

Fossoway School Council meeting

Monday 16 May 2011

The points below reflect the main concerns raised at the parent forum held between parents and representatives of Perth & Kinross Council (Anne Dalziel and Pat Fegen) on 23 February 2011.

What has happened on these issues since last FSC meeting (15 March 2011)?

1. Staffing

- (a) Four out of six **classroom** teachers are on temporary contracts until July 2011.

Headteacher/PKC to:

- *inform parents of the current timetable to determine what happens to the four (out of six) classroom (P1 to P7) teaching posts that are contracted to finish in July 2011*

PKC had advised that staffing allocation for the school should be confirmed by the end of May (including Nursery). No temporary contracts less than one year can be made permanent at this time. It is not the authority's intention to extend any current temporary contracts.

Vacant position will be filled with:

- a. compulsory transfers**
- b. newly qualified probationer one year placement**
- c. generic interview pool - PKC candidates**
- d. external advertisement**

Once a, b and c have been confirmed and classes allocated to teachers, if any positions remain unfilled, justifications go to PKC to be advertised externally (timescale dependant on PKC admin procedures).

- *ensure that if any interviews are required for re-appointment or otherwise, all interviews are carried out with prospective teachers in order to have teachers in post on the first day of term in August 2011*

As per Newsletter, it is our intention to interview before the holidays if at all possible.

- *do all that is necessary to ensure that Fossoway has the maximum number of permanent teachers possible (i.e. make a business case for converting the fixed-term contracts to permanent contracts).*

Reply given by Anne Dalziel at last Parent Council meeting.

- (b) No modern languages teacher in the school.

Headteacher/PKC to inform parents of current provision for modern foreign language teaching in P6 and P7 – teacher from KHS in place?

Headteacher/PKC to inform parents of the timetable/mechanism for ensuring correct provision for modern foreign language teaching is in place by at least the start of the new session in August 2011.

Should FSC contact the rector of Kinross High School directly to ask about the policy for which modern language Fossoway has to teach?

Teacher from KHS in place for P6 and P7 pupils this term.

Request for clarification and updates sent to PKC from school and local management group (April).

Discussions in progress with KHS on feasibility of continuing current provision - dependant on their staffing allocations.

2. Core teaching – Maths and Literacy

- (a) Numeracy and Literacy sessions cancelled and not rescheduled because of non-core activities.

Parents need early reassurance from school about the priority of these key skill areas to say they will not be sacrificed for 'other' initiatives that, whilst still valuable, do not underpin the ability to access learning in the same way.

Numeracy and Mathematics and Literacy and English remain a high priority across the school if a 'setting' group has to be cancelled, this does not indicate that these core skills are not being taught.

In line with CfE priorities Health and Wellbeing is also essential to ensure that all children meet the four capacities of successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Interdisciplinary learning provides a context to demonstrate the links between and across the learning for our children.

Timetabling across the school for setting in Language and Maths occasionally causes difficulties - other specialists timetabled on particular days, or one class going on a school trip.

Parent information evenings are being planned for this term and reports will be indicating levels this session.

- (b) Gaps in maths learning, no record of progress/attainment.

Parents urgently need information to give them confidence in the teaching/learning and assessment programmes and particularly the consistency of these within year groups. Please advise parents how to access (for each year group) the termly schemes of work/programmes of study along with the appropriate framework for assessment.

The experiences and outcomes in CfE provide the framework for the progression of a child's learning through a particular level. Through the continual evaluation process, teachers plan the next steps in learning for a group and an individual within this framework. As children progress at different levels and at different paces, the class teacher uses her professional judgement as to which resources and activities best meet the needs of all the pupils.

All teaching and learning is monitored regularly both formally and informally by management team, by other teachers and by PKC. CfE does not provide yearly schemes of work, a level spans approximately three years, where experiences and outcomes are revisited to ensure depth and breadth of learning.

- (c) Some Oxford Reading Scheme used in P1, but not clear what scheme is being used in other classes, possibly Longman. Reading for enjoyment not working for all children. What is the scheme used for spelling?

There seems to be a need for coherent, possibly new, scheme for both reading and spelling. Could the Oxford scheme be extended to other classes. In P2 the material used for reading and comprehension assessment is from New Zealand. Why? It seems good so perhaps could be used throughout the school but isn't there a comparable UK scheme?

We use a variety of resources to teaching Reading strategies to children. Once children are reading fluently, the focus then moves to 'close reading' skills such as inference, deduction and responding to texts. Teachers will ensure that these reading skills are taught during class by shared reading or guided reading sessions.

We purchased Collins resources for all year groups to ensure progression of these skills.

In early years we use Longman commercial scheme supplemented with other schemes, including Oxford Reading Tree. There is a National Book Banding Scheme which we are in the process of using to 'band' all reading material in school. Through this process we are auditing our resources and will purchase any necessary resources. Commercial schemes are incredibly

expensive and we may need help from the PTA should resources be required as a result of the audit.

- (d) Not enough direction and challenge in the reading for enjoyment.

More guidance is required from classroom teachers on choice of reading books in reading for enjoyment.

We do not teach Reading through the *reading for enjoyment* element. Our aim here is to encourage children to develop a love of reading and engage with texts they enjoy. We agree that the range and choice of books that we provide in school for the purposes of reading for enjoyment may not suit all children. This is where working in partnership with parents can help, you know your children best and their likes and dislikes. This is why we encourage children to bring books from home or from library. PKC are currently evaluating a range of summative and diagnostic assessments for use across the curriculum. We continue to use diagnostic reading assessments as required.

3. Assessment – especially for Maths and Literacy

- (a) What are the CfE assessment levels? How and when are assessments carried out?

Send out a brief handout: a brief CfE guide for parents, how it works, areas covered, assessment levels. What happened to the one Monty prepared last year?

- (b) What is the attainment for each primary level?

The initial brief handout on levels should be followed up by leaflets like the ones Willie did for 5–14 last year on each level, with an attainment plan (i.e. what pupils should know by the end of P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7).

See information in Sharing our Learning folders. CfE information provided by PKC and LTS has superseded Parent Council produced material from last session.

4. Communication, homework, discipline

What is happening with the parent forums set up to discuss these issues?

What decisions have been made? Are more meetings scheduled?

Information supplied to PC members via email.

AOB

What is the timescale for informing parents of the results of the parent questionnaire?