

Parent Council 18th January 2017.

Present:

Clare Whyles (C.W.)

Jenny Carter (J.C.)

Lena Bull (L.B.)

John West (J.W.)

Susanne Addis (S.A.)

Paola Ferrari (P.F.)

Michelle Thompson (M.T.)

Tamar Shirley (T.S.)

Roslyn Zurek (R.Z.)

Sarah Hassenpflug (S.H.)

Reza Akhavan (R.A.)

Suzanna Carter Francis (S.C.)

Simon Bridson-Jones (S.B.)

Ben Haydon (B.H.) (minutes)

Apologies:

Alanna Topham-Locke

Susie Bagnall

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Suzanna Addis kindly joined the meeting to listen to parent's concerns and to present a way forward.

C.W. acknowledged that organisation and communication around after school clubs was very complex and not up to the desired standard and that efforts would be made, alongside providers, to improve the situation.

Concerns fall mainly into three areas: Signing up, Cancellations and Communication.

Signing up

S.A. explained that for internally run after school clubs the correct communication route is through the office.

Additional comments from S.A.

"I did not feel we were offering the 'internal' club leaders to run the clubs for them, or organise phone calls to parents or emails- I was setting up a system which means that each leader is responsible for their contacting and staying in contact with the parents. To me this is paramount as we just speak in triangles, parents ask me, I have to find teacher and ask, then call parent again etc.

We supply sign in sheets. We sign kids in, and pass sheet to leader. We take payment if necessary for internal leaders.

I will always call if needed, but this should be a last resort not a routine.

the teachers or club leaders can set up a simple email system and use and write one single email to all when they feel unwell one afternoon or evening. If they wait til next day, when they might call in sick a bit later in the day, to leave it for us to do, then we missed a whole day and no parent will get the necessary information in time.

They can use their work emails from their phone.

We are happy to register here and hand the sheet with phone numbers and email addresses to the club leader.”

For externally run clubs, communication must be directly with the provider.

Cancelations

S.A proposes trying to keep both internal and external after school club leaders to a minimum 48hr cancellation policy. (It was acknowledged that there will be emergencies where this might not be possible.)

External providers must hold a communication list of parents to inform them directly of cancelations. The office must also be on this list so that office staff are aware of whether clubs are running or not and can provide information in extremis.

S.A. Will encourage external club leaders to have a backup leader on hand whenever possible.

S.B. Asked what the procedure would be if clubs had to be cancelled with less than the 48hrs notice.

S.A. explained that the school staff would provide supervision for children who should be in cancelled clubs until they could be collected (although this does prevent them from fulfilling their roles effectively).

It was asked if Ebenezers could absorb extra children from cancelled club sessions. This is not possible due to required staff to child ratios.

Communication

P.F. explained that the information on the website is not up to date, is incomplete and can cause confusion.

S.B. Asked if parents could have a concise list of club providers' contact details on the school website.

ACTIONS:

S.A. Will liaise with external providers to encourage backup leaders, push for 48hr cancellation practice and to insist that all providers have full contact lists.

The Office will update the website.

Availability of after school clubs across age groups.

C.W. acknowledges that there aren't as many after school clubs available for younger children. She will investigate this and feed back. The possibility of Miss Self's yoga class being extended to younger children was mentioned. Miss Pullen will be offering a KS1 Drama club after Easter.

HEALTHY EATING

L.B. provided feedback on the progress of the healthy eating working group, established at the preceding meeting.

The group has been investigating two strands: The options and freedoms for improving school dinners at school and how can other sources of food at school be made less sugary (can birthday sweets become less sweet etc.)

The group has obtained funding from the "Food for Life" organisation and is investigating the possibility of the school gaining accreditation to recognise the provision of high quality food.

A meeting of the healthy eating working group with Miss Self is scheduled for Thursday 19th January.

The group would like to hold an open meeting for interested parents at the school. It was agreed that this can be advertised in the newsletter.

It was also agreed that parents can book to come in at lunch time and have an adult school dinner with the children, for the purpose of assessing the quality of the food and the organisation of the lunch process.

Details for this have been established by C.W. and are as follows:

Parents will need to phone or see Jo Williams in the office before 9am to order and pay for an adult lunch (£3.60).

There is a maximum capacity of three additional adults at any one lunch.

Some parents have already done this.

