

**Greenway First and
Nursery School
Parent Forum**

**20.00-21.30
Thursday, 26 June 2014
Chestnut Classroom**

Minutes

Attendees

Katharine Ellwood – Head teacher, Alison Hoffman - Parent Governor, Nigel Wiggins - Governor

Parent Forum Members: Isabel Hall (Oak) Sally Fisher (Silver Birch), Beth Baylay (Rowan/Nursery) Helen Hanbidge (Rowan), Liz Hopwood (Cedar), Susannah Gascoyne (Chestnut), Beverley Brookes (Beech), Paula Batten (Elm), Caroline Green (Elm).

Apologies

Fiona Nicolle (Willow), Suzanne Stace - Deputy Head teacher, Ellie Jelf (Maple), Louise Eyles (Red Ash), Cat Crawford (Maple), Kate Moody (Beech), Elliott Brooks (Chestnut), Karin Huber (Red Ash), Caroline Waldron (Oak).

1. Welcome and introduction

Katharine (KE) and Alison welcomed all attendees and class representatives introduced themselves. Alison introduced Nigel Wiggins, who would be taking over responsibility for the Parent Forum from September.

2. Think, Feel, Say, Do activity feedback

KE thanked the group for their input to this activity at the last meeting. The Behaviour policy was the most important policy in the school and the new version was the result of a considerable amount of work by Beverley Murphy and Louise Collins (parent governor). It would be ratified at the Governing Body meeting on 3 July. In the autumn term, the school would hold a curriculum evening for parents at which the policy would be launched.

3. Parent and Child Questionnaire feedback

The response rate had been excellent and KE thanked PF members for reminding parents to complete the questionnaire. A report for parents would be sent out shortly which summarised the responses in a clear and easy to read format. The senior leadership team and some governors had held an away day earlier in June to discuss the school plan for 2014/15. The proposed changes in education such as a new curriculum and the revised performance management framework and introduction of performance-related pay, were the most significant shift in education for many years. Levels (2a, 2b, 2c etc) were being ~~scrapped~~ dropped and new assessment arrangements were being put into place. ~~but~~ The school would continue to use them as an indication of where children were in relation to national expectations, while they integrated the new assessment system.

The themed days, Egyptian, science, had been a huge success and parents were encouraged to check the website regularly for updates and photographs of recent events.

4. New build

KE reported that the compound had been set up and that the children had adapted very well to a change of access at lunchtime. Although the new classroom would not be needed until September 2015, the school had pushed for agreement to an early completion. Poor drainage, which had been a problem for years, had been thoroughly addressed by the surveyor and a considerable amount of investigative work had taken place already, **and more was to follow to ensure that the drains could cope. An additional soakaway would be created near the year 1 classrooms.**

The replacement toilets near the dining hall which formed part of the project were being funded to a large extent by the school. The new build would mean that access to the kiln room, cleaners' room and the new GSA cupboard would be from the hall. This part of the work could not commence until the school holidays as there was asbestos in the kiln room and this would be removed appropriately in the holidays. ~~cupboard which was safe until disturbed.~~ The new toilets would be mixed, but would comprise seven enclosed cubicles, one of which was large enough for wheelchair access. There would be no outer door to this area, just an opening – to discourage loitering. This approach worked well at Ashlyns where new mixed toilets had been installed recently.

The toilets in Key Stage 2 which were installed as part of the 2009 building works were suitable for children up to year 5 i.e. a first school, but not for a primary. The cubicle height in these toilets would be altered in due course, again the school would bear the expense. The concerns of Chestnut and Willow parents regarding privacy in shared toilets, particularly for girls, were recognised and discussed. A few parents believed Greenway to be the only primary school in Berkhamsted which did not have separate male and female facilities. KE agreed to contact all other primary schools to establish the position. The plans for the new build would be available for parents to see at the open evening on 15 July. Sanitary bins would be introduced to the KS 2 toilet area and also in the toilets near the dining room. There was some discussion about the possibility of making some cubicles available only to girls.

Action – KE

Other updates on the school site:

- The picnic benches had rotted in places and were unsafe, so had been taped off pending repair.
- Repairs to the matting around the adventure trail were discussed and this would be a long term project.
- Repairs to parts of the adventure trail which had worn, had been replaced and paid for by the GSA.

5. Issues raised by parents

The following responses were given to issues raised by PF members:

- The gates were not locked at weekends and holidays as the land was a facility for the community and did not all belong to the local authority in any case. KE asked that if parents noticed any inappropriate activity on the grounds out of school hours that they call 101 to report it.
- The school would look into making a bulk order of Greenway logo t-shirts for PE.
- There was no need to replace book bags as the logo would remain the same.
- KE would look into the possibility of varying the day for 'child shows parent' to enable part-time working parents to attend.
- It would be appreciated if nursery parents could leave the site after lunchtime pick up. St Thomas Moore (STM) did not permit the use of its play equipment out of school hours.

- The old swimming pool was full of rubble from the 2009 build. KE accepted that parents had offered to get together and make it useful/attractive, but cautioned that the land may be needed in the future.
- The pond on STM land would be available for supervised educational use by Greenway children. It could not be a joint facility due to legal reasons of responsibility.
- A letter would be issued shortly regarding the plan for sports day.
- Lost property was sorted every week if possible and named items returned to their owner. Unnamed and unclaimed items were disposed of at the end of term.
- One parent had said that there was too much email communication from the school. It was pointed out that although the office tried to send letters in one go, it was not always possible. Also, the body of the email indicated what the attachments were about and which year group/s they applied to.
- It was recognised that if teachers placed notes in the class window, working parents may not get to see it. KE agreed to talk to staff to ensure the message gets to all parents.
- KE asked PF members to feed back to KS1 parents the request that the only attend one performance of the KS1 production, in the hope that everyone could be accommodated.
- A parent wishing to volunteer as a class representative for next year was very welcome to do so.
- PF members agreed to contact their classes and ask anyone with spare football boots to bring them into school to be redistributed or kept as spares. AH will coordinate this.

Finally KE drew attention to the two parent governor vacancies and urged people to consider putting themselves forward or bringing it to the attention of others who may be interested.