

Sciennes PS Parent Council Meeting

Thursday 17th September 2026 @ 7pm
In person at Sciennes PS

Voting attendees:

Emma Moulds, Chair
Sean McGivern, Co -Treasurer
Rebecca-Jo Rushdy, Fundraising co-lead
Lena Lorenz, comms group
Maciej Kaczmarek, P1 Rep
Belinda McGhie, P3 Rep & Clubs
Susie Braham, P4 Rep & Food Intolerances Group
Patricio Tronsco, P5 Rep
Chigdem Arslan, P6 Rep & ASN Rep
Franca MacLeod, P7 Rep
Claudia Steedman, Eco Group Rep

Non-voting attendees:

Sharon McGhee, head teacher
Lucy Gallagher, depute head teacher
Lorraine Burns, P2A class rep
Plamena Inavov, P1C class rep
Rachel Knowlton, P1B class rep
Clare Miller
Jenny Man, P6C class rep
Philippa Townsend
Sarah MacPhail, P5C class rep
Caroline Blackley, P4A class rep

Welcome

Welcome to everyone from the Chair of the PC, Emma Moulds and a brief overview of the meeting agenda.

Apologies

Becky Carter, co-Chair
Helen Holroyd, co-Fundraising lead & Fruit group
Jim Sorrell, Football Club Chairman & Roads lead
Leda Sharkey
John Armstrong

Previous Minutes

Headteacher Update

Sharon McGhee

- Full school year calendar circulated before summer holidays; amended calendar sent out this week

- Celebrating progress and success e.g. pupil progress meetings, classroom visits (open morning 13th and 14th Nov), other year group specific events throughout the year (P1/P2 winter show), staff team get-together etc.
 - Pupil progress meetings are in the main hall due to health and safety and fire risk assessments. It's not possible to host meetings in classrooms. Classrooms are also used to showcase learning and learning environments.
- Lyceum trip Fri 11th Dec: all class and year reps and PC members invited to come along
- School has a robust support plan for ASN families. Thank you to Susie for raising food intolerance and allergy awareness. Strong focus that everyone is welcome at Sciennes from every background and whether they require additional support needs or not. This is reflected in the personal values of staff.
- Aim this school year to ensure consistency within the whole staff team while meeting general teaching council standards. The staff team have co-developed a learning and teaching policy - booklet. The focus is that all children should feel "loved, safe and respected". Focus on giving "good" feedback (e.g. be specific, focus on trying) and connect how feedback is given at school and at home. New policy has a 3 strand approach:
 - Digital strategy working group after October break, together with parents
 - Focus on maths and numeracy; continued engagement with parents
 - "Sciennes Learns" - 4 part lesson model (before Easter)
- Pupil leadership roles: about half the school put themselves forward for leadership roles which shows great engagement.
- Connection between St Leonard's and Sciennes PS: more promotion for nursery and make the connection

Treasurer Report

Sean McGivern

- £49,484.96 current bank balance
- Each teacher receives £25 at beginning of school year to spend on classroom. Sufficient funding.
- Aim to focus on high quality resources that last and sustainable solutions rather than items that are thrown away
- PC Spending plan shared on the PC website: <https://www.sciennesparentcouncil.com>

£10,000	Refurbishment of listed school fence
£7000	Long-lasting project boxes (request from teachers)
£5000	Playground maintenance
£550	Microphones (request from staff team)
£350	Wildflower garden (raised by Eco group)
£75	Indoor plants for admin hub (raised by Eco group)
£150	Chopping boards, knives (raised by Fruit group)

Request Approval for Spending plan (above) – Spending Approved by present voting members (11)

- Longer-term spending: create flexible spaces for classrooms, e.g. triangular tables, soft and high seating areas and areas for independent learning. This needs to be designed by Edinburgh City Council. Approx £35k / classroom.
- Maintaining funding for the roads fencing depending on planning permissions (~£20k, not confirmed)
- All invoices or funding requests need to be sent to: sciennestreasurer@gmail.com

Group Updates

Playground/Roads Update

Sharon McGhee for Jim Sorrell

- discussions with the council planners have been continuing regarding the planning application for the proposed fencing and gates
- we submitted an Access Statement seeking to overcome concerns regarding the acceptability of Hatton Place as the alternative route for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchairs. The Roads Department is also backing this by providing the planners with technical details regarding crossing points, etc.
- the planners have also asked for the proposed fencing to be made lower and its design changed with railings more compatible with the streetscene. We are currently taking advice on the type of fencing which can be procured and a revised proposal will be submitted shortly.
- the further delay is frustrating but it is prudent to achieve the support of the planning officers before the planning application is decided by the Council's Development Management Sub-Committee.
- a date for the committee meeting remains to be confirmed.
- planning approval will trigger the construction of the fencing. The earliest this might occur now appears to be over the Christmas/New Year break, at which time the ETRO would also commence. However all timings remain fluid.
- we are grateful for the continuing endeavours of Michaela Lyons of the Council's Learning Estate for leading the project on our behalf

