

**Sevenoaks Primary School Parent Council Meeting
Thursday, 8th May 2014**

MINUTES

Present

Jo Williams (Chair)	Claire Hooper (3B)
Sophie House (Committee Secretary, RA, 4B)	Claire Strickland (5B)
Ali Owen (1A)	Lizzie Bourne (6A)
Claire James (RG, 2A)	Pui Jellett (SPSA)
Nicola Young (2B)	Lindsay Anderson (Schools Finance)
Tamara Mann (2C)	Caroline Gilmartin, Parent contributor, RA & 1A

Apologies

Alan Duffy (Headteacher)
Ali Lennon (RB)
Kerry Mayes (1B)
Clare Brooks (3A)
Kathryn Robinson (4A)
Sue Hopgood/Adrienne Skelton (5A)
Chris Aguss (6B)

Welcome and Apologies

Action

The Chair thanked the members for attending the meeting.

Minutes of the last meeting

Class Reps

The minutes of the last Parent Council meeting were approved. The Chair reminded class reps to send out the minutes of the last meeting to the parents. PJ made a couple of points about the previous minutes.

School Office

1. Year 6 hoodies: Although it makes sense that these should not be made available before the school trip to Blackland farm as they could get very muddy, could the hoodies be given to the leavers before the last day of term?
2. PJ clarified that next school year water bottles would be given out free to all school children and that they would also be for sale at the uniform shop for replacements or additions.

Term Topic –

“Attitudes to School” including attitude to homework, lessons, views on behaviour management, emotional well-being & pastoral care

Teaching staff

Homework: Some parents felt that there was very little feedback about homework, especially in KS2. One suggestion from parents was that the homework folders could potentially come back home for a few weeks so that the children and parents could see the marked work.

There was some discussion as to the purpose of homework: was it something the children should be able to do on their own, or are parents expected to help? Is it a revision of the work done in class or extended learning at home? One

participant suggested that smaller, but more regular, amounts of homework would make it easier for children and parents to get it done. Overall it was felt that more communication about homework would be beneficial, but that in the absence of a teaching staff representative at the meeting it was not possible to specify clear action points.

Rewards: Comments had been made by some parents that the rewards system at school was unclear, especially the differences between KS1 and KS2. It was felt that a better understanding of the various schemes such as “Star of the Week”, House points, Golden Book etc would help parents reinforce these positive behaviour incentives at home. It was suggested that an outline of the schemes could be put up on the website to help familiarisation.

**School
Office/IT**

Behaviour Management: Although it was noted that levels of bad behaviour at the school were low, it was suggested that there should be more explicit rewards for good behaviour.

Emotional well-being/pastoral care: Overall parents were happy with the provision of care at the school. Questions were posed on how the assessment of children’s abilities was carried out in terms of picking children for interschool and other competitions. It was felt that more clarity on how the teams are picked would be helpful to parents so this could be explained to the children. A specific point about the assessment of swimming ability was made: some children are assigned to ability groups in school swimming lessons which seem to differ from their ability demonstrated during private swimming lessons. How does the school ensure fair assessment and selection? It was suggested that parents can talk to the class teacher if there is a concern and provide them with information about their child’s ability.

Matters Arising

School meals: There was a brief discussion about parents’ responses to the survey on school meals. Around 50 people responded to the questions, with a majority happy with the choice and food on offer (see Table 1 in the Appendix below), but a willingness to make small changes for a healthier menu. The committee also discussed the report on school meals written by Caroline Gilmartin.

The main points were that the focus of school meals should be on not providing damaging foods (such as cooking with oil at high temperatures), and making sure that the children had a balanced meal that they would actually eat. Based on the results of the parent survey and the discussion, the following recommendations were made:

- Fresh fruit and yoghurt only as dessert on Fridays
- Wholemeal pasta and bread to be provided (the impact on school meal take up would have to be measured)
- To ensure that deep fried or roasted meals are provided no more than twice a week (which is currently the case)
- Extra homemade pasta sauce to be provided with the vegetable tomato pasta option

In addition, the following suggestions could be open for discussion:

- Fresh (rather than prepared off site) vegetables such as carrots to be

- provided
- Fresh fruit fillings for desserts
- Vegetarian main meal to mirror the main meal - this could potentially limit costs and preparation time as the accompaniments would be the same

LA mentioned that next year's funding for school meals is slightly more per head than is currently being charged which might help implementation of the proposed changes.

NY commented that it would be useful to be able to know in advance what breakfast was being provided at Breakfast Club so that the school lunch choice could be complementary. Perhaps the Breakfast Club menu could be included on the school website? LY told the committee that the breakfast menu was changing to include, for example, beans on toast.

Any Other Business

Travel Plan: The committee was shown the new travel safety leaflet produced by the Travel Plan Group (TPG), which will be going out to parents by the end of Term 5. The committee thanked the TPG for doing this work. The Chair told members that the TPG was meeting a representative of the KM group about various walking to school initiatives that SPS might consider implementing. The Travel Plan is being updated to include the Travel Survey results and should be completed by end of June. The School is applying for Capital Grants funding from KCC for initiatives and actions relating to the Travel Plan (this includes items such as signage, lockers, cycle and scooter storage etc).

Sponsors for Potential New Build: The Chair informed the meeting that if a new build does go ahead SPS will be short of funds to provide the school it wants. Council reps are to ask their classes if anyone might be willing, or knows someone who might "sponsor a brick" for example for the school. Further discussion on this subject will be made next month when hopefully Alan can attend.

**Class
reps/Parents**

Parent Council Resignations: The Chair announced that the Parent Council Secretary, Sophie House, was standing down at the end of the school year (but would remain as a parent rep member) and thanked her for her contribution over the year. If no-one came forward as Secretary, it was suggested that a minutes-writing rota be implemented.

Class reps

JW said that she was willing to stay on as Chair if people so wished. However she was looking for greater involvement from the Council reps on specific projects. Suggestions for new agenda items were welcome.

Class reps

Any Parent Council members who wanted to step down were requested to ask their class if someone wanted to take their place before the next Parent Council meeting so that the potential new rep could attend.

The topic of discussion at the next and final meeting this year is: "Premises-including improvements to buildings/site/security/protocol etc".

Date of next meeting:

Term 6 – Thursday, 12th June 2014, 2pm

Sophie House RA and 4B