

TPG Meeting

7th May 2025

Agenda

1. Head Teacher Updates
2. SSE update - Alasdair
3. Library update - Jenny
 - a. Succession planning
4. Treasurer handover - Fergus
 - a. Fergus taking on treasurer role to be voted on
5. ASN group request for funds - Rebecca
6. Tipi request for volunteers - Alexa
 - a. If I can't make it, the Tipi team would really like to encourage P1, P2 and incoming P1 parents to get involved with putting the tipi up and down.
 - b. The majority of the group is made up of parents of P2 and older kids and we will all be on the early drop off as of August so I think the numbers in the group will drop off. Plus it would be nice if some of the P1 parents were involved in the tipi - no experience needed, just join in!
7. Parking changes update
 - a. Hi sorry i can't be there tonight but it would be good to understand what the schools view and on the parking permit is especially how this interacts with the current restrictions. Our road is in Permit Parking area P020 but it seems from the consultation docs that we would also have additionality in P019 which is Towerbank. I would never dream of driving to school but it throws up important questions on who can and can't access the roads at pickup/drop off and possibly extra weight to putting in an actual deterrent for those who shouldn't. There was another delivery van on the road at drop off this morning.
8. Staffing changes

Discussion

1. Janitorial additional time
 - a. Schools get an allocation of additional time to spend on opening outside school hours and we've used it all up this year but happy to continue to support these meetings in the school
2. SSE report
 - a. There's a process that goes through to produce the report
 - b. Can't be published yet as a delay in producing it, the next steps are for the council to read and accept it and then it will be published hopefully in June
 - c. Some of the data in it can be quite complex without formal education training so also working on ways to make it more readable and accessible
3. Nursery inspection
 - a. Had notification that expecting a care inspection for the nursery so really important to respond to the survey that's gone out
4. Class make-up for 2025/26
 - a. Towerbank has gone from an extremely large school to a large school and that process is still progressing
 - i. Will be 16 classes in Towerbank from August which is 1 less than current
 - ii. When Mr Friend started there was 730 children and 23 classes
 - iii. After August there will be under 500 children
 - iv. Essentially going from 3 classes per year to 2 classes per year

- b. In the last few years there's been very few changes to classes which is from direction from the council which says classes shouldn't be changed without a specific reason
- c. This year going to make a change for reasons which will be set out
 - i. Won't be more or fewer classes - same number
 - ii. Due to the number of children in year groups
 - iii. Will change the configuration of classes of current P5s and P6s
 - 1. Currently there's a composite P5/6 class
 - iv. Current number of P5s will enable them to have 2 classes of P6s
 - v. Which will enable creation of 3 x P7 classes to fully focus on their transition to S1
 - vi. Further down the school there will be no changes that are able to be made or going to be made
 - vii. However, as happened last year there will be a mechanism for families to explore the option of moving classes, there will be a mechanism for that to be requested and looked at

1. Happy to support families by looking at that option on an individual basis

- d. Discussion and responses
 - i. Voiced disappointment that there will still be a composite class which will be P4/5 (current P3/4 class)
 - ii. There are parents of the composite classes that would like to explore options for better integration between the year groups of the remaining composite class
 - iii. Mr Friend acknowledges that not every decision will please everyone and the guidance from Edinburgh Council that unless you are forced into a situation where you have to change classes then they should remain as is
 - 1. School is happy to look at new ways and ideas to facilitate more interaction between children in different classes.
 - iv. The council's decision to re-organise the classes each year is very challenging for schools, no data presented on whether it's better for kids or not
 - v. Some parents seem to be open to it
 - vi. Mr Friend will give the points raised tonight some thought before making a final decision
 - vii. Has led the school through some really challenging re-organisations which detract a lot of time and attention away from schooling and onto managing the situation
 - viii. It never pleases everyone and takes a huge amount of time and effort to do

5. Library update - Jenny

- a. Library has gone well this year and perhaps a good time to discuss what comes next for the library
- b. A lot of experience in the group but not a lot of capacity time-wise
 - i. Current volunteers looking at what they're able to commit to and writing out a lot of information on how things are managed so the information can be retained and passed on
- c. Jenny still in the school for another year but would like to support from the background and so starting to plan what next year and beyond will look like with the current group of volunteers
- d. Update at the next class reps meeting to see what support might be required

