|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **Greenway Primary and Nursery School****Parent Forum** | **20.00-21.45****Thursday 4th February 2016****Cedar classroom** |
|  |
|  |
| **Minutes** |
|  |
|  |  |
| **Present:** | Katharine Ellwood – Head Teacher, Nigel Wiggins – Governor (Chair), Caroline Crozier – Deputy Head.Parent Forum Members: Dan Bishop (Green Ash) Emma Gaskill & Natasha Goss (Red Ash) Karin Huber (Pine) Helen Hanbidge (Beech) Nicola Shukla (Silver Birch) Izzy Hall (Maple) Beverley Brookes (Willow) Liz Hopwood (Chestnut) Kate Moody (Sycamore) Charlotte Woollett (Spruce) Suzanne Mitchell (Cedar) |
|  |  |

1. Apologies were received from Gemma Chatt (Elm), Caroline Green (Silver Birch), Laura Whittingham-Jones (Chestnut), Becky St. John (Oak)
2. Minutes from the last meeting were agreed and action points reviewed
* Revised Terms of Reference are on the School’s website
* Teachers had reminded pupils to take their wet trainers home
* Congestion outside nursery – feedback – some flooding on wet days, quotes are expensive for either a path or a patch of artificial grass which would do nothing to improve the flooding. Katharine explained the other options which are yellow paint to indicate area to be kept free, or wait one more year until Nursery returns to its original location and the problem will be resolved. Going in earlier has helped. Agreed no further action.
* Parent consultation summary sheets – feedback has been that they were useful, some people have said a copy would be good. Katharine explained that last time it was a kind of pilot and only parents who asked for a copy were given one. Now we’ve had the positive feedback we will formalise it and all parents will get a copy as a matter of course. Katharine talked about the comment from Maple that it would be useful to have suggestions of resources if we are asked to support/extend our children's learning at home. There are some resources listed on the website (eg maths ones) and that the parent in question could ask the class teacher directly.
* Reference to behaviour and Top Class to be discussed under point 4 as matters raised
1. Parent View/Parent and Child questionnaires

Katharine talked about how fortunate GW is to have parents who respond so well to the PQ. She explained how the results are used. A range of data used is to inform the direction the school takes each year, when the School Plan is written for the following year. Looking at trends from one year to the next, there is not very much arising from the PQ that the GB/SLT feels needs to be addressed in the School Plan. So at the recent GB meeting, it was suggested that the child questionnaire should continue this year, but that instead of PQ this year parents are encouraged to fill in Parent View (Ofsted questionnaire). Suzanne asked about the questions. Katharine read them out. They are similar but there are fewer than the GW questionnaire. Charlotte asked about whether there is space for further comments if parents make a negative response. There is. When would it be? Katharine said she would set a deadline, probably in the Easter term. The GB would then look at the data. Beverley pointed out that Parent View is available for anyone to view if they want to. Members felt that there was nothing negative about doing the questionnaire this way and that most of the questions were the same, so why wouldn’t they agree? Any issues not covered by PV can be addressed through Parent Forum. Nigel pointed out that there are two questions at the end of our PQ that can be added to PV, at a small cost. All were happy with this suggestion.

