



Parent Forum

Tuesday 4 December 2018 7:00pm

Minutes

1	<p>Welcome, apologies and introductions</p> <p>Present: Caroline Crozier, Laura Bradford, Michelle Carnegie, Helen Bridal, Sarah Clayton Jones, Helen Tremain, Marie Morris, Helen Edwards, Cindy Gibson, Emma Pritchard, Tiffany Randall, Jo Freeman.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Hannah Farquhar, Emily Ross and Karen Foxwell Moss.</p>
2	<p>Background to setting up PF</p> <p>The forum is intended to provide another means of communication between parents and school, based on a model that worked very successfully at Greenway School when CC worked there.</p>
3	<p>Issues raised by classes</p> <p>Acorn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nursery playground surface <p>We agree that the black tiles are horrible and are making the children dirty. We have put a bid in for funding to have the flooring replaced completely. It should be completed in the spring term, before the end of the budget year. Also this morning it was frosty and very slippery on the main playground. RH is getting a sprayer tonight so that tomorrow it isn't so dangerous (the surface needs to be sprayed with a salt water solution, not have salt applied directly onto it).</p> <p>Action: CC to confirm the time scale with RH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access for prams and buggies to Nursery <p>Action: the Nursery gate will be opened from Butts Meadow at the start and end of each day to make this easier.</p> <p>Oak:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medicines for pupils during the school day <p>It used to be the case that staff would not give medication to children unless it was an inhaler or epi-pen. The policy was changed in March 2018 and if parents give written permission and full instructions we will administer prescribed medication to the children. Parents should take medication to the school office, where it can be stored in the fridge, and where they can complete a permission form.</p>

- Antibacterial wipes and gels for classrooms

There is antibacterial gel in school that the children use and they are encouraged to wash hands frequently. We have a really good cleaning team now so the spread of bugs is limited as far as is possible.

- First Aiders

Everybody in school has Level 1 First Aid training and 8 members of staff are Paediatric First Aiders (a higher level of qualification). First Aid training is regularly updated.

- ParentMails/Communications

Parents feel there have been a huge amount of emails this term. School tries not to overload parents but still needs to keep them up to date with information and events. Most PF members felt happy with the level of communications and find them useful, especially when the title/subject is clear and which class it is relevant for. The ParentMail app was suggested as a useful tool although some members said it can take time to update, resulting in deadlines being missed. Feedback about the school newsletter was that it looks great and is easy to read. Parents are urged to read it so that reminders don't need to be sent out. A list entitled 'This week we have sent out:' could be added to it to help parents who may have missed things. Parents really like Tapestry.

Action: Consider adding the 'This week we have sent out:' list to the newsletter

Cedar:

- Homework

We will raise this with Year 1 teachers but urge parents to liaise directly with class teachers if this happens again.

Action: CC/LB to discuss with class teachers.

- School meals

Herts Catering are always open to suggestions about the menus so CC will pass on parents' ideas/concerns about healthier options. Herts Catering have attended School Council meetings in the past and taken action following pupil feedback.

Action: CC to liaise with Herts catering.

- Lunch clubs

Parents were concerned that they are paying for lunch clubs and their children aren't always going.

Action: SJ will email the people that run clubs to ask them to tell an MSA if a child hasn't arrived at a club so that they can find them.

- Lunchtime behaviour issues

Parents mentioned that class teachers don't always know about incidents that have happened on the playground. There is a system for passing on such information between MSAs and class teachers but it is possible some incidents are slipping through the net.

Action: Reminder at staff briefing to tighten up on this

- Playing outside in wet weather

Unless it is raining very hard children do go out at play times.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Book Day – dressing up One parent had expressed concern about the children being asked to dress up as a book character because it is expensive and some children don't like dressing up. PF agreed that it is difficult to please everyone and CC shared some alternative ideas for World Book Day that have worked well at other schools. It was suggested that there be a cycle of two or three options so that there is still the opportunity to dress up for those who enjoy it, just not every year. Action: For WBD 2019, as an alternative, we will ask the children to come in wearing their pyjamas and bring their favourite book/bedtime story. Toilet breaks during lessons A parent was concerned that in some cases children have had accidents because they were worried about asking to go to the toilet, especially during PE lessons or assembly. Action: Remind teachers at staff briefing, parents encourage their children to ask, if children come home wet please tell the class teacher the next day <p>Maple:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing/Mindfulness Adrian Bethune delivered training to all Victoria and TC staff on the INSET day in September. We have bought his book which we are using alongside other mindfulness techniques and resources. We are considering whether to invite him back in April to see how we are getting on. Action: Include a termly mindfulness update on the newsletter. <p>Beech:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footwear Ankle boots can be worn. Action: update school uniform information in new starters' pack. Links with TC over contributions/special days We agree that we need to try and coincide as much as we can. We think we are improving this and CC/JC meet regularly to discuss diary dates. We will continue to work on it whenever possible although it is not always possible e.g. dress-down days for fairs. It was suggested that the VSA have a link with someone at TC's parent association. <p>Hazel: no issues</p>
4	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Survey results CC asked PF members for ideas about the low response rate and ways of addressing some of the less strongly agreed with statements. It was agreed that in future PF members can help by sending out reminders. It was also suggested that being able to respond online might yield a higher response rate.
5	Date of next meeting – Wednesday 13 February 7:00pm

Other issues that arose:

- WhatsApp
CC urged PF members to encourage parents using class WhatsApp groups to express serious concerns to contact her or LB directly for a speedy and accurate response, rather than discussing these online (as stated in the Home-School Agreement/Online Safety Acceptable Use Agreement).
Some members felt the amount of messages on class WhatsApp groups can be overwhelming. Reps might consider introducing a kind of WhatsApp etiquette to reduce this e.g. updates but no 'thank yous'. It is also confusing when reading it alongside ParentMail.
Action: Parent reps to discuss this as a group
- Communications
For next time PF members will canvass opinion about the weekly Nursery newsletter, fortnightly Reception newsletter and weekly whole school newsletter.
- Liaison with class teachers
CC/LB asserted that teachers are always happy to meet with parents to discuss any issues, including children's progress, throughout the year, not just at Parents' evening