**Crudie Parent Council Meeting 24th June 2019, 2PM**

Present – Allyson Ironside, Mrs Rickard, Pamela Bartlett, Diane Paton & Jayne Watson

Apologies – None

**Treasurers Report**

The current bank balance is £3300.28

**Head Teachers Report**

Ms Rickard reported on what is happening in the school as follows:

Inspection

Very pleased with the report. Reflection on how hard everyone has worked and how well we work with others including the parent council. They were really pleased with the opportunities that we provide the pupils with especially because of our rural location. They were very complimentary about the school and the team and the welcoming feel that we have here. Yes we have points for improvement but that is the same for all schools. They are satisfied that we will be able to work on those and they won’t be coming back to see how we are getting on with them.

Points for improvement also reflect how well we know ourselves as a school – using terms such as “the school should continue to” and “as planned”. These were areas that we had spoken to them about and highlighted as what we want to work on. Continuing to work on literacy and numeracy was to continue with things we had put in place such as Emerging Literacy, Accelerated Reader, Numicon, Maths Mastery and our rotations. Some of these have only just been implemented this year and it takes time to embed these to see the resultant impact. One of the things they also mentioned was that pupils don’t have a rapid recall of number facts such as number bonds and times tables. We have started to go back to the rote way of learning these. An area we would now like to start concentrating on in addition to these is writing.

The other area for work was DYW. We have made a good start to this using audit materials provided by Education Scotland. The inspectors felt that we were well on our way with the work we have been doing for this. We use the skills in the classroom and the pupils are familiar with those terms. We have had some people coming back to us with the jobs that they do and offering support.

Not a huge amount of parents had filled in the parent questionnaire. To put this in context – 9% represents one parent. Overall parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements. The statements were discussed together with the inspectors and there was one particular statement which we thought we could ask the parent council about. The statement was “The school organises activities where my child and I can learn together”. We wondered if parents understood what was meant by this, knew what opportunities we provide for this, and if there were other ideas that they had. There was a good turn-out of parents for the meeting with the inspectors. This was very positive and it was good to hear that parents appreciate the work that we do.

Standards and Quality and Improvement Plan

This will mainly come from the inspection. The work that is done in order to prepare for inspection provides all the details that would then go in to the standards and quality report for this session. Main strengths that will be added in will be about the range of opportunities that pupils are given. The way that staff work together and take responsibilities in different areas. The things we have put in place to begin to raise attainment further.

For the improvement plan we are focussing on the two areas that we discussed and were reported on in the inspection. Writing is a main focus and within that we include presentation and spelling. A couple of years ago we worked in the KFC on the spelling progression but still this continues to be an area where pupils are struggling. We purchased Accelerated Reader as keen readers tend to be your best writers. Pupils pick their own books for Accelerated Reader and so the idea is that if they enjoy what they are reading they will want to read more. This has certainly been the case for some of the pupils and we have seen an increase in their reading scores. With everything though this can take time. With an increase in reading they are exposed more frequently to the written word and your readers are the ones who tend to be better spellers too (not all the time). I have purchased training by Anne Glennie. She is coming up during the November in-service days to train staff in Reflective Reading and The Story Kitchen. It is a progressive programme and she has had a lot of experience working with the Big Writing team. Teachers from the cluster will be joining us.

We will also be continuing in to year 2 of our Emerging Literacy Work. Collegiate time will be spent working together with our buddy network groups looking at how this works for the whole school and making sure that further staff have the necessary training.

For DYW we will continue to go through the audit with King Edward and Fintry. We are looking at holding a careers fayre between the three schools. We have also been working closely with Siemens who are laying cables from the offshore wind farm, past Fintry and on to New Deer. Together we are looking to have a cluster engineering challenge among the schools and run as an after school club. Siemens are currently working with the 3 schools bringing information about the offshore windfarm and relating this to the world of work.

Is there anything you feel you could contribute to the Standards and Quality or Improvement Plan? Any feedback you want to give? Or suggestions on something that you feel is lacking?

Homework kits

From the pupil questionnaires from inspection it could be seen that pupils really didn’t like homework. We had a consultation about homework in 2016 with parents and they feeling was that parents valued homework. With some pupils not completing their homework do parents still feel like this? Is it time to do another consultation? Is it the nature of the homework?

Homework is really important in P1. Such a difference between the pupils who are practising their phonics at home to those who don’t.

I wondered about setting up homework kits. These would be a bag that could be signed out by pupils or parents. They would have a game and possibly a story in them. I figured this would also address the “opportunities for my child and I to learn together” from the inspection. The kits would be optional with parents and children choosing to take them home rather than being assigned each week. Depending on the pack the game would practise literacy or numeracy skills. I was going to ask the Parent Council for money to support the setting up of these but Sandie MacDonald has generously donated a large sum of money to the school so we will use some of that money for this purpose. We are also using some of her money to create the ASD support trays that we had planned to set up this year. These would include things like ear defenders, emotion cards, etc.

Are homework kits enough? What sort of homework do parents and pupils like to have? Is it bigger IDL projects where parents and pupils work together and are completed over a longer period of time – are they better?

As the money from Sandie is being used for the homework kits I wondered if the Parent Council could support us in the purchase of a new Smartboard for the P1-4 class. The P5-7 class use their new board a great deal. It would be good to provide the P1-4 the same. They cost a large sum of money approx. £3000. Auchterless School managed to get funding through Muirden wind farms. Is this something we could try also? Any other suggestions?

Numicon

Mrs Young had asked if we could provide a 1-10 Numicon kit for each pupil coming in to P1. It helps them to learn their numbers and then as they progress through the year they can use them for number bonds and so on. The kits would then be passed on to the new P1s at the start of the following year. Kits are approximately £8 each.

Staff

Mrs Izabella Barska is a probationer and joining us next session. We will have a P1-3 class and P4-7 class. This is because we only have one P3 and she works closely with our current P4s. Next session there will be 13 in P1-3 and 14 in P4-7. I will still have a teaching commitment.

 Mrs Barska is joining us on Wednesday. She will have a guided tour by the pupils and then be in the big class from 11 until break so the pupils have a chance to meet her and they can begin to get to know each other. New P1s will be in the little class so the P3/4 are coming through.

**AOB**

It was agreed that the cost of the numicon kits would be covered by the parent council for the new P1’s starting next term

The parent council will contact muirden windfarms regarding funding to see if this is available for a new smartboard in the P1-4 class

Mrs Rickard will be sending out a survey regarding homework to see how parents/pupils feel about homework after the summer holidays

Parent Council AGM Meeting has been arranged for Monday 9th September