

Parent reps minutes of 24th February 2017

Present: Mrs Watkins, Mrs Jones, Mrs Harding, Mrs Wookey, Mrs Kirkby, Ms Ryrie, Mrs Aves, Mrs Domzalski, Mrs Sloan, (Mrs Owen), Miss Hardman

Apologies received for: Mrs Henderson, Mrs Jukes and Mrs Taylor

Mrs Owen explained that she had to be in another meeting running at the same time and so would be coming back in periodically, and that Miss Hardman will be chairing the meeting today.

School apologised for the lack of a meeting last term. It was a short term and over taken by staff and pupil illness. General Ofsted feedback was positive. Thank you for the parent help Monday evening . All staff very much appreciated it.

Parent Questionnaire summary – copies of these were given to reps, the results will be summarized and passed to parents in a newsletter soon. Comments were not on them as there were personal references about teachers. There was a short discussion about the questionnaire and Reps were asked ‘do they feel it is accurate? What should we focus on as a school?’ Reps felt there was a small % of parents who actually responded, and there should have been more reminders from school to complete it, although it was in a newsletter and there was an email separately too.

In response to parent feedback, we will be changing reports.

Reps were asked ‘How can we further engage with parents?’ Suggestions were more EAL mornings, and bring back ‘Bring your Mum to School Day’. DHT explained that this is a sensitive area and that a ‘people you love’ day would be more appropriate.

Reps had several requests for assemblies to be re-introduced. Partly for children's confidence in speaking to groups and team building. Partly for parent- school interaction. It is noted those parents who work would struggle to get to some, yet perhaps even if one per year was for parents and another in front of just the school would be great. The nativity doesn't afford all children a speaking part. There is also acknowledgement of teachers' time on these. This comes from parents with older siblings who saw the value of the experience and improvement in self confidence in their children.

Assemblies could be more frequent for parents to watch. **Do Reps think they should be at 9am or 2.30pm?** Reps felt they should be scaled down, not be a big production, just need to give children the chance to say one line each about what they have been doing in class in front of a large group. ‘Doing this regularly improves their confidence’. Possibly children could present to parents by class at the end of term to show the work done?

Fantastic Finish – Reps asked could this be changed to make it less crowded/do it more often?

Miss Hardman went through the points raised by each class in turn, responses are in blue:

- **Larch**

- Good
- Christmas play was excellent and still remembered, great that there were so many parts including helping back stage, and being acknowledged for this much effort from staff.
- All the clubs on offer - the commitment made by the staff to offer such a variety of sport and art etc and appreciation of staff travelling and organising so that so many can take part. Kit is much better - particularly for the swim team last night at the gala - compared to two years ago they really looked like a team and thanks to staff for staying until 9pm on a school night and after Ofsted!
- Not so good:
- Still issues with state of toilets and lack of changing rooms - **Older girls and boys are changing separately.**
- Children in Need – parents did raise the lack of support for this and were told the School Council hadn't voted for it as a charity. Apparently at School Council it was nominated and then children were told there was no need to have that as a charity, as school will support this anyway and then we didn't. **This was a misunderstanding, and the charity will be supported next year as will red nose day this year.**
- Questions
- Is cycling proficiency happening if so when? **6-16th June, Velo House is interested in supporting this by checking bikes for children, more details to follow.**

- Will year 6 get a day out or treat after SATS as not going on residential after? **No- but there is a theme weeks planned.**

- **Chestnut class**

- - Quite often recently gluten free pasta has not been available and children on a gluten free diet have had to have jacket when they arrive to get lunch. **This was a one off, school apologised and we have been reassured by the cook there will be an option from now on.** Jo Anne Grey from Independent Catering was at the parent consultations to discuss this.
- - There have been a lot of dress-up days since September with another one next week. Is it really necessary to have so many? **This is a coincidence as Sign2Sing and E- safety were national events close together. For World Book day next week children don't need full dress up.** Reps suggested that for next World Book Day children could design their own front book cover as an alternative to dressing up. **Dress up days will be planned ahead for the whole school year next year. DHT explained staff will think of more creative ideas next year to avoid dressing up again.**
- - WAC coats and bags are stored in the drama room toilet. Some parents feel this is unhygienic and would like coats stored elsewhere. **School will look into this.** DHT said the Year 5 cloakroom will be used from now on for UKS2 children. **Where do Reps suggest?**
- On a lovely and positive note a parent has said how well Mrs Holiday is doing as her daughter is a totally different child since starting reception in September.

