



### Parent Council Newsletter June 2024

South Morningside's Parent Council is a sociable group of volunteers who give a little time to improve the experience for all children at South Morningside. We run clubs, raise money, support the school and liaise with the City Council on behalf of the children and their families at South Morningside Primary School.

This year there have been many activities, equipment and experiences made possible by Parent Council funds and volunteers. This includes: supporting places in Parent Council run clubs as well as on trips including to Lagganlia, to make sure financial barriers don't prevent any children accessing these opportunities; trips to Vogrie Country Park, the Imagine Festival; PE equipment; musical instruments; and playground toys including the newly installed (and very popular!) Trim Trail.

Thanks to all who give time, effort, and money; it makes a huge, tangible difference for all children. If you'd like to donate directly to the Parent Council we would be hugely grateful:



If you'd like to play a more active part in this then we'd love to hear from you! We'd be delighted to welcome you as a volunteer, a Parent Council member, or as a member of one of the subgroups listed below. In particular, the fundraising group are seeking new members for next year. You don't need to join the Parent Council or attend meetings to be part of a subgroup, but you will be making a real difference to the experience that all of our children have at South Morningside.

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|---|---|
| • <b>Office bearers and PC voting members</b> | • <b>Clubs subgroup and clubs convenors</b> |
| • <b>Finance</b>                              | • <b>Accommodation and Playground</b>       |
| • <b>Fundraising</b>                          | • <b>Transport</b>                          |
| • <b>Communications</b>                       | • <b>Ad hoc event and activity help</b>     |

Do get in touch if you'd like to find out more about taking part and joining in!

[secretary@sm-pc.org](mailto:secretary@sm-pc.org)

[chair@sm-pc.org](mailto:chair@sm-pc.org)

### Dates for the Diary – more details below!

- **Friday 28th June: Last Day of Summer Term**

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- **Wednesday 14th August: First day of the Autumn Term**
- **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September: Parent Council Welcome and AGM, 7pm, Comiston Road**

### Chairs' Update

The Co-chairs Louisa Dall and Ange Robinson are standing down at the next meeting – the AGM, and Andrew Leiper and Bobby Patak will become co-chairs. Thank you, Andrew and Bobby! If you are interested to join the Parent Council then come along to the next meeting which will be the AGM at the start of the new academic term.

The Chairs have been focusing recently on working with the Council to get a clear plan for the accommodation at the school, including P1 and P2 spaces for next year, with particular focus on the playground and toilets. More details below! The Chairs have been progressing the proposal to make the Parent Council a Scottish Charitable Organisation (SCIO).

The Chairs and Elisabeth attended a marketplace event to engage new P1 parents and the incoming co-chair Bobby met the new P1 parents at summer picnic. The Chairs congratulated the school staff and Mr Gilles for being nominated for Best Primary School at the TES Awards.

[chair@sm-pc.org](mailto:chair@sm-pc.org)

### Head Teachers Update

Mr Gillies gave his review of the year. Phenomenal to see the parents and the school community involved in so many activities. Staffing and classes for the next school year has been announced with 16 PSA's and a strong teaching team supporting the school pupils. ACCEL Data on P4 and P7 for maths and literacy shows 100% achievement. SMPS pupils entered the UK maths challenge: 10 made it into the final rounds and 7 received medals. Sports Day weather was very wet, the school is considering next year to move the day to September and feedback will be sought from the school community. The June camps may also move next year to a different time of year. The Garden group meets 3 times a week, and thanks to all the volunteers, especially Dr Vivien Beyer, who have put many hours into the playground garden. There were 44 responses from parents on the school improvement plan, and

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the plan is now available to read on the school website under documents: there is a kid-friendly version too.

There is a small uniform update: P7 leadership roles will wear ties on days they are on duty (e.g. sports captains, house captains, prefects, etc). P2 will be on site in August and there will be staggered break times in the same model as in place today.

After school club and breakfast club may face challenges due to space limitations from August. At Canaan Lane for P1, there are a total of 70 spaces shared on a pro rata basis with Canaan Lane P1-P3. At Comiston Road there are 70 spaces, and Spring Oscars and the school applied to the Care Commission (in Feb) for 30 more places at Greenbank Church for P6-P7 but still awaiting update from the Commission and are continuing to chase.

Mr Gilles and the school staff passed on their gratitude to the outgoing co-chairs Louisa and Ange.

