

Date: 13th February 2026

Time: 9.00am

- **Chair's Welcome**

- Reminder that the Parent Council is a forum for discussing ideas and issues affecting the whole school community. Matters relating to individual children or classrooms should be raised directly with the school or Headteacher
- Agenda items are collated from discussion points raised across all year groups via Parent Council representatives
- Shared widespread positive feedback on the recent "Come Learn With Me" session: well organised, well attended, enjoyable, and informative

- **Headteacher Updates**

- Parent Survey
 - Strong response rate: 158 respondents
 - Key results:
 - 97.2% would recommend the school to other parents
 - 93% strongly agree their child is happy at the school
 - 93% strongly agree their child feels safe at the school
 - Results are triangulated with pupil and staff surveys
 - A summary flyer addressing key themes and next steps will be published in the new half term
 - Parents requested insight into issues raised by children; Mr McGrath confirmed common themes include lunchtime, playtime and use of technology. These will be included in the flyer
- Notifications of staff absence
 - Mr McGrath avoids sharing partial information and communicates once plans and solutions are clear
 - Long-term absences are shared when known to be extended
 - Staff absence is always for serious reasons; staff wellbeing and privacy are respected
 - Classes are always covered by familiar staff wherever possible, or by senior staff if needed
 - Communication approach:
 - Absence under one week: no notification
 - Absence of 2–3 weeks or longer: families will be informed
 - Importance of sharing information in a way that reassures children, particularly those prone to anxiety
 - Parent feedback: acknowledging that something is happening, even without a solution, can be helpful
- Key Dates
 - Assessments (w/c 2nd March):
 - Years 1–5 assessments
 - One-hour tests for Maths and Reading
 - Adapted processes for children with SEND
 - Year 6 full mock week
 - Adapted processes for children with SEND
 - Being completed early so data can be shared at parents' evenings
 - Parents requested scores be shown as "x out of total"; Mr McGrath confirmed this will not be the case as it isn't helpful - differing totals/ranges
 - Parents' Evenings: 18th & 19th March
 - PGL trip: 23rd March - 27th March
 - Early closure: School closes at 1pm on 27th March (closes early last day of term only, not half term)
 - Return to school: 14th April (13th April is INSET)
 - Request to update the school calendar to clearly show early closure times

- Full-class activities will be listed on Key Dates; partial/group activities are not usually included to avoid confusion
- Parent request: add a section to Key Dates listing upcoming activities for partial/select groups without dates or confirmed attendees - to raise awareness
- Reception 2026
 - 74 families named the school as first preference for 60 places enabling full funding allocation, and that all families who attend will be satisfied they got the school of their choice
 - Thanks expressed to the school community for advocacy and positive word of mouth
 - Context: borough-wide decline in reception numbers, with ~700 unfilled places forecast next year across Hackney
- Online Safety
 - Letters being sent to Year 4 and Year 6 families
 - A recent Year 4 incident highlighted use of the Discord app:
 - Official age rating 14+, but used by much younger children
 - Includes private servers where children may interact with unknown adults
 - Two digital safety sessions planned for the new half term:
 - EYFS–Year 4
 - Years 5–6
 - Strong recommendation for families to attend
 - Feedback that Mr Dowling’s sessions are excellent and informative
 - Concerns raised about TikTok content influencing inappropriate language in Year 6
 - Parents encouraged to speak directly to the school if concerned
 - Discussion around reinforcing a smartphone-free childhood pledge:
 - School is cautious not to dictate family choices
 - Tone and framing are important
 - Request for:
 - Issues to be raised during sessions
 - Key bullet points circulated via WhatsApp groups with related links
 - Agreement to raise awareness of this movement and government changes
 - iPad use:
 - Some concerns about distraction (e.g. pupils creating memes, watching videos)
 - School reiterated that when used purposefully the majority of the time and that iPads are a powerful learning tool.
 - “Hackney War” issue raised; school will send a message to families of older years
- **Extended Schools**
 - Bev provided an update on the survey, which had 16 responses; all feedback and in particular suggestions/solutions welcomed
 - Key themes:
 - Organisation and booking capacity
 - App issues noted (crashing / showing previous term)
 - Range of activities to suit different personalities
 - Affordability (Bev noted no profit is made; income covers tutors and resources)
 - Parents encouraged to share ideas from other schools or activities they’ve seen
 - Children will be invited to design their ideal after-school club
 - Reminder:
 - Families struggling with costs should contact Bev confidentially
 - Government Tax-Free Childcare scheme is available
 - School is reviewing weekly timetables to ensure more dedicated optional activities
 - EYFS provision will include outdoor space
 - Food
 - Mr Aziz absent from November to early February due to extended jury service
 - Cover arrangements led to some challenges; his return has been felt positively

- Impact also noted on Our Space catering quality: children were always well fed, though menus relied more heavily on items like nuggets
 - Mr McGrath reassured families that the published menu will reflect what is served
 - Trial planned next half term:
 - Vegetable crudités with Nursery
 - If successful, to be rolled out across the school
 - Parent suggested including in Our Space as well
- **Music**
 - Three strands:
 - Curriculum music: taught by Mr Stevens
 - Instrumental teaching (Years 3–6):
 - All children try instruments
 - Year 5 pupils select one to specialise in
 - Instruments available depends on tutors availability each term
 - Ensemble:
 - Selected pupils form a school band
 - Changes termly (though transition did not happen this term)
 - Parent offered to donate instruments; suggested that Mr Stevens would lead on identifying specific needs.
- **School Streets**
 - Confirmed that Shacklewell Row School Street is active and camera enforced
 - Local consultation underway on expanding pedestrianised areas; Hackney Council to provide future updates
 - Somerford Grove is not a School Street; idling remains an issue
 - Stoke Newington High Street crossing:
 - Police attending to ticket cyclists running red lights
- **Enrichment Working Party**
 - Upcoming activities being worked on:
 - Bagel & business management workshop for pupils unable to attend PGL, with thanks to Papo's Bagels; details to be finalised and shared
 - Engineering workshop, whereby architect will lead children in bridge building techniques; details to be finalised and shared
 - Conversations taking place about a Sewing Bee workshop
 - Parents encouraged to explore employer outreach programmes and share opportunities
 - Exploring funding to enhance the school garden, including a potential garden classroom
- **Shacklewell Families**
 - Reminder of the Valentine's Day bake sale 13th February
- **AOB**
 - Toilets: confirmed they will always be clean and stocked (reported issue has been addressed)
 - KS1 playground: funding still being sought
 - World Book Day: Thursday 25th March