- **Beech**

- Praise for the all staff during the norovirus outbreak as this must have been a very difficult time, especially with staff becoming ill and reduced cover.
- Possibly due to curriculum changes, it is understood 'show and tell' doesn't always happen due to volume of work. Again this builds children's confidence and would give children a forum to share personal things or hobbies with classmates. **We will mention this to the teacher.**
- A request for more Forest School or outdoor lessons incorporated more into daily school life. **Whilst we cannot increase the amount of Forest School happening, children are getting more than they were last year as Mrs Bell and Miss Fennell do different days. Active Maths is a new initiative run by Mrs Tizzard for all KS2 Forest School groups to get Maths outside the classrooms.**
- School pet, will there be a new one? It is something the kids take pleasure in. **A Reading dog or rabbits were discussed, although where to keep them is an issue due to the local foxes.**
- The fire alarm is mentioned quite a lot by my children. Is this a regular test or something with system itself? **It is tested once every term (6x a year), and there have been instances where they have been accidentally set off, but these evacuations count for that term's test.**

Hazel

Norovirus – parents wanted to thank all the staff for their care and support of the children during this difficult time. It's really appreciated

- Profile of sport at Bishops Down - this has been raised by a few parents who are keen to raise the profile of sport at Bishops Down. Specific questions include: Are we able to devote more time to training/practising for inter-school events? Would it be possible to extend the Winter Athletics club beyond one term to allow more focus/support/preparation for athletics events so that children feel more confident when competing? **If this is done during PE lessons it impacts on curriculum PE, and out of school sessions rely on staff to be available.**

Perhaps request PSA funding to ensure that all children have all the necessary equipment to train? **This is certainly an idea to investigate, school will do an audit of PE equipment and what we need before the next PSA AGM. Please can Reps also promote the Sainsbury's vouchers to parents as these are used to get PE equipment each year.** Would it be possible to extend the school run football club for years 5 and 6 to year 4 as there is currently no football offered for year 4 boys apart from a paid-for club? **There has been a problem finding someone to run a Y3/4 Football club for many years. Julian Miller takes Y1/2, and the Y5/6 boys are trained for the inter-school matches, but despite several requests over the years, no one has stepped forward to offer to run a Y3/4 club. We will send another request out to parents to get volunteers.** Feedback has also been given regarding the organisation of the latest athletics tournament requesting clearer communication to parents and children to ensure that children are 100% clear what is required of

them and where they need to meet for practices and that all staff are informed in advance of external sporting events and the involvement of children within their class. **We feel this has improved, as school is giving 2 weeks' notice to parents of an event most of the time. We will talk to Diane Tizzard regarding the latest Athletics Tournament.**

- Class assemblies and opportunity to look at children's books – are we able to have an update on this as at the last meeting it was advised that school were looking into running 2 class assemblies a year but we have not had any yet at this mid-way point? **Have looked into it but with the new Science day 2 assemblies will not be possible.**
- Please can you also advise when the next opportunity will be to look at children's books as it would be good to have one soon as we are half way through the year. **Details will be on the next newsletter.**
- Mum/Dad/ Grandparents' day – are we able to have an update on the situation with this from the previous reps' meeting where it was advised that it was being investigated? **As an interim, we have invited parents in to read on Book Day. We are still looking into a more generic 'Bring one adult to school' day.**
- Class homework/presentations – are you able to advise whether presentations etc should still be sent via the office or if a separate email address has been set up so as not to clog up the office account? **Yes- to the office at the moment. James Curl (IT Tech) is setting up an additional email.**
- Last minute cancellation of clubs – there have been a couple of instances of clubs being cancelled at very short notice (the night before) due to them clashing with planned events which have been in the school calendar for some time. Please can we try and get better at communicating earlier to parents in instances like this so that there is time to make arrangements for alternative pick-up times? We understand that there will be occasions where last minute cancellations might be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances. **We will try to do better – sometimes a club will have to be cancelled because the cover we have in place for a planned event falls through.**
- Reversing the entrance/exit footpaths (up and down) – a suggestion has been made to swap this round so that children and parents enter by the right hand path as you face the school (hence crossing the zebra crossing on entering the school) and exit via the other path as there is often a gathering of buggies/parents/children trying to get up and cross while other parents are coming down. **Never considered this- but it seems to make sense. It will be down to the cost of remarking. Helen Jones offered to do a rota of parents to stand along the drive and advise everyone on the change of direction for a few days, once the hedge has been cut back, and parents notified of the change. The footprints would need to be reversed, but they are quite faded now anyway. Miss Hardman will check with Mrs Owen**

