

**St Luke's C. of E. Primary School Parent Council
Minutes of the Meeting held 29/11/18**

Attending:

Dan Bates (Assistant Head Curriculum)

Matt King (Random No Yr 1G)

Michelle Knapper (Class rep Yr 5)

Sophie Tame (Class rep Yr 3D)

Aku Buti (Random No Nursery)

Teresa Payton (Assistant Head Management)

Gemma Hale (Class rep Nursery)

Rochelle Westropp (Class rep Yr 3FW)

Wei Lin Goh (Class rep Yr 1L)

Amy Castle Young (Class rep Yr3 FW)

Welcome and Introduction to Parent Council

DB welcomed everyone to the meeting and distributed the agenda, the terms of reference and the School Information Brochure.

Agree terms of reference

DB explained the purpose of the Parent Council, as having an advisory and consultative role in considering issues which may be raised by parents, governors and staff. Members were selected because they were class representatives, or the parent of a child who was the randomly selected number on the register.

The objective was to provide a 'voice' of parents, improve communications and to create a positive involvement with the school.

Parents Evening- Feedback on new format e.g. in the hall

The new format seemed to have been widely approved of. Comments included the fact that it provided more focus and helped with the timing of the parent/teacher interview, saved time if you had more than one child and was overall more efficient. Being able to look at the books beforehand with lots of room to do so, and the availability of the quiet crèche with a film had also received positive feedback. Some parents had been concerned that confidentiality could have been an issue, but as teachers tables were well spaced out, this had not proved to be an issue. A concern was raised that people may be less willing to raise a sensitive issue, however it was agreed that this type of issue would be raised in a separate forum and before parents evening. One parent had a person in front of them who had overrun by 2 minutes, and as they ensured they did not stay past their finishing time ended up with less than the allotted time. DB explained that in these instances the teacher would allow the full 10 minutes as there was some time allowed during the evening for this eventuality.

Parents Evening- online booking system, user experience feedback

There was good feedback on the new online booking system. It was felt it was much fairer for parents who did not pick their children up from school, and the suggested time options were very helpful. Some parents asked if it would be possible to see all the children in the family at the same time (they had had to log in twice) as it would be easier to arrange timings.

A question was raised by one parent as to whether there would be any value in, for Year 5 and Year 6 children, having a bit of time (not the whole session) with both parents and teachers to agree objectives.

DB to discuss both issues with Mr Dutton

Parental Survey

This had gone out and 50 responses had been received so far. DB asked the Council members to encourage people who had not returned theirs to do so.

DB asked if Council members had any comments on the way the school communicates with parents, as one of the responses received suggested that school communications were 'archaic'. Members felt that there was plenty of modern day communication from the school, with the website, parentmail, and the newsletter, in fact sometimes it was hard to keep up with it all. One member said last year they had felt bombarded with information and that perhaps it would be possible to streamline it, although they had found this year had been better.

An issue was raised regarding a change on the school online payments interface. It now appeared it was necessary to scroll through all the uniform items before arriving at the trips. TP explained that the system was provided by Tucasi and as such the school could not change it, however she had also noticed some changes in the financial reporting – this appeared to be as a result of the upgrading the company had done to comply with GDPR. Neither TP or DB had seen the parent log in process of Tucasi but would investigate.

DB/TP to investigate parent platform and send suggestion to Tucasi for future software upgrades.

Recent school projects overview- Kitchen refurbishment and Playground clearance

Kitchen refurbishment- TP and DB explained that this project, which was very costly, had only cost the school £750- the rest had been funded by the catering company and the RBK.

There was a very positive response from Council members regarding the new menu choices and the quality of the food. Children were now much keener to have school lunches (the pizza and cakes being a big hit) and the parents pleased with the food provided. It was also noted that there were more staff in the kitchen- this was now possible as there was more room. DB invited any members who had the time to visit the new kitchen at the end of the meeting.

Playground clearance

This was felt to be a huge success, with more space for the children, benches to provide extra seating areas and the willow dome in the corner which would soon start growing.

A few council members had found that the process of KS1 children going straight to their classroom in the morning (which had occurred whilst the work was being carried out) instead of lining up in the lower playground much easier, particularly for working parents. However another Council member found their child really liked being in the queue and having the chance to socialise with her peers, it also gave the parents the chance to talk to the teacher.

DB explained that the procedure of children going straight to class in the morning (which was used for KS2) involved the teacher having an activity ready for the children as they came in, which they could read off the board. This was much harder to implement with KS1 Children.

DB to discuss with GD and CC (KS1 leader)

School newsletter – feedback and suggestions

Parents liked the format of the newsletter, with the updated diary and having the team points- they also loved seeing the photos and were interested in what the other classes were doing.

With regards to the class blogs, parents really just read their own class ones

Future dates for Parent Council spring and summer term

There was no strong feeling of days/periods to avoid so DB would circulate the dates.

Issues raised by class reps and parents

Clubs: This year the email advising parents clubs had been released for online booking went out at 3pm and the clubs opened for booking at 7pm. This timing made it difficult for parents who did not access their emails until later. Three suggestions were made: that the notification email should go out the previous day, that the opening time for online booking should be later than 7pm, and that the email should remind parents that the clubs were on a first come first served basis.

TP to speak to office staff and ask for this to be done.

A request was also made for some sort of preference option in the process, although it was appreciated that this could be very time consuming for staff.

DB to speak to GD to see if this could be possible as part of the online booking system.

It was felt that there were less clubs for Year 3 than for other years- in particular a request was made to see if the Mad Science Club would be willing to extend their club from the just KS1 to include Year 3.

DB to check out if this would be possible.

Book changing

Parent council members who volunteered in the school as book changers felt that the book changing section needed some upgrading. The process of finding books and putting them back was very time consuming with the current storage system. It was suggested that having a few bookcases where the books could be stored with the spines facing out, and a system where the colour/numbering was both on the book and clearly on the storage area would both save time and increase available floor space. It was also felt that some more books were required at certain levels.

Two of the council members volunteered to be on a sub-committee to help set this up and if necessary organise some fundraising.

DB to speak to GD.

AOB

Other issues that had been raised by parents:

- It had been raised that the compound surface is too slippery and children were being advised not to use.
DB to raise with GD.
- A suggestion had been made for more physical exercise and/or mental health such as the mile a day or mindfulness. Also that children should not have to stay inside to finish their work and not go out to play as they miss valuable exercise time.
Staff to consider.
- School photos (individual) – a suggestion had been received that these should be more modern. It was noted that many parents may prefer the current system. Council members took the opportunity to feedback that the new system set up for the last photographs (sibling photos first thing) had worked very well.