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Winchburgh PS **Parent Council Meeting**

Date: 21 January 2025

Time: 06:30 PM

Location: Online (Teams)

Attendees:

- David Smith
- Ian Harvey
- Jillian Hailstones
- Lorna King
- Evonne Custer
- Leanne Wilson
- Laura Murray
- Amber McKenzie
- Jenny Nicolson
- Douglas Ross
- Deborah Innes
- Laura Scott
- Lee Sillars
- Kirsty Anderson

Agenda Items and Key Discussions

School Update

1. School Improvement Plan

- **Components:** Literacy, Numeracy, and other curricular areas
- **Pupil Equity Fund (PEF):** Used for inclusion and diversity
- **Distributed Leadership Roles:** Each staff member has a specific role
- **School Improvement Groups (SIGS):** Staff and pupils work together on targeted areas
- **Cluster Improvement Group:** Collaboration with Winchburgh Academy on numeracy
- **Standards and Quality Report:** Published annually on the school website

2. School Extension and Building Refresh

- **Extension Plans:** Four classrooms and one hall extension planned
- **Building Refresh:** New energy-efficient lighting, redecorated stage area, and corridor
- **Future Plans:** Refurbishment of the main school hall and other maintenance work

3. School Uniform Review

- **National Guidance:** Review of school uniform policy to make it more affordable
- **Parent Council Involvement:** Survey and discussion planned

4. Council led Validated Self Evaluation (VSE)

- **Recent Report:** Positive feedback on school and nursery improvement
- **Care Inspectorate Visit:** Strong report expected

5. Primary 7 Residential Experience

- **Location:** Belmont at Meigle in Perthshire
- **Dates:** April 22-25, 2025
- **Parents Evening:** 5 March 2025

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6. Educational Excursions

- **Shift from Summer Outings:** Focus on educational excursions tied to current topics

7. Break and Lunchtime Activities

- **Traditional Playground Games:** Encouraging more structured pla.
- **Mud and Grass Areas:** Temporary restrictions due to muddy conditions

8. Parental Engagement and Volunteers

- **Events:** Family learning event planned between March and June
- **Volunteers:** Always looking for more volunteers

9. Cluster Changes

- **Hawkhill Primary School:** New headteacher to be appointed soon
- **Primary 6 and 7:** Junior Academy program at Winchburgh Academy
- **Catchment Area Changes:** Families can choose to move to Hawkhill Primary

10. Communication with Families

- **Seesaw and Teams:** Clarification on the use of these platforms for communication
- **WhatsApp Groups:** Informal communication support

11. Road Safety and School Traffic

- **One-Way System:** Discussion on implementing a voluntary one-way system
- **Parking:** Impact of new housing development on parking availability

12. Mental Health Week

- **Program:** Activities and resources planned for early February

Additional Points

- **Clothing Packs:** Plans to create clothing packs for parents
- **Change of Clothing:** Policy to accommodate children who need a change of clothes
- **Instrumental Music Service:** Screening at P5 for brass and woodwind instruction
- **Choir:** Mrs Hunt leading the choir and Glee club
- **Pupil Input:** Gathering feedback from pupils on the format of sports day
- **Disco Planning and Organization:** Upcoming Valentine's discos and improvements in registration and exit processes
- **Homework:** Review of homework policy and communication with parents

Questions and Feedback

- **Sharing Learning Times:** Feedback on the timing of these events
- **Class Mixing:** Discussion on potential class structure changes for the next year – too soon to know particularly with cluster changes

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Parent Council Items

Seesaw and Communication

Background and Evolution

- **Introduction of Seesaw:** Seesaw was introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic as a replacement for learning journals. It was initially used for all primary levels (P1 to P7) to facilitate communication between teachers and parents, and to share students' learning progress
- **Post-COVID Changes:** After the pandemic, the local authority decided that Seesaw would only be available for nursery to P3. This change was part of a broader strategy to streamline communication tools and align with local authority guidelines

Current Use and Challenges

- **Nursery to P3:** Seesaw is now used exclusively for nursery to P3 as a profiling tool. It allows teachers to share learning activities and progress with parents. Parents and children can also upload content to Seesaw, fostering a dialogue about learning
- **P4 and Upwards:** For P4 and older students, Microsoft Teams is the designated platform for recording and sharing learning beyond the classroom. Each student has a pupil account, and they are expected to share their learning with their families by logging in and showing them their work

