

## Minutes of Parent Forum Meeting 7.6.16 10.30-12.00

Apologies from Melinda Lavender.

- E-Safety training on the 6<sup>th</sup> June was hard hitting but valuable. The school will write a summary with suggested support and links in the newsletter on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June.
- The Year 1 assembly was well received by parents.
- The issue of rewarding children with 98% attendance was raised – a parent had requested to know if medical issues would be taken into consideration. The parent also felt the reward penalised other children whose parents took them on holiday within term time.

Miss Stock explained the school believes strongly that if a child has done something well or achieved something they should be congratulated and rewarded. Rewarding children is not the same as penalising other children and every child now has the opportunity to be rewarded for so many things: good behaviour, good work, effort, kindness and attendance.

For those children who are not academic, or sporty or particularly talented in any form, the fact that they turn up every day may be their one achievement that can be celebrated. She also added that a number of children have very difficult home lives – for those children the resilience they show in coming to school every day is admirable and should be congratulated.

Miss Stock appreciates the subject of attendance is controversial as essentially children are being affected by the decisions their parents make – whether they are well enough to go to school, whether they take them on holidays in term time. However, there is no doubt that regular attendance at school is vital for a child's education. She asked the School Council to debate whether we should reward attendance and they were very pragmatic in their answers. Some thought 98% was a bit high but all agreed that children should be rewarded for something they do well – including how often they come to school. The reality is that over 50% of pupils will have achieved 98% or better attendance. This is a huge achievement and it would be unfair to ignore it.

Of course, sensitivity and consideration is made to individual children depending on their circumstances, such as health etc. – it would be unfair and unprofessional not to take this into account. The school will consider the level of authorised absences (usually due to medical issues health or operations) when looking at each child's attendance record.

Currently schools have very limited powers to authorise absences. The Government has published very strict guidelines and this is closely monitored by the local authority. The power we do have is the right to reward our children and celebrate what they do well and we believe that excellent attendance should be praised.

- Year 6 residential – parents requested photos to be uploaded on Facebook. Miss Stock explained there was a problem with the wifi but a message would be put on Facebook to say the children were having a great time and there would be regular updates.

- Parents asked when they would receive an update on staffing. Miss Stock explained we are still interviewing so will inform parents at the end of June. She went through the number of new staff joining the school in September and how the school will have additional staff to make sure children will have access to high quality teaching and intervention groups. Mrs King asked how the school can afford all the extra teachers and Miss Stock explained that savings had been made elsewhere. Mrs King asked about how teachers were feeling in general. Miss Stock explained she conducts anonymous feedback every half term and staff morale is very high. Some staff say they have never felt happier. Miss Stock acknowledged it was a very close team and she tries hard to make sure she thanks people for what they do and they feel valued.
- Miss Stock asked how parents felt about the new dropping off and collecting arrangements. Parents said they felt it was much safer for the children but crowding at times was an issue. There is also an issue of some parents letting their younger children run around and hang from the trees etc. Miss Stock said she will look into redesigning the front of the school to allow more space.
- Mrs King raised the issue of safe guarding training for volunteers. Miss Stock said this will be done in September. Parents discussed whether volunteers on trips should also have a DBS completed as they are sometimes alone with a child or take them to the toilet. A general invitation should be made to parents and carers that should they wish to take part in trips they should contact the school to arrange a DBS.
- Miss Stock asked parents how parents were feeling generally about the school and her. Parents said comments were much more positive. Parents who had had dealings with Miss Stock felt happy with how things were dealt with; having the opportunity to talk to her in the mornings and after school made her 'more approachable'.
- Representatives for next year. Parents asked if they could remain on the forum. It was decided that representative was still needed for Year 6.

Reception Kaylee Seymour

Year 1 Jayne Harris

Year 2 Jenny Nicholls

Year 3 Jo King

Year 4 Claire Barker

Year 5 Melinda Lavender

A provisional date was agreed for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July if deemed necessary.