

Parent Forum Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 27th February 2024 – 9.30am to 10.30am

	Item	Action
	Attendees: Mrs Grattan, Mr Maynard, Miss Panayi, Mr Connell, Mrs Aldous, Mrs Lee, Mrs Kazzaz, Mrs Rispoli, Mrs Levy, Mrs Capon and Miss Colfer (minute taking)	
	Apologies for Absence: None	
	<p>Minutes: Mrs Grattan began by thanking everyone for sending agenda items to Mrs Levy in her absence. Mrs Levy also thanked parents.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Snack policy: Parents requesting additional items as part of snack policy. The difficulty we have when making changes to our snack policy is we are a 'healthy school' and promote healthy eating. We need to be able to oversee the snacks children have to ensure consistency and fairness. Some parents don't want us checking their child's snacks and with increased staff workload, checking snack pots to ensure they are in line with policy, some parents do still go against what items are laid out in the policy. Mrs Levy pointed out that the 'broader' the options for snacks, the more complicated it will become as parents will send their child in with the snack they want to give them and then it becomes staff focusing on policing snacks and less focus on the job they're here for. If the snack policy is just a blanket- piece of fruit or vegetable, it is easier for staff members to see and no need to 'check' the policy is being followed- don't want to make it unnecessarily confusing. KS1 children have access to fruit and milk daily as part of government schemes we have in place which they typically have in the afternoon- could look at moving this to the morning if this would be better suited. Mrs Rispoli- could KS2 children also have fruit? Mrs Grattan explained this was looked into previously and unfortunately would cost too much. The additional cost is simply not feasible at the moment for the school. Fruit doesn't go to waste and we do give out to KS2 if we are able to; we also provide fruit to any child who forgets to bring a snack or hasn't had breakfast. Mrs Grattan agreed to resend out the snack survey and gather parents views over Easter and once we have got the results, we can discuss at our next meeting. To clarify currently snacks allowed are- fruit, vegetables, crackers with some butter (no extras like cheese). 2. Clubs: We understand there is an interest in running more infant clubs however it is a case of asking staff members to run these clubs, staff already have high workloads and already working stretched hours. We rely on staff giving up their time to run clubs. KS2 staff were able to run a club, hence more clubs available for older children. We do use sports premium funding to offer to offer staff time back for running a sports club. This would be through the use of a supply teachers to give them their time back each term. Mr Connell put forward the idea of having parent volunteers whom would be happy to run a club for the infant children. Mrs Grattan would be more than happy for this however any non-sports clubs would need to be on a voluntary basis as the sports money is only for sports related clubs. Parent reps to put message out to parents. 3. Coffee Mornings: We do try and provide as much notice for events like coffee mornings as much as we possibly can, the last one was planned late as this one was in support of our 'Wellbeing Week'. We do try as much as possible to send dates out for things as much in advance as we are able. Mrs Rispoli and Mrs Kazzaz both agreed that we are good with this- have noticed the dates provided on the school newsletter and these dates are in advance of events so is perfect for parents. Mr 	

Maynard suggested having a coffee afternoon i.e. 2.30pm so parents can then be around for pick up. Mrs Grattan agreed we could look at this as an option.

4. **Monies owed:** Parents had queried why we chase debts for dinner and other payments. Mrs Grattan referred to Miss Mills email regarding payments for school. This email outlined there should be no debts for any dinners, clubs or trips. Payments should be made in advance or by deadlines given to parents. The office team do not have the time to chase parents and they currently spend a lot of time chasing parents for monies owed. Bromcom (new communication/payment system) will help with this- parents can choose lunch options in advance but won't be able to secure unless balance is paid in full with no debt accruing. Mr Maynard asked what the parent's issue was. Mrs Kazzaz stated that one parent commented that she makes payment on the day but is still chased as a debt. Miss Colfer answered (dinners is part of her job role) and explained that sometimes parents don't pay enough so won't cover cost of meals and then when child has next meal account goes into arrears or some parents don't pay correct amount so then there is a shortfall later on. Some parents don't pay at all and it is a constant chasing game to get payment in and quite often will be a long while before the balance is settled. Mrs Grattan explained with trips, this is why we always send out 'intention to pay' letters as this helps us to know how many parents will make a voluntary contribution as the school physically hasn't got the spare funds to cover costs or any potential shortfall. PTA kindly give some funds to support with a contingency fund but voluntary contributions are always needed as this alone is never enough to cover full costs. Coaches are expensive so we do try where possible to ask parents to drop off/collect to help keep costs down. Mr Connell questioned Bromcom and the ability to go into debt on the system. Whilst the system will be set up to not allow parents to fall into debt on their account, we will always accommodate as understand certain situations can arise and would never let a child go hungry in which we will contact to parents to notify them of this balance owed.
5. **Forest School:** A parent asked if the school could facilitate teaching through Forest school programme. The school currently does not have the money to pay a member of staff to train and then carry this out. We used to have a staff member who ran forest school and was trained however we lost the training when they left the school. Mrs Kazzaz asked if would be possible to do more outdoor activities- plant fruit and vegetables this kind of thing. Mrs Levy explained that we are trying to do more and encourage more outdoor learning as much as possible along with the expectations of the curriculum. Mrs Grattan informed parents the sensory garden is nearly completed and will soon be ready for the children to use- any parents wanting to run a gardening club would be more than welcome. Mrs Rispoli mentioned the idea from last parent forum as to having chickens in school. Mrs Rispoli and Mrs Kazzaz both feel parents would be happy to help with this idea. Mrs Grattan feels it may be difficult for staff, staff wouldn't be able to manage them/look after them so would need a volunteer/volunteers who would take on this role including in holidays etc. Mrs Grattan asked Mrs Rispoli to put together a list of what we need to get started and will meet with her and Mr Walton to discuss- look at possibilities. Mrs Rispoli has all the cages/equipment that would be needed which she would be happy to donate. Mr Maynard asked what gardening equipment we currently have in school- Mrs Grattan will ask Mr Walton to look into this and agreed to put a 'shoutout' in the newsletter. Would parents/PTA be able to fund/provide extra items? Parent reps to also ask via their groups.
6. **Book Week:** Parents queried why an animal theme for book week. Mrs Levy informed parents that School Council met and all agreed on an 'animal' theme as

