



**Minutes of the St. Mary's Episcopal Primary School Parent Council
Held on Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 6.30pm**

Present: Hanneke Booij, Pauline Darnbrough, Catherine Fletcher, Fiona Frize, Jenny Kinvig, Matt Robinson, Alison Sammut, Heather White

Apologies, Liz Owen, Mary Toop, John Ure

Item	Minute	Action
1.	<p>Apologies Apologies were given as above.</p>	
2.	<p>Previous Minutes The minutes of 28th November 2016 were approved.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters Arising Review of any actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion about potential solutions to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists emerging from the end of the lane onto Smithy Loan. Agreed to investigate signage to indicate no cycling in the lane – Nick Green – still waiting for quotations. Liz will get an update. - Liz Owen – ongoing. The school want to continue supporting the children to cycle or scoot to school and to this end the school are going to apply to Sustrans for funding. The children have suggested using funding to provide a scooter park and a shelter for the bikes. – Mrs White - The school were successful in securing grant funding on the basis it is matched funded so a shelter and scooter rack can be purchased. Rev Nick has made suggestions about making better use of the grassy area next to the PC shed and the manse, including moving the shed to create more space. The church has funding available to contribute to the project. - School Meal Arrangements –Michael Boyle is the SC rep who approves payment for the school hire of the hall and he has that funds will be made available to purchase new tables and chairs to improve the dining experience. Investigations are now taking place into deciding upon the most appropriate chairs and tables that need to fulfil a number of needs. - Mrs White - Michael Boyle is no longer the SC person responsible for facilities management, Mrs White will continue the dialogue with the new member of staff. – Mrs White – ongoing. -It was suggested that more financial information could be made available on the school website, twitter, fundraising Facebook page and that a visual record could also be included in the school annual. Alison Sammut agreed to assist Mrs. White with this, agreed to complete this at the same time as the Standards and Quality report. - Mrs. White will forward photographs of what the money has been spent on and Alison will create a report. Alison and Mrs. White will continue to work on this. – Alison Sammut and Mrs. White – ongoing. Done - the process for this cyclical document is in place. - Mrs. White explained that Education Scotland have an iteach initiative, someone working for Apple will come to the school and audit the IT infrastructure and offer free training. Mrs. White is also going to contact Microsoft to ask if they have any similar initiatives to support IT within primary 	<p>Liz Owen</p> <p>Mrs White</p>

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	<p>schools. Representatives from SC have also assessed the IT infrastructure and agree that a majority of the hardware within the school needs to be upgraded.</p> <p>– Mrs White, a representative from Apple is visiting the school on 8/12/16 and Mrs White is continuing to contact Microsoft. – Ongoing. Mrs White has decided not to pursue Microsoft. Instead she has decided to tap into Education Scotland’s iteach initiative and has been successful in securing funding of £1500 for a project called the Writing Grand Prix. The money will be used to buy 3 iPads (with the school funds purchasing a 4th), licences for various apps and resources targeted at helping increase children’s motivation for writing and to support with fine motor skills difficulties.</p> <p>- John is investigating various options concerning the bank account, it was agreed that office bearers would be the signatories and to this end it was also agreed to amend the constitution to reflect this. John Ure will continue with setting up the new bank account and gathering the relevant information. – John Ure and PC, the application is complete and the PC is just waiting for the bank to process it. – Ongoing - The PC will e-mail the parent body regarding the change in constitution. Ongoing - An error has been made by the bank and the process for opening the bank account needs to be started again. The Parent Forum were consulted regarding the constitution change and 100% of those that responded agreed with the amendment. Fiona Frize will pursue this.</p> <p>- The Nursery are performing the Gruffalo on 6/12/16 and 9/12/16 at 10am, Mrs White asked if the PC could provide tea and coffee before the performances and if they could also do the same on 13/12/16 before the nativity performance. Fiona said she would ask the fundraising group. Done - A sincere thanks to the fundraising group who provided refreshments, it was very nicely done and very much appreciated, a sincere thanks to the parents who did such a fabulous job.</p> <p>- Mrs White also asked if parents would like to help serve the school Christmas dinner on 14/12/16, from approximately 11.30am – 1pm. Fiona Frize will e-mail the parent body. – Done - thank you to everyone who helped to make it such an enjoyable occasion.</p>	<p>John Ure</p> <p>Fiona Frize</p>
4	<p>Treasurer’s Update</p> <p>See above regarding the bank account.</p> <p>Approximately £2300 was raised at the Christmas Fair and with the income from the wooden and school Christmas cards the total comes to approximately £2600.</p>	
5.	<p>Fundraising</p> <p>Expenditure for the Christmas Fair was down compared to last year. The school will facilitate the children writing thank you cards to all those who donated items to the fair. Thank you to everyone who contributed to make this such a successful event.</p> <p>The fundraising group are considering hosting a daffodil tea again around Easter and are in the process of planning this. They are also considering a different type of fundraising event for the end of the summer term.</p>	
6.	<p>Homework</p> <p>A parent brought to the meeting information about studies made regarding the well-being of children and various aspects of their lives. Homework formed part of these studies. A discussion followed whereby it was acknowledged that the subject of homework is complex and elicits many varying opinions. Homework, is a live issue at national and council levels, so policies may change in the</p>	

