

Minute of the Annual General Meeting of the Dounby Community School Parent Group held on 12 September 2013

Present:	Alex Clark (Chair)	Lorraine Cormack (Treasurer)
	Anna Davidson	Geraldine Ferguson (Clerk)
	Dawn Flett	Alastair Forsyth (Head Teacher)
	Pamela Johnston	Shenagh Leiper
	Tracey Miller	EmmaJane Rendall
	Margaret Sinclair	Stuart West

1 Chair's welcome and apologies

Apologies had been received from Steve Durkin, Katrina Gray, Avril Hay and Suzanne Lyon.

Alastair and EmmaJane then shared with the group a couple of resources that they were considering using in an age-appropriate way within the school to highlight the need for awareness of how online and mobile technologies can be misused.

The first video, for 8–10 year olds and entitled 'Jigsaw', was produced by the Child Exploitation and Online Protections Centre's (CEOP's) Thinkuknow education programme. It aimed to help children to understand what constitutes personal information – to understand that they need to be just as protective of their personal information online, as they are in the real world. It also directed where to go and what to do if children are worried about any of the issues covered.

The second resource, 'Let's Fight It Together', was a short film based on real events. It depicted the story of a teenager who becomes the target of bullying via the internet and his mobile phone. The film showed a number of ways in which cyberbullying can occur, whom it involves, and how it can affect different people, including the teacher, who in the film is also subject to humiliation.

2 Approval of minute of last meeting (16 May 2013)

After the videos, which spoke for themselves and gave parents a lot to think about, the minute of the meeting held on 16 May 2013 was approved as an accurate record, proposed by Lorraine Cormack and seconded by Corina Taylor.

3 Matters arising

It was agreed that most of these would be covered under various other agenda items (see below).

Lighting for pathway

Alastair confirmed that, as requested, he had begun to look into the idea of providing lighting for the path between the football pitches. Initial cost estimates were coming out at £15 plus labour per light, and it was thought that quite a few lights would be needed. Alastair agreed to obtain a more accurate costing so that the school could consider whether such expenditure could be afforded, given that it was not budgeted for in the school's capital plan.

Child healthy weight: BMI measurement

Vicky Anderson, School Health Co-ordinator, and Sue Baird, NHS Orkney lead officer on child health weight, were then invited to explain to parents the practice of using the BMI method for measuring childhood obesity and to answer questions from parents.

By way of background, the Chair explained that each year dissatisfaction was felt among parents of Primary One and Primary Seven children when they received the letter giving them the results of their child's BMI measurement. Some parents, whose children appeared to be in the 'no action required' category' (which Vicky explained covered measurements falling between the 3rd and 91st Centile of the BMI charts), felt that the letter did not spell out clearly enough

that their child was a healthy weight and that no action was required. Other parents, whose children's measurements were in the categories where action was felt to be required (i.e. the '≥ 91st Centile' category and the more serious '> 98th Centile' category), felt that the tone of the letter made them feel either worried or defensive, and that the letter did not spell out clearly enough what the next step was in order to address the problem. Over the years, some parents had reported being unhappy that the word 'obese' was used in the letter they had received.

Vicky explained the school nurses' role in surveillance of children's weight in Orkney under the Government's Health Efficiency Access and Treatment (HEAT) target for healthy weight interventions. She explained that the aim was to give children who fell outwith the healthy BMI range access to GP and dietician advice and support, and treatment programmes such as Counterweight families and the Scott Programme. The long-term aim was to help avoid childhood problems such as Type 2 diabetes, liver and joint problems, and low self-esteem. There then followed a useful discussion during which parents were able to explain that, while they understood the importance of child healthy weight, it was for some a very emotive and sensitive issue, and that more thought needed to be put into how to communicate effectively with and support parents whose children were in the unhealthy weight categories. There was a suggestion that the term BMI should be explained in all of the letters, or at least that there should be a link to a good explanation or source of information. Vicky stressed the importance of parents taking responsibility and being proactive in seeking advice and information on child healthy weight from GPs and school nurses, although both she and Sue accepted that, in the light of the points parents had raised, some adjustments might need to be made to the format of the letters that were sent out.

The Chair thanked Vicky and Sue for taking the time to listen to parents' views on this difficult subject, and it was agreed that parents would be happy to evaluate any new drafts of the BMI measurement letter.

