**Houston Primary School Parent Council Meeting**

**5th March 2019**   **7.00pm**

Attendees: Nicki Barrett, Cheryl Logan, Elizabeth Lindsay, Pamela Kellock-Shetty, Susan Flintoff, Samantha Ballantyne, Jane Kyle , Morven Feeley, Amanda Johnstone, Jillian McPherson, Jennifer Murray, Lorraine Wilson, Joanne Craig, Carol Farquhar, John Gaffney, Louise Hastings, Laura MacLeod, Lindsay Robb, Allison Livingston, Joanne Renshaw and Alexis Alexander.

1.Minutes were approved from the last meeting by Cheryl Logan and Elizabeth Lindsey.

2. Chairpersons report:

The new roof is looking fabulous. Nicki Barret is unable to attend the parent liaison meetings as it is held on a Tuesday which isn’t suitable for Nicki so if anyone is interested in going in her place, please let her know. Position of secretary has been filled by Alexis Alexander.

3.Treasuresrs report:

The bank balance as of 14th December was £7052.11

Breakdown being:

Movie Night £716.10

Photo commissions £1103.28

Christmas Fayre £2826.00

Easy Fundraising £107.73

4. Events committee report:

Elizabeth opened with a huge thank you to all the teachers, kitchen staff, Janitors etc for all their help and support to make the events possible

The Christmas fayre was a grand success, although it was mentioned that Santa could do with a fan as the corridor was particularly hot.

Elizabeth was extremely proud of the success of the movie night, with 282 children attending which saw the profits go up by nearly £500. It was discussed about having it slightly earlier for the younger groups, but we didn’t know if that would be feasible with parents dropping off multiple year groups. Another suggestion of splitting the p1,2,3s might be a good idea also.

Spring Disco is 28th March

The summer fun night will be held on Friday 7th June. Elizabeth asked for any ideas of possible new ideas for this event, and would welcome input.

The easy fundraising scheme is also woefully undersubscribed, and discussion was held as to how to raise the profile of this easy to use, lucrative fundraising system. Suggestions of a stall at the summer barbeque wherein patrons can register then and there, along side a general raising of awareness through flyers sent home in bags or on tickets were discussed.

Finally, from the events team, Elizabeth is stepping down as chairperson of the events committee after this year. Louise Hastings and Laura McLeod shall be taking over.

5: Uniform report:

Morven Feeley reported Laura Masterton has joined the team in preparation of Lorna’s departure. There has been a significant drop in orders, possibly due to people ordering directly from suppliers themselves online. Tracksuits have been quite popular and the new ones are significantly better quality. They are hoping to put 2 orders in a year to avoid them being mismatched. It has been agreed that girls may wear navy leggings if they chose, along with their tracksuit tops, as the bottoms aren’t as popular. They are also looking for ways to run down the stock as there is quite a surplus at present. Hoodies for the p7s were discussed, and it was agreed to have orders taken the first full week back after the summer holidays in August, with supply for September. It was also agreed that the child’s initials will be on the hoodies.

6: Book Club report:

The treasurer reports that from September to December 2018 the book club made £624, a substantial increase of nearly £100 from the previous year.

There are scheduled author visits at the end of the month. The club is a little thin on the ground for helpers at present so Susan is goign to post on face book to see if that can be rectified.

7: Mrs Murrays report:

Mrs Murray opened by expressing her thanks to all the parent council members and parent volunteers for all their help thus far. It was agreed that all the events had been a great success.

Staffing is fairly settled at present with little movement, however as is usual for this time of year, ill health is throwing up problems for the faculty.

Mr Burges is reducing his day from 5 to 4, with Mrs Miruzzi taking on the extra day.

There was absolutely no response to the advert for a dining room helper so the teachers are doing the best they can.

The roof is now complete, except for the solar panels which have yet to be fitted onto the west wing. This shall be done as soon as weather allows.

