

**NOTE OF MEETING OF PARENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES HELD
ON THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2015
ARDGOWAN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

1 WELCOME

Sheena welcomed everyone to the meeting and passed over to Wilma Bain, the new Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development who had taken up her post on Monday 23 November. Wilma indicated that, for those who didn't know her, she had been Head of Education in Inverclyde for 5 years and had then gone to South Lanarkshire Council as Head of Education in March 2015. She was looking forward to working with parents on a wide range of initiatives in the future.

2 NOTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The note of the meeting held on 2 September 2015 was agreed.

Matters Arising:

- **Parental Involvement on Working Groups** – Sheena indicated that the 2 working groups, as below, were going well. Parents would be invited to be part of more groups in the future. These working groups would be short life as Ruth was aware of how busy parents are, but she was keen to get their input. Heather and Mhairi were thanked for their involvement
 - *Working Group to set School Holidays for the next 2 years – Heather James*
 - *Working Group looking at Adverse Weather Procedures – Mhairi Gilchrist*
- **Updating of Parental Involvement Strategy** – Sheena is still looking at getting groups together to review the Parental Involvement Strategy and would be looking for input from parents
- **School Websites** – Sheena reminded the meeting that Parent Councils could have a page on school websites and post minutes of their meetings and refresh information on a regular basis
- **School Handbooks** – Parent Councils should be involved in updating the school handbook and perhaps look at having a joint Foreword with the Head Teacher. Information on the work of the Parent Council and contact details should be included. Sheena suggested that, when the handbook was being updated, it may be helpful for the Parent Council to be involved in ensuring that it is 'parent friendly'
- **Cost of the School Day** – Elizabeth Robertson, Health & Wellbeing Development Officer will attend the next meeting to feedback on the Health & Wellbeing conference and discuss the costs which parents can experience with regard to school trips, fund raising events etc

3 THE ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE

Sheena introduced Mairi McFarlane and Cara Cooper. Mairi gave background that she was Head Teacher at King's Oak Primary School and had been appointed to the post of Inverclyde Attainment Challenge Project Leader. Cara Cooper was Head Teacher of St Fillan's Primary School in Houston and was seconded to Education Scotland and would be full time Improvement Advisor for the project in Inverclyde.

Mairi gave a PowerPoint Presentation (*copy attached*). She indicated that in February 2015 The First Minister had announced that the 4 year project would have an investment of £100m. 7 'challenging' local authorities were identified to receive support, one of which was Inverclyde. The early intervention in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing, in the first phase, would focus on 6 primary schools in the authority in year 1.

These schools had been chosen using a range of different methods such as Free School Meals uptake, looked-after children and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Although these schools were the main focus, Mairi indicated that when good practice is identified and working well, this will be shared with other schools. Mairi gave an overview of the staffing which was being put in place in the schools to support the Challenge and how they would be driving this forward. A large part of her time when she took up post had been selection and recruitment. This had also included 6 Nurture Teachers, one for each of the schools, through collaboration with Barnardo's.

Discussion took place at the meeting to allay parent fears that the focus on the Attainment Challenge may have an adverse effect on other young people not part of the project. Mairi and Cara indicated that, when upskilling the teachers who were involved in the Attainment Challenge, they would also be working with young people not involved but would be able to use the same techniques and methods to allow them to progress.

A Nurturing Pack was also available for secondary schools to help support closing the attainment gap and Clydeview Academy was using this. Inverclyde Academy had also expressed an interest in using this, and other secondary schools were expected to use the resource in the future.

After discussion, it was felt that it would be helpful if Julie Hall, a Coaching and Modelling Officer with the Attainment Challenge was invited to the next meeting of the Parent Council Representatives to explain the background and thinking to the nurturing pack.

4 UPDATE FROM EDUCATION & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Robin indicated he had attended the meeting on 3 November. He reminded the meeting that papers for Committee meetings were put on the Council's website approximately a week in advance of the meeting. He reported that:

- **Revenue Budget** - there was a small underspend in the Revenue's budget.
- **Capital Programme Update** –
 - St John's Primary had returned to their refurbished and extended building on 1 October 2015
 - St Patrick's Primary was decanted to the old Sacred Heart building and contractors were on site, demolition of the old school had now taken place and groundworks on the new foundations and drainage underway

- Kilmacolm Primary had now been decanted to the St Stephen's decant facility and refurbishment had now commenced
- Various projects were being undertaken in early years establishments to accommodate the new 600 hours legislation
- **Developing Inverclyde's Young Workforce** – This looked at the implementation of Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. Wide discussion took place on work experience placements for young people and ensuring that they have a meaningful experience.

