



Stamford Green Primary School



Notes from the PTA Reps Coffee Morning Tuesday 13 November 2019

In attendance: Mrs Druce, Mrs Saunt, Class Reps, Sue Scott and Debbie Hall (from Aspens attended for part of the meeting)

Aspens

Aspens attended the meeting to update the Class Reps on the development of their App over the coming year and to answer any parent questions.

- We discussed the possibility of adapting the booking system to allow for bulk or blanket booking of meals where parents can populate the whole term, or the same pattern weekly across the whole term, with a single click.
- Aspens explained that as the Stamford Green menu is adapted to the needs of our school it is not available via the Aspens app. Aspens work to ensure that the most popular choices are included regularly and change the menu if a menu option proves less popular. It was explained that there may be the odd day when the menu changes at the last minute due to circumstances outside of their control. School and Sunset menus can be found on the school website – Parent Zone/Useful Information/School Menu or Sunset.
- Mrs Druce explained that she had carried out research across a number of schools and Local Authorities to establish if giving the children a meal choice on the day rather than their parents booking the meal choices online in advance was a good idea. She found out that there was often a discrepancy between what a child chooses to eat versus the parent's choice and children often changed their minds leaving portions of certain foods short.
- Portion size was discussed and it was acknowledged that all children have different appetites. Aspens explained that KS1 have smaller portions than KS2 but that the Aspens and SGPS Staff along with the Prefects on duty help encourage the children to take the extras i.e. salad, bread and fruit. The children are also encouraged to slow down and finish their meals and not rush to go outside to play.
- A parent requested that the meals for Sunset do not overlap with the lunchtime meal option. Aspens explained that there is not currently an overlap.
- Aspens will remind the delivery drivers to turn left rather than right when leaving the school in line with the voluntary traffic flow system.
- The email address for contacting Aspens will be included in the weekly information.
lee.powers@aspens-services.co.uk

WhatsApp

The core purpose of the class WhatsApp group was discussed as the number of messages being circulated can become overwhelming resulting in the important messages being missed by parents/carers. The content and tone of some messages can also have a negative impact on teacher moral and well being. Mrs Druce gave information on the issues of teacher retention nationally and the results of the national teacher well being index, which causes concern for recruitment and retention of teachers.

- Mrs Druce confirmed that, as per the school A-Z, the class WhatsApp group should be used for quick reminders and lost items only.

- Party invites or private business advertising should not happen via the class WhatsApp and any school issues should be discussed directly with the class teacher or a member of the Leadership Team who are available at both the East and West Gates every morning. In order to help Class Reps stop inappropriate conversations taking place, Mrs Druce would write a response, from the school, that the Class Reps could then use to prevent the conversation escalating.

Reading after school

A parent asked if the children could do their daily reading supervised at Sunset. It was suggested that the Y5 or Y6 child could help run this session.

- Mrs Druce explained that Mrs Briggs used to run a homework session at Sunset but found that the children wanted to relax and play after school and it was stopped as nobody was attending. To allocate one member of staff to be run this activity for only 1 or 2 children is not possible and the older children want to play at Sunset and not help younger children with their homework.
- Mrs Druce went on to explain that when factoring reading 5x a week into a busy schedule, reading could be done on the weekend as well as during the working week and that children could think of inventive ways to work this into their daily life – in the car or at bed time. Fostering the love of reading is the most important thing a parent can do. The vocabulary gap between those that read, and those that don't, is significant.

Staff car park

A parent asked why some teachers are parking on the road outside the school, and another parent asked about the car park open/close times.

- The staff car park is available to all members of staff via the barrier, which is in operation between 7.30am – 5.30pm, the busiest times of the day.
- It was explained that teachers may need to park on the road for a variety of reasons including different working patterns/shifts etc.
- The mouth of the school is also very narrow and does not easily allow for cars to enter and leave at the same time. For safety reasons and to prevent damage to staff cars, the car park is closed to parents until 5.30pm after which time it is not as busy and parents are welcome to enter to collect their children from Sunset.
- The school will remind parents to keep the school on the left when driving past the school and for the blue badge holders and to delivery vans to turn left when leaving the car park. The traffic flow message on the newsletter is being redesigned with a map to draw parents' attention.

