

Parent Forum Meeting Minutes
 Tuesday 23rd April 2024 – 9.30am to 10.30am

	Item	Action
	Attendees: Mrs Grattan, Mrs Levy, Mr Connell, Mr Maynard, Mrs Rispoli, Mrs Capon, Mrs Kazzaz, Mrs Aldous, Mrs Lee (via teams), Miss Colfer (minutes)	
	Apologies for Absence: Miss Panayi	
	<p>Minutes:</p> <p>1. <u>Bromcom Feedback:</u> Mrs Grattan wanted to gather feedback on our new communication system, Bromcom. Office staff and Mr Walton have been working really hard and tirelessly to get the system up and running. Mrs Grattan admitted we have experienced some teething issues however we are working through it. Parent reps generally are happy with the new system and can see the benefit it is having for the school. Parent reps did mention a ‘no dessert option’ and ‘dessert’ option. Miss Colfer advised that the school office staff are aware of this and have looked into it. At the moment, the system is unable to be changed as it has been configured and put out on the MCAS app however, we will be amending this for Term 6. In the meantime, if packed lunch children wish to have a dessert, please ask your child to tell their teacher that morning and we can manually add this to the system. Payment for dessert option is 50p also payable to Bromcom. Mr Connell feels the system is very useful, he is currently working with another school who is using Bromcom so he is seeing it from the other side and just how useful it can be with comments etc. Mrs Levy asked all parent reps to encourage all parents to pre-select their child’s meals as this is a massive help for teachers in the morning and saves time.</p> <p>2. <u>Forest School/Outdoor learning:</u> There are grants available from company’s and Charity’s on which you request for forest school to be funded. Miss Panayi has applied to the Tesco’s grant scheme, which have previously accepted these requests from other schools, hoping ours will be accepted. Miss Panayi thought would be best not to apply to multiple charities at once just in case we are granted as would hate to reject a successful application in case we ever want to use them in the future. Miss Panayi has requested either weekly, with a group of 15 children or on a termly rota for each class. If we are rejected from Tesco’, Miss Panayi will work her way down the list of other available grants.</p> <p>3. <u>Chickens:</u> Mrs Grattan has given this some thought and discussed with staff. Concerns as to who would look after them in the holidays and weekends- Mrs Rispoli agreed she would help look after them but sometimes goes on holiday, the school cat could be a potential threat, the risk of rats, where would the chickens go in the school, how would they be shared across the year groups so it was fair. Mrs Grattan will have to say no at this time but knows of some schools that have them so later on in the year may try to arrange a visit to see how they manage it. Mr Maynard asked about the gardening idea from previous meeting- Mrs Grattan explained there has been no movement with it due to other things taking priority however it is on her list and we will get something out to parents.</p> <p>4. <u>Snack Policy Review:</u></p>	

Mrs Grattan explained that we only received 23 responses from the whole school which was a little disappointing as it would have been helpful to have all parents' views.

From parents who did complete the survey- 6 agreed with policy, 17 disagreed. Some of these parents provided suggestions of other healthy snack alternatives such as rice cakes, yogurts and some parents felt their child had a healthy diet so didn't see a snack such as a biscuit as any harm. Fruit can be expensive and can go off quickly when the weather is hot. Parents questioned reason behind us providing cookies and milkshakes if we are strict on healthy snacks- Mrs Grattan explained this is a once per week treat, not all children have to have it, it is up to parents to decide and pay for it and generally children love it. Parent reps seemed to agree with cookies and milkshakes as their children enjoy this and would be sad for it to end. Allow- fruit, vegetables, pitta bread, breadsticks, crackers however Mrs Grattan will look at the alternatives suggested and see if there any other additional options.

5. PGL- 2025:

PGL have increased their prices and it has gone from around £400 to nearly £500/600, their activities available also add to this cost. Mrs Kazzaz to go out to parents and ask if they wish the class to have a residential trip and if so how much they feel is a reasonable amount to pay for it. Mrs Grattan along with Mrs Cousins and Miss Hipkiss are looking at other potential venues such as Kingswood in Ashford and Essex Outdoors. Mr Connell mentioned a 'Big Day Out' scheme in which he has passed details for to Mrs Levy- Mrs Levy will look into this. Mrs Grattan asked parents how they feel about car sharing or paying for coaches as this would help lower costs for parents which is what we aim to do- parents feel happy to carshare and feel other parents would be more than happy to do if the venue was local. Mrs Grattan advised parents would need to arrange this through their Whatsapp groups, schools couldn't arrange this.