Discussion also took place on events and awareness raising to encourage more young people, particularly girls, into science, technology and engineering and how this should be incorporated into the curriculum. Paul Malloy is a STEM ambassador and indicated that he had an involvement with The National STEM Centre in University of Glasgow who work with, and in, schools <http://www.stemnet.org.uk/>. Paul indicated that any school can register and log in to make a request for help. There is a lot of information as well on activities and resources that teachers can use. There is also a science connect page at University of Glasgow and the link for this is <http://www.gla.ac.uk/about/scienceconnects/contact/>

It was also felt that schools could tap into parents' skills in the school to take part in careers events and give information on their profession and facilitate placements for young people where appropriate.

Given the importance of this for young people for the future, it was felt that it would be beneficial to have Robert Lamb, Enterprise Development Officer invited to a future meeting.

5 UPDATE ON NATIONAL PARENT FORUM OF SCOTLAND

Roslynn indicated that the National Conference on 14 November in University of Strathclyde had been a great success and been well attended. The keynote speaker had been Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning. Her speech can be viewed on the NPFS website <http://www.parentforumscotland.org/>. Inverclyde Academy senior pupils had done an excellent workshop on work they undertake on Enterprise. Sheena recorded her thanks to them for giving up their Saturday to attend this event. She indicated that Inverclyde had been represented at every NPFS Annual Conference to date showcasing the good work being undertaken in our schools.

Roslynn gave out a leaflet (*copy attached*), updating the meeting on the work of NPFS.

NPFS were involved in responding to the Scottish Parliament regarding the Education Bill on the National Improvement Framework, their submission to The Bill is on their website <http://www.npfs.org.uk/2015/11/20/national-improvement-framework-evidence-from-npfs/>

Roslynn undertook to contact Iain Ellis, Chair of the National Parent Forum of Scotland to ask him if he knew what other local authorities were doing in terms of addressing staffing shortages in certain subjects

6 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- a) **Scottish Parent Teacher Council (SPTC)** Sheena reminded the meeting that there was a wealth of helpful information on the SPTC website which Parent Councils could access. There was a general site and also a member's site. Each Parent Council has a log-in. If they cannot locate this they can contact SPTC and they will give them it. She indicated that there are 'Parent Council Health Checks' on the website which is an exercise which can help identify how effective Parent Councils are in specific areas and which areas could be areas for improvement <http://www.sptc.info/?s=Parent+Council+Health+Check> . Courses run by SPTC had been distributed and Sheena indicated that any feedback from Parent Councils on what would be helpful for us to organise centrally would be appreciated. If any Parent Councils wished to organise training sessions for their own and neighbouring schools and wished to utilise the hours the authority receive as part of the block insurance could they contact Rhona or Sheena beforehand so that the number of hours used can be tracked.
- b) **Budget Savings Consultation** Ruth Binks indicated that there was an online simulator on the Council's website for people to give their views on how the savings should be made and a series of public meetings are being held. The Chief Executive was keen that a session for Parent Council members was held, as previously. However, after discussion, the meeting felt that as it would only be education savings which they would wish to discuss at this session and transport was the only savings which was being considered, that they appreciated the offer but felt it unnecessary on this occasion.
- c) **Online Payments** Ruth had attended demonstrations from companies on systems which would allow parents to pay for lunches and school trips etc online. Ruth wished to consult with Parent Councils on their thoughts with regard this and a short survey will be sent to them soon. The consensus of the meeting was that this was a good idea and gave parents choice.

7 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates for the Parent Council Representative's meetings for the remainder of the school session are as follows:

- **Tuesday 1 March 2016 – St Joseph's Primary School at 7.00 pm**
- **Wednesday 25 May 2016 – St John's Primary School (tour of refurbished school at 6.30 pm and meeting commencing at 7.00 pm)**

PARENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING
Thursday 26 November 2015
Ardgowan Primary School

ATTENDING:

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| Lesley Crumlish | Aileymill Primary School |
| Paul Smith | Ardgowan Primary School |
| Ian Dyer | Clydeview Academy |
| Wilma Bain | Corporate Director, Education, Communities & Organisational Development |
| Sheena Beaton | Education Services |
| Rhona Turner | Education Services |
| Ruth Binks | Head of Education – Education Services |
| Cara Cooper | Improvement Advisor (Education Scotland) |
| Robin Thomson | Inverclyde Academy/Parent Representative on Education & Lifelong Learning Committee |
| Fiona MacEachran | Kilmacolm Primary School |
| Kate Barclay | Newark Primary School |
| Paul Malloy | Notre Dame High School |
| Janette Ramsay | Notre Dame High School |
| Roslynn Oliver | Parent Representative, National Parent Forum of Scotland |
| Mairi McFarlane | Inverclyde Attainment Challenge Project Leader |
| Cate McGeachy | St Francis' Primary School |
| Claire Hunter | St Joseph's Primary School |
| Tom Miller | St Ninian's Primary School |

APOLOGIES:

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| Morag McCracken | Craigmarloch School |
| Valerie Fisher | St Andrew's Primary School |
| Eugene Lafferty | St Columba's High School |
| Tommy McDade | St Stephen's High School |
| Donna Gairns | Wemyss Bay Primary School |
| Jamie Walker | St Mary's Primary School |