

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 28th March 2025

Time: 9.00am

Jemma welcomed everyone and gave a warm welcome to Mr Middleburg who was attending the meeting to give a SEND update. She outlined the purpose of the Parent Council – a place for all families and carers to discuss matters which affect a large proportion of the school or a whole year group. It is important to promote that the views of our families matter and the Parent Council can work in collaboration with the school.

1- Matters Arising

1.1 SEND Update

- Query re. consistency between classes when children are moving from year to year and Mr Middleburg confirmed there are handover meetings at the end of every year so new teachers know how children are supported / their needs. Social story for children with high needs and a gradual transition for 2-3 weeks to get used to the new setting. Key documentation is also stored on school drive for new teachers to access.
- Mr Middleburg explained there is a structured system with different tiers:
 - Wave 1 – in-class universal support about how to support children with particular barriers to learning. Teacher puts those supports in place to see if this helps. This is in place all the time. If needs are not met by this then move to:
 - Wave 2 – If barriers are still there to learning / development. in consultation with the family, a child may be put on a MET = My Education Plan which provides tailored support. This is reviewed termly to see if the child is meeting targets. After 2 terms of review (2 cycles), if targets are not being met then move to Wave 3.
 - Wave 3 – Look at whether EHCP is required or if external professionals could support class teachers to improve learning barriers. EHCPs are becoming increasingly difficult to access and for children with significant needs.
- Process to follow if a parent thinks a child may have additional need/s:
 - 1st port of call – class teacher to see if teacher agrees / has noticed concerns. Then discuss how to approach those concerns.
 - After speaking to the class teacher then Mr Middleburg is there all the time if a parent prefers to speak to him or if additional help / advice is needed. Then Ms Williams / Mr McGrath can support if required.
- Mr Middleburg can also suggest other networks outside school / external professionals that can support families at home.
- External psychologist comes to school for a limited time for observations, meetings, and reviews. Also an external speech & language therapist and other external consultants can be involved with children who need this support.
- Staff at breakfast club / ASC are made aware if the child's need is emotional / to do with self-regulation / behavioural to support their needs.
- Mr Middleburg has fidget toys for the children that need

1.2 Calendar Link

- On the school website there is now a button “subscribe” that puts all of the school calendar dates into your personal calendar, please be careful to follow all the instructions to download the dates. This will auto-update if a date changes but be aware this will put all year group dates in your diary.

1.3 Communication Survey Results

- The survey tried to gauge what families want / how they prefer to know and see what is happening in school.
- 83.6% say texts and apps are the way they want communications to be made.
- 1/3 like paper letters but school is not keen on this form of communication because of sustainability concerns.
- Social media
 - Family responses were very equally split regarding potential use of Instagram to communicate school news. Instagram account is already set up so the school name is protected but nothing has yet been posted. The Instagram account can be made private so it is only parents that can view it. However, there is a question around how to manage allowing parents / handles as setting this up would be a lot of work.

- Also there are concerns from many parents around managing this in the context of concerns about images of children on the internet / privacy / image-theft / AI.
- Also some concerns that the tide may be changing - away from social media – towards people preferring not to use it.
- School will definitely not be using Youtube as a news channel.
- Suggestion to maybe put energy into improving the school newsletter to reach more families – could get kids involved in putting this together and publishing it.

1.4 Parents Evening Adaptations -

- New format A5 paper report will still be given to parents:
- There is now more text around what has been achieved and future targets etc, less focus on the scores.
- New section called “Things I have been great at” – this is authored by the children to help them be involved in achievements (Year 4 - Year 6)
- Future targets – there should be minimum 2 - maximum 3 given.
- Mr McGrath explained that test scores are standardised- 100 = where you're meant to be /110 = greater depth/ below 90 = a concern
- Request made to explain the acronyms briefly on the report – for next time (next Oct / Nov).

1.5 Chairs Update -

- Richard Lufkin – councillor from Shacklewell Ward has been very involved.
- Somerford Grove is still a problem – the behaviour team at Hackney council are investigating dumped rubbish and fly tipping to work out where it is coming from. Recent incidents have included drug paraphernalia, and used sanitary items.
- Issues with families dropping children off in cars – sometimes doing 3 point turns at the end of the alleyway on Somerford Grove. We understand that some families need to drive to school but this needs to be safe for children. Somerford Grove cannot be made a school street or a one-way street because of the GP surgery. It was requested for the school to send a letter out to all parents – asking them to be sensitive to these issues.
- The school received communication from Hackney Council about continuous dog fouling in the local area – if all dog owners in our community could continue to clean up after their pets, that would be great.

