

## Notes from Ferintosh Parent Council Meeting 2

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 10.30-11.30

**Where:** Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

**Attendees:** Antony McCallum-McKay (AMM) – Head Teacher, Amanda McIntosh (AM), Elaine Mackenzie (EM) – Chair, Elspeth McDonald-Fitzsimmons (EMF), Manuel Araneda (MA) – Secretary, Sarah Bilsland (SB)

### 1) Welcome by chair

EM welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked SB on behalf of all the parents/carers for all her hard work as Acting Head Teacher, whilst a new Head Teacher was found. EM then welcomed the new Head Teacher, Antony McCallum-McKay, to the meeting and said how delighted they were to have him for both schools and the parent/carers forum look forward to working with him.

### 2) Previous Action Points from the last meeting

Actions	Description	Person(s) Responsible	Status	
Action 1	EM to open bank account for Ferintosh Parent Council	EM/AM	Ongoing	EM reported it has been challenging opening a bank account during Covid Lockdown. The bank has said they have long delays currently but EM was hopeful of having it open by end of March.  Ros Bell, Policy Officer at Highland Council has said to contact her if we still having problems by end of March. This is because EM had alerted her to the fact we cannot claim our PC Highland Council 20/21 allocation if we do not have a bank account. EM to continue to Progress.
Action 2	SB to report to Highland the council concerns of parents re number of incidents happening at school and also the lack of information	SB	Complete	AMM reported on behalf of SB that the concerns were passed on through phone calls and emails to both Lynsey Third and the ASN office for the area Roseanne Christie. SB has also made changes to break times too which appear to be working quite well.
Action 3	SB to find out how Mulbuie Parent Council went about getting funding for their outside hut in the first instance	SB	Complete	EM reported that Ben Soffe from the Mulbuie Parent Council did get in touch with her and gave her the details of the Raddery Trust, who is the body they applied to and successfully won funding from for their outside hut. EM reported that Ben had informed her that the paperwork, whilst straight forward, was lengthy. EM said that she had sent an enquiry to them to find out how we could go about applying but was yet to hear back. EM asked if it is indeed something the school would want. Mrs Stevenson runs the “Wild and Free” sessions and EM asked if perhaps she could get in touch with PC to discuss where the hut could go and also give some “statements’ on its possible uses which might help when applying for funding. SB explained to AMM that the idea was that the hut would be a good shelter for the kids and for continuing outdoor learning during all weathers. <b>New Action Point:</b> AMM to ask Mrs Stevenson to get in touch with Parent Council to discuss the hut idea
Action 4	SB to enquire if it is possible for someone at school to take down the flag	SB	Ongoing	SB reported that the School had not found someone to do this yet and there were concerns about Wallace (the handyman) going up to take it down. MA stated that he

				<p>had a telescopic pole which would enable him to take the flag down without climbing up. He could do this at a weekend when no school employee is in the grounds. Agreed this was a good idea and if not possible then to get in touch with School again and AMM would contact the Council.</p> <p><b>New Action Point:</b> MA to remove the flag using telescopic pole. I</p>
Action 5	SB to mention to class teacher Miss Meikle about considering studying flags as a topic and the kids designing their own flag	SB	Complete	<p>SB said that she had spoken with Miss Meikle and she would consider this topic. However, AMM did point out that the children lead the learning on topic choice so it might not be something they are interested in. EM asked regarding “designing a flag” if it might be worth being ambitious and look to run a flag competition with local schools in the Ferintosh Community area. Therefore, designing a flag for “Ferintosh Community” which covers a wide area. Both Schools could then get involved along with the local community. AMM said to send him the idea for consideration.</p> <p><b>New Action Point:</b> EM to send details to AMM with the Flag Competition idea</p>
Action 6	SB to remind all school staff and visitors to close gate after themselves	SB	Complete	All staff have been reminded to close gate and to be mindful of parking when arriving and leaving the School.
Action 7	EM & SB to chase Highland Council about fixing the 20mph flashing lights	SB/EM	Complete	The lights are now fixed and working at the appropriate times of the day.
Action 8	All to have a look at the school website to discuss thoughts and ideas for next meeting.	ALL	Ongoing	<p>EM reported back on this item. It was agreed by PC members that this would go on hold until the new Head Teacher arrived in post. Now that AMM is now in the position EM reported that she would send him their ideas to make the website more user friendly for parents and visitors to the site. AMM agreed there was no harm in having a refresh of the website and getting parent involvement is always helpful.</p> <p><b>New Action Point:</b> EM to send list of ideas for website from PC for AMM to look over</p>

### 3.) Head Teacher Report

**Welcome** - AMM said he firstly wanted to thank everyone for making him feel very welcome across both schools from staff, children and the parents/carers. It has not been the best time to start a new role such as Head Teacher during Covid Lockdown rules with social distancing in place. However, from day one he wants to make it clear that if you have any concerns that you would like to speak with him regarding the school or your child then please just pick up the phone or email him. Parents/Carers do no need to wait until the next PC meeting to raise something and AMM just wants to make that clear.