1. Matters raised through Parent Forum reps
* Follow up to last meeting - Behaviour of certain children resulting in frustration for some children particularly with reference to rewards like Top Class. Izzy pointed out that Maple class has been Top Class twice since this was raised and the parents who raised it may not have been aware of that. She also said the solar system reward chart seems to be working well in Maple. ***Action: Izzy will go back to Maple parents and point out the above, and if any parents still have issues she will refer them to Katharine.***
* Dan talked about changes in behaviour of children in Nursery as a result of the arrival of new children. He acknowledged that this is always an issue, although parents wondered whether/how the children were prepared for the changes ahead. Katharine explained that these preparations did (and always do) take place and that parents can always go to the teacher with this kind of question (although first thing in the morning isn’t a good time). ***Action: Katharine is aware that there hasn’t been a coffee morning this term and will address this as these are valuable for supporting home/school communications.*** Dan said he would be happy to be invited into school more often and Katharine explained that this happens once a term. There was some discussion about the role of parent reps, gathering information for compiling a parent list and the possible need for some kind of leaflet for new parents with ‘Top Tips’. Members agreed this would be useful and Katharine felt it was something that should come from parents rather than school. ***Action: members will email classes asking for suggestions as to what should go in it.* *Nigel will email members after Half Term to remind them to collect these suggestions. They will edit the lists they get and send to Nigel by 2 weeks later.*** Izzy offered to help process the info received
* Silver Birch – it is difficult to give advance notice of when we will be talking about major news events in assembly as this is usually quite a reactive thing and cannot be planned (this was the case with the attacks in Paris and was only discussed briefly in assembly in the context of marking the minute’s silence). It is part of the culture in school to be open about such things, especially when the children are likely to be hearing about them from their peers in ways that might not be accurate or reliable. It is always done sensitively, in an appropriate way for the ages of the children.
* Food – Katharine explained the staff changes in the kitchen. She was concerned about the comments that have come up around the quality of the food. She reminded us that there were issues some years ago around portion size/waste. She also said the portion size the children in Years 5 and 6 get is the same as that given to these children in other schools. Dean is not coming back – children see him in school occasionally and this is because he is an area manager now and GW is on his patch. Hayley, the new cook, has worked with him for years in our kitchen, he is very upset about the recent comments and is working hard to ensure the quality of the food offered here is as it should be. Carbonara is off the menu now. Katharine and Dean have gone through the menu and established that all the other dishes are popular with the majority of the children, so they will stay. There was some discussion about the ‘all day breakfast muffin’ and the way children are affected by the name of some of the dishes. The suggestion that other schools have gone back to the old menu is not true for those served by Herts Catering. Some schools don’t use the same catering company so that may be where rumours have come from. Katharine explained that there are also several staff who eat the school dinners and they are happy with them.
* Dirty cups in dining room – they are regularly changed by staff so not sure where these comments have come from.
* Breakfast Club - could breakfast be available until 8.30am and not 8.20am ? – There are up to 50 children at BC and staff need the time to clear the dining room ready for lessons so the timing will not change.
* World Book Day – last year there was feedback from some parents that they didn’t like the dressing up. The PJ theme is a response to this and is not necessarily a permanent change. Year 3 parents pointed out that there is a PJ day coming up as a reward for Secret Student so this is disappointing for children. This couldn’t really be helped.
* Sports equipment at lunchtimes – Katharine explained that GW is at its largest this year. In winter we cannot use the field and it is difficult to use sports equipment safely on the playground because it is quite crowded. In summer, when the field is available, this will not be a problem. There is a rota for classes to spend time with Mr Lewis at lunchtimes so each class gets this once a week. Top Class also get time with Mr Lewis at lunchtime as part of their reward.
* Extra-curricular activities or clubs – there was a discussion about lunchtime clubs and sports clubs in general. Katharine said we are appealing for parent volunteers with netball club and names need to go to Mr Loczy. Charlotte asked if younger boys could be included in team for High Five netball tournaments as some go to the club but aren’t being included in the team. ***Action: Katharine will pass this on to Mr Loczy.*** Beverley asked about the table tennis table - this is being used at lunchtimes, at WACCY and led to the success of the GW team at the Herts competition. A Badminton coach has given an introductory session for Year 5, she will do the same with Year 6 next week and hopefully year 4 after half term. It is difficult to provide regular Badminton provision for whole classes due to the size of the hall but fliers for a new club at Ashlyns run by the same coach will be sent out after the introduction sessions. It was commented that it is good that the school is introducing other sports to pupils. Karin asked about the swimming competition – it is for Year 4 and some Year 3s. There are currently no plans to offer more extra-curricular clubs or activities. If parents have an idea and are interested, they are very welcome to contact her.
