

Minutes of the Parent Council Meeting, 26 Nov 2014.

1. Welcome & reminder about the aims etc of the Parent Council

- Voluntary
- Not part of the GB nor for fund-raising
- A good way for the school to listen (Ofsted)
- Reps: 2 per class, rotating chair. 2 Year term but rollover if no-one else comes forward.

Typical issues: maintenance, homework, concerts etc. PC does not cover individual children. Try to resolve issues as they come along rather than storing up for the meeting. Write-access to the google groups. Helen sends reps emails for forwarding to groups; these have usually been checked by the school for accuracy before mailing out. No 3rd party advertising. Reps are here to present parents' views, not their own.

2. Academy status

Darwin Green sponsorship applications April 2015. Mayfield needs to convert to an academy if interested in Darwin Green. Consultation for parents on conversion to academy in the New Year, as part of the process. Judith would like any questions we reps hear about from parents to be put to the GB. Reps asked if Judith could pull together something that could be emailed out via the GG. Reps asked many questions on the issues eg. Does Mayfield continue down the route of conversion if the sponsorship of Darwin Green is unsuccessful. The GB have a draft set of FAQ which will be sent to the PC to begin with.

3. Communication from teachers

Year 5 teachers thanked for giving lots of information to parents via GG. Reps noted inconsistencies in the level of communication between the yeargroups, and also the feedback in homework, with Yr 5 for example getting comments weekly but Yr 3 not and the difficulties this poses when siblings do homework together. Paula commented that the topics covered are presented in the half-termly handouts. Paula to check if the new syllabus is up online yet.

4. Lost property

Current system way too much work for one person and helpers are needed. After discussion the following was decided:

- Reminder to parents to put surname and current year group on labels
- Someone (was this reps??) to periodically pull the yeargroup lost property box outside at pickup time for parents to rummage through
- After each halfterm, reps to help Debbie to sort the whole lot.

5. Directory of local expertise.

Paula is compiling a directory; will send a form out in the New Year to both parents and anybody in the local community. To include any expertise (academic, practical, golden time ideas, absolutely anything at all) and including when the person might be available. Class teachers to access the register. Helen to send out an email relating to this.

6. KS1 Books

Several inappropriate / old-fashioned books on KS1 shelves, eg small chapter books. Paula said that lots of donations had come in over the summer but it needed someone to go through and chuck out the

unwanted ones. Could parents identify the problem books and bring in for Paula to deal with. Miss Maher had previously covered this.

7. Water fountains

P&PW (Premises and Pupil Wellbeing) looked into this. Simply not practical: fountains require daily cleansing, there is a freezing risk, and general health risks. Filtered water available in each classroom. Water bottles put out at breaktime during the summer. Wilma pointed out that the risk of dehydration to children is just as great during the winter due to central heating. Teachers and parents to be reminded of this.

8. Volunteer lists

Following feedback from reps that appreciation of a range of volunteers could be improved, suggestions included reps to help class teachers assemble lists of who helps with what so that all parent volunteers get thanked for their input. How do we include community volunteers too? Paula said that usually invitations to the tea party go to 'regular' volunteers. Reps pointed out a range of other volunteers who could be included eg those providing external trips, helping with golden time, swimming in the summer etc, The new register of local expertise should help with compiling a more comprehensive list.

9. Year 6 leavers assembly

A big deal for Yr 6. Two criticisms from the last one: class teachers usually say something about each child, and the child gets to say something. Neither happened. Other issues: assembly was very long, including a long section saying goodbye to departing staff. Too long for young children to sit through. Paula: confirmed it's all change for this year with teachers currently discussing the format, eg less 'talent' stuff and separating an End of Year assembly from the Leavers Assembly.

10. Update on school grounds

Mrs Hill hoping for extra money for the next financial year so that an outside groundsperson can be hired. Condemned play equipment: quotations currently coming in but all so far > 10K so replacement looking more likely. The Yr 3 smell around the cloakroom: was due to a leaking pipe, now fixed, smell fading. Yr 3 reps big thanks to Kate.

11. Whiteboards in the playground for Today notices: progress?

Paula explained that it is difficult to motivate the setting up of this system while parents regularly do not read Parentmail nor the GG – both key forms of communication. Several reps commented that the "Upcoming Dates" section of the Newsletter was the most valuable section in it. How can we persuade parents to read the communications they are already getting?

12 Music provision now Mrs Bell has left

Provision now by class teachers. No current plan to rehire a music specialist. Mayfield would also like an art specialist, PE specialist and so on. The PPA cover to be provided by the new Deputy Head.

13 AOB

Effectiveness of the Parent Council at resolving issues: park until the next meeting.

Meeting closed at 8pm