

**Echline Parent Association
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday 21 September 2023 6.45 - 8.15pm
Meeting held at Echline Primary School (and by Teams)**

Present:

In person:	
Charlotte Davie (Chair)	Cara Quigley
Jana Reuter (Vice-Chair)	Stacy Taylor
Libby Hulme (Treasurer)	Allison Walsh
Jude Moir (Head Teacher)	Rachel Adamson
Lauren Scott (Secretary)	David Flint (CDCC)
Ali Walker	Katie McRae
Louise Bowes	Rosalind Wallace
Graeme Keir	Hannah Dickson
Richard Oakley	
By Teams:	
Julie Fraser	
Helen Green	
H McInnes (Nursery)	
Robbie Crockatt	

Apologies: none

Discussion	Action
<p>1. Welcome – Charlotte welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>2. Consultation on new school</p> <p>As Robbie Crockatt (CEC Strategic Asset Planning Manager) was only available for a short time, it was agreed to hear from him first, on the consultation on the establishment of a new primary school and nursery at Builyeon Road (and proposed changes to Echline School's catchment area). See separate report at the end of these minutes.</p> <p>3. AGM Matters</p> <p>a. EPA report 2022/2023</p> <p>Charlotte shared last year's report. She noted that she and the other office bearers were appointed after the AGM last year. Since then, the EPA has been involved in a lot of different events, such as the Halloween discos, organising various Xmas activities, setting up uniform banks and the Summer Fun Day. We have been working closely with Mr Moir on developing the School's communication plan. We've also been involved in improving the playground and in funding and assisting with the redevelopment of Ross' Garden (thanks to Greenferry and the Rotary Club for their help and guidance with this too). We have spent EPA funds</p>	

on Ross' Garden, the purchase of playground equipment, £2000 towards the purchase of new books for the School, and funded science and maths subscriptions for the School. We've also provided the usual funding for the P7 leavers and funded water bottles for the new P1s. For the first time, we helped organise for the School to be represented in the Ferry Fair parade (complete with new Echline School banner). No other schools participated in the parade this year. We'll need to think about how the School can be represented at next year's Fair, as we are conscious that the children can be spread quite thin because so many groups and clubs are involved in the parade. Many thanks to the Fundraising Team for their efforts over the last year. Thanks too to parents and carers who have supported the work of the EPA over the last year whether through making donations, giving their time, or supporting events (and encouraging their children to get involved too).

b. Treasurer's report – see copy accounts appended to this report.

Libby presented her Treasurer's report. We started the year with a bank balance of in excess of £9,500. In the course of the year to 31 July 2023 we generated income of £11,592 and spent £12,235. Libby noted that we had benefitted from 2 instances of matched funding over the last 2 years which have contributed £1000. The Halloween discos raised £300 after costs. The EPA spent funds on some of the Xmas events, and we also funded some small Coronation mementos for the children.

Running expenses include insurance, some expenses incurred in connection with involvement in the recruitment of the new head teacher, and repairs to the shed.

The Summer Fun Day generated £2,000 after costs (the biggest of which was the inflatables). P4 raised over £100 on their plant stall, which they chose to donate to Ukraine.

The nursery also raised £942 at the Summer Fun Day and from their sponsored walk at the end of June, which has been put into a designated fund to be spent supporting the nursery and its children.

We finished the year with a balance of £8,878 including the nursery restricted funds; or £7,936 excluding the nursery restricted funds.

c. Office bearer roles

Charlotte noted that she, Jana (vice-chair) and Lauren (secretary) had been appointed shortly after the 2022 AGM. Libby continued to act as Treasurer. No one intended to step down, nor had any other nominations been received.

The office bearers agreed to continue in their roles for a further year.

Charlotte noted that there is reference in the constitution to EPA Members (not Office Bearers, and not the Parent Forum). One of the things we intend to explore over the course of the next year is reviewing the constitution, how Membership works and ascertaining whether changes should be made to the constitution. In the interim, those who wanted to be more involved in the work of the EPA were encouraged to come forward (whether that's in terms of attending meetings, or getting involved in fundraising events etc).

d. Proposed dates for next meetings

- i. Tuesday 7 November 2023
- ii. Thursday 18 January 2024
- iii. Tuesday 19 March 2024
- iv. Thursday 16 May 2024
- v. June date to be agreed in due course if thought necessary to have one

4. Minutes and actions from previous meeting

- a. Minutes of meeting on 9 May 2023 were approved.
- b. Actions from previous meeting:-
 - i. Bank account details to be updated - completed
 - ii. Seek update from Stacy on football team's request to Cala for support to fund equipment. - completed
 - iii. To follow up with Council on 'missing' funding money - in progress (expected to receive in October)
 - iv. Banner for Ferry Fair and plans for Echline School procession to be progressed - completed
 - v. To pull together survey for parents/carers to seek their views on what they want from EPA - carried over (briefly discussed the apps which QPS and QHS use - feedback is that queries to those school offices have reduced as parents/carers are using app to find info out)
 - vi. Ensure there is a PA presence at the Fun Day - completed
 - vii. Work on Ross' Garden to continue - completed
 - viii. PA presence/Uniform Bank on Sports Day - completed