2- Updates -

2.1 Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE):

- Discussion around how we talk about positive body image. Mr McGrath explained that there is a taught curriculum that addresses the celebration of individuality of everyone's body and how people should not be made to feel less good about differences.
- Summer term - RSE topic – physical body parts, privacy. Always age appropriate in year groups. The children are encouraged to understand that we should not feel bad or different about our bodies.
- The school also works to create space for people to say you don't have to do that if you are not comfortable with it.
- An emerging pattern by the end of Y6 is that girls in particular seem to focus on how they feel about how they present themselves. Transition workshops with girls in Y6 with conversations about changing thinking and how social media presents people. School staff are trying their best to promote a positive way of thinking and viewing ourselves and each other.
- Teacher education – INSET day planned for teachers after Easter which covers online safety topics and how to appropriately support pupils.
- Questions around the language that children are using /songs they are singing – an action for the school was about how lunch staff can be encouraged to pick up on this and deal with it if inappropriate.
- Hannah being present on the gate – agreed this is very helpful for kids and families.

2.2 Year 6:

- Finished final round of SATS mocks.
- PGL trip next week.
- 12th May is week of SATS assessments for 4 days with a treat on Friday 16th.
- Mr McGrath stressed SATS are really about the school, not the child, so children should not be concerned / stressed about this.
- Final weeks of term from 19th May – kids will be doing fun things, local trips and wider curriculum activities.
- One parent suggested a list of activities that could benefit children after SATS. Otherwise there may be a sense of anti-climax for the children.

2.3 Beach Trip

- Mr McGrath asked to confirm why it had been cancelled previously – the coach costs were significant so it became unviable to do it.
- Is there another way to celebrate the end of the year – yes, school will think about this / whether there is another way to still do the beach trip (different destination or travel by train?) – or another outing / event to celebrate the end of year.

2.4 Young Hackney

- Young Hackney is the organisation that runs all the sports events on behalf of Hackney schools – Mr McGrath shared that due to council cost cutting measures this service will be significantly reduced from the next academic year.
- This will have an impact on the children – but school is thinking about how to fill the gap.

2.5 Lunchtime Activities

- Play and football are very popular. Mr McGrath noted that KS1 kids use anything eg. crab apples, plastic cups to kick around the playground but unfortunately football like games cannot take place in KS1 playground as the risk of injury is too high, given the space/layout.
- It was discussed that there have been some incidents in KS2 playground, including a child whose arm was broken in an accident. Mr McGrath noted that the boys get very focused and competitive, which leads to fatigue, sometimes resulting in incidents.
- There is now a new system in place – play football for 2 minutes then have a break to help cool temperatures / manage excitement. This has been in place for the last 6 weeks and is having the desired impact.
- School staff are thinking about what equipment can be used, engaging specific games etc.
- Mr McGrath confirmed that supervision at break times involves a team of 11 colleagues plus Hannah and Gatie, sometimes a member of the senior team. The top pitch supervision includes a colleague in the cage plus a person in the middle for first aid. The required ratio is definitely being met.

2.6 Enrichment

- The school reflected upon the recent survey results and will be exploring both new opportunities for children to access more enrichment but also how to communicate this with parents so that the community knows what is on offer.

3. AOB:

3.1 The Role of Chair

- Jemma confirmed she intends to step down at the end of this academic year – so the Parent Council is looking for a new chair. The role doesn't need to be in the current format – could be a joint role.
- Ideally the new chair would be in place for next term so the person could overlap with Jemma.
- Let Jemma / Mr McGrath know if anyone is interested. If more than one person is interested then they would need to put together a manifesto and parents would need to vote.
- The role involves - managing the PC Whatsapp group, liaising with PC year reps, meeting with Mr McGrath the week before PC meeting and chairing PC meetings.

3.2 Hall lights

- Hall lights will be replaced during the Easter holidays.

3.3 Play Equipment - KS1

- Query as to why some items were sealed off– a site assessment deemed some things needed to be fixed – this will be done in Easter break
- No balls allowed – these get kicked around (see note above)
- There are still skipping ropes, hoops, giant connect 4 , chinks etc for children to play with.

Next Meeting - 16th May 2025 at 9.00am