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	<p>future. Mrs White explained her current position would be to develop the edu-profiles to an extent where they can be accessed at home allowing parents and children to share external learning experiences and allow a more personalised, flexible approach to homework. As the current School Improvement Plan is underway, it was agreed that a full consultation on changes to homework would not be undertaken this session, but links between home and school learning would form part of the school improvement plan next session. Mrs White also raised the point that if families are having difficulties or challenges with regards to homework that they should come and speak with the class teachers in the first instance and then herself so that solutions can be found. Parents did mention that children had spoken of a 'black book' in P5/6 and children having to explain why homework has not been completed. Mrs White said she would investigate this.</p>	Mrs White
7.	<p>Curriculum</p> <p>A concern was raised about the balance of the curriculum in favour of the arts and less on the traditional core subjects. Mrs White explained that teachers are following the school's curriculum design which places a focus on health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy as the foundation of the school's curriculum. A focus on improvements to literacy and numeracy form key parts of this year's school improvement plan. She reassured the meeting that core teaching is still taking place and she gave various examples. Attainment in literacy and numeracy is still improving. As the profiling of learning improves this will help to further capture a child's learning for parents to view.</p> <p>There was a discussion on how the school can clearly communicate learning. Mrs White is currently investigating a school app which could contain the school newsletter, text messages, updates etc.</p> <p>The parent focus group on 1/2/17 will discuss the partnership between school and parents, specifically about how to improve the learning dialogue between school and home.</p>	
8.	<p>A.O.B.</p> <p>Maths teaching strategies – some parents feel that the teaching of maths isn't suiting all children and their learning styles, some families are doing further teaching at home or use tutoring services. The perception is that the understanding of maths is suffering. Mrs White responded by saying that nationally numeracy attainment is being addressed, and as a school there is a focus on numeracy again in this year's school improvement plan. The school are using the philosophy and principles of Big Maths, which focuses on four key elements to the development of numeracy skills and support children in the application of their numeracy knowledge. It is their ability to apply their numeracy knowledge that many children are finding challenging. 'Making Sense of Numbers' is a group that has been set up to support children in P5/6 and P7 that are not making the progress in numeracy that would be expected. Fiona is going to suggest to those that raised the matter that they speak directly to Mrs White.</p> <p>Parking signs – It was suggested that the use of the word 'respect' would have an impact. Mrs Kinvig will pass this onto the junior road safety officers who are part of the peer supporters.</p> <p>Another suggestion was to ask the police to drive down Smithy Loan just before 9am, Mrs Kinvig said she would investigate this suggestion.</p>	<p>Fiona Frize</p> <p>Mrs Kinvig</p> <p>Mrs Kinvig</p>
9.	<p>Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 1st March 6.30pm</p>	