

GREENWAY PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

PARENT FORUM

TUESDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2019, 8pm

Present: Katharine Ellwood (Head teacher), Alison Hoffman (Governor), Lauren Bishop (Red Ash – Reception), Emma Lelieveld (Elm – Y1), Louise Jenkins (Pine – Y2), Emma Hart (Beech – Y3), Natasha Goss (Willow – Y4).

Apologies: Louise Farrow (Governor), Sarah Whale (Chestnut – Y5), Clare Burlingham (Maple – Y6).

Agenda

1. Welcome and apologies

Attendees introduced themselves. Apologies were noted as above.

2. Daily mile

KE updated the meeting on the daily mile track. Installation had been delayed over the summer, meaning an opening ceremony at the start of term had not been possible. The track was in use – by some classes on a daily basis. The school wanted to do a proper launch with parents and children and KE asked for ideas on when and how this could be achieved. KE had powerpoint presentations which explained the history of the daily mile and its benefits – these could be shown at the launch.

It was suggested that the Christmas Fair might be a suitable event – when much of the school community would be present. The presentations and a display could be shown from one of the classrooms.

The school had not sent any communication about the track but KE wanted to reassure parents that it was being used and valued by both the school and the community. Frequency of use was down to individual teachers. Different schools had different approaches. Roughly five laps of the track was a mile.

3. Behaviour curriculum evening 20 November

The previous academic year had seen a lot of changes; in particular a new behaviour policy. On 20 November, the school would hold an information evening to explain the new policy and the therapeutic approach that the school was taking. Children would make personal invitations to the event for their parents. KE stressed that the school was not trying to tell parents how to bring up their children, but wanted them to better understand the school's approach. The therapeutic approach was based on the assertion that '*all behaviour is a form of communication*'. KE reminded parents that the Behaviour Policy was on the website. The use of the therapeutic approach was high across Dacorum and the number of school exclusions was low.

Parent Forum reps to promote the behaviour evening on 20 November to their classes.

4. Garden area

The GSA had agreed to give the school some money to renew the garden area beneath the Van Gogh hanging and to create a permanent mural for the wall. The Van Gogh installation was faded and worn and the ambition was to replace it with a mural containing the Greenway tree and the school values – perhaps on tiles which would be fixed to the wall. Professional art expertise/support would be sought.

The garden area in front would have eight raised beds made from reclaimed timber – one for each class to use as they wished. KE asked PF reps to contact their classes for parents willing to become involved in the project and those who had the skills to source materials and/or assemble raised beds.

Parent Forum reps to seek support from their classes for either the raised beds or the art installation.

5. Dr Kathy Weston – 16 January 2020, 7.30 -9.30pm

(drkathyweston.com) Check out the website as it is full of top tips!

Dr Kathy Weston enjoys combining her passion for parenting with her extensive academic expertise, she is committed to giving parents the practical tools they need to help their children flourish.

She firmly believes in an evidence-based approach to parenting; in this way you are getting the very best information and can have confidence in the tips you apply at home.

Our children have significant challenges to overcome as they strive to reach their potential. Her aim is to empower you, so that the parenting journey becomes easier and more rewarding.

She has over 15 years experience as a social researcher with a particular interest in parenting, education and family life. She currently work as a motivational speaker and is passionate about bridging the gap between academic research and parenting.

Dr Kathy Weston was booked to lead a session at Greenway on **16 January**. The session would fit with the therapeutic approach covered in the behaviour evening in November. KE would write to parents asking them to save the date and explaining the purpose of the evening.

Parent Forum reps to promote the resilience evening to their classes.

6. Feedback from classes

School trips (Y3)

Q – Why is the year 3 trip to Legoland no longer running? Year 3 only have one school trip this year – to a mosque.

The new Ofsted framework and its focus on the 'whole child' had meant that the school had reviewed the provision of trips and discontinued those that did not provide specific educational benefit which related directly to the curriculum for that year group. Consequently, year 3 would no longer go to Legoland and year 4 would no longer go on the Lincolnsfield residential. (WWII was not covered until year 6 under the new curriculum). There was another trip planned for year 3 in May 2020 however, details would follow in due course.

