

**Greenway Primary and
Nursery School
Parent Forum**

**20.00 – 21.30
Thursday 9 November 2017
Spruce classroom**

Minutes

Present:

School: Katharine Ellwood – Head Teacher, Louise Farrow – Governor (secretary).

Parent Forum members: Susie Lawrence (Nursery), Natalie Littlechild (Reception – Red Ash), Emma Hart & Sophie Kennedy (Year 1 – Elm), Tracy Lerpiniere (Year 2 – Chestnut), Stephanie Gresham (Year 2 – Pine), Gemma Chatt (Year 3 – Beech), Karin Huber (Year 4 – Willow), Caroline Green & Sophie Kennedy (Year 5 – Sycamore), Natasha Goss (Year 5 – Maple), Beverley Brookes (Year 6 – Cedar).

1. Apologies received from: Alison Hoffman (Chair).
Not present: Isabel Hall (Year 5 – Spruce), Laura Whittingham-Jones (Year 6 – Oak).
Welcome & introduction: Katharine Ellwood (KE) welcomed new and returning Parent Forum (PF) members and thanked them for taking on the role. KE circulated copies of the PF Terms of Reference, highlighting the fact that the Forum is a consultative body designed to better facilitate communication between the school and the parent body. She said that the school actively seeks & welcomes parental feedback and that PF members should raise issues affecting the whole class and not individual children. PF members were asked to remind parents that if they have an issue affecting one child in particular they should raise this with the class teacher. PF members were also asked to wait until the meeting Minutes are circulated before feeding back to their class on issues raised. Minutes will be available via the school website.
2. Matters arising: KE reported that all matters arising from the meeting held on 23rd May 2017 (last academic year) had been dealt with before the end of the Summer term.
3. Activity Net update: KE reported that the activity net has been installed on the school field but that it is not yet open as crash mats need to be installed around the base of the activity net to make it safe to use. She said that the net would be used by pupils in KS2 only and only one class at a time. If children were using this outside of schools hours, then parents would need to take responsibility for them.

4. Benches update: KE reported that the benches were waiting to be installed as it is not a job Mr Rapson is able to do. As it was proving very difficult for school to find a company willing to do such a small job it was suggested that PF members might email to ask whether any parents might volunteer to come to school to screw them into position. **Action = ALL**
Post meeting note: A person has been found who is able to the job.
5. Class representatives and collections/presents for staff: KE reminded PF members that their Class Parent Reps are responsible for these, not PF members. There followed a discussion around the sensitivity of requesting donations from parents as there had been some misunderstanding in one class about which parents could/could not sign a thank you card if they had not donated. The Forum also discussed the difficulties some parents found with an account for online donations being set up, rather than carrying large amounts of cash to & from school. It was noted that any collection needs to be done with sensitivity to all parents and KE asked PF members to feedback that teachers are always delighted and touched by the generous gifts from parents & children in their classes but that they certainly don't expect them as teaching the children is reward enough! **Action = PF members.**
6. Garden area/courtyard area: KE reported that following discussions with staff it was proposed to ask parents via the GSA to bring in tools and clear the garden area prior to installing eight raised beds ie one per class, for the children to tend. Year 6 and Eco Council members will organise the tidying of the courtyard area. Alison Hoffman has also offered to continue to help maintain these areas. **Action = KE & GSA.**
7. Discussion of matters raised through Parent Forum reps:
- a) School grounds:
- Parents asked about the area around the old swimming pool which has become a 'dumping ground'. KE gave some background – the swimming pool was filled with spoil from the new build in 2009 having been decommissioned some years earlier. The land belongs to the Local Authority and school has limited control over its future use. KE stated that following academisation this might change but that any future development would be completed sensitively.
 - Parents had commented that there was lots of litter and that bins tended to be overflowing. KE said that there are regular teams of litter pickers as this is a popular pass-time with pupils, but that it can be difficult to monitor rubbish given the nature of Greenway's open site and people using the grounds eg in the evening and at weekends. **Action = KE to feedback to Mr Rapson.**
 - Parents asked whether boot scrapers could be provided by the football pitches. KE replied that the pitches are owned by Sports England so the scrapers are not allowed to be on the pitches but are kept outside Chestnut classroom.
- b) Uniform supplier:
- KE reported that Mapac will be taking orders from January 2018 and that Greenway uniform will be stocked by the shop in Watford next term.
- c) After school and lunchtime clubs:
- there was discussion about the variety of clubs available during lunchtime and after school. KE highlighted the implications for staff of running these but she may be willing to consider having more clubs if parents were interested in running them. PF members were asked to explore this with their classes. **Action = ALL**
PF members suggested that parents might also come into school assembly to talk about their lives/careers eg women in science. KE agreed to discuss with staff/SLT. **Action = KE**

