

## **Trinity Primary Parent Council**

### **Minutes of Meeting on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 at 7.30pm**

#### **1. Introduction and Apologies**

Attendees – Helen Duncan (chair), Kate Goodall (minutes), Jacqueline Scott (HT), Kirsty Martin (DHT), Cheryl Berthinussen (DHT), Robbie Crockatt (Acting School Estate Planning Manager, CEC), Maria Plant (Senior Education Manager, CEC), Jennifer Bird, Clare Blacklaw, Angela Davidson, Kristin Deeken, Kev Head, Christiaan Hoffstra, Collette Holligan, Cath Kidd, Laura Lewis, Angelica Lorenzo, Stephanie Maia, Catriona Regan, Anna Turtle.

Apologies – Ellie Bird (CEC), Gordon Munro (CEC), Jim Campbell (CEC), Ben Powell, Karen Stevenson, Kirsty Wilkie, Clare Sharp.

#### **2. Playground Safety**

Following a serious accident in the school playground, parents asked whether the Council would be making any changes to the school's policy or the Council's policy on playing outdoors during adverse weather. Maria Plant thanked parents and carers for their support of the school and said that the Council is waiting for the report of the Council's own health and safety investigation and the investigation undertaken by the Health and Safety Executive before making any recommended changes. As soon as the findings are made publicly available they will be shared.

The meeting also asked about the safety of the trees. The entire playground, including trees, is inspected every quarter by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. There is also a rolling programme of tree maintenance for the schools estates.

Robbie Crockatt said that the current approach to outdoor play (at break and during lessons) was to encourage it as much as possible. The Council would be considering the recommendations of the report before making any changes to this. It was explained that the variable weather conditions and types of outdoor spaces across the city make it difficult to formulate a whole-city policy to this issue.

Some parents felt that they had not had enough information or updates after the accident. Maria Plant explained that the school had to follow a serious incident protocol, where all communication from the school must be approved by the Council before it goes out to make sure that it protects the confidentiality of the pupil and the family. It was also stated that when an incident such as this happens, the school has to put a series of measures and reporting mechanisms in place, and the Council confirmed that these were all done by the school staff. There was therefore not time to issue information to parents on the day of the incident itself. Parents commented that this was very different to communicating on social media, where information can be passed and shared very quickly.

It was suggested that it might be helpful for the school to have a "holding statement" that can be issued immediately to parents, stating that a serious incident had occurred and that the school is now following official processes and will be in touch as soon as possible. Maria Plant and Mrs Scott agreed that this would be helpful.

Parents asked for some guidance in terms of what to tell their own children about the incident. Again the need to protect the confidentiality of the pupil was emphasised.

Two parents who were unable to attend the meeting had emailed the Parent Council with the following messages, which were read out in full.

*"I fully support the school in their approach to outdoor play and outdoor learning.*

*- Enabling children to take risks in a controlled environment, such as a school playground, promotes a healthy approach to risk taking and teaches children how to make important decisions on their own.*

*- Trinity has excellent playgrounds and outdoor learning spaces which enhance the experience of the children at school. We should continue to maximise the use of these spaces.*

*- It would be tragic if this unfortunate incident promoted a knee-jerk reaction, or caused the school to bow to pressure from concerned parents about the 'risks' posed by playing outdoors*

*- It may of course be sensible to have a well-thought out policy about outdoor play during severe weather warnings. However I would caution against any unintended consequences of not allowing children out to play (e.g. keeping children in classrooms at break time may actually cause accidents by having excitable children running around indoors)."*

(Kirsteen Jones)

*Dear Parent Council,*

*As I'm unable to come to the meeting on 9th October I thought I'd send a short email to offer my support to the school community in light of the incident.*

*I think the staff have acted with great dignity and professionalism at a difficult time, and I am confident that the health and safety of pupils and staff is of paramount importance to all staff within the school. I've had children at TPS for 7+ years (15 in total, if I add up all the years my three children have been there!) and am aware of the huge amount of work and careful thought that goes into all the many, many decisions that are made on a daily basis.*

*I hope the pupil is making a good recovery.*

(Joanna Duncan)

**Action** – H&S reports to be shared, as appropriate.

### **3. Minutes of Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2018**

The Parent Council had prepared a response to the Consultation on Locality Meetings, reflecting our frustrations with the locality boundaries and the poor support for the meetings themselves.

**Action** – HD to follow up on confirmation of meeting dates.

A 52 point Government Report on Parental Engagement was deferred for a future meeting.

### **4. Correspondence**

The Chair had attended a Trinity Community Council meeting and we have been asked if we would like permanent representation. Members agreed to attend on a rota basis

The parent council have been asked to arrange a raffle for the Christmas Fair.

**Action** – HD to prompt PC members re rota and raffle.

The Council's new policy on Letting is having a major impact on clubs and local groups. The Headteachers' Executive also has concerns.

**Action** - Councillor Ellie Bird is to provide feedback on letting at a future meeting.

#### 5. **Headteacher's Report**

As published prior to the meeting.

#### 6. **School Improvement Plan**

A summary of this is available on the school website.

#### 7. **Victoria Park Update**

A 'semi-permanent structure,' i.e. a fence, is to be erected around an area in the park which will be accessible by the school and other park users.

#### 8. **Trinity Academy Update**

A meeting concerning the rebuilding of the Academy had focussed on the wishes of the community and not on the learning and teaching requirements of the school itself. The concept of a 'Campus' was still unclear. The next stage will be a Workshop for staff and pupils.

**Action** – HD to provide feedback on the workshop and lack of clarity about the Campus option.

#### 9. **PC Communications**

A P2 parent had contacted the Parent Council with concerns about the tone and content of a WhatsApp group made up of school parents, and to suggest whether there might be an opportunity for the Parent Council and/or the school to provide guidelines on social media use within the school community.

Catriona Regan led the discussion on this. PC Members and school staff felt that neither body had the right to impose guidance on social media behaviour and that this was the responsibility of individuals. However, it was felt that there might be an opportunity to give PC Members some guidance as to how they might wish to respond to school issues being discussed on social media.

**Action** – CR to draft guidance for circulation and discussion at the next meeting. HD to respond to the individual parent.

#### 10. **Accounts**

Nothing to report. CH and HD to investigate the possibility of internet banking for the PC bank account.

#### 11. **AOCB**

A request was made by Kristen Deeken to avoid using polystyrene cups.

**Action** – school to suggest that parents bring reusable cups to events where tea and coffee are provided.

#### 12. **Meeting Dates**

Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2018

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2019