

Brookhurst Parents' Forum
19th May 2014

Present:

A Stanton (HT), Andy Daniels (3 and 5), K.Snell (Parent Governor – F and 2), K.Savage(1)
T.Swanson(1, 3 and 5), K.Goddard (2 and 4), N.Carroll(F), B.Ling(F) P.Hawkins (3 and 4) K
Mothersdale - Parent Governor (3 and F), S.White - Parent Governor(2 and 6), Bob Duncan
(resident), Bill Gifford (councillor), Raj Dhoot (F) Jude McNabb(2) Nim (2) Lol (F)

No Matters arising from the previous meeting

Agenda

1. Parking

The parking of cars for school drop off and pick up was discussed. It was agreed that although most parents do park safely and with courtesy, there were many occasions where parking continues to cause major safety concerns. The main issue reported is the parking on the corners of Ullswater and Troutbeck Avenues, where it is dangerous to both pedestrians and cyclists. It was reported that the police presence was effective for a short period of time; however a more sustainable deterrent is required. The highways agency has been informed although no immediate response was offered. It was suggested that more bollards or double yellow lines are placed to prevent parking in these high risk areas. As it is likely that there would be a cost implication to this process, the parents in attendance felt that this could be further discussed in school and fundraising possibilities could be explored.

Action: Bill Gifford to report back to the council on the increased safety risk to pedestrians.

The positioning of the ice-cream van was also discussed and it was clarified that the ice-cream van operates entirely independently from the school and if there is any safety concerns that these should be reported directly to the Police.

2. Update on home /school agreement, to include appropriate communication between parents and school staff.

Miss Stanton reported that a new 'home school agreement' was being drawn up and will be issued to all new and existing parents in September 2014. It was discussed that perhaps the 'home school agreement' should be issued at the beginning of each key stage, rather than just at the entry to the school. This would reinforce a positive relationship and communication process.

3. Update on the new lunchtime strategy, in relation to the new free school meal policy.

In response to the new (September 2014) Key Stage 1 lunch entitlement, it is anticipated that 85% of those offered a free lunch will take up this offer. To enable the school to accommodate this increase, a longer staggered lunch period will be provided to ensure that all pupils are given one hour to eat their lunch: KS1 from 12 – 1pm and KS2 from 12.25 – 1.25pm. In addition, a bid for extra facilities (kitchen equipment) has been submitted and more midday supervisors' posts have been advertised.

It is not yet clear whether there will be an increased uptake of hot lunches for KS2 pupils (through families choosing for all their children, across key stages, to have the same lunch option). It was asked if the suggestion of using the 'After School Club' accommodation as an alternative lunchtime venue for Key Stage 2 sandwich eaters had been considered (20/01/14 minutes). It was reported that at this current time there would not be enough staff to for this to be a viable arrangement.

As there is no longer an incentive for KS1 families who are entitled to free school meal to claim this entitlement, Miss Stanton suggested a proposal, that had been agreed by school governors, that families who are eligible are encouraged to make this claim, which provides income to the school via pupil premium funding, through a one off credit via parent pay to support the costs of school trips / visits and extracurricular activities, music lessons, swimming etc.

One parent asked if it would be possible to pay a lump sum into the parent pay account for school meals for an entire family rather than individual payments for individual children.

Action: Miss Stanton to contact parent pay regarding the above query.

4. Feedback on new 'school progress report'

It was agreed by all parents in attendance that the new report format was improved and felt more personal. It was reported that head teacher's comments on each report was appreciated by both the parents and child. Some parents asked that the 'key steps to be achieved' could be made clearer; where these are generic or specific to each child? It was also agreed that some of the terminology should be changed: outstanding rather than excellent (in line with Ofsted terminology) and a specific definition of presentation (work rather than clothing!) It was also agreed that the report would form the basis for the learning review meeting (in July) in which the teachers would report on whether the 'next key steps' had been achieved. To prepare for this meeting, it was suggested that parents may value some guidance on how to make the most of their 'learning review meeting' with the teachers.

Action: to include a note in the school newsletter, prior to the learning review meetings, outlining the purpose of the reviews and making the links with the school reports explicit.

5. School Website.

The school website is currently being re-structured to provide parents / children with a site that is easier to navigate and will contain clear, informative and up to date news / information. In addition to the school website developments, Miss Stanton asked if any interested parents would look at the 'school explained' website below, which offers guidance and support to parents / carers on the primary school curriculum. The website aims to inform parents on what your child should be learning, at which key stage, and how to support your child. Interested parents should access the free trail and report back to the forum on their experience. If the feedback is positive, the website will be placed as a link within the school website. www.schoolexplained.co.uk

Action: to place a note and the link into the school newsletter and ask parents to review.

6. Forest school explained

Mrs Wythe gave us an update on the school's forest school with a tour of the spinney. Mrs Wythe talked about how the forest school emphasises experiential learning with the promotion of teamwork, responsibility and communication, as well as providing an opportunity to embed all aspects of the curriculum. Examples of how the curriculum can enhance both literacy and numeracy and support classroom based lessons were provided. It was reported that feedback from the pupils has been extremely positive and all parents were impressed with the work Mrs Wythe had completed to ensure that the spinney is both a productive and exciting venture for our children.

AOB - It was reported that the Brookhurst app was being used by some parents, although there were missing dates.

Action: Brookhurst app to be updated.

Date of next meeting

Monday 22nd September 2014:

9.00am – 10.00am / 7.30pm – 8.30pm