



Stamford Green Primary School



Notes from the Parents' Forum Meeting

Friday 30 November 2018

In attendance: Two parents, Mrs Druce and Mrs Thorpe

Smoking Near School Communal Areas

The meeting discussed the incidence of Aspen's staff smoking during breaks or before/after work start/finish times as it has been observed that this is not a good example to children arriving for school. Mrs Druce confirmed that this matter had been discussed at a recent review with the contractor concerned. If no improvement has been established Mrs Druce agreed to raise the matter again.

ACTION: Mrs Druce to speak to the contactor again and reiterate the concerns.

School Photographs

Class reps recently gave feedback at a class reps coffee morning directly to Mrs Druce regarding quality control of the recent school photographs. Mrs Druce has recently met with the photographers regarding the matters raised. The company agreed to change the background to white for next year. Black and white photographs are available but you have to login to view these. The company are increasing staff numbers to two photographers next year to meet the needs of the school expansion. The possibility of a parent volunteer to assist with neatening children may be an option. A different plan for siblings i.e. maybe changing the running order to ensure the children arrive fresh at the beginning of the day. Proof sheets will be increased as necessary to mitigate blinking or not looking directly at the camera.

ACTION: Mrs Druce to continue to liaise directly with the photographers to ensure the quality is the best achievable for our families.

Parent Governor Election

The meeting discussed the amount of paper recently used in the Parent Governor Election. Mrs Druce assured the meeting that the Clerk to Governors had explored the alternative options available as the school thought a lot of paper was used too. However, IT systems were not yet proficient enough to ensure the legalities of the election were fully met in this instance.

It was noted that the statements of candidates varied in detail. Mrs Druce reported that they followed a standard set brief which candidates were free to interpret as they did. The parents in attendance felt their votes were possibly not informed enough as statements varied. Mrs Druce commented that this was unavoidable as individuals represented themselves within the guidelines of the set brief.

ACTION: The Clerk to the Governors will explore alternative secure voting platforms for future elections.

PTA

It was noted that parent volunteers at the disco were a bit thin on the ground and there were more school staff in attendance. Mrs Druce has been working with the PTA surrounding the whole

event and was grateful to everyone that did volunteer. It was proposed that in future, face to face requests for volunteers, may assist with parental sign up. Mrs Druce will speak to the PTA about this at the next PTA meeting. The WhatsApp message platform could also be utilised by class reps to cascade the request directly to all classes.

The meeting agreed that the sale of disco tickets had been greatly assisted by the PTA volunteers this year phoning parents to check they hadn't missed the event and avoid upset children. 38 late purchase potential problems were mitigated. The school will look in to PTA Events website maybe having a box that says "I don't want to go". Alternatively parents could email child class teachers to say their child doesn't want to go or cannot attend. Possibly a Google form would be used. A parent asked if Tucasi provided data on messages sent from school being read but Mrs Thorpe confirmed that it only provides data confirming messages are sent.

One parent mentioned that some parents felt the current fundraising for the Atlantis Library project would not benefit their children who would be moving on before the project will be finished. Mrs Druce emphasised the legacy element of such projects and gave an example such as the All Weather Pitch. The funding that the PTA provide to assist with these type of projects allows the school to use the delegated school budget to enhance things like technology at school eg new IT equipment in refurbished classrooms which would not be possible without the sterling efforts of the PTA fundraising for projects such as Atlantis. Project Atlantis is hoping to be completed in the summer term.

ACTION: Mrs Druce to continue to work with PTA to discuss these matters at next PTA meeting and the next PTA Bulletin could explain the legacy element of such projects.

School Lunches

A parent asked why 'Meat Free Monday' is no longer provided. Mrs Druce explained that this was provided by the previous contractor and the new contactor offered fish on Friday instead. One parent asked why more beans and pulses were not provided in the menus. Mrs Druce commented that if the children are not familiar with eating these types of foods then it produces lots of wastage. The menu is therefore standardised to appeal to the majority. Salad bar is always available everyday which also includes fruit. Older children love the choice they have. Reception do not have sandwich/jacket potato option until later in the school year and are encouraged to eat a warm meal each day. Tongs are used to avoid hand contamination at the salad bar. All children can choose vegetarian options daily if they wish.