JR

CD

5. Head Teacher's Report

- a. Looking backwards – it has been a period of significant change with Mr Moir re-joining the School in January. Mr Moir thanked parents, carers and others in the School community for their warm welcome. In the period from

January to June, the focus was on making the School a strong place to build on the Improvement Plan. Asked 'what type of School do we want to be?' Assemblies and Together Time have been introduced, and the School Song has been published. Lunches have been realigned. The local community and local groups have been re-engaged. The School has spent a lot of time thinking about communications. Mr Moir still doesn't think they have got it quite right. Would like help ensuring they get a wide spread of feedback on comms - would like this to be as representative as possible. There has been a huge roll out of digital learning. The P1s to P5s are using a shared solution; the P6s and P7s have been given individual i-pads. Still in the early stages of utilising these (both as a School and more widely as an authority). Will be feedback so improvements can be made. Mr Moir reported that the transition into P1 and from P7 to S1 went well.

- b. Attainment - improvements compared with last 2 sessions. There is a slight decrease in listening and talking attainment targets but Mr Moir believes there are reasons for this. The School is still significantly above the city average. Writing is an area of focus. Working in a cluster group with other schools in Queensferry to see what can be learned from others.
- c. Improvement Plan - Mr Moir has tried to present plan in line with the School values: Nurture; Inspire; Succeed. Not in abstract. 'Live it, don't laminate it'.
 - i. Nurture - continued to develop community building and to make the School a welcoming place. Nurture groups are being developed, and help put in place for those experiencing barriers. The comms plan falls into this. Mr Moir explained that he and the staff do have high expectations and that they are working on instilling this in the children. 'Sweating the small stuff'. Take mastery and pride in the small things like how the children come into school and how they line up for lunch.
 - ii. Inspire - Mr Moir wants to offer inspiring experiences. Has looked at how they structure the curriculum. Looking at introducing curriculum co-ordinators e.g. a literacy co-ordinator. Reflecting on the 2019 school inspection - want to work on increasing the capacity for the children to have a voice. Achieved this through e.g. allowing the children to direct their learning; the establishment of Eco Groups, road safety groups etc.
 - iii. Succeed -to celebrate success and identify where children are struggling. To invest in training. Developing assessment and monitoring. Developing a cluster-wide system to collectively analyse. Mr

Moir intends to consult on the end of year reporting process - from both the staff and parents' sides. Working on skills development too - meta skills. Not just about cramming knowledge but in developing characters too.

Mr Moir believes this is an ambitious improvement plan but the School has made great progress, despite being short on staff.

d. Questions

i. **What does tracking attainment look like? There seems to be a particular focus on literacy and numeracy. Is this at the expense of other skills?**

Mr Moir thinks not. Research shows literacy and numeracy skills are important for life chances. But there is also a focus on the development of other skills such as creativity, curiosity and sense making. There is wider tracking of literacy, numeracy, health and well being.

ii. **How do you drive forward the children who are already achieving?** Mr Moir explained the School's focus on skills, and developing the meta skills will allow it to provide a richer and deeper curriculum. It will allow for children to lead learning and develop towards their own personal targets. This will also allow for children to explore passion projects and make links with partners in the community. One of the School's main approaches to challenging learners is by increasing opportunities for children to lead their own learning and he feel the curriculum review this year will allow for this.

iii. **To what extent is there consistency across schools e.g. the focus on cursive writing?** Mr Moir indicated that the LA's position on this has changed over the last few years. Previously, there had been a mandate for cursive writing. There has been a shift now, so that the focus is on each child. Research does show that cursive research is beneficial for some children facing literacy challenges/barriers and it would be naïve to ignore that research. But there is some divergence as it is recognised that this might not be the only way. There are lots of questions for the School about how they can achieve consistency.

6. Fundraising Update

Jana provided a brief update. Many of the events which have already happened have already been covered. Coming up are Halloween discos and something around Halloween for the nursery children too. We plan to host a costume swap on Facebook. Xmas

plans have already been covered. Query whether nursery children are involved in making Xmas cards. Libby to check. **[Post-meeting,** was confirmed that the nursery children are doing Xmas cards.] There is not much capacity amongst active EPA members to organise an Xmas fair (but if anyone would like to organise it, please come forward). We do hope to hold an Xmas quiz in early December – venues currently being explored. There will be an Xmas jumper swap (in person) – will start 24 November. Other events we hope to put on are a family ceilidh (January); colour run (Easter) and the Summer Fun Day (June).

