

# Parent Council Minutes

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April

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
- Request to families to encourage others to engage and participate, so that the the Council is reflects and respects the perspectives and needs of all cohorts of our community

- **Headteacher Updates**

- Assessments
  - The school is currently in a busy period of statutory and internal assessments.
  - National assessments soon to be underway include:
    - KS2 SATs
    - SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar)
    - Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check
    - Year 1 Phonics Screening Check
  - Staff are balancing preparation with a strong focus on:
    - pupil wellbeing
    - managing expectations
    - reducing unnecessary pressure
  - The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check typically requires a score of 36/40 to meet the expected standard. Children who do not meet the threshold receive additional support in Year 2.
  - End-of-year assessments are also being prepared for:
    - reading
    - maths
    - writing
  - These assessments also inform data used for:
    - parent evenings
    - transition planning
    - local authority reporting
  - In Early Years, Reception baseline assessments cover 17 developmental areas. These are observational assessments rather than formal tests and help staff understand each child's needs at the start of school.
- Class Lists
  - Class lists will be finalised before half term; they will not be shared with families or children until later in the term. Parents are invited to share relevant information with Mr McGrath or Ms Williams (via email to school office, or phone call), if there are social dynamics, specific additional learning needs, or wellbeing concerns that they want to be considered.
  - Specific teacher requests cannot be accommodated.
  - When creating classes, the school considers:
    - balanced class numbers
    - gender balance
    - protected characteristics
    - additional needs
    - friendship and social groupings
    - opportunities to broaden friendship groups
  - Timeline
    - School reports: penultimate Friday of term
    - Class lists shared: after reports (final week of term)
    - Move-up day: after class lists (final week of term)

- 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
    - 61 offers have been made for 60 places (1 additional because it includes a set of twins)
    - This reflects the strong reputation of the school, and Mr McGrath thanked the community for evangelising the school.
    - Families who have not been offered a place:
      - should accept their offered place if preferred
      - can remain on waiting list(s) for other schools
      - If on the waiting list for Shacklewell, they will receive updates from Hackney Education, including information on their position on the waiting list
      - Any questions should be directed to Hackney Education helpline: 020 8820 7000 (option 3)
    - For any families not successful in securing a Reception place for Sept 2026, the waiting list remains active until October half term, after which the in-year transfer process begins.
- **Extended Schools**
  - Positive feedback and thanks to Bev was shared by families about:
    - smoother booking processes
    - excellent breadth of club choices
    - children's enthusiasm for new clubs, particularly skateboarding and wheelchair basketball
  - Special thanks were given to Bev for managing improvements and responding to family feedback. Mr McGrath noted that a suggestion box has been introduced in the office area for further feedback.
  - Mini Showcases for clubs:
    - a new approach will be introduced
    - parents and carers will be invited into the final club session of term to participate in the session with their child/children
    - the July dates will be added to the school calendar
- **Food and Lunch Provision**
  - New draft government food guidance was released while the school was finalising its menu, this delayed the release of the new menu while the school ensured it was as close in line with the guidance. The school remains on the spring menu temporarily.
  - The new menu begins Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April and will be shared with families that week.
  - Changes include:
    - addition of side dishes
    - addition of salad options (as well as the salad bar remaining available daily)
    - some cakes replaced with e.g. shortbread
  - Parents can scan the QR code code on menus for full allergen details; and staff are aware of individual children's allergy requirements.
  - Initial Council feedback in the meeting was very positive, noting that the menu was balanced, healthy, interesting and had very few processed elements.
  - Thanks to Chef Aziz was raised for his incredible care and contribution to the children's wellbeing.
  - Our Space
    - Some children are receiving repeated lunch items, ultra-processed items, particularly nuggets appearing with frequency
    - The school will monitor whether the new menu reduces leftovers, and will review options to ensure Our Space menu offering is balanced, whilst also reducing waste
  - Nursery
    - The crudités trial is still planned for nursery, and has been delayed due to Ms Dickinson's absence but will be carried out this half term
  - Portion Sizes/Time to Eat

- Concerns were raised that some children feel rushed at lunch, particularly when a Come Dine With Me event is taking place
  - Mr McGrath and Ms Williams will review lunchtime arrangements.
  - Portion sizes will also be reviewed under the new menu.
  - Year 6 currently may occasionally receive seconds, but this cannot be offered universally.
- **Communication**
    - The Key Dates letter for this half term should already have been sent. This omission was acknowledged and will be corrected immediately.
      - Summer term dates will be shared during the week beginning 27th April:
        - on the website
        - via the Summer term documents sent out on MCAS/text
    - Parents requested dates should be shared as soon as possible, even if the full calendar is not finalised, aiming for the previous term to ensure adequate time to make arrangements.
    - Correcting Error if dates change:
      - affected classes should be contacted directly
      - whole-school changes should go to all families
      - parents are encouraged to notify the school office if errors are spotted.
    - Messaging
      - The intended process is messages in the school app MCAS and text message for non-app users
    - Some inconsistencies have occurred, potentially due to notification settings.
    - As a backup: year-group WhatsApp groups should continue sharing notices and reminders.
- **Enrichment Working Party**
    - A letter has been sent to families; the school is keen to gather parent and carer input.
    - Parents suggested: home visits could help explain the programme and encourage participation.
    - Gardening Club
      - A new gardening initiative will begin, initially informal and expanding in autumn
      - Potential opportunities before, during and after school
      - Bev will circulate a flyer.
    - The school is also applying for funding that may improve outdoor spaces
    - the KS2 wall area - families expressed particular desire to address this, and showed willing to arrange a family-led initiative
- **Shacklewell Families**
    - A proposal is being explored for a KS2 wall mural, involving parents preparing the wall
    - a mural artist completing the design- further research is underway
- **AOB**
    - Hall Displays: Families requested displays return to the main hall; Mr McGrath confirmed this will be updated with Ms Hanssen .Families requested more dynamic displays - potentially including the office space - showing work and activities from different year groups. Mr McGrath will pick this up with school staff.
    - Bike Storage: Concerns were raised about limited bike space, and misuse of bike space causing further limitations. Possible actions:
      - remind families to take bikes home daily
      - review current rack layout
      - explore additional storage consider improvements through future grant funding
    - A reminder will also be issued:
      - adults should not ride into the school grounds
      - children should not ride (on bikes or scooters) into the school grounds
    - At drop-off or pick-up, bikes should not block entrance, walkways or bike storage
    - Class Assemblies
    - No class sharing assemblies are currently planned.
    - The school noted community workshops remain the main opportunity for children to share work

- formal assemblies can place significant pressure on staff
- The current approach will remain for this academic year, with the summer showcase reviewed afterwards.
- Parent Fitness Sessions
- A request was made to restart parent fitness sessions. Unfortunately Coach Gattie does not currently have capacity so sessions cannot be parent-led at this time for insurance reasons
- Music and Sports Provision
- Parents requested a review of:
- music and sports provision
- Concern was raised that all KS2 pupils should have equal access, as at least one child has not yet received instrumental music lessons across KS2 years.