

# Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Time: 9.00am

Jemma welcomed all the families to the first meeting of this academic year and reminded all that the Parent Council is a voice for the whole school and not individual matters. She thanked all the PC class representatives for their support in collating agenda items for the meeting.

## 1- My Child At School:

- Push notifications not working for some people. Try to fix this individually (eg. reinstall app) before Mr McGrath discusses potential problems with MCAS. Shouldn't be getting emails from school (unless for individual matters) – please let school know if this is happening.

### 1.1- Payments:

- School is trying to fix the issue whereby at the moment you can't pay for clubs with Tax Free Childcare on the app – hopefully this will be sorted soon.
- Noted that it is difficult for some families to have to pay for clubs upfront. Families should discuss with school office if this is the case and they will be able to accept a contribution. Mr McGrath noted it is always better to discuss with school rather than accruing debt – clubs should be available to all families.
- There was a discussion regarding being able to set up a direct debit to MCAS – Mr McGrath thinks you can set this up but then need to tell the app where you want the money to be allocated (eg. clubs / Ourspace etc).

### 1.2 Calendar:

- Can't sync calendar on MCAS / website with people's own calendars. Mr McGrath noted that there is a cost (to school) to make this possible from the web developers – but they are looking into making this possible.
- Mr McGrath confirmed the school calendar on the website does update in real-time.

### 1.3 Communications drop-ins:

- These are scheduled to happen at 3pm every Weds if people want to discuss issues with Bev – eg. how the MCAS app works / club bookings / etc. Suggestion to let parents know more detail on what the Comms drop-in sessions involve.

## 2- Headteacher Update

- Positive start to the year – children really settled. New team – Ms Williams back as deputy; Mr Middleburg returned to Shacklewell but in the role as SENCO.
- There was a request for an update on staff changes – eg. on website. Mr McGrath confirmed that the staff list is on the website as a downloadable pdf. Noted that parents are not notified about teachers leaving. Mr McGrath confirmed there has been an assembly to introduce new teachers to the children.

### 2.1 Whole school project – Here to be heard:

- This is every Friday, across all year groups. The identity project was very popular and successful last year. Every child has an area of school they are trying to improve then feed this into local community. Eg. saving the environment / fake news / health and wellbeing etc. Part funded from Shacklewell Families events. The journalist group will do a bulletin / podcast so the children know what each other have been doing. Every child is doing something to improve the lives of others. This is taking the place of the more traditional pupil advocacy groups - student council etc.

### 2.2 Behaviour for learning:

- Mr McGrath ran through the school's policy around behaviour for learning. Positive framing model around behaviour. 5 key school values. Give tokens out to children who are kind, creative, thoughtful etc when the token bowl / fish bowl is full then everyone gets to enjoy a treat together (that the class has chosen). Tokens are not given out for purely academic abilities.
- Stop and think – this is to help children think about their behaviour choices. Age-appropriate expectations. Positive framing of behaviour. Some serious behaviours are immediate home-contact eg. violence, discrimination etc.
- There has been some feedback from parents how staff are handling some issues – Mr McGrath thinks these issues have been resolved with the particular teachers but otherwise please discuss directly with the deputy or headteacher.
- There was a query around what support is given to a teacher where there are multiple parents raising the same issue. Mr McGrath noted it depends on what the issue is - could be visiting other classrooms to see examples of positive teaching, etc. Also support from leadership team. The teachers are given a positive amount of support.

- Mr McGrath explained it is not school policy to keep a whole class in at breaktime (eg. for behaviour issues). This has been discussed with staff and they are all now aware that this shouldn't be happening. Exception – if a child is given “internal exclusion” for a very big behaviour incident.

### 2.3 Attendance:

- Beyond the school's core values there is also an attendance celebration at assembly. children with 100% attendance for the week are entered into raffle – 3 names are picked and each child get 10 mins activity with their friends. This happens every week. If a whole class has 100% attendance they get 20 tokens for the class jar. Parent feedback that some children are feeling anxious about being sick in case it impacts class chances of winning tokens. Mr McGrath noted that school won't make big thing of this in flu season etc.

### 2.4 Food:

- Parent feedback on new lunch menu has generally been very positive. Biscoff cake very popular! Ms Reid has worked hard with the catering team on the menu and confirmed a significant part of the school budget goes on catering. They try to ensure they are catering for all children dietary needs. There was a concern that school wasn't covering all children dietary needs properly eg. vegan shouldn't just be baked potato; kitchen staff should understand fully what eg. vegan means and not rely on asking the children whether they can eat something.
- Passionate that school dinners are not just frozen meals plonked on a tray. School has plans to get feedback from children as well as parents.
- Ms Reid confirmed that Ourspace food is a snack, not intended to replace dinner. Working on ensuring this is healthy though. Menu is on the website.

