

## Parent Forum Meeting Minutes for Friday 8 May 2015

### Present

Louise Cutler, Miranda Seldon, Vanessa Bailey, Tracy Harris, Tandy Titmus, Verity Roberts, Andrew Morris, Nicola Castle, Katie Bett, Jane Heenan, Katherine Higgins, Sarah Williams, Sam Packer

### Apologies

Simon Barnard

### Feedback from last meeting

On the Parking issue, Andrew Morris (AM) reported some minor improvements. Dacorum Council has been in touch and have looked at the locations for double yellow lines. There have been no objections from the Parish Council and Simon Barnard has approved the locations (from the perspective of a village inhabitant). AM is hoping that this will be going through soon.

Clubs: AM reported that a questionnaire was circulated to the pupils. In addition to sporting clubs requested, he reported that there was demand for other clubs such as chess and computer clubs. He hopes to give these a priority from next term. He also reported that links are being forged with Ashlyns School for their Sports Leader pupils to come and teach clubs. This was run recently for Benchball. There is also the hope that Football Club will be offered for members of the Potten End Football team. Other clubs requested were swimming (deemed to costly to run when the coach hire is factored into it), gardening and model-making. AM did state that sports clubs can struggle with numbers and that uptake would need to be good to justify running these.

Breakfast Club: out of 44 questionnaires returned, 21 said yes to a breakfast club and 23 no. There were 6 people who would like 5 days a week and the rest were for 1-2 or more days. The Breakfast Club that some parents were previously looking into was not deemed viable due to it being required to be offsite (discussed in previous meetings). AM offered his support to any venture and the possibility was discussed of the school subsidising places to get such a club up and running. Katie Bett (KB) suggested that having parents sign up termly might help secure income, and that long-term, this venture should be self-funding because it is a childcare provision. AM will find out from the Berkhamsted Consortium of schools who they use for clubs and what their arrangements are. There was a reason why the Preschool could not be used (it has recently come off the Childcare Register and would need to be put on again to do any clubs). AM repeated that the problem is always in space at Potten End because it is a smaller school.

Read for My School: Following Miranda Seldon's suggestion for the school to join this scheme, AM stated that the school will register for next year.

Small children on the big playground: At present, two 20 minutes sessions per week see the playground cordoned off for the smaller children to play in. Year 4 are leading games for the smaller children and AM stated that he hoped this would make things easier. Hopefully, it will increase to three sessions from September.

Communication: AM suggested that the first port of call would be to email the office direct or bring up an agenda item at the Parent Forum. The Parent View questionnaire can be filled in at any time during the year, but this is geared more towards providing information to Ofsted, and it will be quicker to raise issues directly with the school.

### Agenda Items

#### **Wait time before Nursery after dropping off older children.**

There have been comments from Nursery parents about the waiting time until Nursery starts. AM stated that the Nursery sessions are three hours long and the current differences in time are due to not wanting the drop-off area to get congested with all year groups arriving at the same time. This has implications also in terms of safeguarding the Nursery children, as they need to be monitored a lot more closely than older children, and this is a safer environment for them to arrive at school when other classes are already settled. As school drop-off is between 8.45am and 8.55am, AM suggested parents arrive around 8.50am onwards so that there's not too much hanging around afterwards. Verity Roberts (VR) suggested that the parents go for a short walk to occupy the children so that parents don't have to try and keep them away from toys that have been put out in the small playground.

#### **What year & when is sex education on the curriculum.**

AM stated that arrangements need to be made in line with the National Curriculum requirements for Years 5 and 6. The School Nurse will talk to parents on 20 May (the date changed from 19 May) at 5.30pm. Parents will be able to find out more about the talk the Nurse will have with the Year 5 pupils. After half term, the children will then have their talk with the nurse, and to follow on, the Nurse will hold a Mother/Daughter discussion so that issues can be discussed at home with all the facts about what they are learning being available to all. This is a new situation for the school with the current Year 5 being the first to have this. AM is checking the material that is being used, and a panel of staff, parent governors and governors will be viewing and discussing prior to the event. In using the school nurse, the approach is consistent with other schools, and it is for the purpose of

having children moving to Secondary School being aware of the issue and not being vulnerable through ignorance.

Sarah Williams (SW) asked why the girls and boys wouldn't be separated. AM said that they didn't want to create a divide and therefore all pupils would be present at the same time but will be sitting in their friendship groups. Sam Packer (SP) suggested that the groups be given the opportunity to discuss any questions amongst themselves, write those down and they could be read out and discussed anonymously, if the worry was that children would be too self-conscious to ask questions.

### **What is the current policy on parents / carers speaking informally to teachers.**

AM stated that it can be disruptive if parents try to catch teachers for a discussion at the start of the day. He said that most teachers will make themselves available after school, but that it would be helpful to know the reason in advance so they are able to prepare. AM also stated that parents can make an appointment directly with him and this can go through the School Office.

### **Year 1 Communication**

Louise Cutler (LC) has had a comment that there is a lack of communication sometimes and parents are not clear on reasons why spelling tests are sometimes happening, and sometimes not. Vanessa Bailey (VB) stated that information is put in the window, and parents can look there for relevant information.

AM stated that the diary dates are set up in Google Calendar and parents can link this to their phone for reminders. He will work on a crib sheet for parents to set this up. Any clubs cancelled will show up here.

AM apologised for some clubs being cancelled recently due to training sessions. Potten End wants to become a STEP school, which looks at developing a positive approach to behaviour, and all staff need to be involved. This approach analyses where bad behaviour comes from, finding the root cause and changing it. AM feels this is very important to the school in supporting good behaviour.

### **Class Trip**

On the Year 1 trip the children demonstrated behaviour that was not 'appropriate' for a school trip. The children needed reminders to remain with their adult and to behave sensibly e.g. Not to 'run off into the woods' and to 'climb trees'. In future it would be useful to remind parents and pupils (both in letters and within class) about the expectations of behaviour on trips.

The issue of parent accompaniment has been raised and the school are reviewing parent helpers on trips to determine whether parents should be allowed to accompany their children. Katherine Higgins (KH) and Sarah Williams (SW) stated that on a recent Class 2 trip, parents did accompany their children and they were issued guidelines to follow.

AM agreed that the approach needs to be consistent for each year group.

### **School Mission Statement**

VB talked about Potten End School developing its first mission statement. A short and snappy motto was agreed on – Laughing, Learning, Growing, Succeeding Together. These will be arranged in the shape of a cross with positive adjectives surrounding them. VB would like to involve parents in this and has asked for input from parents. Any words can be emailed into school.

### **Next Meeting**

19 June 2015 @ 2pm

### **To follow up:**

**Crib sheet for Google Calendar – (AM)**

**Class Trip-** policy on parent accompaniment

**Adjectives** – for school Mission Statement

**Breakfast Club** – report back on Berkhamsted Schools provision (AM)