In addition to the recent roof upgrade, the school will be completely rewired over the summer holidays. It is a massively ambitious task wherein the school is handed over to the contractors resulting in quite significant upheaval. It was noted that this it is only the rewiring that will be done, and the classrooms will not be put back to their original condition. So we shall await the outcome.

There is on going discussion regarding the proposed early learning and child care centre that is being built to replace the nursery. There is still no concrete plan as to where it is to be located, but there is a meeting booked in at the end of March that should help clarify this. The hope is that it will be up and running for August 2020. The nursery will not change to the new 52 week structure until the new build is ready as there is simply not the capacity to facilitate the change in hours. AS yet, staffing levels and management structures are undecided.

The school has launched its new online payment system, Parent Pay. We are the only school in Renfrewshire that was part of the pilot LOA pay scheme that now remains. It is hoped that we shall be up and running by April/May with the expectation that this is how parents will pay henceforth. If you have a balance on the old system, you are advised to run it down. We are hoping that there will be a facility to transfer the balance but this won’t be a speedy process. More info to follow shortly.

Numbers for this session will be 511. P2 and P4 are completely full with sizeable waiting lists. The next school year will reflect this, with an increase in composite classes. Whilst this may not be a popular decision, the school cannot accommodate these large numbers and keep classes as single year groups.

Mrs Murray was delighted to announce that the school has received Pupil Equity funding of £19,000. They are currently looking at how this will be spent but that it will make a really big difference.

The issue of the online world impacting on the school and classrooms day to day running, in that problems and issues stemming from social media and the increase of cyber bullying was discussed in great depth. The teachers expressed concern over how much time is taken up with these issues. The general feeling was that the extensive education pupils have received thus far isn’t working and that they will need to look at this issue further.

All schools in Renfrewshire have been updating their antibullying policy. Houston have, along with parent consultation (there were 82 responses) have prepared a draft of their new policies. The general consensus was that parents felt that where there had been instances of bullying that had been reported to school, the outcome had been more than satisfactory, with clear conflict resolution strategies in place. In the cases where the incidents hadn’t been reported, the staff have encourage the parents to discuss it with them.

Plans for the new library area have been coming along on the back of the outpouring of ideas the children had. Alas, finances and space have been key factors in the new design, however the plans have been favourably received. The fundamental ideas of there being an inside/outside area has been incorporated and reflected in the décor. The library contractor donate £1000 towards the funds, bringing the total up to £4500. It is going to look fabulous.

8: AOB:

Dawn Campbell has asked that the issue of bus lane markers be put on the agenda and discussed. The issue has been raised that due to parents parking in the bus lay by, this is causing great concern for pupil safety. It was raised that until it is properly marked this will be an ongoing concern.

Mrs Murray has been in discussion with Kenny regarding this matter and it is going to cost £2200 to paint the lines on. Although there have been generous offers from parents and Leslie Turnbull has said she will paint it, the problem lies with the legalities of this. The suggestion was made to approach local councillors to see if they could offer assistance in this matter. It was also suggested that having a push in the school for carpark safety would be a welcomed idea. Mrs Murray will speak to Kenny again, with everyone in agreement that whilst the issues over parking grumble on, safety is obviously of paramount importance and there needs to be something done.

After the feedback received from parents regarding the school photographs last year, a new photographer has been found. Julie Van will now do the photographs on the second full week back, with the school receiving a 20% commission on sales. We need to get some parent helpers along again to help with this. There was discussion regarding year group and class photos, but no decision made. Prom pictures were also discussed, with the plan being they will be done at the River Inn when the pupils arrive by either Victoria Murray or Mr Hedges and will be available for purchase at the tea party.

And finally, The polytunnel. Mrs Murray said that the efforts the wider community went to raise funds to rebuild it after it was so badly vandalised, speaks volumes about the community. An astounding £1400 was raised to reinstate it. Sadly, it has been vandalised again, however it will be made good again.