We have a new menu beginning in term 4 – CW would like to invite some interested members of parent council (L.B.?) to come and discuss options and menu decisions with the kitchen team – needs to be asap –first week back – please email Ben if you are interested.

EXTENDING MORE ABLE STUDENTS

A discussion was held about what the school is doing to extend the learning of more able students. C.W. explained that the model for extending more able students was based on the principle of promoting deeper learning rather than getting the children to do more of the same or go onto content from another curriculum year. Teacher's have been including ideas for how to deepen and broaden more able students' understanding within homework tasks that are set.

The homework concept maps were developed with more able students in mind, to promote independence and to allow students to pick work that interested them and to 'run with it'.

It was suggested that the "My Maths" website be more widely promoted to parents as a tool for extending homework.

There were a number of requests for information to be made more easily available.

It was asked if a document could be produced that explained the new maths curriculum and its problem solving approach.

It was asked if a document could be produced that explained how learning is extended for the most able.

ACTION:

C.W. and the governors curriculum standards committee to look at preparing a curriculum explanation document for distribution.

CW to lead 2x sessions for parents – 28th Feb 3.15pm and 6th March 6.30pm.

DAILY MILE

A request was made for the school to look at whether the "daily mile" scheme could be adopted at St Ebbe's. This has been raised previously and it was thought that as the school has better than average pupil participation in cycling and walking to school, the time out of the curriculum could not be justified.

SCHOOL VISION

A question was raised regarding how the school leadership is doing against the school vision and how this is being measured.

C.W. Explained the school's values, vision and the school improvement plan and confirmed that it is the school leadership's aim for the school to become "Outstanding" (as judged by Ofsted).

S.B. Explained that the school governing body is responsible for driving school improvement and that the governors attended a visioning day in the 2015-2016 academic year to plan a route towards our vision.

A process has been instigated for governors to pair with subject leaders, visit the school and interview teachers and pupils to assess progress. This is progressing well.

Susie Bagnall has recently had a productive visit to the school improvement lead school that St Ebbe's is paired with.

C.W. asked for parent council to consider ways in which parents could get involved and contribute towards the school achieving its vision.

FUNDRAISING

T.S. Explained that the School Association (SESA) is in need of parents with grant application experience to join SESA and assist with applying for grant funding.

ACTION:

Could this go in the school newsletter?

SCHOOL UNIFORM

This has been raised at parent council in the past and as on previous occasions more parents were in favour of remaining without a uniform than changing to having one.

ACTION: SESA will investigate the possibility of ordering sweatshirts or similar with a St Ebbe's logo that could be purchased (in part as a fund-raising initiative) by those wanting a uniform.

INTER-YEAR CLASS MIXING

There has been a request for the two classes in each year group to mix more often.

There are sometimes logistical difficulties with this (such as fitting up to sixty children in one classroom) but teachers are supportive of this and will take opportunities to combine groups when appropriate and practical. P.E. and music were cited as examples where this might be possible.

C.W. reports that "staff are very supportive of this as they enjoy working together - we will actively look for opportunities to mix the children within and across year groups."

HYGIENE AND TOILETS

Concern was expressed about the unhygienic state of the toilets and the lack of appropriate soap for the children to wash their hands with. Several comments expressed dissatisfaction with small bars of solid soap and requested liquid soap instead.

C.W. explained that the prior switch to solid soap had been made as a result of a small minority of children emptying the liquid soap dispensers onto the floor, leaving no soap for other children and creating a slip hazard.

Liquid soap has now been reordered and will be available for a trial period. The children will be spoken to about respecting their toilets and hygienic practice and if this trial proves successful then liquid soap dispensers will be introduced permanently.

SESA has agreed to fund soap dispensers.

CW and FS to work with the children to produce posters encouraging children to act responsibly and hygienically (!) in the toilets

WATER FOUNTIANS and WATER AVAILABILITY

Concern was expressed that children did not have access to all the water fountains during break times (fountains are either out of order or not accessible due to the building work).

It was also queried whether children had access to water in their classrooms during break times.

C.W. Confirmed that children are not allowed into classrooms during break time. Supervision is not available for this.

It is not possible to relocate the fountain that is currently inaccessible due to building work but Graham Godby has repaired another one. There will be at least one drinking fountain available during the building work and staff will remind children to take drinks from their water bottles (which all children should have) at the beginning and end of break times.
