

## Parent Forum Minutes – Meeting held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017

### **Present**

Andrew Morris, Simon Barnard, Shelley Williams-Farr (R), Jo Phillips (R), Katherine Higgins (Y4), Tracy Harris (Y5)

### **Apologies**

Jo Copestake (Y1), Emma Harwood-Jones (Y1), Verity Roberts (Y2), Katie Bett (Y2), Henny Salinger (Y4), Tandy Titmus (Y5), Nicola Castle (Y6)

### **Minutes from last meeting**

Approved via email following last meeting

### **Matters arising from last meeting**

#### 1. Class Trips

Andrew Morris (AM) commented that the recent class trips have been enjoyed by the children. The Year 4 Hudnall trip will take place from 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> July.

#### 2. Lunchtime rotas and noise levels in the hall

AM explained that the KS2 'surprise' rota for lining up at lunchtime is working well. There is a much more relaxed atmosphere at this time. Tracy Harris (TH) confirmed this.

AM also explained that the noise level in the hall at lunchtime can be very high. This is problematic for the staff in the kitchen as they can't hear the children when they are asking for their meals. The children are not doing anything wrong; it is simply the noise of many conversations at once. There is currently a traffic light system in place, but something more is needed as the noise is too much. Sound absorbing puzzle pieces have been purchased and are waiting to be fitted. They are rather expensive, but they are effective.

Katherine Higgins (KH) suggested using acoustic pads around the serving hatch, which remove the high frequency sounds only. This would be a cheaper option. She will look into this.

#### 3. New Building

The new building has been slightly delayed due to difficulties in getting access for a digger. It is not possible to have heavy loads on the new playground.

Therefore, it will be constructed over the summer holidays. (Please see minutes of meeting held on 5.5.17 for details of the new building).

#### 4. Parking

Simon Barnard (SB) is continuing to work on the proposed footpath opposite the Pre-School. It has been suggested that this go behind the hedge as the bank cannot be cut into. However, there have been some objections from residents and the matter is still at the planning stage.

AM commented on the parking situation in general and emphasised that the school needs children from outside the village, who clearly need to be driven to school. It is in the interests of all to spread the parking fairly across the village. KH added that the footpath would be for all residents. She asked if it would be possible to have a footpath across the green (near Martin's Pond) to join up the pavements on either side. This would make it easier for all when walking across the green in all weathers. SB explained that the village green is common land and it would be very difficult to get planning permission for this. There will be further parking bays on the green, but it is taking time to get the land deregulated.

### **Agenda**

#### 1. World Book Day

A parent has asked if the children could dress up as a favourite book character on World Book Day. She feels it is a shame that we don't currently participate in the way that other schools do. She says that most of the children enjoy dressing up. She questions the view that it's too expensive to buy outfits, saying that it should actually be about being creative in whichever way the child and parent choose. She also added that we have a lot of 'dress down' days and it would be nice to have one 'dress up' day.

AM agreed that this is a good idea and he will plan for this in the next academic year. He emphasised that the process of dressing up must actually promote reading and focus on characters from real books, rather than TV and film characters. He will write a letter to parents regarding this nearer the time.

#### 2. Sports Day

A parent has asked if teachers can explain to children the importance of staying in lane when running in KS2 Sports Day. They explain that last year, a

teacher was standing on the corner, therefore children were cutting across lanes to get to her, causing delays to other children. Also, it would be helpful if the teacher logging places could stand at the end. This request has come from a pupil.

AM said that he would indeed talk to the children about staying in lanes and running across the line and he will encourage the relevant staff member to move back.

He added that this year, KS2 will have a morning sports session on Sports Day in addition to the normal afternoon activities. They will take part in a circuit of games and races, much like FS and KS1 Sports Days. Parents will not be present for this but AM is keen to have feedback from children and parents about the success of this additional session. The scores will contribute to the House Points totals.

## **AOB**

### 1. Reading

AM gave an update on the ideas previously discussed aimed at encouraging more reading.

Following the agreement between AM and Forum members that children should be focusing on reading real, rather than electronic, books (please see minutes from meeting held on 10.3.17 for details), he announced that the school has spent £2500 on new books for the reading scheme and library.

He also confirmed that Bronze, Silver and Gold Reading Awards will now be given to children in recognition of consistent reading at home over a half-term or term. This system will be straightforward for teaching staff to manage and not take up the valuable time of teaching assistants during school hours.

SB commented that he has noticed when hearing reading in school that reading diaries are not being updated every day. Often the children are reading, but they or their parents are not recording this. AM confirmed that children can fill them in themselves. He added that hopefully the above system will raise the profile of reading in the new school year and encourage all children.

## 2. Payments for school meals

AM explained that many parents are currently behind on payments for school meals. The school tries to be understanding about this matter. However, the debt needs to be paid to Herts Catering by the school, therefore the school ends up out of pocket. It is a lot of work for Mrs. Adams to give reminders for this and the school currently only chases debts over £12. AM appealed to parents to please ensure all payments for school meals are made on time.

Shelley Williams-Farr (SWF) asked if it would be possible to link PayPal to WisePay to make it easier for parents to pay, or add an option for Direct Debit. KH suggested changing the options on WisePay so that payments can only be made termly. AM will look into this.

## 3. Using Childcare Vouchers to pay for trips and clubs

KH commented that Childcare Vouchers can be used to pay for day trips and clubs. There is an option on WisePay for this. AM will write another letter to parents to publicise this.

J. Phillips  
05.07.17