

Note of a meeting of the Dounby Community School Parent Group held on 27th May 2010 at 7pm at Dounby School

Present: Kay Morgan (Chair) Emma Grieve
Karen Allen Michelle Hill
Lorraine Cormack Margaret Sinclair
Alastair Forsyth Corina Taylor
Katrina Gray Georgie Clark (Clerk)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Andrea Price and Isla Dougall

2. Minutes from meeting held on 4th March 2010

These were approved as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none for discussion.

4. Correspondence Received by Chair

- Parent Council Newsletter – copies were available for information
- Annual Parent Group Chair and Head Teacher Event – Kay reported on this event which she attended recently. The event was introduced by Leslie Manson and Kay found it useful to meet with Chairs from other schools. Kay gave an overview of sessions held at the event:
 - VSE – Self Evaluation of authorities and schools. The local authority had done well and a report had been published. This will be available on line soon.
 - Curriculum for Excellence – information was provided on Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Kay sought further information on exactly what CfE was about. It is about joining subjects together where teaching is combined with topics, not all the time. Subjects are incorporated into topics but there will be specific times for maths and English, as stand alone subjects.
 - Budgets – Savings are being made throughout Scotland and local savings will equate to £1.2m equating to 12% over 3 years within the Education Department.
 - Lorraine Sander, National Parental Involvement Coordinator gave a presentation. She highlighted that there was a toolkit available for schools to engage with parents. Also at the event there was discussion on how parent councils can be involved in this. As a parent council, we can decide how we want to be involved – then share the findings with the school on how parents can be involved and to help the school. Parents of P7 children will shortly be getting a letter which details the Curriculum for Excellence qualifications. This will be issued in the next 7 to 10 days. Lorraine also talked about homework, with issues reported on the Homework Policy. Alastair highlighted that he has been working on a policy with teachers at Dounby and this will be shared once in draft form.
- Report from Charlotte Harrison, Chair of Papdale School Parent Group who is also the local representative on the National Parent Forum. She is available and can be contacted in relation to taking forward any concerns etc from Orkney to a national level. She asked the group at the event if it would be helpful for there to be a forum in Orkney between the Chairs to establish links with other schools. The Chairs were asked to take this to their groups and report back. It was felt that this would be useful in terms of sharing ideas with other schools locally.
- Triple P Parenting – the Home Link Service gave a presentation on the Positive Parenting Programme, there are 21 trained coordinators in Orkney – made up of Health Visitors, School Staff, Social Workers and others. They can provide training for any stages of development, including the teenage years. Their aim is to provide training to pre-empt any problems before they arise. A leaflet is available for information and staff members from the Home Link Service are available to come and give presentations to schools. They can also run courses which involve both the teachers and parents. Papdale School had undertaken

this and had found it useful. After discussion it was thought that it would be useful to organise a presentation at Dounby.

- GLOW – this is still not at a stage to provide passwords for parents – Alastair was to update the group on this further in the meeting.
- Training – A request for training was given to the Chairs and courses available included Role of Chair; Fund Raising; Chairing meetings; Involving Parents, Finance, Curriculum for Excellence and GLOW. It was agreed that Michelle would be put forward for the Chairing Meeting training session
- Insurance: Insurance for the Parent Group has been paid until October. This will be then be reviewed to see if the local authority will pay the fees. Traditionally Parent Councils require this insurance in order to be insured when holding fund raising events. Currently FODs undertakes fundraising for the school and any event is hosted by the school and covered by local authority insurance. Alastair asked if FODs could become a sub committee of the Parent Council in order to avoid mis-use of the school insurance and liability.
- eSafety Presentation – Graham Bevan is available to come to schools to give a presentation on computer security. The main rules are:
 - make sure you know what your children are doing on the internet
 - keep your computer in a public room in the house
 - encourage children to speak to you when worried
 - CEOP – this is an emergency button that is available on most networking sites that the child can press when they feel threatened or unhappy
 - Be vigilant

Alastair highlighted that internet safety will be included on the website and work has been undertaken with P7 on their safety when on line. A good website to visit is www.thinkyouknow.co.uk for web safety.

5. Update from HeadTeacher *HMle Inspection Report –*

The school were in receipt of the full report. This was a more detailed report to that which was sent out to parents. This detailed report will assist the school to progress on the issues raised.

Overall the group were happy with the report that was received, noting that there were areas for improvement.

Alastair highlighted that pupil performance in English and mathematics was the highest priority for the school to improve. Based over 3 years the writing achievement had dropped. A programme will be rolled out to the school in the coming year to work on the content of writing,

Alastair highlighted that overall he was happy with the report.

GLOW – presentation from Alastair

Currently classes 3, 6 and 7 are signed up and using GLOW. Each class will have a home page for news, updates and notices, a blog page is an option as well.. This will eventually become a form of communication between teachers and pupils. Alastair went on to show how to access the Glow Scotland web page via “Google”. He also showed how this could be used by staff as a form of communication. For staff members it provides access to information both locally and nationally and is an ideal way to show good practice.

6. Any Other Business

Alastair informed that there currently were adverts out for 2 posts within the school, a full time teacher for Nursery and Pre School and also a full time teacher for year 4/5 composite class. It is hoped to shortlist, interview and appoint to these posts before the end of term.

7. Date of Next Meeting

An Annual General Meeting will be held on 16th September at 7pm