One parent asked how long do you have to eat? Mrs Druce confirmed the children have long as they need/want. No one is sent out to play before food is eaten but some children are keen to get out to play which is why they have to ask if they are allowed to leave the lunch hall after staff have checked adequate amounts have been eaten.

ACTION: Mrs Druce will ensure lunch hall staff are encouraging use of the salad bar.

Free Fruit Scheme for KS1

One parent was unhappy with the quality of the fruit being provided. Pears have been brought home and never seemed to ripen. Mrs Druce explained that this was a Government funded scheme and the school does not have control over the supplier. Surplus fruit can sometimes be offered to children to take home. The parent was concerned due to the high levels of pesticides had been found in a recent study of the free school fruit scheme. The parent wondered if the school would be interested in planting our own orchard on the back of the recent Woodland Trust tree planting. Mrs Druce commented that space for such a thing would limited and the proposed site would obscure local resident's garden views and it was felt that now was not the time for potential contention with the residents.

Mrs Thorpe added that excess or overripe bananas were being passed to the kitchen for use in banana cake recipes to eliminate wastage.

ACTION: Mrs Druce will speak to Class Teachers about fruit quality and remind if inedible it should not be offered as spare but disposed of in an environmentally friendly way.

Long Service Awards for Staff

A parent congratulated the school on acknowledging the dedication of staff members who have been recently receiving Long Service Awards. They think the awards are wonderful.

Living Streets Walk to School Scheme

A parent asked if the new scheme implemented in October had assisted in the reduction of parking complaint/issues. Mrs Druce confirmed there had been an improvement recently. The parent noted that differences in the awards being given to siblings from the same families were odd. Mrs Thorpe confirmed this had been noted when children were not correctly recording their mode of transport to school accurately. It was also observed that Police Community Support Officers had recently been outside of school at school pick up times and the school were still encouraging parents to report poor parking matters directly to the Police to improve the situation for all concerned parties. Mrs Druce has spoken directly to parents in the past and appealed to their better nature when repeated pleas to drive/park more considerately had been ignored.

ACTION: The children will be reminded by Class Teachers to record their journeys accurately.

Additional Recycling Scheme Introduction

One parent was asking about the potential to use some of the space near the East Gate to introduce a local recycling receptacle as this would create income for the school and items such as printer cartridges/pens could be recycled on site. Mrs Druce stated that previous schemes had proved messy as previous items had not been removed in a timely fashion and had overflowed. In addition to this, space was limited in that area as it was. However, the school is not averse to helping the environment alongside revenue generation opportunities, as the funds could be used to improve learning and outcomes for children.

ACTION: Parent to investigate in more detail and provide an update regarding acceptable items that can be recycled and also the size of the receptacle unit.

Blue Spots near East Gate Area

One parent asked if attention could be paid to the blue spots at the East Gate to remind parents to stay back when collecting children at the end of the day. The area gets congested and it is hard for children to see their parents if people stand in front of this area. Mrs Druce said this could easily be mentioned in the next weekly information or newsletter as a polite request/reminder. It was also suggested that perhaps keep left arrows could be painted on the pathway where it narrows considerably to encourage people to walk at a reasonable pace without the whole pathway being blocked. Mrs Druce said she liked the idea but felt it may not be viable as children were keen to explore the Remembrance Garden area and would wander that way which could cause issues. Mrs Druce added that she was keen for this area to be explored by the children and hope that people could share the path considerately with other users as that is all the space available for everyone to share. Due to the tree protection order rules in place the area cannot currently be expanded.

ACTION: Reminders to be added in school communications by Mrs Thorpe and Mrs Wheatley. YR and whole school.

Acoustics in School Hall

One parent noted that during school assemblies it was not always possible to hear the children or even the teachers speak sometimes. They wondered if microphones could be used. Mrs Druce explained that this would be another thing for the children to think about during what is, for some, already a nervous time.

School Trips

The parents asked if there could be rota of parents kept who were willing to help on any school trips that needed volunteers. Mrs Thorpe added that the trips usually worked well and we had previously gone out to the wider school community in the past when the need had arisen. The parent thought the variety of experience for the children should be complemented especially the religious trips to Mosques and Temples etc. They commented that their children had benefited greatly from the diversity of trips and this helped to break down stereotypes.