**Return of all Pupils on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021** – Whilst P1-P3 has been back since 22<sup>nd</sup> February, all pupils will return on Monday 15<sup>th</sup>. AMM reported that he and SB have been looking at what the curriculum will look like when all children are back.

The latest Lockdown has obviously had a huge impact on the children and the school is noticing this. Some of the children are very emotional. It is going to take some time to get all children to settle back into the school routines. The School will be focusing on health and wellbeing and getting children forming relationships again. This will be the main focus across both schools.

At Ferintosh, the school is lucky to have the large grounds where Mrs Stevenson and Miss Meikle are able to take the children outside to do activities: the children thrive outside. AMM and SB will be working out the curriculum to build resilience and using tools such as Bounce Back and Treehouse. Of course, both schools will also be looking at literacy and numeracy and continuing with assessments.

**Staffing** - No change to staffing at Ferintosh which is great news.

EM asked if Mr MacPherson was still part of the team because parents had noticed he has not been around since we came back from lockdown.

AMM reported that as Mr MacPherson is the SEBN teacher, which is part of the SEBN team within Highland Council, he goes around the different schools and facilities using his expertise as required and he will come to Ferintosh if needed. The SEBN team is quite small, and his expertise is quite specialised and needed widely right across the area.

**Resources for School** – AMM handed over to SB to report on how the School has bought lots of new resources to support the Teejay maths. Double of everything has been ordered: Sets of Assessment material and lots of support material for the early years to help back up the Teejay maths curriculum. The assessment resources have diagnostic assessments which will help to identify gaps in the learning for the children also. The resources should be here in the next couple of weeks. AMM reported that this is a very up to date resource which should be fantastic to have. It cost a lot of money but well worth it.

**Extra Resources Funding**- AMM would like to work with the parent council to think of resources they can purchase for the pupils to use. This could be focused at the aims of fundraising, for example, resources for playtime. AMM asked if the PC could think about this with the Parent Forum and get back to him.

**Action:** PC to liaise with parent forum on this discussion and get back to AMM.

**Easter break** – AMM reported how the term was coming to an end in 3 weeks. Parents/Carers should be mindful that children are going to be tired and need a break. It is a time for getting outside and going for walks and doing stuff together. They will have missed a lot in their learning but they still need this down time. School will be carrying out assessments in order to identify where pupils are in their learning. It will be a very lengthy process but teachers will be working hard to progress children in their learning. The main message is that teachers will be working hard to identify the gaps in learning. This will be a lengthy process but if we are worried about anything, then we should get in touch to discuss with the school.

**Social Media**- AMM stated how he would like to introduce Twitter for the School as a means of promoting the school and also celebrating success. It would also be useful in terms of reminding parents/carers about events which come up in the school such as “Red Nose Day”. AMM also said there would be a school group twitter and then Miss Meikle could have her own twitter and she could tag the school in it. Permission forms would be sent to all parents to ask if they are happy for their child to feature. It is to be noted that both the name and a picture of a pupil featured would never be used together. AMM said he believed it is a really good medium for informing parents and also raising the profile of the school. The consensus from the PC was this was a good idea and they supported it.

**Action:** AMM to put out forms to all parents to inform and get permission.

**Red Nose Day** – School will be celebrating Red Nose Day next Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March. Children can wear something red if they want. There is no charge and they do not need to take money in for this.

**Parents Evening** – This will be a 10-minute telephone call for parents again. A form will be sent with requested times. Reporting will take same format.