- PF members provided feedback from pupils that portion sizes of meals at WACCY were too small. KE responded that the WACCY cook had recently stepped down and that it has been difficult to find a replacement, however she was not aware that meal portions had grown smaller! Other staff are currently managing the provision of food for 60 children but their primary focus has to be the children's welfare. WACCY staff will continue to monitor this.
 - KE was asked about the breakfast club menu and said that cereal, toast and fruit are provided as well as brioche and pancakes. Children will continue to be encouraged to make healthy sensible choices from the variety available to them.
- d) School meals:
- Parents had asked about the food combinations chosen by pupils at lunchtime eg sandwich/roll and pasta at one meal. KE explained that a salad bar is available at every meal and that pupils are encouraged to try to choose a variety of food but that she will ensure that this continues to be monitored by the lunchtime staff. KE reiterated that ketchup is only available to the winners of the top class award each Friday.
 - Nut policy: KE said that it was important that school helps pupils with allergies to learn how to manage these independently as a life skill. PF said some concern had been raised about a perceived change in the school's nut policy; KE said she would re-issue the list of appropriate snacks for pupils in KS2 and reiterated that there was no change in the school's nut policy. **Action = KE.**
- e) OFSTED report:
- KE said she is not yet in a position to provide an update regarding the result of the recent OFSTED inspection.
- f) Future local development:
- In response to a question about the school's position on the Issues and Options consultation from Dacorum Borough Council, KE said that the school works with Schools Planning who work in turn with developers. Greenway School does not have an official view, however members of the Governing Body attended the public meeting about the Bearroc Park development. In light of the forthcoming meeting to discuss the latest proposals planned for this Friday, 17th November from 2pm to 9pm in the Civic Centre it was agreed that a letter highlighting this to parents should be sent from the Governing Body. **Action = KE.**
- g) Road safety:
- following the recent tragic RTA outside St Mary's Northchurch, parents asked for guidance regarding traffic at both the Greenway entrances, in particular the gates at the St Thomas More entrance where there have been issues around dangerous driving and inconsiderate parking. KE asked PF members to encourage parents to report examples of this behaviour whenever they see it and where it concerns pupils/parents at STM to report it to their school office. **Action = PF members.**
- h) Communication:
- Parents had asked for more information about Harvest Festival and other assemblies eg the length of the service. KE said she wasn't always able to predict the length of services or assemblies and would not add this detail to letters home. She also confirmed that there are no limits on the number of parents/other family members able to attend performances for Reception and Nursery children and that this would be made clearer in future letters. **Action = KE.**
- i) Sports fixtures & events:
- Parents asked for more detailed information in letters home about sports events eg what children are taking part in, whether it is a team or whole year event, also for

football team members to receive a pre-match briefing. KE said she would pass these requests to Mr Lewis. **Action = KE.**

8. AOB:

- Nursery 30 hours free childcare scheme – KE reported that children who have taken up places under the scheme this year are getting a fantastic level of provision with a high ratio of staff to children and access to a wide range of experiences and facilities. However the scheme is currently running at a loss due to the low numbers of families who took up the offer of a place, despite an initially promising number of them expressing an interest. The Governing Body will be reviewing the likely provision for next year in light of the take-up this year.
- Year 5 homework – parents asked whether homework could show the expected hand-in date or alternatively for a homework timetable. **Action = KE to feed back to Year 5 teachers.**
- Table tennis tables – parents asked whether the areas around the outdoor table tennis tables could be fitted with matting to avoid pupils coming home with very muddy shoes. KE reported that due to increased Sports Premium funding school was planning to purchase new equipment including matting. **Action = KE.**
- Academisation – parents asked what the likely timescale of conversion to academy status might be. KE reported that the application has been submitted and that whilst there is currently no firm date for this, it was likely to take place before the end of the financial year.
- WACCY capacity – parents asked whether school had any plans to expand WACCY to provide places for more children. KE said that there was no more capacity and that whilst she sympathised with parents who were currently unable to secure a place for their child, the numbers (currently 65) were at the maximum and that once the school starts to reduce in size then pressure on places will also reduce.
- Children in Need – KE said children would be encouraged to wear odd socks to school all week, and that Dress Down Day is planned with a £1 donation.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Date of next meeting = TBC