

GREENWAY PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

REMOTE MEETING OF PARENT FORUM

Monday 7 December 2020, 8pm-8.45pm

Present: Fiona Duck (Chair of Parent Forum), Katharine Ellwood (Head teacher), Lorraine Tritton (PSHE Lead), Louise Collins (PSHE/RSE Link Governor), Elizabeth O'Reilly (Chair of Governors), Lucy Knox Smith (Nursery), Catherine Falla (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

FD chaired the meeting and EOR took minutes. KE and LT had noted all comments received via Parent Forum representatives in advance of the meeting and had shared these with those governors present.

KE acknowledged that the time frame for consideration of the draft policies had been tight but stated that experience had shown that where longer time had been allowed this did not equate to more parental feedback (and often there had been less). Policies are monitored and reviewed annually by the school and Governing Body as they are working documents.

Attendees introduced themselves.

2. The purpose of the meeting was to receive feedback on the draft PSHE and RSE Policies previously circulated to the parent body.

Nursery – there had been no written feedback sent to the PF representative. Verbal feedback received was that parents were happy with what the school is proposing as it is for the school to determine the approach to be taken.

Reception – there had been no written feedback sent to the PF representative by the deadline but a couple of queries had been received that afternoon around what information would be shared with parents to enable them to reinforce messages at home and as to how much time would be devoted to sensitive subject matter eg eating disorders, as it was felt that this could not possibly be covered in a one hour session.

LT provided reassurance that the sex education element of the curriculum is generally covered in the summer term. Parents are advised of this via letter to ensure that they are clear on what will be delivered and when. Depending on the restrictions in place at the time around Covid-19, will depend on whether any face to face meeting(s) with parents to discuss the delivery of sex education will be facilitated. LT provided further reassurance around the fact that the Jigsaw programme has been well thought through and planned; the curriculum is a spiral curriculum where topics are revisited as the children progress through the school; and that even though only 1 hour pw is dedicated to PSHE it actually runs through every lesson; break time and lunch and is re-visited, and developed, year on year. Therefore, a topic such as eating disorders will not simply be covered in a 1 hour lesson.

Year 1 – whilst some parents had hoped for more time to consider the draft policies it was helpful to have had sight of them. There were no questions which had not been covered via other year groups.

Year 2 – some parents had hoped for more time to consider the draft policies. The lack of feedback was more due to their heavy work commitments in the lead up to Christmas as opposed to lack of interest on their part.

LT responded to comments made in discussion as follows:

It is very important for children that the use of natural body terms is not made to be a 'big thing' by school or parents. However, the more children/families can be encouraged to use proper body part names as set out within Appendix 1 the draft RSE Policy the better. LT is very aware through her training of the need for all children to be able to use correct terminology. All those with older children agreed that it would have been really helpful to have the list of language used at school when their children were younger.

Children are not encouraged to share family confidences via the 'worry box' or otherwise in class. The school ethos is such that staff strive to ensure that children feel comfortable to share anything which is on their minds – a class charter is developed to ensure that all children understand the 'rules of engagement'. All staff undergo regular safeguarding training and are aware of the steps that they have to follow should any disclosure be made by a child but are also experienced in closing down situations where a child may start to disclose a family confidence to class mates. Parents are advised where a child discloses something which might be of a sensitive nature.

LC confirmed that as a governor she had undertaken pupil voice sessions with staff and she was very confident that pupils understood confidentiality and what they are and are not able to say eg they may say 'a friend' has said or felt something but not disclose who it is.

Pupil voice was obtained by LT in the development of the RSE Policy by talking to 2 pupils from each of years 2,4 & 6. Feedback received was that they love the use of the chime bar during the 'calming time', which is incorporated within lessons and that they felt it was good to be taught the proper body part names. They reported that 'friends' who had been worried about things now weren't.

In response to a specific parental question 'age appropriate' means the actual ages of the children in the class (i.e. the Year group). 'Stage appropriate' means what information any particular child is able to understand regardless of their year group.