this is what they wanted- fitting in with our planned performance of 'The Jungle Book'. The active school Council try to make options as broad as possible for parents/children. No child would ever be told off or turned away because they haven't come in wearing an animal costume. Mrs Levy said children could come in wearing an animal print top if they wanted or animal ears if this is what they want or just own clothes if they don't feel like dressing up. Agreed the office will send out a message to all parents stating this.

7. **PTA Funds:** Miss Panayi explained that the PTA members recently had a meeting to discuss events coming up and what the monies are going to be used for. Miss Panayi understands that not all parents are probably aware as to how much the PTA does for the school and where the funds raised actually go/get used for. Events held by PTA are- film nights, disco, story time with Santa, Easter egg hunt, Mother's Day gifts. The PTA also have a contract with the school which is a 'school expenditure fund'. This fund is used for things such as trip contributions, workshops like safety in action (Year 6), Year 6 leavers books, iPad replacements for classes, Nessy licence, class Christmas presents, Christmas crafts, Easter eggs and Christmas tree baubles for all Year R children coming into school.

Mrs Grattan explained that all classes have 15 iPads and over the course of 7 years, they need replacing as software goes out of date, the school cannot always fund this and therefore request these from the PTA. Old iPads are sold or recycled to make some money back for the school- Mr Walton is great at sorting all of this. PTA have recently received two requests from school. First was for a set of books that a few Year 5 children asked for by writing a personal letter to the PTA and the second was for a set of 30 headphones with microphones and crumbles which are needed to support our computing lessons. PTA are currently looking for parents to become members from Hedgehogs class. In Term 5, PTA are going to be sending out a Microsoft form to gather information from parents/carers to see if any other parents wish to give up some of their free time to help at events- don't need to be a member just willing to volunteer some free time! PTA want to source as much as possible and only spend the funds that need to actually be spent on things needed for the school. Could the PTA do an event which raises funds for Forest school?, could PTA fund or source fruit for KS2 children? The PTA will gather information and work with the school.

Mrs Rispoli asked would the forest school be just for Year R or would all year groups benefit- Mrs Grattan would like all children to benefit if possible as 'outdoor learning' is key. Mrs Kazzaz suggested asking the Village Greengrocers if they ever have any 'almost out of life' fruit which could be used for the older children and could check out the supermarkets as the quite often have boxes in which they let children take a free piece of fruit.

Mr Maynard reiterated just how important the PTA is to our school and how having a strong PTA is key. Mr Maynard feels getting the community involved is also important, including them in events and getting their money! Money raised by the PTA always goes on the school/children- doesn't get spent on bills, wages for staff or anything other than things which will benefit the children.

Miss Panayi finished off by speaking about the idea of moving the Infant disco to an earlier start. PTA members discussed the idea and are happy to go ahead and move the disco to a 5.30pm start. Miss Panayi will put out the idea to parents and see what the feedback is like. There was discussion about how this could cause some parents to be waiting around if they have more than one child, there was also discussion of the traffic outside school and the chaos that the disco causes. Mrs Aldous said she felt parents need to accept that it can be chaotic, it happens twice per year and it is fun for the children.

Mrs Lee suggested the idea of having tea/coffee stations in one of the rooms for parents to wait and chat so not having to go backwards and forwards, could do it

	for a small cost so some extra money for school. Mrs Grattan agreed we would look into this/have a think if possible as may impact cleaning staff.	
3.	Any other business	

Meeting ended at 10.40am