



PARENT FORUM NEWS

Who are we...? What do we do?

The Parent Council (PC) comprises a few elected Parents who represent all parents and carers of pupils at Glassford Primary. While we do have an elected Secretary, Chairperson, Treasurer and named Committee members, any parent or carer (**THAT MEANS YOU!**) can attend the meetings – either via Zoom currently or within the School building when we are permitted to gather in person again. If you aren't able to attend a meeting, we are more than happy to raise a question on your behalf or get you an answer.

All the Minutes are published on the SCHOOL WEBSITE if you would like to review them after the meeting.

<http://www.glassford-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk/>

The Parent Council is an excellent way of meeting other parents and people in the village who all have the same goal – **to make our children's educational experience the best it can be.** It is also invaluable to learn more about our teachers – every one of our teachers have attended a meeting in the past year and it's a good way of getting to know them better too.

All parents have skills to offer – whether it be simply time, raising ideas, supervising an event, giving out library books at school, painting scenery, weeding, litter picking...the list is endless. Not all the jobs involve leading a group, taking minutes, counting vast sums of money or organising an activity. Many hands make light work as the saying goes and it really does help. How we can get involved is obviously severely limited just now because of the Covid pandemic but we will get back to more normal times, eventually.

The Parent Council is not just all about fundraising. You may have heard the term PTA mentioned. Lots of schools have a PTA (Parent Teacher Association) as well as a Parent Council and two sets of meetings. In these Schools, the PTA would generally lead and organise all the fundraising and the Parent Council would deal with more of the business of the School. At Glassford, because of our size (and in line with lots of other Schools nowadays), our Parent Council covers both sets of responsibilities meaning we only have one set of meetings, which are usually every 6 weeks or so.

What have we been doing in the last year?

Because of Covid 19, as you will be aware, parents have not been permitted to access school premises for meetings, to attend parents nights, enjoy assemblies, watch Sports Day or even arrange discos and parties for the pupils. But the Parent Council have still been helping from a distance or you might say, virtually. We've still been holding **Parent Council Meetings** via Zoom to hear what's been happening in the School. The Headteacher discusses the **School Improvement Plan** (this is a plan that every school has to continually improve on what they do) and laterally this has been rebranded as the School Recovery Plan. We can give our opinion on how things are handled or what the pupils and parents feel about certain things. All through the Pandemic, the advice keeps changing on how 'bubbles' are arranged, handwashing facilities, distancing requirements, self isolating requirements and processes, bus travel, and what equipment can and can't be used. The Headteacher often needs our thoughts on what works and what doesn't work and what is causing anxiety or problems. Parent Nights haven't been able to happen in the past year but we as parents have shaped what feedback we did get in consultation with the Teachers via PC Meetings. At Christmas, the Teachers recorded a fantastic **Nativity** and it took some of us on the Parent Council a few hours to work out how to be able to share it with you but we succeeded!

We have arranged a **school uniform swap box** so if pupils need a replacement item of uniform during the term, we can help. We even have a clothes rail all ready to use for when parents are allowed to be back in School. You may have heard the term '**cost of the school day**' – this is an initiative that we were working on a year ago to try and reduce some hidden costs associated with a pupils school day for example insisting on branded PE kit (at Glassford we don't); holding lots of non uniform days and requesting donations, arranging a Christmas jumper day and encouraging children to wear something Christmassy; hosting sponsored events... (cont..)

Communication with the **Parent Forum** (which is YOU) is via the **parent forum facebook page**, or the **School website** and newsletters in the school bags.

Please feel free to respond or get in touch with ideas or comments at any point. We all want to do the best we can and make things even better for all the children. We can only do

this if you tell us what's good and what could be improved upon and we will assist where we can!

Get involved!

...In these examples, some children may not have access to Christmas jumpers (because the children all grow so quickly) and we do not want to force them to buy a jumper just to fit in on that one day. Instead we would say it is entirely optional or just wear some tinsel or accessories could be provided in school so no one feels left out. As a Parent Council, we have discussed lots of ways of reducing these hidden costs and making your life that little bit easier. This whole idea is even more important with Covid 19 as we know there have been huge challenges for some families in the past year. So we will continue changing things where we can to reduce the financial pressure in some small ways.

We can also spend time looking for money elsewhere, ie from grants. Last year we applied for a micro grant from the Community Council for den building equipment and the children love using the materials in the School grounds.

YOUR ideas are IMPORTANT as well as any TIME or SKILLS you can offer.

GIVE AND GET BACK!!!!!!



Do you shop online? Raise funds FREE for our school. No cost, no catch - raise free donations for us every time you shop online with @easyyuk!

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/glassfordprimaryschool/>

Get in Touch

Chairperson: Gordon Innes

Treasurer: Lee Rogers

Secretary: Christine Hall

If you wish to contact the Parent Council, you can do so by e-mailing, phoning or speaking to any member of the elected Parent Council members or office bearers.

As secretary **Christine Hall** manages the correspondence...
e-mail alanchrishall@gmail.com or 07719 775 796.
<https://www.facebook.com/glassfordprimary/>

Join the 'Glassford Parent Forum' Closed Facebook Group

Alternatively, speak to Mrs Donnelly or Mrs Gilfillan at the School and they will be happy to pass on a message.

What is 'Ragbag'?

You will have seen the Ragbag bin behind the school gate at the entrance – this is for you to deposit bin bags of clothes, shoes, belts and bags which the Ragbag company then distribute to needy people and recycle what they can't use. The Parent Council arrange for a collection whenever the bin is full and we are paid by the kilo – the money raised go straight to School funds for us to spend as necessary but more about that later.

Every few months, we arrange a street collection where we will give you a branded rag bag and encourage you to fill it and then we collect it from your doorstep to save you the hassle. You can use normal bin bags of course as well if you have more clothes than the wee ragbag will hold. In the past year, even with Covid 19 hampering our efforts, **we have raised over £1900 just from these ragbags. It's an amazing amount that will be well spent by the school.**

What do we spend the money on that we raise?

It is the Parents on the Parent Council who agree what will be bought with the funds that are raised. A lot of the funds in normal times get spent on transport for the pupils – to go to swimming lessons, trips to supplement projects and topic work; buses to go to the Activity week, golf day, or inter school activities in Strathaven. These activities will commence again.

In the past year, the funds we have raised, have been used to purchase Christmas gifts and to give every pupil their own pencil case filled with all the necessary resources that they may need.

We will continue to do this for the next year.

We are also looking at spending money on more outdoor learning resources and playground games for next session and the P1-4 class would like outdoor Numicon resources.

What next?

As soon as Schools relax the restrictions, the teachers will be keen to have parents involved in the school much more. The Schools take their leads from South Lanarkshire Council who are advised by Government and lots of health professionals in what protocols are to be followed. Until then, we need to keep our distance and keep wearing our masks. The Parent Council share what they are organising, working on or needing help with either by School newsletters or the facebook closed group. If you are not a member of the facebook group, please let the School office or Christine Hall know and we can get this sorted for you. We will continue to arrange our rag bag collections for funds until we can do more and offer our support (on behalf of you) to the Head teacher and the Teachers in any way we can.