

## Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday 30 June 2020 (via Google meet)

**Present:** Lynn Milton (Chairperson), Kerrie Laird (Head Teacher), Jenny Neill (Vice Chair), Suzanne Haviland (Secretary), Fiona MacKenzie (co-Treasurer), Michael Thorpe, Louise Power, Anna Lound

**Apologies:** Emma Hill, Julie Macleod, Marsha Broadley, Kath Jones (Treasurer)

### Return to School

1. Parent Council (PC) met on 16 June to discuss a “blended” approach to returning to school. Then on 23 June, the Deputy First Minister John Swinney announced that schools will return full-time in August if Scotland continues to make progress against coronavirus (<https://www.gov.scot/news/return-to-full-time-schooling/>).
2. Given the significance of this change, PC met again on 30 June.
3. While a full-time return is now anticipated, schools must continue to prepare for “blended” learning models as contingencies. The Scottish Government is expected to make a final decision by 30 July ahead of schools’ return on 11 August.
4. Therefore, GUPS’s plans now encompass preparing for a full-time return as well as four other potential models: one-metre distancing; two-metre distancing; 50 per cent return; and “child hub”.) Each scenario has distinct challenges.
5. On 25 June, Kerrie sent a letter to parents explaining that while a full-time return was expected, GUPS has various other contingency plans and will be ready to welcome children under any model. The letter further explained that GUPS will send final details for the return at the end of the summer holidays.
6. PC discussed how GUPS should continue to communicate information to parents. Recognising that parents have recently received several letters from GUPS and from Highland Council, and so may have missed the 25 June letter, PC agreed GUPS should reissue it. Moreover, at the risk of overloading parents with detail on contingency plans, GUPS should wait until the final model is known (end July) and then issue clear and comprehensive guidance.
7. On 2 July (after the date of this meeting), Kerrie emailed parents with her best wishes for the summer and reattached the 25 June letter.
8. Other items discussed regarding the return to school include:
  - A probationary teacher has filled the 0.7 vacancy. The final model of return will determine how GUPS assigns teachers to classes.

- Whether classes may switch between locations and whether teachers may cross from one class to another are determining factors in how teachers will be deployed and how classes will function. It would be limiting for GUPS (and other small primaries) if they can do neither.
- If schools return full-time, then composite classes will move up in the same format and the incoming P1 class will be a straight (non-composite) class.
- School lunches will be as before under a full-time return. Under a blended model, they would be packed lunches in the classroom.
- Under any model, it is unlikely that school-helpers or visitors will be allowed onto the premises.
- Under any model, both school gates will be open at drop-off/pick-up to enable social distancing.
- Kerrie is getting a quote for the playground fence to maintain P1 social distancing.
- A number of children experienced skin irritation after handwashing (March 2020). Medical advice suggests this was more likely caused by poor hand-drying than by the soap. GUPS will support children to dry their hands better.

#### **Any Other Business**

9. Highland Council will release PEF funding back to schools. Details are not yet clear.
10. The PC AGM will be in September. The date will be confirmed when school resumes.

#### **Addendum (from 6 August)**

11. The Scottish Government announced on 30 July that (with the caseload sufficiently low) schools will be open full-time from 18 August.
12. On 4 August, Kerrie emailed parents with instructions for a staged return the first two days (12-13 August) with classes split into two groups attending alternatively on either Wednesday or Thursday. Then from Friday 14 August, GUPS will welcome children back full-time.