

## Parent Forum Minutes – Meeting held on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018

### **Present**

Louisa Ingram, Simon Barnard, Jo Copestake (N/Y2), Jo Phillips (N/Y1), Shelley Williams-Farr (Y1), Katie Bett (Y3), Katherine Higgins (Y5), Tandy Titmus (Y6)

### **Apologies**

Emma Harwood-Jones (N/Y2), Verity Roberts (Y3), Henny Salinger (Y5)

### **Minutes from last meeting**

Approved via email following last meeting

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

#### 1. Sports Day Medals

Louisa Ingram (LI) confirmed that KS1 and FS will receive stickers and KS2 will receive medals at Sports Day this year.

**Action:** Arrangements for stickers and medals to be made in Summer Term.

#### 2. Adults in Classrooms

As previously discussed, an email will shortly be sent to parents regarding students and volunteers in each year group. LI said that it has been great to hear about the high numbers of parent volunteers in school.

**Action:** Email to be sent to parents with details of student and volunteers in each year group.

#### 3. World Book Day

An update has been emailed to parents regarding the arrangements for World Book Day. LI said the children are excited about the costumes. Tandy Titmus (TT) added that Year 6 are not as keen on dressing up. LI explained that dressing up will be optional for Year 5 and 6. They will need to wear school uniform if they are not dressing up. Katie Bett (KB) said parents greatly appreciate being given so much notice about dressing up.

Jo Copestake (JC) said that Year 2 parents have asked if Harry Potter costumes will be allowed, considering that Potten End is a Church of England school. LI said she understood the possible concerns, but confirmed that the school is happy for children to dress up as characters from Harry Potter. Simon Barnard

(SB) agreed on behalf of the Governors. LI explained that many of the characters display very positive traits and the books are currently used as a Guided Reading text in Upper KS2.

LI also confirmed that superhero costumes are allowed, but that the characters must be from a book. She emphasised that the celebration of World Book Day is about instilling a love of reading and books, hence the opportunity for younger and older children to read together on the day.

Parents are reminded to see the article attached to the World Book Day email for other costume ideas.

#### 4. Road Safety and Parking

SB explained that unfortunately, there has not been much progress since the last discussion on 20.10.17. However, there is now a consultation taking place regarding the proposed footpath opposite the Pre-School. Shelley Williams-Farr (SWF) added that local residents have been notified of this.

Regarding the recent accidents at The Common crossroads, SB said that Sir Mike Penning MP has agreed funding for repainting the road markings. JC highlighted that there may be an issue with the junction not being visible on Sat Nav, which could be contributing to the accidents. She also asked about the possibility of Vehicle Activated Signs with happy/sad faces on this road. SB explained that they work for a while, but unfortunately not in the long term as drivers become used to them.

Katherine Higgins (KH) asked about the involvement of the Parish Council. SB confirmed that they are involved, but that progress with Herts County Council (HCC) is slow.

KB asked what the next steps are. SB confirmed that HCC will instruct contractors to repaint the road markings, but there is currently no indication as to when the work will be carried out. He also explained that unfortunately, it will be very difficult to get the 'Give Way' sign changed to a 'Stop' sign.

Regarding the parking situation around the school, TT highlighted that some parents are continuing to park on Church Road. It was suggested that perhaps new parents may not be aware of previous requests from the school not to park here. LI said she will send a reminder email to parents about parking, making explicit that parents should not park on Church Road (the road with the School's main entrance on).

TT asked if there was any news about the new parking sign from Friends of School (FOS). SWF said that it was not on the current list of items to be purchased. LI will request this from FOS.

LI added that the police will be coming to speak to Year 5 and 6 about road safety. This is being organised by Alison Elderfield.

Please see the minutes from the Parent Forum meeting on 20.10.17 for further details about road safety and parking.

**Actions:**

- Email to be sent to parents regarding parking, detailing roads/areas where it is not appropriate to park.
- LI to speak to Helen McKeich (FOS) regarding the request for a new parking/road safety sign for outside school.

**Agenda**

1. Teeth Brushing

A Year 1 parent has asked if it is possible to introduce a time after lunch, and before afternoon lessons, for children to brush their teeth. They suggest that this would be a good routine to establish in order to promote the health and wellbeing of the children.

LI explained that unfortunately, due to health and safety considerations, this will not be possible. The logistics of supervising this and keeping things hygienic would be very difficult. The school nurse talks to Reception children about the importance of brushing teeth when she visits. Care of teeth is also covered in Science and PSHE in other Year groups.

SB gave a reminder that children are very welcome to wash their mouths out with water after eating.

2. Parent-Teacher Consultation

A Year 1 parent feels that children in the lower year groups are too young to attend the Parent-Teacher Consultation meetings. They felt that their son didn't benefit from being there and he didn't know how to contribute. He thought perhaps that he had done something 'wrong'. They explain that this is the only opportunity to have 15 minutes with their teacher, where they are able to speak freely. They acknowledge the benefit as the children get older

and become more vocal and involved in their education. Their feeling, and the feeling of other parents they have spoken with, is that having their child present didn't add anything to the meeting and perhaps meant that some things couldn't be shared. They suggest that parents could choose whether or not to have their child present at the meeting.