School lunch menus

The Chair distributed copies of his summary report on the findings of the School Meals survey conducted on Sports Day in July (see copy attached). The school cooks had had a chance to see the report and thought that it was useful to have the feedback from parents and carers. They had a number of points to make in response, however, and these were circulated and duly noted (copy also attached).

Play Dounby update

Members of the Play Dounby group gave a brief verbal report on progress with the playground project. Catherine Diamond and Garry Burton from OIC had been able to attend the most recent meeting, on Wednesday 11 September, and had given the group some very helpful tips regarding technical specifications for materials to be used to redevelop the playpark and advice on access and requirements for paths. This would help with the costings that still had to be prepared for inclusion in the funding applications.

The next step was to finalise and distribute the community survey, the results of which would help prove to funders that there was a need for the project. It was hoped that this step would be completed before the next Parent Group meeting.

4 Correspondence received by chair

None to report

5 2012–2013 Annual Report on the activities of the DPG and FODS update

The written report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, was approved. Friends of Dounby School members present at the meeting reported that they had had a successful year, filled with fund-raising activities; and as they had recently recruited some new members, they looked forward to an even more successful year to come.

6 Approval of accounts and appointment of auditor

A Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Parent Group, showing a closing balance (as at 30 June 2013) of £560.78, was circulated and duly approved.

A Statement of Income and Expenditure and a Balance Sheet for Friends of Dounby School was also circulated. This showed a closing balance of £6,973.05 and detailed the amounts raised as a result of various FODS fundraising activities during the year. Given this healthy balance, the question was asked whether monies could be donated by FODS to the playpark project. The answer was that, certainly, the sum of £2,606.45, being the J R Smith Trust Donation, could be used for the playpark; however, the rest of the surplus funds were earmarked for spending on essential books and equipment for the school (e.g. books for the middle of the school and laptops for the older children).

As in previous years, Steven Sinclair had examined the records of both groups and certified the Statements of Income & Expenditure. Steven's appointment for the next financial year was approved and there was a vote of thanks to him for providing this service free of charge.

7 Confirmation of office bearers

Alex Clark and Margaret Sinclair agreed to continue in the posts of Chair and Vice-Chair respectively until the end of their term of office in September 2014. Lorraine Cormack also agreed to continue as treasurer (of both FODs and Parent Group).

8 Invitation to co-opted members

Shenagh Leiper was invited to continue as a co-opted member on the Parent Group as it was felt that her contribution had led to some interesting discussions and action points during the time of her involvement. Shenagh confirmed that she was happy to continue.

9 Matters arising from Headteacher's Report for September 2013

There were no matters arising.

10 Draft School Improvement Plan for consideration and approval

The Plan had been circulated prior to the meeting, giving parents a chance to consider it. Since there were no questions, Alastair recommended that the Report be approved, pointing out that there were, of course, other areas of school improvement that were ongoing but that were not covered in the new plan. The report was duly approved, proposed by EmmaJane Rendall and seconded by Stuart West.

11 Play Dounby update

See 3 above.

Alex asked what had happened to the Scrap for Play idea that had previously been mooted. Alastair explained that Scrap for Play would be included on a smaller scale within the playpark project. The problem was the cost of a storage system for the scrap materials, and the Play Dounby group was looking at cost effective ways of solving this.

12 Agenda items for next meeting

There were no suggestions.

13 Any other competent business

A parent remarked that her child had occasionally mentioned not getting enough time to finish her lunch before the bell rang for the end of lunchtime. Alastair explained that, because of the self-service system, when salad was served, it took a long time for the children to make their selections, which led to delays. This was likely to improve, since a new system had been introduced whereby P1s and P2s would go for lunch 15 minutes early, and teaching staff would

help them with their lunch, and help them acquire valuable skills, as part of the health and well-being section of the curriculum.

There was a request for term letters to be made more user-friendly so that parents could understand better what was being taught and how they could help their children. The use of the word 'algorithm' was given as an example of non-parent friendly language.

Finally, some parents commented that the latest batch of school jumpers were not as good quality as previous batches, and Alastair agreed to pass this on to the school office staff, who could take this into account when next placing an order.

14 Date of next meeting

There being no other competent business the meeting concluded at 8.45 pm, after it had been agreed that the next meeting would be held on 21 November 2013 at 7pm.