

GREENWAY PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

REMOTE MEETING OF PARENT FORUM

Friday 20 November 2020, 9.30am-10.30am

Present: Katharine Ellwood (Head teacher), Elizabeth O'Reilly (Chair of Governors), Lucy Knox Smith (Nursery), Kerry Hall (Reception), Lauren Bishop (Elm – Y1), Emma Lelieveld (Pine – Y2), Louise Jenkins (Beech – Y3), Sophie Kennedy (Willow – Y4), Natasha Goss (Chestnut – Y5), Rachel Scott (Maple – Y6).

Agenda

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies received from Fiona Duck (the new governor Chair of Parent Forum) who is unwell.

KE chaired the meeting and EOR took minutes. KE had noted all comments received via Parent Forum representatives in advance of the meeting.

Attendees introduced themselves and KE thanked the new representatives for stepping forward and thanked existing representatives for continuing in their positions.

2. Yoga

Feedback from all classes was very positive although some feedback from parents in Y4 and Y6 revolved around pupils needing to have another PE lesson (as opposed to yoga taking up a PE lesson) as children needed as much physical activity as possible.

KE explained that the intention had always been to trial yoga during the autumn term with there then being a review undertaken with pupils, parents and staff as to its impact prior to a decision being taken as to whether or not to continue with it moving forwards. The positivity demonstrated by parents to the introduction of yoga has been reflected in the pupil voice obtained by school staff. Yoga will continue next term with the same external teacher being funded by sports premium – it takes place during one of the two weekly PE slots.

Staff have noticed that childrens stamina and focus has been impacted by their time away from full time school - there has been a real need to improve this to ensure that they are in a position to learn. Yoga challenges the children to focus and remain calm for

periods of time – it is vital that pupils have appropriate behaviours for learning and yoga supports this. Staff are seeing the benefits already with all year groups noting that some of the Y4 and Y6 pupils (boys in particular) are finding the lack of physicality in yoga and the need to focus challenging.

On the three days that pupils do not have a PE slot all teachers aim to use the running track ie three times per week with the exception of Early Years children who spend time outside each day during their child initiated play. Children in Early years will be using the running track when staff feel it is appropriate.

KE is also aware that some pupils are under the impression that Mr Lewis delivers PE and unless they have him teach them they feel they are not doing PE. All teachers teach PE very effectively.

3. Drop Off and Pick Up Arrangements

Feedback from all classes was generally very positive with fewer comments from Y4-6 parents. The observations that were made echoed those made from parents in the younger year groups around the lack of space in the alleyways and the possibility of the side gate being reopened.

KE confirmed that whilst staff are aware of one or two very young children having a wobble at drop off, staff have been incredibly impressed with how well the childrens independence has accelerated as a result of their saying goodbye at the gate – they are settling very well in school and are absolutely fine.

As the weather gets colder/wetter children and parents will need to ensure they are appropriately dressed for drop off/pick up but staff are in any event ensuring that particularly for the younger children, half of Nursery and Reception pupils peel off to go to class whilst others are being dropped off to ensure they are not hanging around outside for too long. Drop off in particular is now running very smoothly. Parents do need to remember that as their child is handed over to them at the end of the day it is important to disperse as quickly as possible whilst maintaining social distancing – KE is becoming increasingly concerned that sometimes pick up seems to be an extended play session.

Class laminated sheets that Mrs Ellwood or Ms Roe will be held up for longer at pick up. **Action KE**

The measures that have been put in place are as a result of Covid and the guidelines that the school have to follow etc – the school

cannot facilitate pick up at the same time for KS1 and KS2 and there will be no pick up from classrooms. Parents cannot access the school via the St Thomas More gate at present. The Greenway side gate will not be re-opened. The school are aware of the site access limitations and the narrow alleyways leading off Crossways. These alleyways are not part of the school site. If these become overgrown parents can contact the council to ask them to cut back the hedges – the governors do routinely ask them to do so.

KE will continue to remind particularly the older pupils of the one way system operating on Crossways and of the need to walk in single file along the alleyways.

Action KE

Parents can raise concerns about the access routes to the school and in particular speeding traffic along Shootersway directly with the council. This is something that was raised by governors when planning permission was being sought for the development at Durrants Lane.

KE acknowledged the difficulties that families have faced as a result of the school's access restraints and thanked parents for their support in the change of arrangements during these challenging times and confirmed that pupil voice has confirmed that the children understand and have readily accepted the measures that are in place. Parents have been very supportive in the wearing of face masks for which KE is grateful.

4. Google Classrooms

Feedback from all classes was generally positive and there was an understanding that this was a new venture for the school and for parents and that as they were all learning to use it at the same time there were bound to be some hiccups. The system is being constantly reviewed.

