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| **Greenway Primary and Nursery School**  **Parent Forum** | | **20.00-21.30**  **Thursday 11th June 2015**  **Library** |
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| **Minutes** | | |
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| **Present:** | Nigel Wiggins (chair), Katharine Ellwood, Caroline Crozier  Parent Forum Members: Beverley Brookes, Nicky Woolner, Caroline Green, Isabel Hall, Elliott Brooks, Helen Hanbidge, Natasha Goss, Jaki Culley | |
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1. **Welcome and apologies**

Apologies had been received from: Clare Burlingham, Charlotte Woollett, Kate Moody, Paula Batten, Liz Fleming, Ann-Marie Costelloe, Liz Hopwood.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting**

Katharine went through these, giving an update where appropriate:

* Rucksacks: governors have seen these and are happy with them. Katharine is planning to do a bulk order so that parents can buy them at Open Evening (if they come in time) or at Welcome to your new class meeting in September. Members agreed this would be helpful.

*Action: KE/CC to arrange for rucksacks to be available for parents to see at the Summer Fair and to organise bulk order with school office*

* Snacks: Katharine said the list mentioned in the minutes of the last meeting had not been done but thought it might not be necessary as Caroline reported that children are now bringing in healthy snacks and making sensible choices about healthy carbs.
* School meals: Katharine reported that she has been monitoring these and that there do not appear to be any issues with portion size. The assembly on dining room issues took place and Y5 dining room monitors were introduced in the Spring Term.
* Bookmarks: these have been handed out to children.
* Parent/child questionnaire: the results of these will be coming out soon. Katharine thanked PF members for chasing their class members – the response rate was high, as in previous years.
* Big Write/talk homework: Katharine fed back PF comments to teachers. She has not heard of any further issues relating to this.
* Nursery corner: Nigel reported that John Rapson (site manager) is looking into ways to improve congestion.

1. **Matters arising**
2. Reports

Katharine presented the new report format to the group. She explained the background to the changes and rationale. She also went through the explanatory letter that will go out at the same time as the reports, to help parents understand new reporting of children’s attainment. There were some questions:

* Who writes the report? *Whoever teaches that subject.*
* Is ‘Age related expectations’ similar to SATs? *ARE is similar to SATs in that it is set nationally, however they cannot be compared to each other as using different curriculums. The current Yr 2 and Yr 6 SAT’s are testing on the old National Curriculum. From next year both SAT’s will on the new curriculum.*
* Will next year’s Year 3 children have a surprise with the increased expectations of the new curriculum (given that they have been taught the old curriculum this year)? *Possibly, although staff are very aware of the differences and will have been preparing them for the changes.*

1. E-safety

There will be another E-safety workshop for parents on 18th November 7.30-8.45, run by the same person who ran the one at Westfield earlier this year. It will only be for Greenway parents and Katharine asked members of PF to sell it to their class groups – stressing particularly that it is not just about older children. Members felt it would make quite a difference that it is only for GW.

*Action: PF members to encourage parents to attend.*

1. Rucksacks, pencil cases and equipment

For rucksacks, see above, under minutes of the last meeting. In addition, there will be a trial of the new GW bags with some new mobile cloakroom stands in the remaining few weeks of term.

Katharine told the group that from September, children in KS2 will be asked not to bring pencil cases to school. Everything they need will be provided for them. This year there have been a lot of pencil cases coming into school, particularly in Year 4, and it is noticeable that these cause quite a lot of disruption to the flow of lessons. There was some discussion over the fact that when GW was a first school, pencil cases were allowed in Y4 because of the transition to middle school. However, now that this is no longer the case, pencil cases will only be allowed in the summer term of Year 6. Even then, there will be clear guidelines about what they should contain.

1. Starry Night

Katharine thanked parents for all the positive emails she’s received about the new wall-hanging, made by Jo Kidd using all the children’s felt squares. There was a brief discussion on how thanks may be expressed to Jo and Katharine mentioned a presentation of flowers either at the summer fayre or in a special assembly.

Katharine also mentioned at this point the number of positive emails she’d received following Science week and told the group that the certificates for every child who held the lunar samples would be coming out soon.

She also asked members for their thoughts about issues around the use of scooters in the school grounds before and after school. There was recently an accident where a parent was hurt (to the point where she had to attend ‘Urgent Care’ and has been told not to drive for a period of time). Everyone agreed that there could be a letter asking for greater surveillance of younger children who tend to be the ones who want to use scooters. There was also a discussion about putting another scooter park by the entrance in Crossways, possibly with a sign (‘No scooters beyond this point’). Some parents shared that it can be difficult to explain to a younger child that they can’t scoot and an official sign would help. PF shared the idea that if after the letter has gone out and there are still incidents involving scooters then a ban would be put in place.

*Action: school to send out a letter about extra surveillance and investigate cost of another scooter park.*

1. Parent/Governor vacancies

Katharine and Nigel shared the news that there are two vacancies for parent/governors, for which a letter has already gone out. Also that Lorna Ginn, a co-opted governor has announced that she is stepping down so if anyone knows someone in the community, who does not have children at GW but would be interested, please would they let school know.

1. **Any other business**
2. Will there be a Nursery trip this term? Yes – trip to the farm on 2nd July.
3. When are class photos? Monday 15th June.
4. Football in the playground – there have been some ‘near misses’ recently. It was suggested that the footballers could be asked to play on the bigger field, away from waiting parents and younger children. Katharine agreed that this was a good idea, although there is the issue of it being across the road into school. While on this subject, Elliot mentioned issues around parents getting in the way of netball club on Fridays.

