

Title of Meeting: Comely Park Parent Council Meeting	
Venue of meeting: Staff Room, Comely Park School	
Date of meeting: 6 February 2008	
Attendees: Mr Watkinson, Dougie Kennedy, Mel Brookes, Colin Gordon, Barry Smart, Rochelle Black, Sheila Ferguson, David Henderson, Stuart Duncan, Mrs Simpson	
Apologies: Councillor Goldie, Nicola Morton	
1	<p>Richard Teed, Senior Forward Planning Officer, Falkirk Council</p> <p>Richard Teed is Senior Forward Planning Officer at Falkirk Council, but also manages a small team looking after placing requests and school transport.</p> <p>Comely Park School (CPS) catchment area is one of the most urban catchments within the Council area, with over 4,000 dwellings within the catchment boundaries.</p> <p>Traditionally, there are many placing requests from the Lionthorn estate area, especially with P1 class sizes now reduced to 25. An additional teacher was added to P1 in 2007, to comply with class size ration requirements.</p> <p>CPS also currently has 3 teachers for P3, but this will reduce to 2 teachers next year (where the maximum class size will be 33). Class size pressure comes mainly from placing requests. Places are also reserved for each year group, for families moving into the CPS catchment during the course of the year. (For the August 2008 P1 intake, approx. 2 places will be reserved for children moving into the area.)</p> <p>Mr Watkinson said there are currently 52 enrolments for P1, with 2 or 3 of these for deferred entry and some of them placing requests. If numbers stay below 50 for catchment pupils, it is likely that P1 will consist of 50 children (and so only 2 teachers), meaning that no placing requests will be satisfied.</p> <p>Where there is a sustained intake of 50 or more children, the Council can always add additional classrooms to accommodate them, but demand will always exceed supply at a popular school such as CPS.</p> <p>Over-capacity enrolments have been managed down over recent years by refusing placing requests for CPS, although the vast majority of placing requests are satisfied at primary stage generally.</p> <p>Incidentally, there is a high level of placing requests going up the school, as a form of waiting list.</p> <p>There are no plans to extend CPS at the moment and the Council will resist this if at all possible.</p> <p>CPS has been at high occupancy levels since the 1990s. Roll projections show that, for the next 5 years, there will be similar levels of occupancy, with 45-55 enrolments per year for P1. The Falkirk Royal Infirmary site may put pressure on CPS, once it has been sold off for housing in the future.</p> <p>Richard Teed's team works closely with the Council Planning teams to see what new housing developments are in the pipeline. The Council's rate of new housing growth has been in the top 6 in Scotland in recent years, with a large amount of new developments currently underway in areas including Redding, Larbert and Whitecross.</p> <p>Although the rate of housing development has meant large financial gains for developers, any potential recession could slow down new housebuilding rates. The Council uses a ratio of 0.27 pupils per house, to help them plan for future enrolments. In addition, Richard's team is also consulted on for any new housing development of more than 5 houses.</p> <p>Potential class size reduction for P1-3: Falkirk Council, along with other Councils, has raised serious concerns about the potential implications for P1-3 class sizes of 18. (Richard is not sure if the proposed class size of 18 is for separate classes or for class size ratios.) The Council will get further advice on the timetable for this in the near future.</p> <p>There has been £3-4m investment in the school estate p.a. in recent years, with all schools rated A-D on a number of different areas. There are currently no schools in the Falkirk Council area now having a D rating.</p> <p>School bus: The Transport Planning Unit at Abbotsford House deals with school buses. There is currently an issue with the CPS bus of certain children's behaviour when they are unsupervised on the school bus, although most buses now have CCTV. In addition, there is a Behaviour Contract that pupils/parents have to sign, plus an escalation procedure to deal with most issues.</p> <p>There are also School Travel Plans for each school, with maps, a list of hazards and recommendations. Although there is a very small Council budget to implement the Travel</p>

	plans, Mr Watkinson will circulate the relevant section of the CPS Travel Plan to the Parent Council.
2	<p>Minutes from last meeting</p> <p>Response to attainment document: Dougie collated our replies and sent off a response to the Education Team, but has had no response to date. Dougie will chase this up.</p> <p>Playground/school gates: Barry will get an update out to the Parent Council within the next couple of weeks on the issue of the school gates. Did Mrs Collins put information about the gates out in the January CPS newsletter?</p> <p>Could we add some simple signage to the gates? Could we use some of the Parent Council funds to pay for the signage, if the Council Clerk of Works is not forthcoming with funding? Mr Watkinson has established that, contrary to popular understanding, there is actually no public right of way from the double gates by Formula 1 to the single gate by the back lane. Mr Watkinson will add information in the next CPS newsletter about the levels of playground supervision.</p> <p>Playground facilities: a landscape architect was due to come to CPS to survey the playground. Mr Watkinson will check the progress on this, as well as the status of the proposed Awards for All application.</p> <p>Central Scotland Forest Trust: Sheila will follow this up.</p> <p>Weatherproof noticeboards: Mr Watkinson will give Dougie the contact details for the Facilities Officer at the Council, plus proposed costs for the noticeboards in the playground.</p> <p>School patrol crossing: Dougie will check the progress on this re: the crossing at Cochrane Avenue with Nicola Morton.</p>
3	<p>Communications</p> <p>We have a standing agenda item to look at ways in which we can communicate with parents of CPS. Stuart thinks we need to update all parents on what we have achieved since the formation of the Parent Council – should we do this in the form of an additional page added to the next school newsletter?</p> <p>How can parents feed back to the Parent Council? By e-mail, website or letters to the school? Can we set up a dedicated e-mail address for the Parent Council? Barry will look into this and will let us know.</p> <p>Barry will also produce the additional Parent Council newsletter page and Mel will assist with copy for this. Items for inclusion include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on Richard Teed’s attendance at meeting - School gates - Playground supervision - Playground facilities - Notice of AGM - Business Links - School Travel Plan (walking to school) <p>We will aim to have the first draft of the newsletter page completed within 2 weeks.</p>
4	<p>AOB</p> <p>There is currently consultation on a proposed Nursery School merger, with notice of a meeting on 4 March and return of written responses by 12 March.</p> <p>Barry has the e-mail addresses of all other parents interested in getting more information on the Parent Council and will set them up separately on Google Groups.</p> <p>The CPS Parent Council bank account has now been credited with £500, but any unspent funds (less a 20% reserve) will pass to the school in April. The account is held at the Clydesdale Bank in Falkirk. Colin will arrange for the accounts to be audited.</p> <p>Do we need to apply for Data Protection registration for the personal data we hold? Colin will look into this and report back to the group.</p> <p>Stuart thinks we need to amend a couple of elements of the CPS Parent Council constitution, relating to Pupil Council involvement and arrangements for calling special meetings.</p>

	Does the constitution accurately reflect our objectives?
5	Next meeting date The next (interim) meeting will take place on Wednesday 19 March 2008 at 7.30pm in the Staff Room, in advance of the AGM in April. (Please note that the AGM will be held in the Library.)

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