KE confirmed that this particular digital platform has been chosen as most children at Greenway progress to Ashlyns where it is also used – it should ensure that the transition is even easier for them. Greenway is purchasing a set of Chrome books for Y6 and another set to replace the existing i-pads.

Staff are aware that some parents are missing the social contact outside the classroom door and would appreciate more photographs and information as to what the children are doing each half term– the aim is to upload more to the class tabs on the school website.

A further communication is being sent out by school today which will hopefully iron out some concerns/confusion. KE reassured parents that spelling is being tested in class via dictation and that teachers are encouraging pupils to apply the words learned in their work – the Spelling Shed programme had been thoroughly researched by school and was found to be the one that had the most impact.

KE reminded parents that if any parent has any concerns, they should email their child's teacher. The homelearning uploaded will only be seen by school staff – an acknowledgement will be sent. The work will always have been seen by the teacher, but the acknowledgement could be sent by the teaching assistant.

5. Any Other Business

Appreciation to school and governors for clear communications re lockdown and the return to school was noted.

Q. What is the position with regard clubs moving forwards? No clubs took place in the first 6 weeks of the autumn term for obvious reasons. A very limited number of clubs were set up (football and ukulele) immediately prior to the second lockdown which have been allowed to continue but no further clubs will be established for the time being. KE and SLT are keeping the matter under constant review. They are hoping that external clubs may begin to start up again for children to attend.

Whilst individual/shared peripatetic music lessons are taking place the recorder club will not be started again at this stage.

Q. How are the school dealing with race and discrimination/Black Lives Matter – will there be changes to the curriculum? There was a whole school project for the first three weeks of term where all year groups studied 'Coming to England' written by Floella Benjamin which was chosen for its cultural diversity and to support Black History month. Within PHSE and through Jigsaw the children are studying a topic of 'Celebrating Difference' over a 6 week period. KE has been impressed with the comments made by pupils around BLM and also the American election and congratulated parents for their clearly having discussed this with their children.

Q. Will the Greenway Holiday Club run again? This had been a real success, but no decision has yet been taken as to whether or not to repeat it. It had been a huge effort to effectively set up a business (establishing demand; recruiting and training staff; and dealing with

the logistics) within 3-4 weeks whilst also contending with the very many other issues presenting themselves.

Q. What plans are in place for pupils to learn table tennis? Mr Lewis is running an invitation only club on Fridays for Y5 and Y6 pupils. Once restrictions are lifted school will review whether this can be opened up to more pupils.

Q. Why do pupils have 1 hour of RE pw but History/Geography/Art and DT are given less time? It is the law for maintained schools to deliver 1 hour of RE each week. Teachers deliver History and Geography etc in blocks so unlike in secondary school pupils do not necessarily have weekly history or geography lessons etc.

Q. Were parents consulted on the change to the WACCY provision? Those parents impacted were consulted about the change in hours provision by KE personally phoning all of them. If restrictions eventually ease and parents are able to stop home working then the school will consult on the need for increased provision at WACCY. It is important to remember that WACCY is a business and has to be run as such.

Q. Are Greenway considering a QR Code like St Thomas More?
KE will investigate **Action KE**

Q. Will hot lunches be increased in number? Due to staff capacity and Covid restrictions, hot lunches will only be delivered on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at present.

Q. How can lost property be accessed? Teachers support pupils to look for an item they have lost in school. A box of lost property cannot be brought to the school gate for parents to look through due to Covid restrictions.

Q. Will Greenway allow Y5 and Y6 to attend the trip to O2 in 2022? KE cannot confirm that just because a year group has missed out on an event because of lockdown they will automatically have this rescheduled for another time. School are aware of those children who have missed out on this specific event (and various other events) and are not ruling out a combined Y5 and Y6 trip as and when it next runs. However, it is too early to make any decisions.

Q. Will Greenway sign up to help Covid research via the ZOE app? KE receives very many emails on a daily basis and whilst she is aware of this app she has not had a chance to investigate it yet due to the very many other calls on her time.

Q. Will the GB be sending a Response to Consultation re Dacorum Local Development Plan? The GB have been working with the school, town council and Local Authority for very many years around the provision of infrastructure within the town (to include schools). It was as a result of the GB's refusal to accept a proposed expansion to 3 form entry at Greenway that (working with all local Heads and the Local Authority) the town eventually moved from a three tier system to a two tier system. It should be noted that the GB and school have always been told that the Schools Planning team only take into account new homes for which planning permission has actually been granted when considering what further infrastructure should be put in place. If parents have views on the subject, they should respond to the consultation and contact their local councillors.

Finally, KE noted that she was concerned by the tone of one or two of the communications she had received via the Parent Forum reps. Parent Forum is designed to enable parents to raise issues with the school but she would hope that if any parent has an individual concern about their child or is very frustrated by something this should be dealt with outside of Parent Forum and not via the Parent Forum reps.

Next Meeting Monday 7 December 2020 at 8pm