

Parent Council Minutes 27 January 2016

Present: Susie Bagnall, Claire Whyles, Ben Haydon (Parent governor), Simon Bridgson-Jones (Parent governor), Barbara Sacks-Singer (Garry/Darling), Lucy Till-Awny (Liffey), Sarah Rae (Pangani), Chris Hays (Thames), Megan Douthwaite (Seine), Melissa Hutcheson (Haro)
Apologies: Paolo Ferrari (Congo), Ben Willmore (Yangtze), Becca Vallins (Limpopo/Amazon)

Review of requested feedback from Dec 2 meeting

- (1) *Music lessons:* Feedback varied widely, with diametric opinions in some cases. A proposal was made to move lessons to year 3 to get children interested at a younger age and to address the complaint of disruption to other year 5 activities. Children who receive the pupil premium funding will be offered free lessons. Parents who would like their children to learn a musical instrument will be encouraged to apply, and if they need help with payment the school will apply to Oxford City Charity on a child by child basis. It was noted that there is a free Saturday morning music session available in Cowley that is not well attended.

Conclusion: General agreement to transition to year 3 music lessons, ensuring that no year groups miss out on lessons.

- (2) *Off-site trips:* General support for trips for both year 5 and year 6. One suggestion to try Kilvorrough, though one of the trips already goes to Wales and is similar in style.

Conclusion: Continue with two trips but review the location options.

- (3) *Web site:* Some parents complained that they couldn't find information; suggested to use the search option, which is very good. Parent council minutes could not be found, as they have not been posted this year. Minutes from this meeting will be posted; no minutes are available for the prior meetings (22 Oct and 2 Dec).

Conclusion: Parent identified to take minutes, will post them to the web site.

New issues raised

- (1) *Forest school funding:* Question of how to ensure the current availability is maintained. The JustGiving web site option doesn't work because it cannot fund staff. Other fundraising options could be pursued, and will be considered if needed. The budget will be set in May; action will be taken then if necessary. In the meantime a parent representative to Year 1 will remind parents about voluntary contributions in ParentMail.
- (2) *Playtime supervision:* Concerns were raised about the level of supervision during playtime. The school is continually reviewing and monitoring this supervision. At lunchtime there are four TAs stationed outside, with up to six additional one-to-one TAs. Three members of staff are stationed in the hall. Jump ropes and chalk have been introduced to help structure play. KS1 morning break now has a teacher in addition to a TA so that children have another familiar adult should issues arise. Isolated cases of insufficient numbers of adults have been raised with the school and the circumstances have been reviewed and addressed.
- (3) *Childline presentation:* some feedback that children were encouraged to call with anything that is on their mind e.g. if they had a bad dream or their tummy hurt. Teachers will follow up assemblies and clarify the use of Childline and remind them that there are usually adults

at school and home with whom they can discuss concerns.

- (4) *Year 5 trip*: Parents requested a partial refund because the trip has been shortened. Diana has contacted all parents to ask whether they would like credit against future payments or a refund.
- (5) *Homework*: a parent raised that homework had not been marked since Christmas; the teacher concerned has noted the criticism. In future the committee agree that this should be raised with the specific teacher at the time rather than referred to Parent Council.
- (6) *Student assessments*: Concern that students are not getting feedback on their progress now that levels have been replaced. The school is still bedding in the new assessment system; as it becomes established children will learn to understand their standard of achievement and progress.
- (7) *Parent councillors*: It was noted that a range of feedback was received through indirect channels from classes that have no parent councillors. These classes should be encouraged to find a parent councillor. Current parent councillors will be posted on the class web sites.
- (8) *KS2 snacks*: Concern that children have been told that certain snacks are unacceptable and not allowed to eat them (e.g. organic fruit smoothie). The allowed snacks will be reviewed with the staff and the policy will be clarified to parents.
- (9) *Toilets*: Complaint that toilets are not cleaned sufficiently frequently. Teachers will remind children to keep toilets clean; cleaning once a day should be sufficient.
- (10) *Class newsletters*: Sometimes confusing, and some not aware of how to find them. Suggest creating a standing link to class newsletters in the school newsletter.
- (11) *Christmas play*: Concern from one parent that not all children had lines and some were bored during rehearsals. Traditionally the year 2 children have more lines; this has not changed. Overwhelming feedback in support of this year's production, some felt that it was the best performance in years.
- (12) *After-school club*: Please ensure the information on the web site is up to date. The information was last updated on Jan 20.
- (13) *Email communication*: A number of parents have not received responses to requests for permitted absences; a new system has been set up at school to improve this.
- (14) *Swimming/Forest School combination*: Concern about having swimming and forest school on the same day. This will be fixed next year.
- (15) *Year 6 clubs / Forest school overlap*: Concern about overlap between forest school and year 6 clubs. This cannot be changed, the forest school day is set.
- (16) *Links with Pegasus Grange*: Other links with elderly exist; could reach out to Pegasus for a choir performance.
- (17) *Year 5/6 reading to younger kids*: Suggestion made to do this; it is being set up this term.
- (18) *SESA fundraising targets*: Several items were identified at the SESA AGM, so parent

feedback is not needed for this year (should return to this for next year). The refurbishment of Swan Class will cost 5000 pounds to the school, and SESA will be contacted to ensure they can fund this as agreed at the AGM.