**Parent Council meeting**

**Wednesday 29th October 2014**

**Present:**

Elspeth McIntyre (Chair), Liz Mahindru, Amparo Ruiz-Prado, Fiona Hunter, Melanie Unkles, Claire House, Russell Bridges, Shona Barrie, Anne Fishwick, Justin McNeil, Karen Miller

**Apologies:**

Julie Syme; Jackie Clarke

**Resignation:**

Graeme Esson

**Parents interested in joining:**

Phil Goodlad

Suchitra Wishart

Emails have been sent to Ruth Docherty and Selwyn McCausland regarding remaining on the PC. Felicity Steers has resigned from the PC but is happy to be consulted on environmental issues.

**School Catchment Area – feedback from consultation meeting**

Generally the feedback from parents was good. We support deferring the implementation of the consultation until Aug 2016. We believe this would remove the confusion for children in the present shared catchment areas which are under review who will be registering to start P1 in Aug 2015 and that it would remove the uncertainty for the current P7 children who may no longer be in the Hillpark catchment. We will submit these recommendations if the parent council is not contacted by the Department of Education for comments on the published proposal as part of the Departments consultation with parents, pupils and teachers in November 2014.

**Traffic flow around the school and disabled parking**

The one way system proposal suggested by the community councillor at an earlier meeting had not been put forward to the council for their consideration when discussions regarding the railing were taking place. Feedback at those meetings from the planning department was that a one way system was not feasible.

Discussion took place around parent access to disabled parking. Liz stated that space is made available to parents if requested. Morning drop off becomes problematic due the car park being locked down for the safety of the children coming to school. It was suggested that using the tennis club car park (with agreement from the tennis club) was the best option. Should a parent require additional help e.g. to assist bringing the child into school they should contact the school directly and help will be organised.

**Hillpark Secondary transport links**

It was highlighted that the public transport links from Clarkston Road to Kilmarnock Road / Fenwick Road are non-existent. This may cause future problems for children moving up from Merrylee Primary to Hillpark Secondary. We will raise our concerns with the Hillpark PC and ask if they could take this forward.

**School Improvement Plan**

The 3 main focuses this year are to be:

Assessment and moderation

• Continuing Literacy & Numeracy

• Developing Science & Technologies across the learning community

Raising attainment and achievement

• Review programme of study Literacy in line with key features of learning

• Review programme of study Maths & Numeracy in line with key features of learning

• Developing other programmes of study in line with the key features of learning

Nurtured and Included

• Review GIRFEC & Nurturing School agenda

• Embed use of SHANARRI indicators in planning and assessment for every pupil

Further information can be found on the website.

**Mother Tongue**

Mother Tongue encourages children, who do not speak English as a first language, to share a lullaby, poem, rap or song from their mother tongue and to write a short commentary in English about why this piece is important to them. In Scotland, pupils will be able to submit commentaries on Scots and Gaelic texts in this category.

Other Tongue encourages children learning another language in school (French, Spanish, German, Italian, Mandarin, Urdu, Gaelic, and Cantonese) to use that language creatively by writing an original poem, rap or song in that other tongue.

It was thought that this initiative could be integrated into our culture week or form part of literacy week.

**Wind Turbine**

This had been turned off due to the extension. Unfortunately during the works the cable was damaged. This has now been fixed and the engineer will be out to turn the turbine back on. The wind turbine generates 10% of the school energy requirement.

It was reported that when the sun is low there can be flickering of the sunlight through the turbine blades which are thought to be the cause within the staff group of headaches and nausea. There was a concern raised that this could be a potential risk to people suffering from epilepsy. Discussion took place regarding whether blinds may help. As it tends to happen at the end of the school day, teachers are managing this by moving to a classroom at the front of the school.

**AOB**

The railing running from the roundabout and the Monreith Road/ Friarton Road to OLA was installed during the October break.

General feedback has been positive with parents confident to allow their children to walk to school from the start of the railing. Parents have commented that the children are much safer.

There has been a criticism received regarding the railing not having gaps to allow people to cross the road in the long stretch from the round about to the school car park. When planning the railing the planning department felt that car drivers would not be expecting gaps in the railing and therefore they could be less observant for children stepping out into the road.

Staff have highlighted that buses coming to the school have to park next to the gap to allow children to load and unload. Where more than one bus is being used for a trip they are to be asked to park at the top of the lane on Merrylee Road.

Zig zag lines are also due to be renewed outside the school.

Mrs Mahindru has contacted Bailie Josephine Docherty thanking her for her support in getting the barrier erected.

The bush within the grounds of the tennis club is protruding on the pavement. The tennis club is going to chop them back.

By email: Jackie raised the question regarding how the pods were being used and if there was anything the PA could do to support their use. She also asked it may be possible for Merrylee After School Care Service (MASCS) to make use of them.

Mrs Mahindru stated that one of the pods is currently being used for storage of the bikes and other large equipment where there is no storage available within the school building. The other pod is being used as a GP area, for music lessons and art. It was not thought appropriate of MASCS to make us of the pods. It is believed that the pods will be removed once the catchment area consultation process is complete.

MASCS would like to continue themes/projects the children are working on in school. It was felt that it would be difficult to carry out on a class by class basis but that whole school projects would be easier to continue.

Elspeth McIntyre will stay on as Chair for one more year.

Amparo Ruiz-Prado will stay on as Treasurer

Melanie Unkles will stay on as Secretary.

**Date of next meeting 23rd February 2014 at 7pm**