

'Broughton Decides'

As a PSA, we are pretty successful at fundraising. As well as our 'big wins' such as the summer fair and the Edinburgh Marathon Festival, the year round efforts via the cafes, discos and bag packs are to be commended. We know that a relatively small number of the school community is involved in the organising and running/execution of these events., with an even smaller number attending the PSA meetings where it is decided how money is spent.

We have on-going challenges in encouraging wider involvement and a PR problem in people (not) seeing how the money raised is spent, nor understand how these funds relate to their child's/children's experience at school. Even something like the 'Culture Fund' could be better understood in terms of its direct link to subsidising school trips and its role in the wider 'poverty proofing' work.

As a starting point can we review the money spent last year, e.g. Culture Fund, loose parts, smart boards, re-vamping golden time etc.

A simple 'we raised £XXXX and this is how we used it' on the school website/newsletter would be really helpful.

There has been recent debate on the Facebook group, noting that there were no trips to the Edinburgh Book Festival this year. There is also a perception that the Culture Fund is not used consistently across the classes and a perception that some classes benefit more than others. We understand that organising excursions is challenging for a host of reasons, so what can we do to make this easier?

For discussion:

-  **Do we know what has worked well and not worked well (for teachers and children)?**
-  **Are there things that should become 'regular events' as part of the Culture Fund?**
-  **Can we promote all trips supported by this funding via the school website?**
-  **What would help make this easier for class teachers?**

Other views raised include a desire to see investment into the playground, e.g. basketball hoops, money being spent on a 'big' one-off event that benefit the whole school, e.g. a trip to the panto at the Kings Theatre or a cinema event. What other ideas could we think about, e.g. 'start up' funding to help establish school clubs (coding club, music, book club, art, drama)? Are there any opportunities to link into Drummond, e.g. older children wanting to volunteer as part of D of E awards, or who are keen to get experience of football or basketball training?

In terms of process, quite often, proposals are tabled at the PSA meeting which gives little time for consideration and we have no criteria in place to help ensure consistency and equity of spend. We also know that poverty is a reality for many of our families. How do we support the poverty proofing agenda work in school?

At the moment, we have a considerable amount in the PSA bank account. That is a brilliant position to be in. However, we do not want to see large amounts of money languishing in the bank account. Our commitment should be to utilise the funds as fairly and promptly as possible, with the overall aim of enhancing and enriching school life for everyone at BPS.

There is room for improvement in how we:

- ✚ Plan the spend of the funds we raise
- ✚ Develop and agree the criteria for what we will and will not fund via the PSA
- ✚ Develop ways that allow a greater number of people to inform and influence how the money is raised and spent
- ✚ Ensure that the money raised in one academic year is spent within the next academic year (there may be a need to keep some money back, e.g. £500-£1000 as a 'reserve')
- ✚ Ensure transparency in decision making
- ✚ Communicate with the wider school community about what we spend the money on
- ✚ Acknowledge and address cynicism and apathy, e.g. the difficulty in seeing playground improvements (a broad aim for many years that doesn't match what people see, despite the funds spent on loose parts play), the limitations of the school's budget (e.g. funding rubbish bins and smart board maintenance) and how this is considered as part of our criteria

The idea of 'Broughton Decides' is to address these challenges so that the wider school community feels involved and informed as well as building more confidence that PSA funds have directly supported their child/children.

Questions for discussion

- ✚ How much money do we have available?
- ✚ What have we already funded that we think should continue? Do we need to check back with school community? e.g. Culture Fund, coach for Lagganlia?
- ✚ What mechanisms do we have to generate ideas? E.g. school events that bring parents into school, (drop ins, parent consultations), Facebook group, BPS email
- ✚ How would we establish a choice of ideas and then carry out a vote that would be easy for people to take part in, as well as allow a swift decision before October half-term (is this realistic)? E.g. week-long event where people can vote in person as well as on-line?
- ✚ Can we commit to spend funds raised to be spent in the following academic year, with an agreed reserve to enable PSA to make in-year funding available?
- ✚ What should we do next?