Comms

Lena Lorenz

No update

Fundraising and Events

Rebecca-Jo Rushdy

- Aim to cultivate relationships with families and create a community
- Events diary on website: <https://www.sciennesparentcouncil.com/diary> (option to download Google Calendar)
- Uniform sales including outdoor kits, dressing up etc. to focus on sustainability and affordability
- Next big events coming up:
 - **29th October Halloween Disco P4-P7 (shared effort, use [SignUp.com](https://www.signup.com) to spread jobs)**
 - P4-5 4.30-5.45
 - P6-7 6-7.40 - pack down needed (P6/7 parents)
 - No DJ available this year - back up: borrowed disco lights and playlist
 - **28th Nov Winter fair**
 - 2025 raised £11,400 - what raised well? Raffle (pre-sale plus hampers) (£1,870), Christmas trees (£1,010), Wreaths (£911), Silent Auction (£887), Entry (£834), Bar (£780).
 - Leads missing e.g. wreaths, santa's grotto, food (big effort, only £137 profit), bar (need someone with license, mixology background to lead)
 - Some ideas: wreath-making craft night (Community event), keep silent auction and move raffle online (Zeffy) and simplify to Tombola at fair, need to source trees supplier (can families purchase direct?), food: either recruit catering family or increase bake sale efforts; bar: offer alcohol-free mulled wine unless we get a licensed lead; Santa's Grotto: new lead or repurpose space e.g. glitter tattoos; space: recruit for more stalls run by parents and create a rest area (feedback from parents)

- Discussed possibility of asking for entry donations via FSS to obtain GiftAid → complicated.
Emma in conversation with FSS about this and will update.
- Bake sales: each year group “owns” 1 bake sale, “friendly competition”. So far, we raised: £361 (P3), £344.20 (P6)
- Fundraising group has set up a channel on the WhatsApp community Hub and this can be joined directly via the WhatsApp community channel
 - Comms via the [WhatsApp Group Chat](#)
 - Regular coffee chats (and occasional pub nights) organised to bring people and ideas together
- New fundraising ideas and any help always welcome: sciennesfundraiser@gmail.com

Football

Jim Sorrell (written update)

- all year groups have been training on the Meadows every Saturday since the start of term,
- matches against other schools begin this weekend for P4-7 years,
- subscriptions are currently being paid through Parentpay and an update on player numbers will be given at a future PC meeting,
- year group reps met 16/9 to coordinate running the club

Fruit Group

Rebecca-Jo Rushdy for Helen Holroyd

- Fresh fruit platters for every class, almost every Friday morning
- Request for funding of fruit through PC while maintaining fundraising efforts via ParentPay (approved)
- Fruit group taking place in GP room for prep
- Join WhatsApp group from Community if interested in helping

Eco Group

Claudia Steedman

- See spending requests in table above
- P1 garden group - talk to Claudia or join Whats App

Clubs

Belinda McGhie

- Thanks to Rebecca for great introduction and help with clubs.
- New term up and running for August – December
 - Next year SPLIT August – October, October – December
 - Water Polo – still seeking a coach
- NEW Clubs launching for early October: Drawing, Guitar
- What else would we love to offer via the Parent Council? → seek input via class reps
- Minor issues: requests for trials & changed minds, waiting lists, registration process
- PVG officer required!

ASN

Chigdem Arslan

- ASN WhatsApp group: needs to be advertised as people don't know about it. New people joined since last GIRFEC coffee morning (3rd Sept). A friendly, supportive group for parents and carers of children with Additional Support Needs.
 - Confidential space
 - Share experiences
 - Ask questions
 - Post useful services and resources
 - Support one another
 - Everyone is welcome!
- Messages from the GIRFEC team (Ms Alison Mackintosh (P1-P4) & Ms Paula Gilhooly (P5-P7)):
 - If you have concerns about your child's wellbeing or support:
 - Speak to your child's class teacher,
 - you can ask about meeting with a member of the GIRFEC team
 - Early conversations can make a real difference.

Digital Devices

Rebecca-Jo Rushdy

- *No Update*

Allergy Awareness

Susie Braham

- *No Update*

Year Group Issues

- Email to admin@sciennes.edin.sch.uk with any concerns

AOB

- *Nothing raised*

Succession Planning / Vacant Roles.

- PVG officer
- Uniform sales lead

Any questions or concerns, email: sciennesparentcouncil@gmail.com

Thanks to everyone who attended!

Next Meeting date Wednesday 4th Nov at 7 p.m. ONLINE