### Finance update

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of the fundraising group, and all those who volunteer and support by buying/ attending/ giving, the Parent Council is in a good place to support a wide range of activities for the school. In addition to ensuring equality of access for opportunities like club places, trips, and residential trips, highlights recently have included Vogrie Park trip for P1s and P2s. The Parent Council funded the "Virgin Money" initiative for P7's giving them £5 for an entrepreneurial activity week (although there was no funding from Virgin this year so the name will likely change in future years).

We're really pleased to be able to help the school with these activities, to enrich the educational experiences offered. Thank you to all who have given and supported fundraising activities to make this possible!



### Fundraising Update

The Summer Fair had a great atmosphere and it was so lovely to see everyone coming together. Thanks to all the volunteers, the Scouts, organisers and those who attended. We raised a spectacular £5,000! The Art club did any amazing job with the children doing the mural on the back right wall.

Many people are stepping down in the fundraising team, we need people to join the team who can help with the PC fundraising events from the fairs to the Halloween Disco. Please come and join the fundraising team!

Our fundraising activities make a huge impact to the school community. The winter activities, including Hallowe'en Discos, Parents' Quiz Night, and Winter Fair, made over £12,000 – an enormous sum that will make a great difference.

This phenomenal sum is thanks to the volunteers who are part of the fundraising group. Some are due to step down at the end of this year, so if anyone is interested in helping out with these fantastic school community events, which also generate crucial income that benefits the children at SMPS, then drop us a line on [fundraising@sm-pc.org](mailto:fundraising@sm-pc.org)

If you would still like to donate to the parent council activities, including the playground improvement works, thank you! You can do so here:



[fundraising@sm-pc.org](mailto:fundraising@sm-pc.org)

### Accommodation Team Update

#### **Playground**

The playground improvements have started and there have been a number of transformations already from planters to the trim trail. The playground parent group has been regularly meeting and volunteering.

You many have noticed the posters at the Summer Fair on the playground master plan: there is still lots more to do. The playground plan over the next two years is to refurb the multi-use games area and adding evening lighting, adding a woodland

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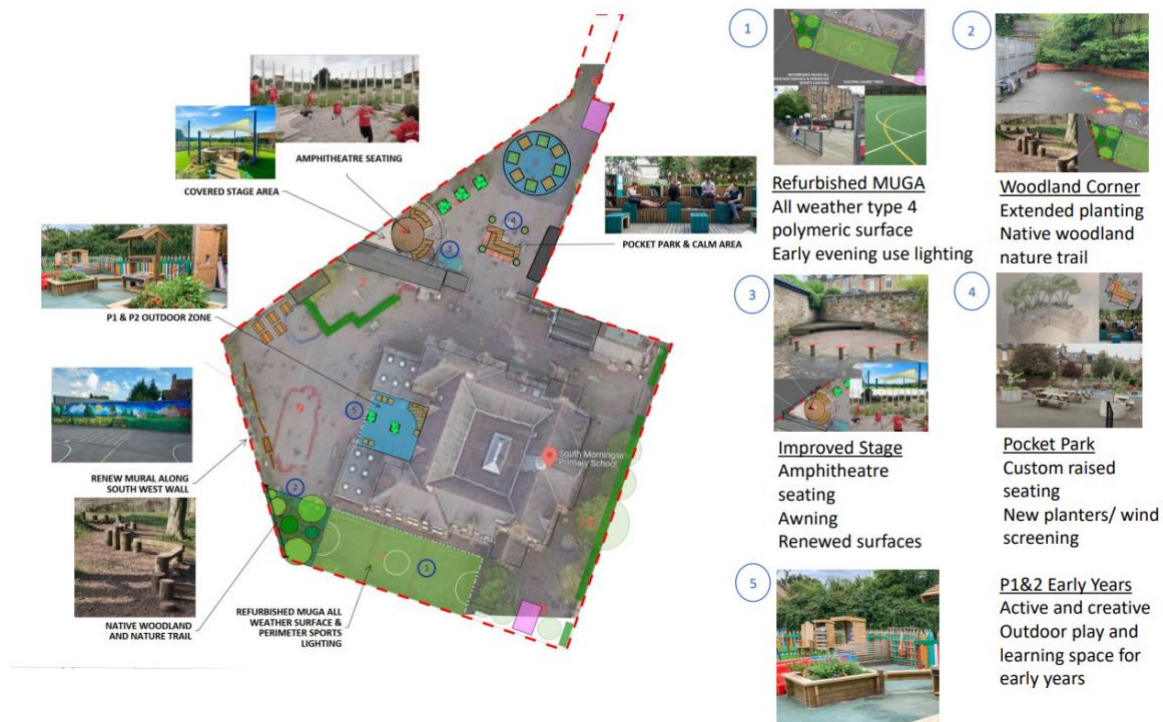
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# **PARENT COUNCIL UPDATE**