6. Treasurer update

- a. Fergus happy to take on responsibility from Steph
- b. Will share a vote via WhatsApp

7. ASN request for funds

- a. Request for up to £2000 for specific items such as weighted blankets, sensory items, deep pressure, fidget toys, a whole bunch of items that will be sourced and benefit kids with ASN
- b. Aiming to find long lasting items that are good quality and sustainable where possible
- c. Some items would be freely available to all children in self-select baskets, some would be

8. Tipi volunteers

- a. Conscious that most of the Tipi volunteers will be going into P3 and so won't be staying for the 15 minute window so looking for some P1/P2 children that could take on some responsibility to manage the Tipi

- b. TASC might start using it as well in the afternoons
- 9. School perspective on suggested parking changes
 - a. School streets are meant to be free from cars except
 - i. People that live in the street, taxis and anyone with a disabled badge, but badge doesn't need to be shown
 - b. Doesn't seem to work
 - c. Have managed to get the council to stop doing bin collections during drop-off/pickup times
 - d. School Travel Plan is possibly not an effective way of managing it
 - e. Parents taking action seems to be the best way to get meaningful change
 - f. Sustrans possibly had funding at some point to help with related travel management
 - g. A number of issues with the infrastructure
 - i. Lane leading out has no direct barrier to stop kids running out onto the road - some near misses there
 - ii. Signage is out of date and not accurate
 - iii. Sometimes 1 way, sometimes 2 way, not clear
 - iv. Pavement from school to prom is inadequate
 - v. Could the protective barrier be extended - council's position is to remove them so suggesting any changes may have it removed
 - h. Perhaps could identify what the desired outcomes would be?
 - i. School Travel Plan would look at that
 - i. Banners on fence
 - i. Have done that before and they were torn down the next day
 - ii. School might still have the banners so could see if they could be re-attached
- 10. Staffing changes
 - a. Will be some changes at the end of the year, will send an email with updates
 - b. Mrs Chad will continue as acting capacity in Forthview until Christmas
 - c. Katrina Innes will continue in seconded role until Christmas
- 11. Mobile phone ban started in Porty High today
 - a. First high school in Scotland
 - b. Been on the news tonight including some Towerbank kids
 - c. They have to get the phone back if they leave the building
- 12. Transition from ParentMail to Groupcall
 - a. ParentMail has been replaced by GroupCall which sends emails directly to email rather than in the app
 - b. Only sends to the primary contact, so if you want additional contacts then need to email the school to request it
 - c. School were told they're not allowed to use ParentMail any more, must use GroupCall
- 13. Teachers paying for resources
 - a. Can the TPG help with that?
 - b. Mr Friend gives out the very clear message that teachers use the resource request process to request resources and that they don't use their own money to buy resources
 - c. At Lindsay's school the parent council donate an amount to each stage (£200) which the teachers can decide how to spend
 - d. As the TPG we could decide to do that but would look for direction on how that might work
 - e. Mr Friend not happy to accept that a school can't run financially independent
 - f. The wood of the circle area is rotting and becoming dangerous but a throw away quote to fix was £50-60k so not an easy job - could be investigated further
- 14. Fairs
 - a. Handover from Clare has been phenomenal
 - b. Will start call for volunteers after volleyball tournament
 - c. Samba band are going to perform
 - d. Blanket sale - a car boot sale without the cars
 - e. Entry will be at the gate
 - f. Looking for a

- g. TPG public liability is covered by council
- h. Some events are requesting volunteer insurance

Actions

- ☐ Vote on Fergus taking on Treasurer role - approved 18 for, 0 against
- ☐ Vote on ASN request for funds - approved 18 for, 0 against
- ☐ Request for Tipi volunteers from P1/P2
- ☐ Mr Friend will investigate how to start a School Travel Plan
- ☐ Investigate if still have the 'drive safely' banners
- ☐ Discuss with Mr Friend about starting a per-class fund that TPG gifts for teacher's discretionary spending