In relation to the mosque visit, KE advised that the school had a duty to teach children about all faiths – this was particularly important in a school where there was so little cultural and religious diversity. The school was keen to focus on real visits rather than relying on visiting speakers.

Sports clubs (Y3)

Q Why is running club not for year 3?

Running club was set up deliberately for years 1 and 2 to ensure a spread of activities offered across all groups.

All KS2 sports activities would start imminently. Sports ambassadors had been trained and would run activities in school at lunchtimes. Children would be told how they could sign up. Pupil Voice had been used to determine which activities the children wanted most. Mr Lewis could answer any queries parents had.

Art lead and art club (Y3)

Q Who is the art lead and could we have an art club?

Mrs Bennett had taken on the art lead role. There were no plans to run an art club, due to pressures on teachers' time. KE acknowledged that there were parents willing to run an art club, but she cautioned that this would be a challenge in terms of numbers and resources. She would consider this being run as a trial.

Show and tell/confidence building (Y3)

In response to a question about show and tell, KE advised that year 3 had only one session this year. It was a question of balance and the demands of the KS2 curriculum. Confidence could be built in many different ways

Child shows parent (Y3)

Q Could child shows parent be held out of school hours for working parents to attend?

These events were never held on a Friday because of the weekly celebration ceremony. Parents could however ask to come in at the end of the school day if they could not attend the scheduled session.

Achievement For All (Y3)

Q What will the Achievement For All deliver?

This was a discrete project that the school had signed up for, together with individual parents/families. It was a private matter but if parents had specific questions, they should speak to KE.

Reminders (flu vaccination) (Y3)

Q It would have been helpful to have had a reminder about the flu vaccination.

A parent had forgotten to sign the consent form and did not get a reminder, then had trouble getting a vaccination for their child elsewhere. KE apologised for this and would check with the office regarding reminders.

World Book Day (Y3) 2020

Parents had made some suggestions about different approaches for WBD. KE had invited other ideas at the previous PF meeting. These included bringing in a favourite book; and bringing in an item from a book. Another suggestion was to allocate a book to each class and leave it up to children whether they wanted to dress up as a character, or bring in an item from the story. Staff would discuss the options, but sandwich boards would not be used again.

Swimming pool area (Y1)

Parents had asked about plans for the old swimming pool and the land more generally. KE advised that the land with the disused pool belonged to the local authority and in any case, the school did not have the funds to do anything with it.

School security (Y1)

A parent had asked about school security after rumours that drugs paraphernalia had been found on the land. KE reported that this had happened on one occasion, but instances of vandalism and criminality were low. The site manager carried out a daily check of the premises.

The local police were aware that the site was open and carried out regular patrols, especially in the summer and when the weather was good. Governors had had many discussions on site security. KE and the governing body were keen that the school site remained open at evenings and weekends so that the whole community could use the space. There was no easy solution, but the situation would continue to be monitored.

Supporting parents (Y1)

There was a suggestion that new school year communication could be brought forward to the very start of term. KE advised that 'Welcome to your new class' was deliberately held in the second week so that everyone could settle in first.

Year 1 parents had felt that they needed more support with helping their children with phonics in Reception. KE would follow this up. Lauren reported that Reception parents this year had already received a phonics booklet and information on readwrite inc and high frequency words.

A parent had asked if the school could limit the number of communications sent out on a Friday and/or the last day of term as these often got missed. KE said the school would bear this in mind, but pressures of work in the office meant that sometimes this was unavoidable.

Action KE

Driving onto school grounds (Y1)

Parents were still driving into school to drop children off at breakfast club. KE advised that it was only with the express permission of the headteacher that parents could drive onto school grounds before 5pm on a school day. AH would check the relevant policy and KE would ensure a reminder was sent to all parents.

Action KE/AH

Multi Academy Trustees Designate

A parent had asked if the four local schools (Greenway, Bridgewater, Swing Gate and Westfield) had used the time and experience of the trustees designate over the summer to further explore options for academisation. KE advised that the combined decision of the four remaining schools had been not to pursue this.

7. AOB

A parent had asked if E-safety training for parents was planned this year? KE asked PF members to seek views from their classes.

Parent Forum reps to gauge level of interest for an e-safety event

8. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 3 March 2020 at 8pm.