CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

from AGM 8 October 2019

I would like to welcome you to our AGM tonight and thank you all for coming along.

It has been another year of change and I’d like to start by expressing my thanks to Emma McCallum who was permanently appointed Headteacher in November. We were sad to say goodbye to Rachael Blackhall who had been deputising as Depute Headteacher but we are very pleased that Chenelle McMaster is our new Depute Headteacher and Caroline Green is the new Childcare Manager at the nursery. They have both started these new roles in August and have successfully taken on huge remits and have done so seamlessly and with lots of positivity. I’d also like to thank all of the talented and dedicated staff who make Aviemore Primary School and Nursery the successful and happy place that it is. They work incredibly hard to make the school run smoothly and they give the children so many different opportunities to develop and gain a wide range of experiences. We are now into the second year of the nursery being integrated with the school and I would like to thank Emma, Caroline and all the hardworking nursery staff for their commitment to make this continued integration go smoothly and continue to provide the children with such great support. We’re keen to continue to take this integration a step further and when ever possible, include the nursery in what the school are doing.

The school and nursery have seen many successes over this past year. Through individual and team sporting achievements including shinty, running, tennis, snowsports, football, triathlon, cycling to name but a few. There have also been successes in drama with some wonderful performances by different levels of the school. Lots of children put a lot of practice and dedication into Rock Challenge this year and thoroughly enjoyed it. Academic improvement has also been continued with Parent Council supporting the finance of resources when requested by our teaching staff including additional reading books, maths resources such as code-a-pillars and additional resources for the Rainbow Room. There has been a real drive across the school and nursery for more outdoor learning as so many benefits can come from this. The Parent Council were keen to support this by providing waterproofs for children to wear for outdoor learning. There was also the outstanding success of the children in the school choirs who took part in the Badenoch & Strathspey Music Festival and won in several categories. I’m sure that there are many other successes that I’ve missed! We would also like to thank the many teachers and parents who help make so many extra-curricular activities available to the children. We look forward to these successes and experiences being built upon in the coming year and hope that as a Parent Council we can help out where possible.

As a Parent Council, we have had a really good year in respect of fundraising as I’m sure our treasurers report will reveal. We have a number of kind and helpful parents who regularly organise and help out at the discos run throughout the year which lots of the kids really love. It’s great that the P7 children have been taking more responsibility by helping to run these discos with the money raised from the final disco of the year going directly towards the P7s leavers dance. As well as the discos, this past year has seen lots of other fundraising activities including a Sponsored Bike Ride, Tea towel sales, Christmas craft fair and another successful Summer Fun Night where members of the Parent Council and teaching staff really pulled together to raise funds for the school and nursery. We also raised some money for Unicef at the Summer Fun Night. All of these events are only possible as a result of hard work by those involved. I want to thank all those who have contributed to this effort, both individuals and businesses, over this past year. I hope that you will continue to volunteer and that we can encourage others to help too.

Thanks to all of the fundraising activities, we were once again able to fund the travel for school and nursery trips which were very successful and worthwhile. Every class in the school and nursery used their funding effectively for trips including; trips to Highland Wildlife Park, Edinburgh Zoo and the Highland Folk Museum. Fundraising paid for many resources for the school including new playground equipment, shelters in the upper wing and nursery playgrounds, equipment for Rock Challenge and Primary 7 class photos.

As well as fundraising activity, the members of the Parent Council have this year represented the Aviemore parent community with activities to push back against the cuts in ASN funding. Several members have given a great deal of their time for this cause and it is really appreciated. The proposed changes will affect staff and pupils so it is a cause that we need to continue to pursue and support this coming year.

The Parent Council have also led some successful recycling initiatives such as recycling milk bottle tops, red noses and unclaimed lost property school uniform.

This year we set up a Facebook page dedicated to Parent Council activities which has been well received and now has 177 followers which is a decent proportion of the parent population. It would be good to increase this further and for it to become more interactive.

This was my second year as Chairperson and I’d really like to thank the other members of the committee and parent council for keeping me right and also for making it a really enjoyable experience. It’s been great to see lots of new faces coming along to the parent council meetings and helping at the various events. The meetings have been really well attended with lots of useful ideas and productive participation. I think this coming year the parent council is looking very healthy with the wealth of talent and enthusiasm of our members. Everyone is busy and the time and effort that you give to the Parent Council is greatly appreciated.

It would be great if all of us could continue to try and actively recruit new members or helpers that would give us a good spread of representation from all year groups across the school and nursery. It is important as a Parent Council that we have representation across the school. Obviously the more parents that we can involve the easier it is on the rest of the Parent Council. It’s also really important that we keep improving our communication with the wider parent community and use all of the resources available to us to make this as effective as possible.

I’m really keen to record my thanks as Chairperson specifically to Lynne as Secretary for the work she has undertaken in this role and the support that she has given to the committee and Parent Council as a whole over the last 2 years. Thank you to Sas for her support as Vice Chairperson, for her willingness to take on this role and her dedication in giving all that she can to the school and nursery for several years. I’d also like to thank Tanja who took on the role of Treasurer this year which she has done very effectively. It is because of these generous people giving their time and enthusiasm that we are able to function as a committee and a Parent Council. We hope that there will be other members willing to take on these key roles which are essential for the Parent Council to continue successfully.

We have lots of great ideas and plans for the year ahead, in fact we’ve already started the ball rolling on the first fundraiser of the year, creating a cookery book. I really want to encourage everyone involved in the school and nursery community to continue to give your time, skills and energy to build on what the school and nursery already offer and help it to progress and continue to thrive. Let’s try to provide our kids with the best possible place to learn and enjoy their nursery and school experience – that’s why we’re here so let’s do everything we possibly can and make this the most successful year yet for the school, nursery and Parent Council.

Judith Thurlow

8th October 2019