arrangement for a period at the beginning of the new term and give feedback?

EM will contact GCC and ask for clarification on 1-8 above.

Fiona will draft email to parent community to ask for feedback on the new system once the GCC letter has been distributed.

At current administration workforce establishment for Merrylee is calculated at 2.7wte. There are 2.4wte in post. It is thought that this may be reduced further to 2wte posts.

**Let Costs**

Jackie reports the following points discussed at the GCPF meeting:

1) Condition number 12 - schools are not licensed for public entertainment and admission to functions where a charge is made must be by ticket and no money must be taken at the door.

Many of the PA fundraising events within school has the facility for parents / children to pay at the door.  This will need discussion with the PA to plan events going forward where this would present an issue.

2) Condition - 13 - any let where music is to be played or films to be shown requires an appropriate copyright broadcasting license.

The PA have complied with this and purchased and annual film license to cover showings at their recent movie nights.

The school disco's have always been covered by the school’s license to broadcast music and entertainment purposes.  This is no longer the case and the change will affect small things like playing music at the Christmas Fair!

Kathryn Farrow, Quality Improvement Officer (parent partnership) links in with SPTC (insurance provider), is going to ask GCC for clarification.

The other main point in terms of lets was clarifying whether the PC should be paying for lets at all.  It is understood they should be free as part of an agreement with Glasgow Life when holding them in school premises.

It is necessary to chase up confirmation of lets if Glasgow Life does not email to confirm as it could potentially compromise the insurance cover if Glasgow Life have not confirmed let.

**Catchment Area Consultation**

This has now come to an end.

**School update and classification**

There will be 18 classes next year: 3xP1, 3xP2, 3xP3, 2xP4, 3xP5, 2xP6, 2xP7

P1 classes are at full capacity (capped at 75). There is some flexibility in other classes.

Merrylee and OLA are to share a bike shed. Unsure where it will be positioned.

**Email Management**

Russell manages the PC email. Clarification required as to the legal requirement to keep emails. Justin will ask the question when attending the “Legal essentials” course next week.

Mel will ask Kathryn Farrow to email the PC secretary and not the PC email.

**Election of PC committee**

Elspeth has stepped down as Chair and Phil Goodlad has taken over with Fiona Hunter as Vice Chair.

Amparo has stepped down as treasurer and Claire House has taken over.

Mel has stepped down as secretary and Russell Bridges has taken over.

**Request to invest in new, portable kid-sized goals**

The school already goals which are stored in the pods. The can be used for the Friday football club.

**AOB**

Merrylee Primary is part of the pilot for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

Children’s rights in ASL are changing – they are lowering the age to 12 for children to take their issues to tribunal.

**Date of next meeting to be confirmed**