**PE: Cross Country** – EM enquired about what the school were thinking regarding letting the children at Ferintosh participate in the Black Isle Active Schools virtual cross-country event which is currently on until 31<sup>st</sup> March. Although, our children are in the younger part of school, there is a category for P1-P3. EM stated how some of the parents and children had shown interest in it. EM showed the meeting attendees a possible medal which could be bought very cheaply and given to children to encourage the activity which PC could purchase. AMM reported that they had not thought about this. However, he was keen on the children being active and he thinks it would be good to get them out every morning ideally. He suggested the “daily mile initiative” where by the children (and Staff) could walk or run it. He would speak to Miss Meikle about this. AMM reported how they had done this in other Schools which he had been in and he finds it very beneficial to the children because it helps them settle. This way they could see which children like running or if they are good at it. They could then look to introduce cross country to the children or even sprinting. Medals could be looked at later on to help encourage and engage the children.

**Action:** AMM to speak to Miss Meikle about the most suitable time of day to introduce this “mile a day” and get it timetabled into the day

#### 4.) AOB

**Homework** - AM raised the question about when homework would be given again. AMM reported that the children will get homework after Easter. It will be up to the individual teachers to set the work using the online platform (the Padlet as used pre-lockdown). This will be in line with the school's homework policy.

**Trees** - AMM reported that there are some Trees to be felled in the grounds of Ferintosh which have been marked. After speaking with Wallace, he has said that it is likely to be done during the Easter break and therefore AMM wanted us to note that we might notice works going on when/if we pass the school.

**Gardening Club** - Parents can only get into the grounds once the Covid tiers change. AMM thought it was a good idea if we want to help the school tidy up the pots at the front and it would be good to get the children involved too.

**Action:** AMM to inform PC when it is possible to get into grounds when Covid restrictions lift.

**School Gate** - EMF raised the issue of the gate again. The gate is quite often left open by the children when they run in to school and she wanted to know what the policy was on shutting the gate as a parent under current Covid rules. EMF stated that she is very worried about her children ( and any child) running out onto the road and wants to ensure that the gate is always shut.

SB reported that the policy is that the gate should be always closed and closed after each person. AMM suggested that the children should also be taught how to close the gate. Staff are sanitising their hands constantly and should be clean. Parents should also sanitise their hands to shut gate. AMM said he could look to get sanitiser at the gate.

In addition, AMM reminded parents/carers of the following :

Be mindful of Covid rules (wearing a mask unless exempt, keeping 2 meters apart and 1 adult to collect/drop off pupils).

Please be mindful of comments made at the school gate when picking up and dropping off. Remember even as parents and carers we are representing our school with what we say. If we have issues with anything relating to school, we should speak with Miss Meikle or Head Teacher directly.

**Action:** AMM to double check the policy on the school gate and look to get the children closing the gate also.

**School Sign** - EM raised again that the road is busy and that the school sign is hidden by bushes which makes her wonder whether some vehicle drivers even realise that it is a school situated beside the road. Would it be worth having a more prominent sign? AMM said that they can look at cutting back the bushes. AMM then suggested that it might be a fundraising activity for PC to consider if we do need another sign. We could also speak to roads department in Highland Council about this if a new sign is necessary.

**Action:** AMM look to get the bushes cut back around the sign to see what it looks like in the first instance

**Date of next meeting:** Thursday 20th May 2021, 10.30am

#### List of Actions

Actions	Description	Person(s) Responsible
Action 1	<i>Open Bank account</i> for Ferintosh Parent Council	EM
Action 2	<i>Outside Hut for shelter:</i> AMM to speak with Mrs Stevenson regarding possible outside hut for Ferintosh grounds and get her to speak with PC to help with statements regarding "Wild and Free" which would help when completing funding application forms	AMM
Action 3	<i>Flag removal:</i> MA to look at taking the flag down outside school hours	MA
Action 4	<i>Flag Competition idea:</i> EM to draft idea of Flag Competition from PC to AMM	EM
Action 5	<i>Ideas for Website:</i> EM to send AMM the list of PC ideas for improving website	EM/ALL
Action 6	<i>Social Media for School:</i> AMM to send out permission forms to Parents/Carers for use of Twitter to promote and celebrate school	AMM
Action 7	<i>"Mile a Day":</i> AMM to speak with Miss Meikle regarding the "mile a day" idea and to start timetabling into the day.	AMM

Action 8	<b>Additional Resources Fundraising:</b> PC to liaise with parent forum to think about what resources they might like to purchase for the school. For example, resources for playtime and then get back to AMM with “wish list”.	ALL
Action 9	<i>School Gate:</i> AMM to check about procedures for closing the school gate and then inform Parents/Carers. Also look to get children involved in learning to close school gate	AMM
Action 10	<i>School Sign:</i> AMM to look at getting bushes cut back to reveal school sign	AMM