

Parent Council Minutes

Date: 6th July 2026

Time: 9.00am

- **Chair's Welcome**

- Matters Arising

- Reminder of the purpose of parent council, how the agenda is set and how to participate. All parents and carers are welcomed and encouraged.

- 26/27 Representatives

- Thanks given to incoming parent who has volunteered to be Reception year rep; for all other reps, please speak with the Chair if you can no longer continue in role in the next school year

- **Leadership 2026/27**

- Welcome from Mr Trahair

- The incoming Head discussed how much he had enjoyed his time with Shacklewell in recent weeks

- Focus on kindness

- Mr McGrath laid out the desire to be more explicit about what kindness means e.g. it also applied to being considerate with more boisterous play (seen more since the start of the World Cup)
- Confirmed that the process if there are any issues with unkind behaviour, is to raise it first with the class teacher first (or deputy head). These staff members are best place to address directly rather than Head. Confirmation of process to be reiterated formally (via email/message etc).

- **Headteacher Updates**

- School appreciated school community adapting so quickly to school hours change for heat wave; this reciprocated by families
 - Chair noted that most of the school community applauded the quick response and in particular the earlier start to the day, though there were questions about how safe travelling home at 1pm was for those on public transport. This is to be considered next year should there be another heatwave.
- Head reiterated that children will have access to water in playground and fans in classes, and should all be bringing in hats & water bottles & sun cream
- Hackney Council reviewing its guidance to schools

- **Shacklewell Families**

- Round of applause for the huge success at summer fair, and invaluable support for school
- Funding KS1 new playground, which will include focus on creating more shaded areas for protection from the elements
- Close to £8k raised at the summer fair, excluding the raffle.
- A parent requested an easier way to donate for those who can't attend events or just want to donate throughout year. Shacklewell Families noted there is a QR code for donations on the school website, but they will send round, and add to event posters in future

- **End of Year Routines**

- End of year reports: to be sent at 12pm on Friday 10th July, except for Y6 as the Government has postponed release of SATS results. From now on, reports appear in the MCAS app in the 'document' area
- Anticipated there will be some teething problems so please help others/direct them to the office
- WhatsApp message to be sent by Parent Councils reminding families to download MCAS and seek support if needed from the office
- Class lists: to be shared with students and parents on the same day (transition day - Monday 13th July) to avoid anxiety that has been seen in previous years.
- Four teachers are leaving; and replacements are arranged already (some departing the Federation, some promoted within the Federation). It is up to each teacher to confirm this to children and the families
- If your child is in a class with a new teacher, that teacher will attend on transition day so they can get to know each other
- New reception stay & play: parent commented that the calm nature of the stay & play was really welcome
- 2nd hand uniform sale takes place Monday 20th for new reception children

- Reception classes to be shared with each individual family on class lists day
- Transition Planning
 - A new SENDCo will be coming in, given Mr Middleburg's departure, and will be a member of a newly-formed group of 4-5 members of staff that will focus on inclusion. The new SENDCO is called Mr Waldon and he is joining from Woodberry Downs School. Other team names will be shared to families so they know who to talk with. The inclusion team includes Ms Hannah Mahoney, who families noted is exceptionally good at her role.
 - Request that Ms Mahoney be more visible to KS2 families in the mornings, as she's widely considered to be brilliant so how can KS2 get more access to her? Head noted she spends most of lunch times in KS2 playground so pupils have access, but will also consider other ways to ensure she is available to parents at drop-off too.
- End-of-year trips/treats
 - Clissold splash pad out of action so school working hard to arrange alternatives for those classes affected
 - Suggestions from parents of Evergreen adventure playground or Roseberry fields - to be passed to Bev, who is already talking to some of these options. Fallback is movie day for Y1-Y3 though families noted this would be a shame. Y4-6 alternatives have already been arranged inc. trip to Coram Fields.
- New Projects
 - Library - to be split into two rooms: one for children who have sensory needs or similar and need quiet space. The other will be a room for e.g. discussions with Ms Mahoney
 - This means better provision for children who don't have in-class access to learning - school able to do a better job of meeting needs of all children
 - Each classroom will have additional stock added to existing class libraries - suitable to year and rotated amongst years
 - Music space to be established in Year 1/ Year 2 space to provide direct access to creative and musical arts.
- Parent Council 26/27
 - WhatsApp Groups
 - They are recognised as a useful tool for sharing school information, but are not officially endorsed by the school. Reiteration that the focus must be on inclusion, therefore families are reminded to not share non-school info or information that isn't applicable to all (e.g. a party invitation to a subset of children would be exclusionary and should therefore be shared via other private channels)
 - Agreed that WhatsApp groups should use the 'description' of the group as a place to remind users of the purpose of the group, of the need for inclusion and to keep information to school specifics. If someone posts something that is not in keeping with that guidance, they should politely be reminded of the purpose and guidance.
 - Parent asked how we can better ensure all families are aware of the WhatsApp groups, in case they want to join. Suggestion of putting a notice listing the parent council reps on the school board with QR codes to join each year's group. The Head supported this idea and reminded the council that this can't be endorsed by school
- Food
 - Menu - on the website- apologies from school that there was some confusion about vegan availability - all information is now updated on the website
 - Question about availability of vegan/vegetarian - children encouraged to eat what's been cooked for their diet, to ensure all get suitable option (i.e. vegan meals are reserved for those known to be vegan)
 - Lunch hall
 - This is meant to be a time to relax, but at the same time it is required that classes finish their meal and move through the hall to make space for others
 - Training is being done with lunch hall staff to ensure they're catering for those who rush and those who take their time
 - Our Space variety
 - To be looked at for September - needs a bit of work to ensure broad and balanced diet throughout school day, not only at lunch time
 - Seasoning