7. AOB/Items Raised

- a. Trip fund - Mr Moir has mentioned before that the location of the School makes it more expensive to organise trips (because e.g. private coach hire is required and that can cost £500 per class). Public transport is not always a viable option. Is there a way that the EPA can help with funding trips? General discussion on the pros and cons, and also about the Opportunities Fund. Mr Moir explained the Opportunities Fund has been used to subsidise 'pay what you can' trips. But more people are asking for help. Mr Moir keen to ensure 'equity of experience'. Agreed School should try to give as much notice as possible of trips/ask for money in instalments where possible, and perhaps place a limit on how much any trip will cost. Other options discussed were 'pay it forward'. Should a separate parent group be set up to discuss this further? At this stage, just planting the seed for further thought.
- b. Panto trip – following on from the previous point, the Alhambra has been in touch to ask if the School would like to visit them to see the panto. Cost (including transport) would be £17 each. 286 children. Could School put the amount of money they'd previously paid for theatre company to come into the School towards the cost of a panto trip? Need to consider children who may not want or be able to go. Need to make sure no children feel excluded (so if proceed, maybe need to consider organising panto trip and something else at the School at same time so all children have an experience). Agreed that the Pupil Council should consider this and let us/Mr Moir know what they would like to do. EPA agreed in principle to fund the costs over £10 per head. Mr Moir also to consider speaking to the parents/carers of those children who may struggle with such a trip, to gather their thoughts.
- c. Mobile phone pact – example of group of schools in Ireland adopting a voluntary 'no-smartphone code' until high school. Would reduce peer pressure and pester power, and increase attention spans and literacy. Could reduce cyber bullying too. Could such a pact work at Echline (or in wider cluster)? Various pros and cons were discussed. Some could see benefits, others felt it would not work for them. Would it apply to all phones and smart watches, or just

Mr Moir

Graeme Keir & others

<p>mobile phones? Perhaps there is a middle ground somewhere. Agreed a sub-group would be set up (initial members Graeme Keir and Ali Walker) to explore the code in more detail and what other options there might be, and come back to the next EPA meeting with further thoughts. Might Mr Johns also like to be involved in these discussions? If anyone else would like to be involved, please email echlinepa@gmail.com to indicate your interest.</p> <p>d. Musical instruments/tuition - ongoing issues with access to music tuition, which is having knock on effect when kids reach High School. This is because the High School slots are already full with children who have had tutoring at primary. Feel Echline is at a disadvantage. An appeal was made to Mr Moir to push hard for better provision. Mr Moir explained he had in fact spoken to the instrument service person today. Lack of tutoring is partly down to circumstances (illness etc). Also, Mr Moir has no direct engagement with the tutors who come to the School (they are not School staff) so it is difficult for him to monitor whether they are coming in or not. He recognised there is an issue with the system. He will communicate these concerns to those at the leadership level.</p> <p>e. School photos – 20 November for nursery and siblings photos; 21 November for everyone else.</p> <p>f. P6 buddies – Mr Moir confirmed there is a meeting soon between the P1 and P6 teachers to discuss how to take this forward. Point was made that the buddy system used to start in nursery, so there is a feeling that time is being lost. Mr Moir confirmed that would be the plan going forward.</p> <p>g. Halloween DJ – the DJ we used last year (who would not accept payment) is otherwise engaged. We have struggled to find other DJs. A couple have quoted £320/300. It was agreed that the EPA would cover the cost of this.</p> <p>8. Date of next meeting</p> <p>Provisionally, Tuesday 7 November 2023 (this will be in person and over Teams).</p>	<p>Mr Moir</p> <p>Mr Moir</p>
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ACTION LIST

21.09.23	Initials	Action	Date
1.	JR	To follow up with Council on 'missing' funding money - in progress (expected to receive in September/October)	End October
2.	CD/JS	To pull together survey for parents/carers to seek their views on what they want from EPA -	End November

		carried over (briefly discussed the apps which QPS and QHS use – feedback is that queries to school offices have reduced as parents/carers are using app to find info out)	
3.	LS	EPA to send out email to gauge interest in the setting up of a sub-group to draft response to catchment change consultation ASAP	By 11 October
4.	JM	Panto – Mr Moir to discuss with Pupil Council and some parents/carers to gauge thoughts	By 13 October
5.	LS/GK	Mobile phone pact – EPA to send out email to gauge interest in the setting up of a sub-group to consider further and report to next EPA	Report back at next EPA meeting
6.	JM	Musical instrument tuition – Mr Moir to escalate	By next EPA meeting
7.	JM	P6 buddies – Mr Moir to update post P1/6 teachers' meeting	By next EPA meeting