* Splitting of the current Reception class – the decision will not be taken until much later in the year. Reception parents said they hadn’t realised the class would be split from Year 1. Katharine reminded them she did say it at the meeting last year.
* Year 6 SATs – there will be an information letter going out to parents just after half term. It is school’s intention to keep these as low key as possible in order to avoid panic/pressure. There will be breakfasts on the days of the tests. Caroline outlined briefly some of the preparation already underway in Year 6 and she and Katharine stressed that the approach is very gentle.
* School uniform – concern about the quality and sizing of items recently purchased. The supplier hasn’t changed but the manufacturer used by them has. ***Action: Katharine will ask the office to look into this and also to investigate the issue of the too-small PE bags.* *Also can the* *supplier offer sweatshirts/hoodies with logos?***
* Road signage on Shootersway to indicate that there is a school nearby– Katharine explained that it is very difficult to do anything about this. She can ask, but it takes a very long time for anything to happen based on experience.
* Can drop of at the gate be permitted due to congestion? No because this holds up cars waiting to turn there and also poses a danger to pedestrians crossing the turning circle, particularly children in years 5 and 6 who walk to school unsupervised
* Reward system/ladder of consequences – this has already been discussed at last meeting – see minutes. New solar system chart is working well in the class this issue was raised by.
* Caroline Green wanted to add a positive comment about the changes to the behaviour system (via email)
* Stretch in Maths in Year 6 – Katharine/Caroline advised that individual parents with concerns over this should talk directly to the class teachers.
* Mathletics – concerns that it feels like it is always being used for homework– ***Action: Katharine will talk to staff about how much this is being used for homework and monitor the mix/variance***. Nigel read out an email from Becky in support of Mathletics and the benefit it gives.
* Mild/Spicy/Hot – works very well and is embedded throughout the school.
* Electrical fault – school was very sympathetic to the difficulties posed by the closure. The decision was not taken lightly and the circumstances would have forced a closure no matter what time of year they had happened. PF members were supportive of the school’s position and understood that the situation was outside of its control. They were also appreciative of the out of hours communication they received.
* Sharing assembly – this will never be on a Friday due to whole school celebration assembly. The dates are decided according to other events in the school diary and this is set at an SLT meeting in the summer. There is only one class sharing assembly a year and dates are published as early as possible in the hope that parents can make arrangements to attend. Charlotte asked about texts reminding parents of Child Shows Parent – these have been discussed before and have happened, although perhaps not systematically. ***Action: Katharine/Caroline to check this with the office.***
* Space Project – see February newsletter.
* Pool – planting area? Katharine is concerned about investing time and money in this area because, while there is no plan for an expansion, if GW were to expand at some point in the future, that is an area that might be built on.
1. AOB
* Liz raised a point about spelling homework taking a long time. She will advise that parent to speak to the class teacher.
* Reception trip to Butterfly World now not possible. Mrs Murphy and Miss Cooper are investigating options.

ACTIONS SUMMARY

* **Izzy** will go back to Maple parents to inform them they have been Top Class twice recently, and if any parents still have issues she will refer them to Katharine.
* **Katharine** is aware that there hasn’t been a coffee morning this term and will address this as these are valuable for supporting home/school communications
* **PF members/Nigel.** Leaflet for new parents with ‘Top Tips’ **PF members** will email classes asking for suggestions as to what should go in it. **Nigel** will email members to remind them to collect these suggestions. They will edit the lists they get and send to Nigel by 2 weeks later.
* **Katharine** will pass this on to Mr Loczy query ref if younger boys could be included in team for High Five netball tournaments as some go to the club but aren’t being included in the team
* **Katharine** will ask the office to look into the issue of poorer quality / change of sizes or school uniform from same supplier but different manufacturer and also to investigate the issue of the too-small PE bags. Also can the supplier offer sweatshirts/hoodies with logos?
* **Katharine** Mathletics – concerns that it feels like it is always being used for homework– Katharine will talk to staff about how much this is being used for homework and monitor the mix/variance.
* **Katharine/Caroline** Texts reminding parents of Child Shows Parent – these have been discussed before and have happened, although perhaps not systematically. Katharine/Caroline to check this with the office.