*Action: school to send a letter about scooters, football, general surveillance of toddlers and awareness of others on the playground before and after school.*

1. Issues around parts for Y1 in the KS1 production – KS1 production - Year 2 have main parts. Year 1 all have speaking parts if they want them, next year they will have main parts.
2. All children involved in singing. Some dancing - we consider whether the children have been dancers in their class assembly before or not. Year 1 have 15 dancers and year 2 have 30.
3. Why did only one Y2 class take part in the mini-olympics event? We were only allowed to send one class, Pine were out at Ashridge anyway, so Miss Orr and Miss Holly had to make a decision on which class would go.
4. Is homework in Y2 differentiated? Yes, almost always.
5. Will there be a transition meeting for KS1-KS2? No. At last year’s meeting Katharine asked parents if they felt it was worthwhile, most said they didn’t feel it was necessary. Some members felt it would be helpful to meet new teachers (new to the school) but Katharine explained that this was not always possible due to those teachers’ other commitments. The children will meet new teachers on transition day and parents will meet them at the ‘Welcome to your new class’ meetings in September. Katharine asked Y5 parents if they felt there was an appetite for a Y5-Y6 transition meeting. They asked if she felt there would be big changes and the answer was ‘no’. All three Y5 parents present felt that transition day for the children and welcome meetings in September would be enough.

Caroline Green shared a feeling among her group of parents that lots of them don’t know all the teaching staff and she wondered if there could be photos of staff on the school website. There was some discussion about using the display in the school entrance but Katharine explained that GW now has about 50+ staff so it might be difficult. It was suggested that TAs be introduced at the Welcome meeting. Katharine agreed that this was a good idea, although pointed out that in many cases now, TAs are not attached to a particular class as they run intervention groups throughout the school.

*Action: Katharine will ask all staff how they feel about photos on the website and will ask teachers to include information about TA support in their welcome PPTs.*

1. Can INSET days be before holidays rather than after them, as children are tired at the end of term? Katharine explained that some of the INSET days are fixed and always will be. She also reminded the group that the purpose of an INSET day is for staff training and she prefers to do this when staff are feeling fresh at the start of a term.
2. Can texts be sent out reminding parents of Child shows parent? Yes

*Action: Katharine/Caroline to ensure this happens.*

1. Will Y3 children be encouraged to walk to school this term? No, this has always been a Y4 policy and there will be pedestrian skills training for Y4 children before the end of the summer term in preparation for Year 5.
2. Will there be cycling proficiency training? Yes, for Y6.
3. Will there be another letter clarifying acceptable carbs in the snack policy? No, it doesn’t seem to be necessary.
4. Do all children get the chance to visit the library? They should do.

*Action: Katharine/Caroline to check with teachers that this is happening.*

1. What extra responsibilities will Y6 have next year? There will be a head boy and head girl. They will continue to be house captains, sports leaders and may take a more active role on the school council. There are also plans to involve them in supporting the younger children in the school. They will also be involved in giving tours of the school to prospective parents. At this point, Katharine explained that this was previously a role carried out by Y4 children, but that for the last 2 years, such tours haven’t taken place because reception places have all gone to siblings. She asked members to put the word out that it is no longer the case that you can’t get into Greenway and this myth needs to be dispelled.

*Action: Katharine is going to talk to St Thomas More about Y6 roles. PF members to canvass opinion around the town about GW places and dispel the myth that it’s not worth applying.*

1. Will those children already working at Y6 level be given Y7 work next year? Katharine explained that the expectations of the new curriculum mean that some of the work covered in Y5 this year has been at a level that would have been taught in Y6 under the old curriculum. This may be why some children/parents in Y5 think they’re doing Y6 work. It may also be because they’re being tutored for the 11-plus and are covering elements of some subjects that are not normally taught in Y5. She pointed out that one of the main aims of the new curriculum is for the children to be taught ‘breadth and depth’ in all subjects, so that they achieve mastery of concepts before moving on. This is what will happen in Y6, with appropriate differentiation for all pupils, but this does not mean teaching elements of the Y7 curriculum. She assured the Y5 parents present that children would not be allowed to coast in Y6.
2. Could a timetable for forthcoming sporting fixtures be publicised? This is sometimes possible, but not always as Mr Loczy often receives very short notice of fixtures and has to prioritise picking teams rather than publicising the event. There was some discussion of how children are picked for fixtures and Elliott was particularly interested to know whether children who don’t necessarily get the chance to do sport outside school were chosen. Katharine assured him that this does happen. He took the opportunity to say how good the sport has been for Y5 this year. Also with a Sports Apprentice starting at Greenway next year this will help with the arrangement of sporting fixtures, selection procedures and the teaching of sport across the school.
3. Will there be a Y5 production this year? No, there will be a Y6 production next year.
4. Is Letton old enough for Y6 children? Yes – some of the activities offered will be different and tailored to meet the needs of older children.

Katharine asked whether parents felt a PGL style trip would be well-received. Members replied that some children in Y5 have been to PGL centres and enjoyed themselves a lot, although these trips are generally much more expensive than Letton.

1. How do you buy new PE t-shirts? Go to the school website, but check with the office first as they still have some of the smaller sizes.

It was also noted from Charlotte Woollett and Kate Moody (via emails before the meeting) about the positive feedback on Science week and how their children had thoroughly enjoyed the experiences and to thank Mrs Adams for organising.

Nigel thanked everyone for their attendance and positive contributions to meetings this year. He explained that a letter would go out in September about next year’s Parent Forum and that they would be very welcome to continue in their roles if they want to.