



MINUTES

Avoch Primary School Parent Council

Tuesday, 6th May 2020 | 7.00PM

In Attendance by Zoom

Ruth Edmonds (Chair), Iona MacMillan, Inga Ballantyne, Phoebe Dickinson, Claire Weaver, Jacqui Dingwall, Asia Kucharczyk, Fiona Whyte, Stef Rankine, Kirsty Cameron, Donald MacPherson, Karen Patience and Lorna Sim.

Apologies

Rebeca Rawlinson, Kate Lackie, Carlyne Wilson, Debbie du Preez, Ingrid Robertson.

Minutes from last meeting

Updates from the previous Minute that were not covered as Agenda items are:

- Seesaw. Donald confirmed that the school was no longer proceeding with the SeeSaw app due to various issues including cost, quality and permissions.
- ASN. A letter had been drafted by Rebecca but will need to be redrafted in light of the ongoing Covid19 situation.
- Bikeability and Match the Miles Challenge. Bikeability is on hold for now but there are still plans for a Match the Miles event adapted for lockdown guidelines and Fiona will be liaising with teachers on this. Jenny Graham visited the school for an assembly pre-Lockdown and presented the P6s with their certificates. Lorna also confirmed that an online Sports Day is planned and details will be coming out soon. Our local cycle maintenance and bike fit leaflets are on hold just now but will be produced and shared by the end of term.
- New parent liaison. This is ongoing and we are still looking into ways to support new P1s and all new pupils and parents/carers coming to the school. Ingrid and Debbie are working on this together.

Report from the School, Lorna Sim

"As far as I am aware this is the first Parent Council virtual meeting that has taken place for the Parents and staff of Avoch primary and nursery. We are now in week 7 of lockdown and in the middle of week 5 of learning at home.

Learning at home

I appreciate that this has been challenging for a number of families, but I have been heartened by the huge amount of positivity about a situation we all have no control over.

As you know Mr MacPherson created a survey which was sent out to all parents last week. We wanted to capture a picture of what was going well and if there was anything that would be possible for us to do to help. Prior to this, we had received emails asking for more work, or less work, or work presented in a different way, so it was difficult to make decision unless we knew what everyone thought.

The response was very high with only a very small percentage not feeding back. The overall comments were also very positive. Only a very few families noted that they really weren't happy or managing with what was offered. We have been able to contact them directly to offer support,

from giving a device to families without one to reassuring parents and offering suggestions for their child.

One request that we have not been able to do is to get materials or equipment from the school. The staff and parents are simply not permitted to enter the school or grounds for any purpose as directed by the chief executive of Highland council.

Of course there will always be a few who ask for more work, or less work or different activities, but using our professionalism and experience we do feel we are doing a good job and the survey supports this.

The responses and planned action were sent to all families.

Moving forward

None of us know how long this lockdown will continue or what schooling will look like in the future months. Decisions about this are not taken at school level but by the Government and then then authority level before it reached school level. Rest assured I will keep you informed as and when I get information. I know no more than you do from watching Government updates. At this stage there is no point in speculating,

What I can say is that the teachers meet remotely in teaching groups every day and plan together for the next week. The teams are there for moral support for each other, to ensure consistency in tasks and to help each other out if one or more becomes sick, so that children do not miss out. These high level conversations are crucial to working out what to plan. Nursery and PSAs also meet regularly.

The management team and teachers have been phoning families throughout and especially those we know may need a bit extra support because of, for example, additional support needs or vulnerability.

There is a lot of data gathering for the Scottish Government at whole school and authority level so our actions are being scrutinised to ensure we do our best for our families.

Leading learning for teachers and myself has been full of challenges, mostly with IT and IT access and restrictions placed upon us, including devices, so I would like to thank all of them for working very long hours grappling with technology. Mr MacPherson in particular, has been a huge support to me, as well as to others. The positive is that my IT ability has rocketed thanks to the lockdown. I do however have to work off three different types of laptops, but this is through necessity, rather than choice.

Building works

I had invited our link person from Highland Council estates to this meeting but sadly he is attending a funeral today. He did however send me the following update.

Nursery Extension

- Planning Permission is due to be signed off imminently. A planning condition is to improve the car park as previously discussed so this will definitely happen but after the extension has been built and probably during a holiday period.
- Costs are being reviewed by THC's Quantity Surveyors Team.
- Sign off on the above are the last pre-construction phases so we are looking good to start on-site as soon as restrictions are lifted.
- Works will also include an upgrade of the boiler to cope with the additional capacity as a result of the extension.
- Although this is largely guesswork, Morgan Sindall are estimating a completion date of December 2020 at the earliest.

In addition what I know is that the implementation of the additional nursery hours due to be in place this August has been lifted by the government for obvious reasons. This means that there is a high chance that when nursery do return we will most likely continue with morning and afternoon sessions until such times that the building work is completed and additional staff employed. I have no time line for this.