Sycamore

- What they we doing for Red Nose Day this year? **This will be low key, no dress up, possibly just a red nose and donation - details to follow.**
- What changes have been made to Wrap Around Care? **The prices have increased and the governors met to discuss the overall system, see website for new T & Cs. Pre paying and a new cancellation policy are the main changes. Governors reviewed WAC as it has been making a loss. Chasing debt is a huge time consuming effort. People book and don't come, tea is booked and not eaten, last minute cancellations mean staff have been booked to work and then are not needed, so payment will now be needed before the child attends. Reps report that some children are not enjoying their time in WAC. There will be a pupil survey for those children attending WAC, and those who no longer attend, to investigate this.**

Maple

- Apparently parents who put their hand up to help on school trips are routinely missing out whilst others go more than once. They suggested a "names in a hat" and taking out the name of anyone who's already had the pleasure of accompanying 30 kids on a day out! **We go with who put their hand up first, but teachers will be asked to consider who went last time and give more parents a chance.**

Apple

- Why is playtime equipment being banned? 'According to my kids, it's the same children consistently 'losing or damaging' the balls etc. I heard that they have implemented a [signing in and out policy](#) to monitor this, but today they have told me that all equipment is banned?' [This is being reviewed and children will be spoken to about respecting property.](#) Football has been temporarily stopped on the playground due to the number of children. [Once the weather improves and children start to play again in the wooded area, there will be less children on the playground and it will be safer to have the footballs out.](#)
- Parents felt a Maths workshop half way through the school year is too late. It needs to be held in the first term of the year covering all aspects that will be taught so that we can adequately support our children and support what is being taught. Methods have changed since we were children! [There will be a Maths week put into the 'Whole School Plan' next year for parents to see how we teach Maths in school. This will be organised by Miss Hardman and Mr Wyke, and be earlier in the year.](#)

General comments

- Science Day – children loved this.
- Spare classroom once the school starts getting smaller – can this be used for a home for the library? [Yes it will be.](#)
- House Points Colour day – can this go into the newsletter as well as the children being told? – [yes it will](#)
- The catering staff are all cheerful and the food is good.
- Is the Y5 Camp out happening? [Yes it is, Mrs Wilson is waiting for final details for costings and a letter should go home soon](#)
- Class Library visits are still not happening on a regular basis – [we are working on a revised timetable](#)
- Mrs Hutu is pregnant, will Y4 Sycamore lose another teacher this year? – [There will be a letter going out to the class, and then the school re this. She is planning to stay until the end of the school year.](#)
- Y6 Plays – there was strong feeling from Y6 parents that each Y6 class should do a separate play so there are enough speaking parts for everyone who wants one, and children who are happy to be in the chorus do not get bored/lost in the group. [Mrs Owen had suggested that all Y6 did the same play together for 4 performances, but 2 of them had leads from Oak, and the other 2 had leads from Larch. However, after discussion, she will look into Y6 doing the same play for 2 nights each, but separately.](#)

The dates for the next Parent Reps Meetings will be as follows, all at 9am:

Friday 31st March

Monday 15th May

Friday 16th June

Friday 7th July