

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 14th February 2025

Time: 9.00am

Jemma welcomed everyone and gave a warm welcome to the new families attending for the first time. 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 and not individual matters. It is important to promote that the views of our families matter, and the Parent Council works in collaboration with the school.

1- Matters Arising

1.1 OurSpace Booking Routines -

- The booking process has been tightened up, you can no longer book on the day into Ourspace, booking needs to take place at least 24 hours in advance. If help is needed with using vouchers for afterschool clubs/wraparound, please speak directly to the school office.

1.2 Staff/Parent Interactions -

- Unfortunately, there has been an increase in inappropriate language and behaviour from parents to staff. Staff deserve to be spoken to with respect. Frustrations should be addressed to Mr McGrath and the appropriate processes should be followed.

1.3 Road Safety Success -

- Jemma reported some very positive meetings with Richard Lufkin (Shacklewell Ward Local Councillor) regarding the persistent dangers faced to children crossing the road at the A10 Palatine Road pedestrian crossing. The Hackney safer transport team along with the Shacklewell and Clissold Policing Team have identified the crossing as dangerous due to the poor behaviour and persistent contravening of the traffic signals by cyclists.
- The crossing will now have regular morning visits from the police because following an attending every morning for a week there was clear evidence their visibility and police enforcements changed cyclists' behaviour at the lights.
- With regards to school crossing patrols (lollipops) the guidance from Road Safety Britain is that they are not placed on light controlled crossings as their sign is as legally binding as a red light, and the presence of both, which could be possible contradicting each other at times can confuse both the road user and the pedestrians leading to greater danger.

1.4 Litter in local area -

- Jemma also met with Giancarlo Cristaudo, Operations Manager, from Hackney Council to discuss the persistent rubbish along Somerford Grove. A bin was subsequently removed, where people were piling up rubbish on the ground around the bin, this problem area has now disappeared. Hackney Council identified another problem area and will speak directly to those involved.
- Somerford Grove and the areas around school are patrolled twice a week by Hackney council to sweep and litter pick – they are investigating if the patrols can be upped during the week. The open bin bags at the top of the Somerford Grove are an ongoing issue. Richard Lufkin is happy to help us expand the areas of concerns around the school.
- The school community is reminded to log issues on the [Hackney Council – report a problem website](#).

1.5 Parent Partnerships -

- Effective communication can foster positive partnerships between the school and families. It is important to maintain transparency and trust and the opinion remains strongly amongst the families that sharing information as soon as it is appropriate can help ease transitions for the children. Jemma mentioned that initial angst around some issues recently particularly the change to the start of the school day in KS1 had caused a lot of additional admin and time for the senior management team and teachers. This could perhaps have been avoided if the school had informed families first about the changes rather than implementing them without any prior knowledge. It is important to understand that the school only ever wants to make changes that create a positive change. With regards to teacher changes, Mr McGrath said that the school will endeavour to let families know what is happening at an appropriate time and sometimes they cannot share information early as they themselves do not know the timeline of teacher's sickness/departures. It was suggested again that just a simple sentence through MCAS letting families know there are changes happening is suffice.

2- Updates - [Parent Survey Results](#)

2.1 Personal Development Updates:

- Mr McGrath mentioned that after the most recent school survey, acting on feedback that school could do more to share what the children are involved in regarding personal development as the school does an awful lot in the area, but the community doesn't seem to know about it.

2.2 SEND:

- To address items raised during the recent parent questionnaire Mr McGrath shared that Mr Middleburg will attend the next Parent Council meeting to update families on our approach as a school.
- Parents should approach school with SEND concerns as a first port of call and to start a process of additional support. School doesn't always see indicative behaviours that would trigger a SEND response from staff. Parents are encouraged to initiate conversations with the school if there are concerns.

2.3 Communication

- The bi-monthly school bulletin was receiving very disappointing web hits (just 80 on the last bulletin) so the school is looking for other platforms to share information as the current bulletin does not appear to be working.
- If any families have a particular expertise in comms/tech/marketing, please approach the school to help share ideas. The school will consider options carefully and take ideas from parents
- A survey on sharing information has already been shared with the school community and will be used to take feedback and make decisions with hopefully a new sharing forum will be launched by the summer term.

2.4 Supporting Positive Behaviour

- Mr McGrath said teaching children that the word 'bullying' is contextual and some poor behaviour is not bullying, but some children have experienced bad encounters so are quick to label unwanted behaviour as bullying. Children are taught that they shouldn't be bystanders to bad behaviours in real and electronic spaces.
- Parenting is critical here, school can do the best they can with matters arising at school but support is needed from home. School teaches them to speak up, which should be supported by trusted adults. This is covered in assemblies and PSHE lessons in class time.
- Bullying has to be repeated to meet a definition threshold. Patterns are now more extensively monitored and staff observations combined to get a fuller picture.

2.5 Food

- Menu is available on the website. Families are reminded that the Ourspace food is a snack, not a full dinner. Feedback will be shared with the kitchen staff, and the summer menu is being reviewed.
- Pupils can now use a traffic light electronic feedback system at lunchtimes which is giving real time feedback from the children.
- Feedback from the recent school survey showed good feedback on the school lunchtime menu at school.

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 Premises

- Heat lamps on the ceiling are a heat source which is why the light is very yellow and not bright. Hackney have agreed that the school needs premises work but the hall lights are currently not a priority, however Hackney Council will be supporting a full roof replacement.
- Investigation has revealed that underground work needs to be done and that pipes and sewage work is being prioritised.
- The priority of works taking place are: the roof, solar installation and new pipework. The solar panels will hopefully be being installed in the summer 2025.

Next Meeting - 28th March 2025 at 9.00am