

Parent Council Meeting 11/05/16
Minutes

Present:

Mrs Bagnall (Head)
Becca Vallins (Mr Stowe)
Simon Bridson-Jones (Parent Governor)
Melissa Hutchenson (Mr Godby)
Megan Douthwaite (Ms Cranham)
Paola Ferrari (Ms Pullin)
Barbara Sacks Singer (Miss Self)
Chris Hays (Mme Vergier/Mrs Horn)

Apologies: Ben Haydon (School Governor)

Head Teacher Report:

The financial Year April 2016 - April 2017 is going to be really difficult. In order to present a balanced budget cuts have had to be made. So going forward there will be no Forest School, No Ignite Sports, No VIP Music, and any Teaching Assistants who leave will not be replaced.

All money raised by SESA will be needed to assist the school with the main budget. However, cake sale income will still go to the individual classes to help the teachers with much needed purchases for individual classrooms.

With assistance from Parents the school has put out grant applications to help fund Forest School, and Mrs Bagnall will be meeting with the Manager of Ignite Sports to see if some sort of offer (i.e. the after school sports) can still be offered if parents can cover the cost of it as an after school club. Teachers will take back the running of P.E. lessons themselves.

There has been a pre-site meeting with the builders for Swan Class, and they are expected to come in at half term to do the work. This has been paid for by the diocese, apart from 10% which the school has to contribute. SESA has agreed to support this.

New Issues from parents:

1) Concern about how new year 6 and 5 classes will be divided up. The teachers are working closely together to consider the needs of all the children. Two models are being considered by SLT at the moment. Either the classes will be divided into one Y6 class, one Y6/5 class and one Y5 class, or the classes will be divided into three split Y6/5 classes. Due to the budget constraints the third model of two Y6 and two Y5 is no longer an option. There is a senior management team next week devoted to this issue, and no decision has yet been

made.

2) Would it be possible for parents to meet the teacher of the next class the term before?

There are quite a few new teachers starting in September, and the current teachers will be teaching in new KS areas so not possible this year. However the school will look at having the parent/teacher introduction in week 2 instead of week 3 of the new academic year.

3) Will there be a visit from Paul James to inform parents about the newly proposed Swan School. At the moment there is nothing concrete to announce. But Mr James is happy to come and talk as soon as there is. Hopefully before the end of term.

4) Clarification on the no uniform policy.

There is no research that suggests wearing a uniform raises standards of achievement. However, about six years ago the school did a consultation with parents on this matter. The results came back approximately 50% for a uniform and approximately 50% against it. There is no current plan to re-look at this, but it can be re-visited if enough parents say they would like to look at this again. However the school would prefer to concentrate on saving Forest School at the moment.

5) It seems that there are fewer visits to museums and other (free) resources in Oxford after KS1.

Mrs Bagnall discussed this with the KS2 curriculum leaders. Educational visits are a key part of school activities, however visits have to be curriculum linked, and occasionally are prevented by resource issues. (I.e. - Andy Warhol exhibition only allowed for 25 children at a time). There is currently a plan to take all of KS2 to the Ashmolean next week for Greek workshops.

6) Some parents would like Forest School for the oldest children. At the moment we are trying to save FS for the younger children, and the older children get afternoons and days at Hogacre. The Head is in favour of this in principle.

7) Placement of Clothes recycle bin.

There are no current plans to change the position of the clothes recycling bin. The placement just inside the carpark gates was seen as a good compromise position. The school remains grateful to parents for using it, as it provides a small income.

8) Snacks for KS2 provided by Food for Thought

There is no current plan to do this, but could be investigated. The children would have to bring in the money for the snacks.

9) Could Trading Week be shorter so children do not feel so lonely if they don't do trading cards?

Mrs Bagnall will speak to playground staff about being aware and supporting children who are not trading during playtime that week.

10) Does Guided reading stop for more able children?

Guided reading continues for all children and has not been dropped.

11) Can there be more opportunity to do music with the whole class?

The school covers the National curriculum requirements for Music which allows for one term of music lessons once a week. The school bolsters this where it can through whole school singing sessions, music listening in assembly and events like the autumn and spring concerts.

12) Geography and the world - would like more learning about different places etc. The school follows the National Curriculum on this. It incorporates all subjects where it can in Projects. So have done volcanoes for instance and also learning about Greece and the Greeks and Romans topic.

13) Can the school do more sports activities with other schools?

Have done netball matches with SS Mary and John. Tried to get Tag Rugby in - but the coaches pulled out. There are challenges of transport, and the school does not own a minivan - but very much open to this.

14) What opportunities are there for children to be stretched in the future, - for example extra maths lessons/opportunities to learn something like Latin?

The evidence is that the highest achieving children are doing well at the school, and there is no longer extra funding to support this, but the school is actively looking at how it teaches maths and assessing the current groups' method. The extra maths group may return if it is perceived to be needed. The school has been approached to be part of a University project on bringing the classics into schools. Hopefully this will start in the autumn.

15) Some concern expressed about the lyrics of the Hymn "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?"

It was acknowledged that the children may well concentrate on the more gruesome aspects in the progress of the song, but that this is a traditional hymn of long standing, and that the lyrics describe the whole Easter Story, arriving at a happier ending.