Safe road crossing with a Lolly Pop Person

A parent requested a lolly pop person to help with road safety outside the school. Another parent suggested that a teacher take on this role.

- It was explained that a road traffic impact assessment had been conducted previously by the council and a zebra crossing would cost approx. £100k. As families cross in a variety of places the school may require more than one crossing and the council will not cover any costs of this. As the roads do not form part of the school premises parents experiencing traffic or road safety issues should report it to the police.
- Teachers have different and already onerous responsibilities during the school day and cannot be spared to manage traffic and pedestrian safety. In addition to this, the police have advised Mrs Druce not to direct or manage due to liability risks.

The school paths

One parent asked if the school path could be checked for animal poo and if the paths could be salted when it gets icy.

- Mr Briggs and Mr Evans check the paths daily and remove any mess that they find. If a parent/carer sees any animal poo and report it to a member of staff on the gate or to the school office, the area will be cleared as quickly as possible.

- Mr Briggs and Mr Evans prioritise the use of salt around the school, firstly placing it in areas heavily used by the children. If the path by the West Gate is very slippery, then parents/carers are encouraged to use the grass instead.

A parent said that it was very dark when collecting from Sunset and asked if there could be extra lighting on the premises

- Both the Sunset area and the school path are lit after dark but the car park is not lit during the evening.
- A parent pointed out that a large puddle forms on the path outside Mr Briggs house after heavy rain that causes congestion on the path.
- Mrs Druce explained that when we experience continuous heavy rain the rain water drains off the top field and playground down to the low area of the school. Unfortunately this, coupled with stream at the bottom of the school filling and the water table rising, results in puddles forming in certain areas of the school. Unfortunately, without a pot of gold this puddle will remain at Mother Nature's mercy!

Bikes or scooters on school grounds

A parent highlighted that although not permitted, there is an increasing number of children riding bikes and scooters on school grounds and causing a hazard to people entering and leaving the school.

- It was acknowledged that the children should not be riding on school grounds and agreed that the school would include a message in either the newsletter or weekly info highlighting this to parents. It was agreed that it is also the responsibility of the parents to ensure their child abide by school rules after they have been dismissed by their teachers.
- One parent suggested additional signage around the bike sheds or on the fences but it was agreed that signs often get over looked or ignored and weather damaged.

School Communications

A parent commented that there were lots of school communications being sent.

- Mrs Druce explained that it is a very busy time of year and that the school tries to stagger letters across the week. Hopefully January won't be as busy as Christmas.

PE plimsolls

A parent asked why the children no longer wear plimsolls during PE as the children's feet get dirty after PE lessons.

- It was explained that children are not allowed to wear plimsolls while using certain PE equipment as it is deemed unsafe and that plimsolls are inappropriate for outdoor use as they do not have required support.
- Mrs Druce confirmed that the hall and studio floors are swept and cleaned regularly:
 - The hall floor is cleaned after every lunch time and some evenings
 - The studio floor is cleaned every night
 - Both floors are deep cleaned every half term

Christmas Jumper Sale

One parent asked for clarification on how and when the Christmas Jumpers would be sold.

- It was explained that jumper donations would be taken via the school office from w/c 18.11.19 and the PTA will sell them alongside the 2nd hand uniform on Friday 29 November. Any jumpers left over will be sold at the Christmas Market on 1 December

Christmas Market Chocolate Tombola

A parent brought up the issues arising from the busy Chocolate Tombola at the Christmas Market

- It was mentioned that there would be two Chocolate Tombola's, split by age group and held in different classes and the children would enter and leave by different doors. This will help with both traffic flow and crowd control. The PTA are also looking at reducing the number of winning raffle numbers.

- All the children will be remind of their manners and honesty at Whanau on Thursday 28 November.

A positive parent message

A parent wrote into their class rep to say that she felt that Stamford Green was a lovely, well run school.

Thank you to all the class Reps that completed a 'Positive Postcard' for their child's class teacher; they were very much appreciated.