Communication Guidelines

- **Teacher-Parent Interaction:** Teachers are not supposed to interact with parents directly on Teams. The guidance is that students should share their learning with their parents, maintaining the pupil's ownership of their account
- **Seesaw for General Messages:** During COVID, Seesaw was used extensively for general communication, including reminders and updates. However, this practice has led to some challenges, especially when transitioning to Teams in P4, where such communication is not continued

Issues and Solutions

- **Disappearing Communication:** The transition from Seesaw to Teams has created a gap in communication for parents of P4 students and older. Parents were accustomed to receiving updates and reminders via Seesaw, which is not the case with Teams
- **Communication with Teachers:** For any communication that is not directly related to learning, parents are advised to contact the school office. This includes logistical matters like forgotten items or general inquiries

Future Steps

- **Clarification and Consistency:** The school is working on drafting clear guidelines for communication to ensure consistency and to address the challenges faced by parents and teachers. This draft will be shared with the Parent Council for feedback
- **Informal Communication:** While the school cannot officially use WhatsApp for communication, it acknowledges the usefulness of informal WhatsApp groups among parents for sharing information and supporting school communicatio

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Cluster Changes

Hawkhill Primary School

- **Construction Progress:** Hawkhill Primary School is currently under construction and is expected to be completed soon
- **New Headteacher:** Interviews for the new headteacher are taking place and The new headteacher is expected to be in post between the end of February and the Easter holiday
- **Collaboration:** Winchburgh Primary and Hawkhill Primary will work creatively and collaboratively, maintaining their own identities while benefiting the wider Winchburgh community. This collaboration is like the past partnership between Winchburgh Primary and Holy Family

Junior Academy Programme

- **Primary 6 and 7:** Starting from January 31, Primary 6 students will join Primary 7 students at the Health and Well-being Hub in Winchburgh Academy on Friday mornings. This program, called Junior Academy, focuses on developing skills and metas-skills
- **Activities:** The program includes access to the sports hub and classroom areas, with activities designed to prepare students for the My Academy program in S1 to S3, which includes awards-based programs and leadership awards

Impact on Other Year Groups

- **Indoor Hall Space:** With Primary 6 and 7 students attending the Junior Academy program, there will be more indoor hall space available for Primary 1 to 5 students at Winchburgh Primary
- **Physical Education (P/E):** The additional hall space will help address concerns about limited P/E time, especially during the winter months when outdoor activities are less feasible

Catchment Area Changes

- **Hawkhill Primary Catchment:** Families currently in the Winchburgh Primary catchment but within the new Hawkhill Primary catchment for the next school year have been notified
- **Options for Families:** Families can choose to move their children to Hawkhill Primary or keep them at Winchburgh Primary. This applies to individual children or entire families
- **Sibling Guarantee:** If a family has a child already attending Winchburgh Primary, they will receive preferential (not guaranteed) space allocation for siblings

Nursery Provision

- **Hawk Hill Primary:** Initially, Hawkhill Primary will not have a nursery provision. Families with nursery-age children will need to use either Holy Family or Winchburgh Primary's nursery settings
- **Dual Arrangements:** Families can opt for dual arrangements, where nursery-age children attend one school and primary-age children attend another

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Road Safety

One-Way System

- **Proposal:** The Parent Council and school are considering implementing a voluntary one-way system to improve traffic flow and safety around the school
- **Discussion Points:**
 - **Positives:** Could reduce congestion and improve safety for children and parents
 - **Negatives:** Potential for increased traffic on certain roads, causing delays.
- **Next Steps:** Further discussion needed to ensure all Parent Council members support the proposal before moving forward
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Pavements and Crossing Patrols

- **Concerns:** There have been discussions about the need for better pavements and additional crossing patrols to ensure children's safety
- **Action Items:**
 - **Parent Council Involvement:** One option is for the Parent Council to write to the traffic department to express concerns and request additional crossing patrols
 - **Contacts:** The school has contacts in the traffic department who can be approached for guidance and support

Public Car Park Development

- **Development Plans:** The public car park behind the flats, often used by parents for school drop-offs and pick-ups, has been sold or is about to be sold to a developer for building social housing flats
- **Impact:** This development will reduce the availability of parking spaces, potentially increasing congestion and safety concerns around the school
- **Awareness:** The school will share updates and information as the development progresses to keep parents informed

General Safety Measures

- **End of Day Procedures:**
 - **P4 Gate:** Miss Ross will be present at the crossing area near the P4 gate to help children cross the road safely. Although she is not a crossing patrol officer and cannot stop traffic, her presence in a high-visibility jacket should help
 - **Flow of Children:** The school will slow down the flow of children coming out at the end of the day to reduce congestion and improve safety

Date and Time of Next meeting 25 February 2025

Location: - TBC