CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

I would like to welcome you all to our AGM tonight and thank everyone once again for supporting the Parent Council.

The past year has been a very different to the one I envisaged a year ago! The Global Covid-19 pandemic effected every single one of us and caused the closure of the school from 23rd March until 11th August 2020. I would like to express my gratitude to the school staff for all the assistance and support that they offered parents and carers, as we all took on the role of home schooling tutors – I’m sure that I speak for us all when I say that home schooling gave me even more respect for the work that our school staff do! The school staff have also done an outstanding job of organising a safe and happy return to school this August; I believe that most children have been over the moon to return to some sort of normality, and have the opportunity to see their school friends and teaching staff again. I sincerely hope that this can continue.

As the Parent Council, we have had a strange very year for fundraising. We managed to hold a two successful school discos before the school closure, I would like to thank the parents that gave their time to help us organise and run these, the kids really enjoy them and I know they have been missed in the last 8 months. In normal years, the P7s who help run the school discos would receive the monies raised from the final disco of the school year for their leavers dance, we were sad that this could not take place this year. Late last year we created a cookery book with recipes kindly contributed by parents, carers and school staff, it was very well supported by parents and local businesses, the Mountain Café were kind enough sell copies on our behalf, meaning that we sold well half the number printed. We held a successful Christmas Fair with money raised from sales of the cookery book, tea towels, stalls and raffle – once again our parent helpers came along to assist and we had a very profitable event. We also ran an online auction for the first time, with a variety prizes kindly donated by local businesses, it was a great success with bids coming in from people across the country. We were however very disappointed not to be able to hold our usually well attended Summer Fun Night due the Global pandemic.

Thanks to our successful fundraising we were able to support the replacement of one of the school smart boards. Earlier this year the school identified that several the smart boards had reached the end of their useable lives which would have been a huge expense to replace. Very kindly one of our parents has fixed these and will continue to assist as necessary, I would like to thank Mike Dearman for his help.

This year the Parent Council launched party boxes; these being boxes of reusable plates, bowls and cups which can be hired out for children’s parties or events. These were very kindly donated by Claire & Ian Whyte and I would like to note my gratitude for this very kind gesture. We hope that these will continue to be well used in the future.

We successfully launched the uniform exchange, which has given parents the opportunity to recycle and reuse outgrown school uniform by donating it to the rail. Since the Covid-19 pandemic this resource has moved to the Community Foodshare at the Church Hall. I would like to encourage parents and carers to donate outgrown uniform and reuse the clothing items available. It is recycling at it’s very best!

The Facebook page continues to be well supported; we currently have 221 followers which is a good proportion of the parent population. We would like to continue to develop this and find other ways to interact with parents and carers.

This was my first year as Chairperson, and I would like to thank the other Parent Council members for all their support during this very strange year. It has been lovely to see some new faces coming to meetings and supporting at events. We would like to encourage parents and carers from across the school years to join the Parent Council, it is important that we have representation from across the school. I have represented the APS Parent Council at Highland Parent Council Partnership meetings this last year, which has been incredibly useful to hear the issues and concerns raised by other Parent Council officials.

I would like to record my thanks as Chairperson to Claire Whyte as she steps down as Vice-Chair but I have no doubt she will return to the Parent Council when she is once again able to. My thanks also go Helena and Katya for the work they have taken on in their roles, and the support that they have given me and the Parent Council over the last year. It is only because of these people giving their time and enthusiasm that we are able to successfully operate as a committee and a Parent Council

We appreciate that the coming year could be a difficult one for many as the global pandemic continues, but we hope we can all face this with positivity and optimism even with an uncertain future. Our fundraising options are limited, but we have a number of ideas and projects which we hope to progress, such as a school lottery and another online auction. I would really like to encourage everyone involved in the school and nursery community to continue to give your time, skills and energy to help the Parent Council continue to be a success!

I would finally like to thank all the parents, carers, school staff and local businesses for supporting the Parent Council, we just couldn’t do it without you!

Carole Butler

4th November 2020