

**Greenway First and
Nursery School
Parent Forum**

**20.00-21.30
Tuesday, 11 March 2014
Chestnut Classroom**

Minutes

Attendees

Katharine Ellwood – Head teacher, Suzanne Stace - Deputy Head teacher, Beverley Murphy – Head of Foundation Stage, Alison Hoffman and Louise Collins - Parent Governors

Parent Forum Members: Kate Moody (Beech), Caroline Green (Elm), Isabel Hall (Oak) Sally Fisher (Silver Birch), Elliott Brooks (Chestnut) Diane Young (Willow), Ellie Jelf (Maple), Beth Baylay (Rowan/Nursery) Helen Hanbidge (Rowan), Karin Huber (Red Ash), Liz Hopwood (Cedar), Cat Crawford (Maple), Susannah Gascoyne (Chestnut), Louise Eyles (Red Ash)

Apologies

Beverley Brookes (Beech), Fiona Nicolle (Willow) Paula Batten (Elm), Caroline Waldron (Oak)

1. Welcome and introduction

Katharine and Alison welcomed all attendees and class representatives introduced themselves.

2. School ethos and vision activity

KE shared with parents the draft Greenway vision and ethos. This was a first draft and was still in progress. The previous ethos had been in existence for some years and the aim was to make it more inspiring in time for the change to primary status. The mission statement 'Caring to Learn, Learning to Care' would be kept. PF members were asked to carry out a 'think, feel, say, do' activity in respect of how staff, parents, children and governors would view the school in three years' time. Staff had carried out the same exercise on a recent inset day. The results of the activity would be written up and communicated.

3. Behaviour Policy review

In line with the work to revise the ethos, the school and governing body were carrying out a full review of the behaviour policy. This work was being led by Beverley Murphy and Louise Collins. Staff and KS2 pupils had been consulted on standards of behaviour and the consequences and rewards linked to these. Children were very clear that they learned best when they behaved best. School Council had done a 'perfect day' exercise to consider what factors in the school environment made for an ideal day, such as supporting one another in their work.

A 'ladder of consequences' had been drawn up and was being trialled in year 4 with the aim of becoming part of the policy. One of the most effective sanctions was being sent to the classroom of a younger year group for time out. The school had also been in consultation with schools which already have year 5 and 6 pupils to learn from their experiences.

There was some discussion about behaviour during football games played at break times. KE reassured the PF that it was made clear to children that the same standards of behaviour applied. Discussions during assembly had focused on the impact of football games dominating the playground, particularly during the winter months, when the playing field was out of bounds. KE had worked with the School Council and they had decided to stop football in the winter months as this impacted on space for the rest of the children.

There was a question about whether parents would understand about the ladder of consequences. KE said that parents would be involved by the school in cases where their child's behaviour had passed a certain threshold. However, PF members agreed that it would be helpful to understand the different strategies the school used to encourage good behaviour and deal with inappropriate behaviour. KE asked if the PF thought parents and carers would be in favour of this.

Action: PF members to consult with their classes to see if parents and carers would be interested in an awareness session on behaviour and how it is managed.

4. Schools re-organisation

Greenway is one of four schools due to become a primary school in September 2014. This date coincides with the introduction of a new national curriculum. KE has been involved in discussions with those other heads on the transition to primary status since September to ensure consistency across the town and to provide for a smooth transition. She reassured the PF that the children were the most important consideration and their education and well being were at the heart of everything the school did.

She was aware of the comparisons that parents were making with Bridgewater and had requested and received a variety of information from other schools about their timetables, after school activities etc. Greenway children would not be disadvantaged because of the transition. The costs of engaging specialist teachers, such as those employed at Bridgewater while it was a middle school were not sustainable on primary school funding levels.

Year 5 and 6 would automatically be part of local inter-school sports matches across Dacorum. The GSA had agreed to fund Greenway sport kit and equipment for team competitions. A range of responsibilities for year 5 and 6 children was under consideration, such as head boy/girl, sports captains, school council secretary/chair etc. There would be no change to the toilets, but in terms of changing for PE, staff would be sensitive to children's needs. There are no requirements for separate toilet and changing facilities at the primary school stage.

In response to the request for an early year 5 to 6 transition meeting, KE said that she would be writing to all KS2 parents to address all the points they had made via the PF representatives.

Walking to school was discussed. The Local Authority had funded various activities and improvements, including:

- New school gates for Greenway and St Thomas More (installation delayed due to manufacturing issue)
- Fluorescent, textured surface for the alleyway off Gilbert Way (installation tbc.)
- Traffic surveys to identify crossing 'hot spots'
- Improvement works at Kings Road/Shootersway junction
- New scooter and bike pods already installed at Greenway
- Consideration of how to educate motorists

A letter from the Local Authority would be sent out in the next week or so.

Cycling proficiency would be offered to years 5 and 6. Pedestrian training would continue to be offered to year 4 children. The school would support independent walking to school, but it was a parent/carer's decision as to when their child was ready, taking into account the lack of designated crossing point, for example at the intersection between Greenway and Gilbert Way.

5. School Questionnaire

The response rate for parents and carers completing the questionnaire to date was low. At only 15%, it was down on the same stage last year. Louise Collins asked PF to remind their classes to complete it and to ask those with children in nursery, reception and year 1 to help their children do so at home. Children in the other year groups had already completed the child questionnaire in school hours. AH would send an email with the survey links and the latest return figures to all PF members. The deadline was 21 March.

Action – PF to remind parents and carers about the questionnaire

6. AOB

KE advised that the Government was introducing free school meals for all KS1 children from September. Relevant parents would receive a flyer about this asking about likely uptake, which they were asked to complete and return by Monday 17 March.

In response to a question from a year 2 parent, KE advised that WACCY children were only kept in the classroom during 'Child Shows Parent' rather than being sent to WACCY where it was not clear whether or not their parents would be attending. It was agreed that this could be upsetting for children whose parents were unable to attend.

An expanded after school provision was being considered in view of the fact that there would not be places freed up at the end of the summer term.

The issue of links with Ashlyns through updates in Greenway's monthly newsletter was raised and KE agreed to address this.

Alison Hoffman
Parent Governor