6. Swimming:

Mrs Grattan advised parents that swimming is a compulsory part of the National Curriculum and not a school choice. We have to take Year 4 & 5 swimming, once per week for a total of 6 weeks. As a school, we cannot directly ask for payments from parents so we have to ask for a 'voluntary contribution'- this is directed from the government, again not a school decision. Parents should be aware, without parents making the voluntary contribution, the shortfall will come from school budget which is money much needed in other key areas in school. With regards to children who are feeling unsure about it or have concerns about getting wet etc, we always encourage all children to attend each week. All children get a full hour in the pool hence the early start time. For future years, maybe parents could carshare, this would bring costs down as wouldn't need to fund coaches. Mrs Lee will go out to current Year 3 and ask for their views on carshares or if happy to continue paying coach prices. Mr Connell suggested the idea of reaching out to other local schools with the aim to loan their school mini buses- he works for St Johns Secondary and quite often their mini bus is sat most mornings not being used- Mrs Grattan will look into this.

7. Trips and Workshops:

Mrs Grattan made all aware that there have been some parents not paying for workshops. This then results in a shortfall for the school which again comes out of school budget. Mrs Grattan made parents aware that parents complete the 'intention to pay' letter but then when it comes to paying don't actually pay the money, quite often it can be up to 1/3 of the class. Some parents have also previously complained about being chased for payments however Bromcom now supports this as payments etc are all in one place. Mrs Grattan would like all parent reps to ask for feedback from parents as to whether they would like these workshops to continue. Mr Connell proposed we look into asking local companies if they would like to sponsor trips or

events for a simple mention in the newsletter or some form of advertisement. Mrs Grattan agreed to look into this option.

8. Book Swap:

Possible book sale for a donation.

Parents advised their child have read most of the books we have. Mrs Levy explained we have been donated a lot of books which have been added to the library for AR reading and others have been given to classes to be added in the book corner. There are quite a few that are not on AR system and Mrs Levy hasn't got the heart to dispose of so could do a book swap/book sale- will have a think. Can look at doing a 'pop up' stall on open afternoon in the hall in which parents can donate and swap books.

9. Birthdays/Own Clothes Days:

Year 2 parent feels it would be nice for children to have an incentive, coming into school wearing their own clothes on their birthday. Mrs Grattan explained we have some vulnerable children who may not enjoy this and may feel pressured, some don't like being different so won't work for all children. We already allow birthday badges, sweets and sing to the children so we do celebrate them in these ways.

10. Cookie payments on Bromcom:

Mrs Grattan explained that this is on the list to be done however it is currently bottom of the list as the office staff have had other priorities and the most important thing has been to get the system up and running first and foremost. We would ask that all parents are patient and bear with us whilst we get the system in and working. It is on the list and will be done as soon as possible in the meantime, please just give us some time.

11. End of the day collection:

Mrs Grattan and staff have looked at this issue before and all agreed that the current system is working much better this way. Staff feel it is more secure using our current system. When we were allowing children to leave from their classes previously, parents would continuously be waving through the window which would disturb the children and the teachers would then find it hard for the class to reengage. Feel it is best to keep the system how it is currently.

12. Parking:

Mrs Grattan agreed that we did used to have a rotation of staff out the front of school helping aid the traffic and stopping parents from turning on the forecourt or parking on the zig zag lines however staff workloads and job roles have changed/increased and now there is simply not the time for it at the moment. We have got florescent jackets and we are more than happy if there are any parents that wish to volunteer their time to do this.

13. Breakfast Club:

Parents felt that they were waiting a long time to sign their children in to Breakfast club which impacted on them getting to work on time and they are paying from 8am so should be able to drop and go (reported after day 2 of the new system). Mrs Grattan reminded parents that Bromcom is a new system which had only been in use since 15th April so Monday 15th April was the first time BC staff were using it. Office are working tirelessly trying to get the system fully up and running but there are going to be some teething issues as this is to be expected when using a new system. Mrs Grattan asked Miss Colfer to speak as she runs BC every Monday morning. Miss Colfer stated that BC admission may well have been a few minutes later than normal but not massively late for parents. We use an app for registering the children now in BC and ASP and this is proving to be much easier and a lot quicker however patience is just needed as we need to make sure all pupils who should be at the club are and we can only do this if given the time and patience to do so. Certainly, by the end of the week (Friday 19th April), BC children were coming in a lot quicker as staff were more confident and faster with the system and how it works.

	Agreed final meeting this academic year will take place 11 th June 9.30am. All agenda items to Mrs Grattan by Monday 3 rd June.	
3.	<p><u>Any other business:</u></p> <p>Directed for PTA- parents have asked for events such as Film night, if we could go to having a link to book rather than a QR code as some parents find the QR code difficult to use. Mrs Grattan pointed out that it is too late to change right now as this is one is being organised currently however we can speak with the PTA for future events. We also agreed to advertise the links/QR codes clearly in newsletter and board outside school.</p>	

Meeting ended at 10.30am

Meeting Action Points Summary

Item	Person Actioning	Action	Action completed