LI has spoken to Mrs Paton and Mrs Loria regarding this. It has been agreed that Year 1 will trial giving parents the choice about whether or not their child is present for the Spring Parent-Teacher Consultations. This will then be reviewed and a decision made about future arrangements.

Arrangements will remain the same for the other year groups. It is felt that it is very beneficial to have children present for consultations from Year 2 onwards.

SB asked if there will be a crèche available for Year 1 children at the Spring consultations if they are not attending the meetings. LI confirmed that if the appointment is during school hours, children will remain in class with their TA. If the appointment is after school, children may stay in the library, where LI will be.

**Action:** Year 1 parents to choose whether or not to have their child present at the Spring Parent-Teacher Consultations. Review outcome of this prior to Autumn Consultations.

### 3. Use of Cricket Pitch and Sports Policy

A Year 1 parent asks if there are any plans to utilise the cricket pitch more for sports. They also ask if Potten End has a policy for how much sport children do as standard and what is offered as extra e.g. 'run a mile day' etc.

Regarding the cricket pitch, LI explained that this is currently used by KS2 (Years 3-6). Unfortunately, KS1 and FS are not able to use it due to the lack of toilets on the site and the high number of adults that would be needed to supervise the children. (Please see minutes of meeting held on 7.10.16 for details of a previous discussion about the cricket pitch.)

The statutory requirement for PE is two lessons a week from Year 1 onwards. In the FS, children have standard PE lessons, but they also spend a lot of extra time outdoors during their Child Initiated Learning (CIL).

Regarding extra sporting activities, Mrs Loria (PE Subject Leader) is looking into:

- Skip2bFit week – The date will be confirmed soon. It will hopefully take place this term.
- The Daily Mile – An initiative where children run a non-competitive mile a day in school in order to improve their physical, social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing. This is possibility for the future.
- Urban Strides – This company provides street dance classes and workshops. Representatives will be visiting to take an assembly in February. After school clubs are currently offered at another local school.

KB also highlighted Energise, the whole school initiative that uses music and movement to energise the mind. TT and KH commented that the Skip2bFit week will be very good. TT added that there is a particular need to promote fitness for girls.

LI said she has been impressed with the number of sports clubs taking place in school. The children seem especially keen on basketball, football and netball. She highlighted that all the above options will continue to promote fitness for the children. She acknowledged that sometimes PE lessons have to be missed if the hall is being used for something else e.g. play rehearsal. She will monitor this.

**Action:** Date of Skip2bFit week to be confirmed.

#### 4. After-School Clubs

A Year 2 parent has highlighted that as far as she can tell, there are no non-sporting after-school clubs for Year 2. They ask if the school could look at providing both sporting and non-sporting after-school clubs for each year group. Other clubs they have seen offered for other year groups include: construction, reading, dance, drama, yoga and art.

LI explained she is unsure what has happened in previous years. She said that cooking and craft clubs are currently on a rolling programme for different year groups. It appears that Year 2 haven't had their turn with these yet. This has been noted by the office and they will ensure that they are offered these.

Regarding whether other clubs can be offered, LI explained that the range of clubs available is partly down to the interests of the teaching staff that are able to run them. SWF highlighted the Garden Explorers club that she ran for Reception children last year. LI said she is very happy to welcome other parents to run clubs. They would need to have a DBS check and would need one member of staff with them (a teacher or TA). A small contribution was

made by parents for the Garden Explorers club, which went to pay for the TA's time out of school hours.

**Action:** Parents are very welcome to volunteer to run new clubs after school.

## 5. School Trips

A Year 5 parent has asked if there could be more exciting day trips for their year group. Another Year 5 parent has asked if there could be a trip to Hazard Alley in Milton Keynes. Her eldest child has been and found it very interesting and worthwhile.

LI outlined the Year 5 trips planned for this year:

- Alford Arms (pancake making)
- St. Albans Abbey (Anglo-Saxons)
- Boxmoor Trust (River Studies)
- Possible trip to the Apple Store in Watford (IT)

She is not looking to change these at the moment. Unfortunately, a trip to Hazard Alley in Milton Keynes would be very expensive. The cost could exceed £30 a child, including the cost of a coach and of entry. Additionally, the journey is long at 50 minutes.

KH asked if car sharing would be possible, if time could be found in the Year 5 schedule. LI explained that although Hazard Alley does look like a good day trip, the cost is unfortunately too high.

Bletchley Park and Milton Keynes Museum were also highlighted as very good day trip options.

## 6. English Speaking Union

A Year 5 parent has asked if we could look into Potten End becoming involved with the English Speaking Union, which helps develop key oracy skills and boosts children's confidence in public speaking. They are running a comprehensive debate programme for Year 5 and 6, which starts in January and is free for 100 schools. (Although, this may be closed now for this year.)

LI said that this looks very interesting, but it is closed to applications for this current programme. LI asked if KH could find out when it reopens. KH explained that the debating programme is free, however there is a cost for the workshops.

**Action:** KH to find out when registration for ESU debating programme opens again.

## **AOB**

### 1. Term Dates

The list of important dates for the Spring Term will be available next week.

J. Phillips  
23.1.18