corner, improved stage area and custom raised seating will be created in “pocket park” between the concrete planters. There are also plans for the P1/P2 area between the toilet blocks. However, this cannot happen without fundraising so there will be dedicated fundraising for the playground to continue the transformation through 2024-2025 to make this happen.

## **Playground Masterplan**

  
 South Morningside Parent Council



Gardening Group met 3 times a week for half an hour. 150 tomatoes plants were potted up with many children taking home tomatoes. P1 were doing potatoes and spring onions last week.

Volunteers are welcome for summer holidays garden maintenance and watering; it is very easy to pick up the hose and water the plants! Carrots, pumpkins, courgettes and green beans have been planted to harvest in the new school year in August. Swiss chard, kale, artichokes should be ready for winter harvest.

## **Toilets and P2 moving to Comiston Road**

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The co-chairs have been meeting the council estates department and have now received a clear works plan for the school improvements for P2 starting at Comiston Road in August and for 2025 for P1 to also move into the school building. During this summer: two classrooms will be re-painted, new furniture has arrived for P2 starting, a wheelchair ramp will be installed & an accessible toilet added by the south entrance. Design work will start in January for the toilet renovation and work will start next summer 2025 with an initial costing of £360k. In addition, the P1/P2 play area will be improved with a mud kitchen and other features.

If you are keen to get involved these changes to the school building and grounds, or any other accommodation matters, then please do drop us a line on:

[accommodation@sm-pc.org](mailto:accommodation@sm-pc.org)

### Clubs Update

P2s will be onsite next year, the parent council are putting together some information on what clubs they will be able to take part in at Comiston Road.

Art sessions have been proposed for the P7s in groups of 10 for 4-hour sessions.

We are looking for a volunteer to help with PVG checks for all clubs. We are asking for parents who could help out with leaflet and graphics for clubs. We are also looking for convenors for Code Club and Gym Club to help club admin with no need to be present at the club. If you are interested to help keep these clubs running, please reach out to the email address below.

Thanks to the fundraising success of the Parent Council, our Clubs can also offer places to children whose families may struggle to afford a place otherwise.

[clubs@sm-pc.org](mailto:clubs@sm-pc.org)

### Transport Update

Ian Murray has been in touch passing on complaints from local residents about car parking on the zig zag lines during school drop off / pick up. Please park in designated spaces. The police have been at St Peter's beside Canaan Lane to stop cars double parking or parking on the zig zags.

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Mr Gillies and the group are working to try and update the school's travel plan – a document the City Council hold to help ensure safe journeys to school for all children. The plan currently held by the Council does not accurately reflect South Morningside PS.

[transport@sm-pc.org](mailto:transport@sm-pc.org)

### Communications Update

The Communications Team use the Parent Council website, newsletter, Classlist, WhatsApp and Facebook to keep everyone up to date with Parent Council activity. If you notice anything out of date or think more information is needed about anything in particular, please get in touch! If you'd like to be added to any WhatsApp groups then do let us know too.

We're also keen to engage with and hear from more parents, so will be looking at more ways to keep in touch. If you have any thoughts on this then to let us know 😊

In addition, we are really keen to hear from anyone with any graphic design skills.

We'd also love to hear from you if you might have time to help with these different comms activities – just drop us a line!

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### Next SMPC Meeting

The next meeting, the Welcome and AGM, will be held **at Comiston Road on Monday 9 September 2024.**

The Parent Council makes a real difference to the experience that our children have at school, and if only able to do so thanks to those who get involved. We are always looking for more volunteers to come forward and help in some way with the PC including with clubs, fundraising, accommodation, communications and much more. If you are able to design a poster, to co-ordinate a club, or would like to take part in the discussions about our school and its future then we would love to hear from you!

You can volunteer for as much or as little as you like, many hands do make light work!

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Please do come along to the PC meeting to find out more, or email our chairs at [chair@sm-pc.org](mailto:chair@sm-pc.org).

**“you’ve got to create what you want to be a part of”**

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