### 2.5 iPads:

- Mr McGrath reminded families of the device allocation in school;
  - Y5+6 – every child has own iPad in class
  - Y3+4: set of 20 iPads between 2 classes
  - Y1+2: 15-20 iPads across both classes
  - Recep: 5 for each class
  - Plus 45 chromebooks in school so children use different types of tech equipment..

### 2.6 KS2 Reading Diaries:

- Down to class teachers to organise when they need to be taken in to school / when to write in them:
- Ideally make 3 entries per week. Up to families to decide which days. Teacher should be telling parents which days they definitely need to bring diaries into school.
- Suggested that teachers should tell the children to keep reading diaries in bags not in lockers so they can be brought home to fill in.

### 2.7 Music:

- This year there will be double the amount of time for music. Jake will be in on Tuesdays and Thursdays to teach the music curriculum which will include whole class singing. Prior to Shacklewell, Jake was teaching at Grazebrook for 2 years.
- Y3 experimenting and exploring instruments – in groups of 15 children for 30 minutes a week, in addition to whole class curriculum.
- Y5 & Y6 – Pupils can pick an instrument from guitar, flute, ukulele and drums plus music curriculum lesson
- After school ensemble is being set up and will be run by Hackney Music Service.
- School band (separate to After School Club) and choir also being set up.
- Choir selection: school will be looking at barriers to children outside school before ability to sing beautifully.
- School has set up a spreadsheet showing every child – and tracking which children are selected for what in order to try to give more parity to the selection process.

### 2.8 Christmas celebrations:

- Definitely happening but school is thinking about how to structure this to give the best opportunities to see children.

### **3. Chair Update**

- Possibly discuss a new name for Parent Council – think about renaming it to sound more inclusive (not all children are represented by parents; and is “council” the right word).

#### **3.1- Safety:**

- Mr McGrath noted that a parent had their phone snatched out of their hand outside school yesterday. Please do not walk around outside with a phone in hand – and if parents have children who have phones, please also tell them not to do so.
- Mr McGrath also noted there have been some opportunistic bike thefts – if children are bringing bikes in then please lock bikes up or at least ensure they are well parked in the bike shed

#### **3.2 Smartphone Free Childhood Movement:**

- The SFC movement was discussed. Ms Reid & Mr McGrath noted they feel this is for individual responses within families. Only Y6 children are allowed to bring phones into school and they are left at the office during daytime. School feels that committing to the SFC movement oversteps their remit in telling parents how to parent. However, Parent Council is encouraging of sharing information about this on Whatsapp year groups to make parents aware that it exists in order to then make informed choices about whether / when to give their child a phone; or what sort of phone this could be. More information here:  
<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk>

#### **3.3 Bullying policy:**

- There was a discussion requesting more information on the school's policy for dealing with bullying. Ms Reid noted that school does not have a “bullying policy” as children are not labelled as bullies. But there are consequences for bullying behaviour (= repeated behaviour).
- Protocol is to contact class teacher in the first instance, then if behaviour continues contact either Ms Williams / Mr Middleburg / Mr McGrath.
- Class teacher can be approached at drop off / pick up, or a meeting / phone call can be arranged via school office. Mr McGrath suggested to always follow up with an email reminder of actions discussed.
- Meetings / phone calls with Ms Williams / Mr Middleburg / Mr McGrath can also be arranged via school office – or approach them at the school gates.
- School office email (to arrange meeting / call) is: [swoffice@newwavefederation.co.uk](mailto:swoffice@newwavefederation.co.uk)

#### **3.4 Come dine with me:**

- Cost has increased to £7 – Mr McGrath pointed out this is the same as the cost to staff. If this is difficult for some families then they can still come – discuss with office.
- Suggestion to make it possible for families who are able to make a contribution, to have a “pay it forward” mechanism – eg. on MCAS app. School will look into this.
- There was a query whether a parent can attend without eating lunch. Agreed this gives the wrong message to the children so is not possible.

#### **3.5 Shacklewell Families:**

- Update – SF is still looking for a third member of the core team. Shout out on Whatsapp year groups please. Exactly what the role involves can be determined by SF team so please come forward if you can help!

### **4. AOB:**

- 5S teacher will be going on maternity leave (probably end of this term). School is currently recruiting for maternity cover.
- Swimming (Y3) – children are assessed for first 2 days then streamed. Mr McGrath will look into providing snacks for straight after as the children get really hungry.