



## Chairperson's Report – Session 2024/2025

Kevin Smith

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

*This report will provide a summary of the work of the parent council & chairperson in previous academic year 2024/2025.*

### OVERVIEW

The objectives of the Parent Council are:

- To promote partnership between the school, its pupils, all parents and the Catholic Church to ensure that pupils develop their full potential;
- To work in partnership with the school to contribute to the Catholic ethos and create a welcoming community which is inclusive for all parents;
- To develop and engage in activities which support the education and welfare of the pupils;
- To identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils.

(SJB Parent council Constitution 2023.)

Session 2024 / 2025 has been a busy and active session for the parent council.

Particular focus:

1. Outdoor learning enhancement / School playground improvements
2. Fundraising
3. Smartphone free childhood sub group

## **Cost of the School day**

This is a standing agenda item at all of our Parent Council meetings in consideration of South Lanarkshire council's policy. Mrs Currie leads on its implementation for our School specifically and discusses aspects of this with parents in a variety of ways to ensure parental consultation including the parent council. This area of discussion has featured during my time as chair since 2022 and before, during my membership of the parent Council. SJB Primary School and the parent council are committed to this matter and are conscious of this when making decisions and planning activities. There is a fine balance between the expectation of activity and the rising costs involved in many things that were once incidental costs such as transport etc. Areas considered have included; cost and model of school photographer, School trips, use of fundraising, review of opportunity / expectation of spending money for school activities and trips and pursuing partnership opportunities where available for particular projects and School improvements. Examples of things that are embedded; spending in gift shops on school trip, unless agreed on specific trip, review of pricing and packages available from photographer, free child entry at school fundraisers hosted by parent council including fete, partnership with men's shed for outdoor learning equipment instead of costly UK wide providers, a balance of free and low price activities at the annual School fete.

As a Parent Council we have promoted the use of the pre-loved uniforms across the School with success. We continue to enjoy the partnership with a competitively priced & local School uniform provider for the logo branded uniform items now with a shop in the local village of Bothwell as well as the option of the online provider used historically, details of both are on the School website.

## **Outdoor Learning and partnership with School eco- committee.**

Members of the parent council partnered with Mrs Summers, the School eco committee and AMCO (engineering company community partnership), we also got some help from Grow Uddingston & Uddingston Men's shed in developing the playground to make it more attractive and available for outdoor learning and play activities. We even made our own bird boxes with each class involved in assembling & decorating one each. The planting of the raised beds with vegetables, new wooden planter from men's shed for herbs and lots of colorful tubs planted with bulbs have involved children from all classes and will hopefully leave a legacy for future years. Men's shed also built an amazing reading throne and benches, this cost us a fraction of the cost of other suppliers as we bought the timber required locally. Mrs Summers and the eco committee are very keen to continue with this work and would welcome support from parents, carers and grandparents

in taking this forward, any keen gardeners or anyone willing to help please get in touch with the School parent council chairperson & Mrs Summers.

AMCO engineering very generously partnered with us to provide the skills and tools to maintain the playground, they improved the outdoor learning classroom structurally and gave it a fresh lick of paint, refreshed and improved the sensory area, trimmed our willow tree tunnel, fixed our handmade and decorated bird boxes to name a few helpful and popular improvements. We will continue in our partnership with them particularly around world of work week and STEM activities in the future.

### **Parent Council Fundraising**

This has been another successful year of fundraising raising a significant amount of additional funding for use across the School as detailed in the treasurers report attached. The past 3 years summer fetes have provided approximately £15000 worth of funding to the School. As mentioned in previous years reports we have seen the impact of this and other fundraising activity with the purchase of C-touches for each classroom, new and improved playground equipment, support for outdoor learning & eco-committee activities as well as other spends as appropriately identified by the headteacher and management team.

The family fundraiser in January each year and then the summer fete have both proved to be very popular with a high level of participation across the School and wider School community. These are 2 activities that parents across the School community have expressed that they would like to see return in 2026, many recognising the change of PC members and those involved in leading the fete will require some consideration and additional planning.

This year we held our own Summer fete independent of Muiredge Primary, sad to see a partnership for this event lapse for this year and hopeful that they come back on board for this type of event in 2026 or other fundraising opportunities to embrace both Schools and wider community involvement.

Easy Fundraising – through online purchasing has been a steady stream of income with minimum administration beyond promotion.

### ***St John the Baptist Smartphone free Childhood – subgroup of the Parent Council***

This academic year the parent council supported a subgroup, who introduced the Smartphone free childhood campaign into the school. This is a national community led movement encouraging parents to act together to be pro-childhood. Their aim is to enabling children to grow up confident using technology but not dependent on

it, through building digital skills gradually and intentionally, through delaying smartphone ownership.

