



**Draft Minutes of Gatehouse School Council Meeting held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2008  
(to be approved at next meeting)**

**Present:** Mrs S L Cain, Mrs C Clark, Mrs A Fairnie, Mrs H Innes and Mr H McLean

In attendance:

Parents: Mrs M Burgess and Mrs S Walker

Councillors: Cllr T Jacques and Cllr J Maitland

1. Mrs Fairnie **welcomed** everyone to the meeting.
2. Apologies were submitted on behalf of Mrs P Hamilton.
3. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
4. Mrs Innes, Treasurer, gave a brief financial report which included monies received and one outstanding invoice. There have been a few teething problems with the bank account and the invoice will be settled as soon as Mrs Innes is in receipt of the cheque book.
5. **Items of business**

**a. Safety of Children before and after school**

Mr McLean gave a brief background report on how problems at the school gate have arisen as a consequence of construction of the new Health Centre, and expressed his thanks to Mr Duffy who has voluntarily taken on the position of unofficial 'lollipop man'.

Mr McLean advised of the School Travel Plan which is well under way following consultation with the pupils, Combined Services, the Police and the Local Roads Department. A sketch plan was distributed which laid out the proposals which will hopefully reduce the chaos at 9.00 am and 3.00 pm each day. It was agreed in the interests of all round safety that things need to change, and it is proposed that we revert to the 'one way system' for cars round Garden Street with the children being dropped off there. It is envisaged that the only vehicles parking on Dromore Road would be the school buses.

We are at present awaiting the final go ahead from the Council's Roads Department, and parents can be advised of the proposals once confirmation is received.

A discussion followed with various worthwhile suggestions and it was agreed that there will be no easy way to alleviate this problem, as there is always going to be an element of congestion at these times.

Cllr Jacques advised that he had previously submitted proposals which suggested negotiations to obtain access to the school through the community centre car park but had heard no more about this. The school was unaware of his proposals at the time.

b. **Update on new school website**

Mr McLean gave a demonstration of the new school website on the interactive whiteboard. The new website – [www.gatehouseschool.org](http://www.gatehouseschool.org) - will be officially re-launched in the next newsletter and parents will be asked for any feedback they may have. A past parent, Ken Smyth, created and maintained the original school website for many years and Mr McLean expressed his sincere thanks to him for this, but it is now felt that this is unfair to expect Mr Smyth to continue with this burden, and, accordingly, the school (Mr McLean) is now taking over management of the re-launched site.

c. **Mobile Phone and Internet Bullying Policy**

Members of the School Council had received a copy of this previously for their perusal, and it is now available for all parents on the school website. It was noted that those few of our pupils who have mobile telephones in their possession have them for 'before and after school' communication with home/parents, and use of phones has not been a problem in school as children don't use them during the school day.

d. **Repairs to New Playground**

Unfortunately the new Playground has a shallow area which is prone to pooling during the wet weather and subsequently freezing in winter. The contractors were initially happy to resurface the area but we have now been advised that installation of a drain is proposed. It is felt that this will not be satisfactory given that a patched surface will probably result. Members were asked for their opinions and the general opinion was that the playground should be repaired to the standard expected.

Cllr Maitland and Cllr Jacques will take this forward and investigate with Property Services.

e. **School Panto**

'M & M' Panto is now costing approx £700.00 for 1½ hours entertainment. Enquiries have been made with both Lochside Theatre and Newton Stewart Cinema. Lochside Theatre

never replied but Newton Stewart Cinema is very keen to have us and it has been decided that we will travel to Newton Stewart for an evening performance later during December.

f. **School Uniform**

Mrs Fairnie has been approached by parents regarding the state of dress and appearance of some of the pupils. She asks whether a School Uniform Policy could be produced. It was agreed that school uniform was very important and various incentive 'schemes' were discussed;-

- ❖ a 'wear your uniform with pride' week.
- ❖ a 'used uniform' table for those families perhaps unable to purchase new items of school uniform. Items perhaps being sold for a 'small donation' to the school.
- ❖ black plimsoles enforced for gym – at only £2 per pair most families should be able to provide these as opposed to more expensive trainers.
- ❖ deduction of house points for not wearing uniform.

6. **Any other business**

Apologies were submitted from Cllr Gilroy who was attending a school council meeting in Creetown.

Mrs Innes enquired as to whether there remains a requirement for the janitor to be in school during meetings. This was discussed briefly but no answer is clear.

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00 pm

Meeting closed at 8.00 pm