

GREENWAY PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

PARENT FORUM

TUESDAY 5th MARCH, 8pm

Present: Katharine Ellwood (Head teacher), Alison Hoffman (Governor), Natalie Littlechild (Elm – Y1), Louise Jenkins (Elm - Y1), Emma Lelieveld (Pine – Y2), Emma Hart (Pine – Y2), (Caroline Green (Beech – Y3 and Sycamore – Y6).

Apologies: Louise Farrow (Governor), Laura Whittingham-Jones (Y3), Kerry Hall (Reception), Caroline Taylor (Nursery).

Agenda

1. Behaviour policy

KE advised that the current behaviour policy had been the subject of considerable work and consultation when it was developed and introduced. It was based on the 'Hertfordshire Steps' approach. The school had worked with Ashlyns to ensure continuity and consistency of message at that time.

Thinking had changed since then, with a move to a more therapeutic approach to behaviour management which Herts County Council had adopted. KE and Mrs Roe had received training in 2018 and the new approach had been trialled at Greenway and feedback sought from children through 'pupil voice'. Evidence was that this new approach to behaviour management had reduced the levels of exclusion from schools in other parts of the county and Greenway was now considering amending its behaviour policy accordingly. A letter had been sent to parents before half term explaining the two principal changes to the behaviour policy and these had been explained to children in assemblies.

The changes were:

1. Removal of the 'ladder of consequences' as this was viewed as 'name and shame' process.
2. Golden time had been renamed as 'social time'.

No feedback or queries had been received from parents and so KE asked PF members for views.

Q. What is social time?

It replaces 'golden time', which had been used as a reward, therefore some children did not get it. Some found golden time

difficult to manage and to choose an activity. Social time was not a lesson, but was structured in a way that the class teacher felt would be of most benefit. PF members reported that they had only really heard their children talking about the removal of the ladder, but they understood that this did not mean removal of the consequences.

2. First Aid training- GSA

The GSA had circulated details of first aid training. This would take place on Monday 25th March. The deadline to apply for a place was Friday 8th March. If it was oversubscribed, names would be pulled from a hat. There was no charge, but a donation was suggested. The demand so far had been high and there was a possibility of running an additional session.

As an Easter fundraiser, the GSA chairs had suggested a 'Smarties challenge'. Each child would be given a tube of smarties. Once they had eaten them, they would be asked to decorate the tube and fill it with money earned by doing small jobs over the holidays. A tube could hold £12 worth of 20 pence pieces. There would be prizes for the best decorated tube and the highest fundraiser. PF members thought this was a great idea. Children with allergies/intolerances could be given an empty tube with a bag of Haribos instead.

3. Daily Mile Bid

The school had been successful in its bid for funding to build a 'daily mile' running track – an all-weather surface track which would sit around the outside of the football pitches. The grant was for £20,000 and the school and GSA would fund the remaining £22,000. The track could be used by the whole community. It was likely to be built in the autumn. The GSA had also agreed to pay for a new laptop trolley and repairs to the climbing apparatus.

4. Spellings

KE asked parents to consider a draft letter from Mrs Russell, the English lead, which set out proposed changes to learning and testing spellings in school. The writing of words in sentences would be discontinued as this had been found to move the focus away from learning the word or spelling rule. Also, sometimes the words were difficult to work into a sentence.

Q Will this be more work for children/parents? It will be a different way of doing it but will run concurrently with homework. If parents have any concerns, they should raise these with the class teacher.

5. Parents questions/feedback from classes

Q. For World Book Day, could the school alternate the approach each year - dressing up as a book character, wearing pyjamas, making sandwich boards etc?

There will always be parents who don't like the approach chosen. There were pros and cons to each. There would be a different approach next year instead of sandwich boards.

Q. Would Greenway adopt a Forest school approach as they have at Bridgewater?

There are no plans to do so at Greenway. Different schools offer different things. Bridgewater has exceptionally large grounds.

Q. Can we have information on the KS1 production 21/22 March so we can discuss with children at home? Also the themes/topics that children will be studying?

The themes are covered at the 'Welcome to your class' session in September.

Ideally, the production is something that parents should not have too much information on, so as not to spoil their enjoyment. Information relating to costumes would be circulated with plenty of notice.

Action – KE to speak to KS1 staff about the KS1 production.

Q. What is the best way for parents to suggest extra-curricular activities for children?

There were no plans to introduce additional school-based activities. From year 3 onwards, there were plenty of musical and other activities on offer. Dance was part of PE curriculum. Mr. Lewis spent most of his time out of school with clubs and matches/fixtures.

Q. Does the school use Mindfulness?

The school was using elements of mindfulness, but this was not a whole school approach.

Q. Why is there no teaching assistant (TA) in year 2 in the mornings?

There hasn't been one this year. TAs are deployed where they are needed. Year 2 has a TA in the afternoons. The TA is not a statutory requirement.

Q. Can the lighting be improved at night – it is very dark picking up from WACCY?

All the lights had been replaced with LEDs. The school could not do anything about St. Thomas Moore's lighting but would let them know the feedback from our parents.

Q. Are times tables taught consistently?

Yes. There are plans to introduce a national times tables text for year 4 children next year. No further detail is available yet.

6. Any other business

Q. Can Nursery hours be condensed into four days instead of five?

No, this is not something the school can offer. Children are not required to be in nursery, but if they do not attend on a Friday, for example, they will miss one fifth of nursery input.

KE offered to speak directly to the parent/s who had asked about this.

7. Date of next meeting

Thursday 16 May 8pm.