Turfing update from Estates team

"This was cancelled after an instruction from the head of Property Services which still stands unfortunately. This has to be done whilst the weather is better. Personally, I think this could be done safely whilst following social distancing guidelines. My gut feeling is that we could get a window of opportunity to get this done before the schools come back."

Transition

P7 to S1

P7 teachers and I are working on a plan for this both as a p7 group and also jointly with the Academy which will be shared shortly. Of course it won't be the same as usual and I do feel particularly sad for our P7 children. However, we will do our best.

Nursery to P1

Likewise, for this group, the infant teachers are also looking creatively at what could be done and again this will be sent to you as soon as we have it thought through. Thanks"

Lorna Sim

There was a wider discussion initiated by Phoebe about whether APC could provide help for families in difficult or changed circumstances due to the Covid19 situation. Ruth agreed that this could be looked into and would discuss further with the APC Committee and Lorna as a general idea to see what we could do. This would be approached sensitively.

Actions:

Ruth to organize a separate meeting to discuss APC support for families.

Treasurer's Report, Claire

An updated report was distributed before the meeting to those present and is appended here. Ruth asked for discussion about how much of the 2019 Christmas Fair funds should be put into the Playground Project. The raffle money and the wine raffle were specifically advertised as for the playground fund and that will be honoured. The remainder of the Fair money will go into general funds. Around £700 was raised at the February discos.

Homeschool

Stef and Inga said thank you to Lorna for the 'airmail' video that was circulated. This was appreciated by everyone and Lorna will pass on formal thanks from APC to all the teachers.

P7 Leavers

Hoodies have been ordered and paid for by parents, though APC will help if anyone needs help to cover the cost - as is the usual arrangement. There will be no formal leavers party. Ruth asked if we could do something for the leavers in lieu of a party and Lorna confirmed that the teachers already have an online celebration planned and will let us know if there is anything additional we can help with.

Playground, Inga

Inga presented some slides that detail the project so far and the proposed amendment and these are appended at the end of this Minute. Inga's proposal to amend the design, removing one

element was accepted. This is to remove the 'Leapfrogs' element, making better use of the space and bringing the project within our existing budget. This is great news and means that we now have the funds to proceed. However, the schedule is restricted by the Nursery construction which is expected to start later this year. Ideally then, the playground installation will happen immediately after this with a start date of early 2021. In the meantime, other ideas for improving the playground have been proposed by Miss Byham and others on the committee and we will proceed with these as best we can in light of the current situation.

Inga will investigate whether the original quote from Wicksteed is still valid. Inga confirmed that the donation from Raddery Trust is not strictly time-limited; although ideally it would be spent in 2020, an extension is acceptable as necessary. The Highland Council Maintenance Officer needs to discuss any ongoing costs with Wicksteed as this annual expense must be signed off by the council in advance. Permission for the installation will not be given unless there is an agreement that the cost is covered. Once installed, the equipment will be inspected annually as part of the school audit and recommendations for repairs made as necessary. There is a cost implication here for APC as we will need to cover this cost unless it is covered under warranty from Wicksteed. The Wicksteed maintenance plan includes a 15-year warranty that covers wear and tear (though probably not vandalism).

Actions:

Inga to confirm that the Wicksteed quote is still valid and what is covered by the warranty following installation.

Inga/Ruth/Lorna to liaise with HC Maintenance as to what the cost implications are and permissions needed.

AOB

Ruth extended the best wishes and sympathy of APC to Mrs Chatburn and Mrs Clark.

Fundraising for the rest of 2020 will be difficult and will need discussion at a future meeting. There will be no summer fete and discos may not be possible for a while. If anyone has any ideas, please let Ruth know in the first instance.

Action: All to consider ideas for fundraising for 2020.

Next Meeting

Wednesday 22nd June 2020, 7pm via Zoom

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	AVOCH PARENT COUNCIL			TREASURER REPORT			6th May 2020		
2									
3	Opening balance as at 17th February 2020					£16,744.77			
4									
5	<u>Income</u>								
6									
7	Highland Council				£214.46	£214.46	Total Income		
8									
9									
10	<u>Expenditure</u>								
11									
12	Lottery licence				£20.00	£20.00	Total Expenditure		
13									
14	Closing balance as at 20th March 2020					£16,939.23			
15									
16						£13,037.23	(Play equipment fund)		
17									
18						£3,902.00	Net Total		
19	Outstanding Items:								
20		Income	Expenditure						
21	Cheque – Kate		£80.00						
22									
23									
24									
25									