- Chef Aziz aware that sometimes dishes contain too much spice for a younger pallet
 - Nursery/Our Space 'crudite trial' - Now likely to be next term (Sept 2026) but well understood the need
- **Curriculum**
 - **Reading-** Reading at home and reading diaries
 - Families raised that sometimes the same books are coming home
 - Raised that completing the 'comment' doesn't feel worthwhile when staff not acknowledging
 - How to encourage kids to consistently fill it out (and to choose books that they're interested in but also are challenging their reading)?
 - Incoming Head noted that KS2 reading diaries is a topic of conversation across the Federation as for some children they just want to read without it being a 'chore'. Agreed that the outcome of that conversation needs to be communicated to parents and carers so that they are aware and can reinforce it with pupils. Incoming Head noted that some form of log, to be able to look back at progress over the year, can be a positive thing. Amongst ideas to be considered will be the possibility of awarding stickers for reading across multiple genres, to avoid children getting stuck in one genre or author.
 - **Music**
 - Support for all children and continued learning
 - The school is pushing Hackney Council for music provision and agenda for September
 - The school is aware the tracking was not sufficient this year, so some Y5 children have still not had access to instrument lessons. Ms Williams working on this now - all children in Y5 and Y6 must have at least 30 mins per week of being taught an instrument
 - Y3 and Y4 receive music lessons within the curriculum, and an additional class lesson each week to experiment with instruments. The aim is that they can then choose a favourite to continue with in instrument lessons in following years.
 - School will not make additional lessons available for individual children who want to continue to learn outside of curriculum
 - Parent noted that Hackney Services was an incredible trip for the pupils, and asked if the school can do more to raise its profile as it was inspiring for children and opens up doors for all children to have further access to music/instruments (potentially at no cost). The school will identify way to feed this information to students, so they can choose to join orchestra or lessons via Bridge School
 - Confusion about Ensemble band: this offering is being reviewed by the school and will be communicated.
 - General point of communication: families request better communication so they are more aware of home reading expectations and progress, spelling test progress, and music engagement (instrument and access). Clearer guidance requested about what music provision is available, to who and how
 - Parent suggestion that school, parents and Music Service discuss and agree together
 - Drama teacher advertisement: permanent contract working across two schools advertised on DofE job board. Parent requested the details so the families can share amongst their relevant communities
 - Parent noted that there's a teacher organisation that recruits e.g. musicians to be PGCE - they will share details with the incoming Head
- **Facilities**
 - Point of order re parents on site - we model behavior to children so ensure if tricky conversations to be had, this is done in appropriate manner
 - Toilets
 - Premises now being more vigilant as of last week, and always checking toilets following busy periods e.g. lunch etc. Noted however that there had been a report this week of a facility needing attention. To be investigated with the caretakers.
- **AOB**
 - Request to ensure key dates are in Shacklewell website calendar
 - Question regarding when after-school clubs will be available online for Sept: week commencing 13th July

- Question about whether there could be before-school clubs; to be considered, though noted that for the c.40 children in breakfast club part of the draw is the peaceful morning activity that gets them ready for learning.
- Parent raised a desire to set up a gardening club for both parents and children before school - run by parents, with parents (i.e. not childcare). To be discussed with the incoming Head in the new school year.