

**Minutes of Parents in Partnership Meeting
Community Room, Sunnymede Junior School
Friday 12th May 2017**

	Name	Role	Class
Present:	Ronnie Branch	Headteacher	
	Lucy Moffat	Parent Representative	4H
	Ruth Coppell	Parent Representative	4B
	Hayley Quarrell	Parent Representative	3H
	Susan Kelly	Parent Representative	6HP

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

No apologies were received. Mrs Branch apologised that the last meeting had to be cancelled. This was due to Mrs Oliver being ill, combined with a number of apologies from representatives.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

These were approved, with no changes made.

ACTIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

SCHOOL MOTTO:

Mrs Branch explained that the final school motto has been agreed, as voted for by the children. The final motto is:

“LEARNING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW”

Mrs Branch explained that a homework project took place recently where children were encouraged to design a motto that reflected and incorporated the motto. Two pupils from each class had their entries chosen. They will work with a local artist, Matt Mackman, over the next week to create a mural on the large wall in the wildlife garden. As well as two pupils from each class, a few other children have been selected; these are pupils who have shown a keen interest in or talent for art during their time at the school. The mural will incorporate the motto, as well as the school's values. This should be completed by the end of next week and we are looking forward to seeing the finished design.

GROWTH MINDSET PROJECT:

Following a discussion about this at the last meeting, Mrs Branch confirmed that we will now be launching this in the autumn term, with a workshop for parents. This term, the focus has been on preparing for the project. All staff have now been trained in the principles of 'growth mindset' and some teachers have started to introduce it informally in their classrooms. The school has ordered posters and various resources to start the launch of the project. The headteacher's weekly award will be adapted so the certificate is awarded each week to someone who has demonstrated 'growth mindset'. 'Neuron' mascots have been purchased for this, as well as a book called 'Fantastic Elastic Brain' (a book focussed on nurturing a growth mindset). Mrs Branch explained that the school was considering buying a book for each family as part of the launch of the project and in the hope that parents will work alongside parents to promote a growth mindset. Mrs Branch asked for their thoughts. A discussion took place about this and representatives looked at the book. Whilst they really liked the book, the representatives felt that it may not represent value for money, as it would probably be looked at once and put on a book shelf. They felt that a growth mindset poster (either the one distributed at the meeting or the different version shown at the previous meeting), would be more effective and better value for money. They explained that a poster could be put on a wall and referred to regularly in the home. Indeed, one parent said that they had already been doing this with their own child following the last meeting. A suggestion was also made that the class copy of the book could perhaps be lent out to pupils a week at a time on a rota basis or similar. This would mean that it could still be shared with families and growth mindset repeated in the home. Mrs Branch said she would

take this back to staff and governors but thought that the rationale discussed seemed most logical and worth pursuing.

PREMISES WORKS:

The wooden structure referred to as the 'quiet area' has been adapted so that there is new non-slip strip on the steps. There is now a purpose built barrier to make it very clear when it is not in use.

The upper school girls' toilets have been fully refurbished to match the quality of all the other toilets throughout the school. The adjoining boys' toilet was due to be refurbished at the same time. However, this will now be done at half term, as a last minute plan was made to adapt them so they are accessible to wheelchair users. Once this has been completed, all of the toilets throughout the school will have been refurbished in the last few years.

EXITING ARRANGEMENTS FOR Y4 and Y6:

Representatives present reported that this had much improved since discussed at the last minute and this improvement was seen quite quickly.

PTA CHRISTMAS FAYRE:

Representative present said that, as requested, this year they were given plenty of notice if their child was helping on a stall. They felt the event has also gone smoothly and that Mrs Bicheno's acting as a link between the school and PTA proved helpful.

PTA FUNDING

Mrs Branch explained that the PTA funding has been used as agreed for school trips that focus on aspects of SMSC: spiritual and cultural. Y5 had a successful visit to the Firstsite art gallery in Colchester, as did Y6 to St Paul's Cathedral and Tate Modern. Y4 are going to The British Museum later this term and Y3 will be visiting the amazing BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Hindu temple in Neasden)

SPORTS DAY

Representatives present agreed with Mrs Branch's proposal that sports day should follow the model trialled last year, where the even lasts half a day rather than being a full day event.

CONSULTATION ON END OF YEAR REPORT FORMAT FOR PARENTS

Mrs Branch explained that the report format was going to be changed this year. An interim format has been used for the past two years in response to the changes in the new curriculum. However, this electronic system was not user friendly for staff during the report writing process. Mrs Branch gave a 'mock' report using the new template and asked for views. All representatives were happy with the proposed format. They asked if there would be guidance provided to parents about the changes, which on balance are minimal; Mrs Branch confirmed that there would.