Over the course of the year, a questionnaire of parents' views, and another of senior pupils' phone experiences, were conducted. A pact was launched, and parents and carers were invited to consider whether they would want to stand together to support it.

Our pact:

'Acting in the best interests of my child and their community, I pledge to wait to give a smartphone to my child at least until they have left St John the Baptist Primary School for secondary school'.

On 11/6/25 the number of children whose parent/carers had signed a pact (so the 2024-25 academic year):

Year group	No. of children whose parent/carers signed pact
<i>P1</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>P2</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>P3</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>P4</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>P5</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>P6</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>P7</i>	<i>Less than 5</i>

Parents noted they would like more information around a number of related topics; therefore, the sub-group held a panel event on 11 February 2025, Internet Safety Day. The audio recording of the speakers, including representatives from the school, parent council, and NSPCC are available. The session also benefitted from the insights of pupils. In addition, we pulled together useful resources and tips and tricks for keeping children safe online.

You can find all the information about the St John the Baptist smartphone free childhood campaign *group, internet safety day audio files, the report on the questionnaires, and the link to sign up to the pact can be found here:*  
<https://padlet.com/parkerlouise89/st-john-the-baptist-primary-smartphone-free-childhood-campai-sbhpqp0d817q2su5>

### **School improvements**

This year seen ongoing discussion about the planned and promised improvements to the nursery portacabin, upgrade of the sports MUGGA pitch, school extension, kitchen upgrade and general improvements across the School. The parent council expressed concern re lack of progress from south Lanarkshire Council in some areas with delays persistent. As chairperson I pursued complaint on behalf of the parent council, contacting South Lanarkshire Council to discuss the school building improvement plan. We have seen some progress with the completion of the School extension integrating well in to School life, the kitchen redesign and refit has been completed and essential roof maintenance now completed and we believe all areas are now water tight!!

There are 2 outstanding areas that will remain on the headteachers report and should remain a focus for the parent council going forward:

- MUGA Pitch – following further complaint we were advised in the last term of the 2024 / 2025 session that the MUGA pitch was approved for replacement during this years summer holidays, despite ongoing communication with SLC this was disappointingly not taken forward and no further update has been received.
- Nursery Portacabin improvements – a new canopy is in the planning to be installed in autumn 2025, no further information re other improvements at this time. You will see the grounds around the nursery have been lovingly improved by staff and some families of the School community making a welcome entrance and play areas for the children to enjoy.

## **Finance Report**

Please refer to accompanying finance report 2024/ 2025 compiled by Treasurer Helen Darroch.

We continue with use of an online banking account provided by Bank of Scotland allowing much more flexibility of use & oversight with transactions however experience ongoing issues in administering the account. Account holders and signatories will now need to be updated as soon as possible in the School year 2025/ 2026, from previous experience this is not straightforward and takes some time. We have in the recent past and should again consider the transfer of funds to a new, more user-friendly bank account suitable for our needs as a parent council. Helen Darroch will take this forward with new office bearers.

As Chair, vice chair and treasurer we hold the principle not to hold large sums of money in parent council accounts and instead transfer funds directly to the School with confidence in the ongoing partnership discussions re use but also for ease of access when required to support the work of the school.

A healthy balance has accumulated this year and now, the majority of this requires to be transferred to the School for use, consultation and discussion between Parent council, head teacher, senior leadership team & office bearers is carried out in the spirit of partnership and ultimately the School need / priority as directed by head teacher is then furnished with funds.

At the last parent council meeting agreement was reached to support the funding of improvements to the School stage sound equipment and discussion had re enhancing reading schemes throughout the year groups also.

The treasurer requires to identify an auditor to undertake the annual review of Parent council accounts.

## **Communication and interface with wider parent forum**

Out with the parent council membership meetings the parent council elected positions and other parent members engage with the wider the parent group to hear views and opinions and include them in activities. The parent Council has featured at each parents night with a stall in the waiting area with other School initiatives, communication is effective via the Parent Council Facebook page, Parent portal managed by the School and School website where details re membership & minutes of parent council meetings are published. The Parent council email address is - [parentcouncilstjohnbaptist@gmail.com](mailto:parentcouncilstjohnbaptist@gmail.com) & is published on the School website.

## **Farewell & Thanks**

I conclude my 3<sup>rd</sup> term as chair with this report and as my son has now started in S1 at High School this will be my last AGM and chairperson report for St John The Baptist Primary School. I will tender my notice as chair alongside Kelly Weir Vice chair at the AGM on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 and note the departure of 2 long standing and active parent council members, Kelly Weir & Craig Wilson who have significantly lead many initiative on behalf of the parent council & supported me in my role as Chairperson.

I wish the new chairperson, vice chairperson, office bearers and all future parent council membership my very best wishes and full support to continue with the positive and successful partnership working across the parent forum, parent council, senior leadership team, staff and School community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Kevin Smith**

Chairperson

2022 to 2025.