	A	B	C
1	Playground equipment funds		
2			
3	Funder	Total	
4			
5	APC	£5,000.00	
6	Raddery Trust	£5,000.00	
7	BIG Stall	£454.01	
8	Envoy	£250.00	
9	Ross-shire Engineering	£250.00	
10	Avoch Harbour Chippy	£60.00	
11	Tullochs	£500.00	
12	Christmas Raffles	£1,523.22	
13			
14			
15	Total	13037.23	
16			

Playground Project – Slides

Action Plan 2018/19

- Visited Culbokie Primary Playground
- Invited Wicksteed to Avoch Primary to discuss options.
- Involved pupil council Pupil to make a shortlist of equipment.
- Made voting sheets up for all pupils/staff/parents evenings.
- Collated votes and created a design based on popularity, variety, value for money.
- Got a quote from Wicksteed.
- Applied for grants.
- Agreed £5000 APC funds
- Agreed all future fundraising to go towards playground.
- Held Spring Clean-up to get improvements started.

Playground Equipment

(What would you like?)

Shortlist for quote - by

4th

Scramble Net Climber

5th

Health Trek - Parallel Bars

1st

Horizontal Monkey Bars

2nd

Health Trek - Pull Up Bars

7th

Health Trek - Leap Frogs

6th

Health Trek - Over & Under

3rd

Ball Over Bars

Posters from Wicksteed - Equipment

Avoch Primary School

WICKSTEED

PRODUCT LIST:

- A. Horizontal Monkey Bars
- B. Parallel Bars
- C. Roll Over Bars
- D. Scramble Net Climber
- E. Pull Up Bars
- F. Over and Under Hurdes
- G. Leap Frogs

SAFETY SURFACING

Plan View

Leap Frogs

Parallel Bars

Horizontal Monkey Bars

Roll Over Bars

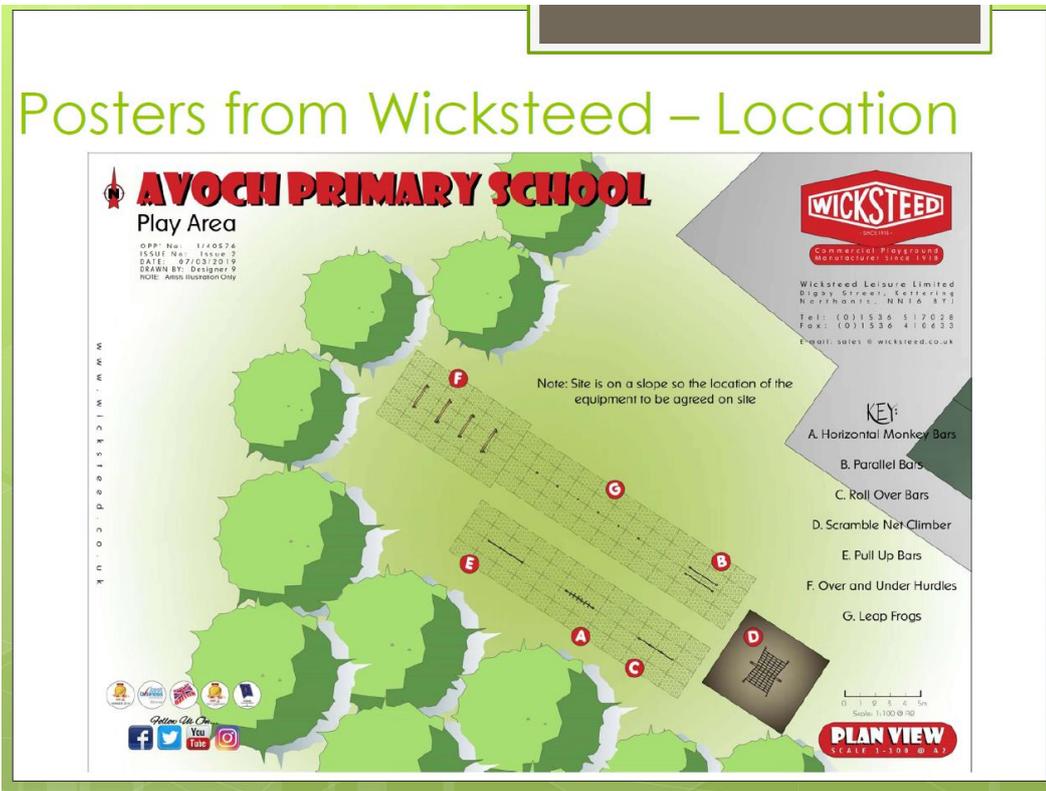
Pull Up Bars

Over and Under Hurdes

Scramble Net Climber

Wicksteed logo and social media icons at the bottom.

Posters from Wicksteed – Location



One possible solution when lockdown finishes...

- Get a new quote without 'leapfrogs' - approx. **£11,000**
- More accurate 'allowances' (currently approx. £2000)
- New total required **£13,000**
- Purchase this new plan with existing funds
- Use left over funds for other playground improvements and ideas (**approx. £500**).