RESULTS FROM PARENT AND PUPIL SURVEYS IN REPONSE TO BULLYING

Mrs Branch shared a copy of the most recent parent survey (based, at present, on results from three year groups - Y4 responses still to be calculated). Whilst the results are generally very positive, Mrs Branch explained that she was surprised and disappointed by the response to the statement 'This school deals effectively with bullying'. Based on 42 responses, 33% said that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Mrs Branch said that this does not reflect the very few cases of alleged bullying that they investigate in school that are either brought to their attention by parents or children. Mrs Branch explained that they work very hard to deal with behaviour issues and have

done a lot of work on this in the last year. Mrs Branch has worked with children to try and understand the definition of bullying as opposed to one-off behaviour incidents (that often arise from friendship issues) and wondered if the term 'bullying' is still being used as a catch' all phrase by parents. Mrs Branch asked if there was lots of talk amongst parents of there being lots of bullying in our school. All representatives present said that they had not heard any parents talking about bullying or this not being dealt with in school. Mrs Branch explained that, as the questionnaires are anonymous, it is difficult to speak to those parents who responded negatively. Mrs Branch suggested that representatives could perhaps speak to parents in the playground to try and understand a little more about the negative responses. Mrs Branch noted, however, that despite the negative responses to that particular question, 95% of parents responding said they would recommend the school.

MATTERS ARISING

SUMMER LUNCH MENU:

A parent had raised that on week 1 of the new menu, there is pasta for two days in succession and did not think this was a good idea. Mrs Branch said she would look into this, once she had a look at the menu. Whilst it may not be possible to rectify this for this term, she would liaise with the kitchen to try and ensure this does not happen in the future.

It was brought to the table that some parents are not happy with the 'picnic' lunch on the menu again this summer – that a sandwich was not worth £2. They feel it is not value for money. Mrs Branch explained that we use county menus and they give us a selection to choose from each term. We make choices of which two weeks (from a selection) to use based on a number of factors. One factor considered is how popular that meal has proven in the past. It so happens that this menu choice was extremely popular last year, with a high take up. Consequently, it was selected again this year and continues to prove popular this term. Children don't receive just a sandwich; thy also receive a carton of juice, a homemade chocolate brownie, fruit and vegetable sticks. Children also like the menu as it allows them to be quite communal; when the weather is warm they like to eat outside on the picnic tables etc. as it forms part of the Essex County Council menu. The school does not make a profit from the kitchen, hence retaining a meal cost of only £2. Representatives present felt that all parents have a choice and not all meals will appeal to all children / parents. Children can be sent in with a packed lunch on days where they don't feel it is value for money.

GOLDCREST NURSERY GATE:

It was brought to Mrs Branch's attention that the Goldcrest nursery gate has started being left unlocked again. This had been resolved a couple of years ago when raised by the PIP group. However, they advised that the nursery has been taken over by new management and this could explain the lapse in security. Mrs Branch said that she would ask the Site Manager to raise this with Goldcrest Nursery as a matter of urgency to ensure that the security of the school site is not compromised.

OUTDOOR P.E. CLOTHING

One parent felt that children were allowed to go out in just t-shirts for outdoor P.E when it was very cold. On the day in question, her son had a chest infection and really needed to be wearing warmer clothing. Whilst children are generally given reminders to wear warm clothing and children are encouraged to be independent and select the right clothing, Mrs Branch will give another reminder to the P.E. teacher.

YEAR FOUR SANCTIONS:

A representative brought up that last December there were a few Y4 parents who were unhappy about an incident that had been dealt with and where a whole year group sanction had been threatened. Mrs Branch said that she recalled this incident and that a couple of parents had been to see her with their concerns. She was able to explain to them in detail the context and also offer an

interpretation that had perhaps not been shared by pupils themselves with their parents. Indeed, early on in a conversation with Y4 pupils, she had suggested that all Y4 pupils could lose their playtime. However, she explained that she very quickly made clear to pupils at the time that this would not be the case and that pupils who had not behaved inappropriately would not be sanctioned.

Mrs Branch clarified that whole school sanctions are not generally appropriate. Whilst the school reserves the right to apply a 'blanket' sanction in exceptional circumstances, Mrs Branch has made it clear to staff that this must be agreed first with her or the Deputy Head. When the revised policy is updated in July, this is also going to be added in. Mrs Branch said she is happy to talk to any parents who would like to talk about the incident and is happy to share the incident and the rationale for her discussion with the pupils.

As part of this conversation, a linked discussion came up about rewards and praise for children who always do the right thing. Mrs Branch explained that some pupils have personalised behaviour plans to meet their individual needs and this can require a different response from teachers. The representatives present understood this. Mrs Branch also gave some examples of how praise and rewards can also take different forms for different children and does not necessarily have to be a sticker. Mrs Branch offered some examples to the group. The school has a lot of mechanisms for offering rewards but will reiterate to staff the importance of recognising those pupils who always make the right choices etc. as we want all children to feel valued during their time at Sunnymede.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

This will take place at 9:00 am on **Friday 7th July 2017** in the community room.