Year 3 - some parents had hoped for more time to consider the draft policies. A query had arisen around how different types of conception are dealt with within the programme eg donor conception.

LT advised that the Jigsaw programme gives guidance to teachers in this respect, which she quoted from as follows:

'We want all children to feel valued and included so we cannot make a judgement about one form of conception over another, and there is a possibility that some children in the class know they were not conceived in the 'usual' way. The essence of this lesson is that children understand the biology and feel included no matter how they were conceived. Whilst sexual intercourse is the way the sperm fertilises the egg in many cases, there are occasions when this might not be possible e.g. medical reasons or same-gender relationships. So, ask the children if all babies are conceived in this way? Teachers can explain as much as they discern to be appropriate according to the nature of the children's response to this question and the age and stage of the cohort of children. It is perfectly acceptable to say that when sexual intercourse isn't possible to conceive a baby, doctors can help people to have a baby perhaps through egg donation, artificial insemination, surrogacy or IVF. Or people can choose to adopt. At this age it is important to clarify in simple terms what they may have already heard about these subjects without burdening them with too much detail. Awareness of the existence of these things is what matters and the chance to correct any misunderstandings they have. Ensuring all children feel included is paramount.'

KE reassured parents that staff know their families very well and that parents have historically always shared a lot of information with the school – the school has a lot of different families and is well known for its inclusivity. Parents have more information around the curriculum now and therefore may feel they wish to share even more detail about their family circumstances with the school though there was no requirement to do so.

Year 4 – there had been no written feedback.

Year 5 – the limited feedback received was that Jigsaw is an excellent resource and that the draft policies appeared comprehensive and appropriate. It could be that as a lot of the class have older siblings, they know how well Greenway handle the more sensitive topics.

Year 6 – there had been no written feedback, but it was felt that the vocabulary being used at school was really helpful.

In discussions KE confirmed that whilst the school does not highlight issues around County Lines with the children, Years 5 & 6 have a workshop with an outside provider around alcohol, drugs and gangs where the issue of County Lines is covered. Staff at Greenway (and all other local schools) are aware of the difficulties that Berkhamsted faces in this regard, with its proximity to the A41 and train line. If any disclosures are made the school has an excellent working relationship with the police and other agencies.

The workshop has been for pupils only but if there was a demand amongst parents a workshop could be provided for them too. (This has happened in years gone by).

The NHS undertake a national annual health assessment survey of all Year 6 children where they answer a questionnaire anonymously. If they answer questions in a certain way, then 2 nurses are on stand by to talk to those children and offer advice/support as necessary. The school (which has no access to the detail of any disclosures) has a summary of the responses and the trends year on year for Greenway are very positive.

3. Actions moving forwards:

- i. The policies have been sent to the GB for noting only at their forthcoming meeting on 10.12.20 as at the point the agenda was circulated it was unclear whether there would be a need for any major changes to the draft policies post this parental

consultation. If time allowed they would be ratified on 10.12.20 otherwise this would be dealt with early next term.

- ii. On ratification the policies will be uploaded to the school website.
- iii. Parents may feedback to the school at any time on any subject they wish to. All were reminded of the Comments/Concern form that is available from the school office.

4. Finally.....

LC reminded parents that Greenway has consistently delivered a comprehensive PSHE and RSE curriculum. The Government has required a review of how this is being delivered across all schools but parents at Greenway can be reassured that, unlike some, this school has always had timetabled PSHE/RSE lessons and has also always additionally ensured that the ethos of the school is woven into all school policies and is apparent in what is delivered to all children throughout the school day. LT's thorough review of this subject area had been very reassuring to governors who were satisfied that investing in the Jigsaw programme was an appropriate development that would further support teaching and learning. With parents and children confirming their enjoyment of the resources being used the school and governors will strive to ensure that parents have all they need to support their children with what is a sensitive but essential part of their education as they grow up through the school.

Next Meeting: Date tbc