

**Greenway First and  
Nursery School  
Parent Forum**

**19.30-21.00  
Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2012  
The Library**

**Minutes**

**Attendees**

Katharine Weston, Suzanne Stace, Elizabeth O'Reilly - co-Chair of Governors, Alison Hoffman – Parent Governor  
Parent Forum Members: Fiona Nicolle (Maple), Kate Moody (Elm), Liz Hopwood (Oak), Charlotte Woollett (Chestnut), Susannah Gascoyne (Silver Birch), Diane Young (Maple), Paula Batten (Purple Ash), Ellie Jelf (Yellow Ash), Helen Hanbidge (Red Ash), Beth Baylay (Red Ash), Louise Eyles (Class Rep for nursery), Charlotte Eastaff (Purple Ash), Sally Lound (Willow)

**Apologies**

Beverley Brookes (Silver Birch), Sally Fisher (Beech), Julie York (Willow)

**1. Welcome and introduction**

Katharine welcomed everyone and attendees introduced themselves.

**2. Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of the Parent Forum was explained. The PF had developed over the past four years to become a proper, democratically elected, consultative tool and had proved key to seeking views from Greenway parents. The PF was not a decision-making body, but a valuable method of consulting both ways between parents and the school. Members were representing the views of the whole class rather than their own personal views. Consultations would be carried out as and when required, but the PF also had a role in feeding information to the parents of their respective classes and bringing matters raised by parents to the PF for discussion.

**3. School dinners**

KW had had concerns for some time over the quality and quantity of food. The consultation carried out by the PF in the summer term had confirmed that these concerns were shared by parents. She had met with catering staff to raise the main issues, including the problem where not all three of the choices were available at the later sittings. Following the Year 3 residential, a food 'waste awareness' exercise had been carried out for a week which showed that waste levels were much higher among younger children. As a result, starting this term, KW had requested that the catering staff adjust portion sizes, so that the younger children were no longer given too much and the older ones no longer given too little. This had improved the situation considerably, however the waste exercise would be repeated each term to monitor levels. It was hoped this redistribution would mean that parents would not have to pay more in order to be sure of having larger portions for their children.

Changes to the packed lunch option were that: the bread was now always a baguette (cut into three pieces) as this was much more substantial than rolls or wraps; there was no longer any packaging on the fresh fruit and vegetables; and the desserts were chosen from a separate tray and were no longer wrapped.

The quality of food had improved, but again this would be monitored. Once the new menus were in place, maths club would conduct a survey aiming to establish if there were any very unpopular dishes, with a view to requesting their removal from the menu.

Other points made:

KW confirmed that KS2 children should not be given a snack to eat after their Tuesday swimming lesson.

Reception children would be able to have school dinners on Fridays after half term and every day from January if they wished. The provision of a home packed lunch together with an earlier lunch time would prepare them for coping with a lunchtime routine at school.

Although teachers tried to monitor the choices pupils made and encourage them to try different things, the choice was up to the individual child. Parents were encouraged to talk to their children about choosing sensibly.

#### 4. Berkhamsted Schools' Reorganisation

KW referred to a letter to parents dated 17 September which advised that the PF would be assisting in establishing as far as possible the number of younger siblings who would require reception and nursery places over the next few years. The issue of younger siblings had been raised consistently with HCC by KW and the Governing Body throughout the consultation process. Every school would be affected in terms of places for siblings. The position at Greenway had undoubtedly been exacerbated by the 90 reception intake this September, but the alternative of not taking an extra class this year would almost certainly have meant those extra 30 children being sent to a school outside the town.

A proforma for recording the numbers of all younger siblings was circulated. Members were asked to request information on the younger siblings of the children in their class, using this information to complete a single proforma and to then send it to AH by Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October. After the meeting, AH would email a suggested form of words to be used when requesting this information. It was accepted that this survey was not a failsafe method, but it would provide HCC with a good indication of the minimum number of siblings who would be seeking places each year.

The application by HCC to the OSA (Office of the Schools' Adjudicator) to vary the published admission number (PAN) from 60 to 30 was a separate process over which the school clearly had no control. In addition, there were separate planning applications to expand the premises at other schools in the town. It was not known when the OSA would make a decision, but it was anticipated that this would be before Christmas.

**Action – AH to send out the proforma and a form of words after the meeting.**

#### 5. AOB

Other items discussed were as follows:

- a) Alleyway off Gilbert Way – this was often congested in the mornings and the problem of overgrown hedges had been raised with the local council. There were separate entrances off the alleyway for St Thomas Moore and Greenway and parents had been asked by both schools to ensure they only used the one for their own school. **KW would write to parents clarifying the different start times, in particular the 8.45 start for nursery.**
- b) Swimming Lessons – **KW agreed to clarify whether Mr. Loczy was teaching some of the class each week.** The instructors were of the opinion that swimming every four weeks was sufficient for children to make progress and improvement had been noted by parents. On Tuesdays, two of the three KS2 classes who did not swim, did PE instead, and all of KS 2 did dance on the Monday.
- c) Dance classes throughout the school had been a huge success, particularly for boys and Janine's lesson had received an 'outstanding' rating during the Ofsted inspection. It would not be possible for all 90 reception children to have dance at the same time, but it would be timetabled later this term for each reception class to take part in dance. Dance classes were themed and fitted in with the class teachers' lesson planning.
- d) Buddy Benches – School Council had consulted children on how to spend money raised from cake sales. 'Friendship benches' or benches with quotations had been discussed as children were not overly keen on the idea of buddy benches.

- e) KW reassured the meeting that having years 5 and 6 at the school would not present a challenge - all staff were trained to teach the primary school curriculum. She commented that middle schools had facilities such as science labs because they were required to teach the secondary school curriculum in years 7 and 8. Schools in Berkhamsted would continue to work closely to ensure smooth transitions from one to another.

**6. Date of next meeting**

A further meeting would be arranged once the outcome of the OSA application was known.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.

Alison Hoffman  
4 October 2012