

**Minutes of Parents in Partnership Meeting**  
**Community Room, Sunnymede Junior School**  
**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at 9am**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Class</b>
Present:	Ronnie Branch	Headteacher	
	Sue Burton	Parent representative	4J
	Charissa Guy	Parent representative	5S
	Dawn Locks	Parent representative	5W
	Louise Loss	Governor	4J
	Amanda Freestone	Parent representative	3V
	Toni Jobson	Parent representative	6K
	Wendy Whybrow	LSA	
	Alyson Smith	Parent representative	4H

Mrs Branch opened the meeting and apologies were received from Carriann Everard, Angela Chapman, Joy Fisher, Sam Theedom, Sharon Smith and Julie Riches.

RB explained that she wished today's meeting to focus on a new initiative to improve handwriting in school and would be handing round a draft letter and leaflet for discussion before it is sent to parents and published on the website.

At a previous meeting it had been mentioned that, although several children undertake music lessons during the school day, parents/carers did not have the opportunity to see them perform. WW has volunteered to arrange a 'musical evening' to showcase these children. The music teachers have already been approached and would like to take part, as would the school choir. It was also suggested that this could be turned into a fundraising event with a small charge for tickets. The meeting thought this was a great idea and WW confirmed she is happy to take the lead. She will start planning and bring suggested programme and dates to the next meeting. A 'cello' assembly has already been arranged and parents invited.

### **1. Minutes of the last meeting**

These were agreed.

### **2. Homework Policy**

RB confirmed that the parent survey responses had been collated and would pass round copies of the summary document later.

### **3. Handwriting**

So that parents/carers can help their children with handwriting, RB has produced a letter and leaflet which she handed out for discussion. These will be published on the website. RB thanked LL for her valuable input into the letter. A discussion took place on whether/when children should use a pen or pencil. There is an issue with pencils i.e., toppers, grips etc. Class teachers will decide whether pencils are OK to use, if not the child must use a school pencil and this is explained in the letter.

When children come into Yr 3 they will still use a pencil. Once a teacher has decided that a child's writing is neat enough and well formed he/she will be awarded a 'pen licence' which will be given out during assembly on Wednesdays. Pens can then be purchased the following day. Currently, most children bring their own pens into school and some are better than others. The red Berol ones provided in school are not brilliant but are the best considering budget restraints. School will still provide these when children receive a pen licence if they do not bring in their own pen. RB explained that School has ordered some black Uniball Eye micro pens which can be sold for £1, which is less than the cost on the high street. We hope this will make it easier for parents to obtain the right pen and, if they are purchased from school, we will name them. Hopefully this will motivate the children. Having looked at the documents, those present agreed this was a good idea and asked whether this information would be provided in the Yr 3 induction pack. RB confirmed it would. RB said that children already writing in pen will not get a licence; they can continue using their own pen or they can buy one from school if they wish. All children will continue to use pencil in Maths, some Science and Music.

A discussion took place on pencil cases and contents. RB agreed these can be a distraction in class and teachers will tell children not to bring them to school if this is the case. RB said she would provide 'pencil case guidance' for the new Yr 3 parents.

RB will launch the 'pen licence' during assembly on 16<sup>th</sup> January.

#### **4. Homework Survey**

RB circulated the summary document and confirmed she had read all of the comments. With regard to sanctions/rewards for completion of homework she said that, although sanctions would be cheaper and easier to manage, rewards would be more motivational but would need to be discussed with staff. She commented on how comments in relation to this in the survey had convinced her of this; they were rather poignant. Her initial thoughts, subject to further consultation, were:

- Completion of homework on a weekly basis - 1 house point
- If the teacher is pleased with the quality of the homework - 2 house points
- If the homework is outstanding and beyond expectations - 3 house points
- Possibly a half termly reward but the costs could mount up. One cheap option could be that any child who completes their homework every week for a full term will get entered into a raffle at the end of the term, the prize being a book, box of chocolates or similar

Responses also indicated that some people liked projects, some didn't but most people don't like homework in the holidays. There were very mixed views on the type of homework activities, which some people found onerous, others found worksheets good. It was acknowledged that the content of the final Homework Policy will not reflect everyone's views but the commitment is to try and make the policy as flexible and parent friendly as possible

It seems that a mixture of homework would be preferred i.e. Maths and English worksheets linked to the class topic, with something creative once a month. Should there then be an optional homework project for those who want to do it? Weekly worksheets will be marked and children may well be involved in marking. The validity of children marking homework was

queried in the meeting. RB explained that 'peer assessment' is common practice in schools and allows children to reflect on their work and have a dialogue about it with others. Work is swapped and at the end of the lesson children have to decide whether the work has reached the criteria for the lesson outcome. RB agreed that if peer assessment has taken place, the work should still be seen by the class teacher to check it has been marked properly. Expectations about marking of homework will be addressed within the new policy and RB will talk to the staff to remind them that all homework must be acknowledged prior to that.

RB will have the policy in place for September. There needs quite a bit of discussion to get it right before it is written and approved by governors, but it will clearly be better than anything we have had before.

#### **5. Feedback on toilet soap issues**

RB confirmed she is still monitoring the soap and there does not seem to be a problem. Also, the 'missing light' mentioned in the previous meeting did not, in fact, relate to our school

#### **6. Skills Audit**

RB advised that she had researched possible audits but had not brought these to the meeting.

#### **7. Parent Consultation**

RB explained she is still reviewing this. She is looking at a possible 'meet the teacher session' in the first or second week of the autumn term, with the consultation evening shortly after the half term. Timings would be dependent upon the assessment schedule and will be agreed once this is decided.

#### **8. Yr 4 swimming - Parent mail**

It was mentioned that some Yr 4 parents had not received the end of term communication regarding the spring term swimming lessons. It was agreed the letter would be resent via Parent mail at the end of this meeting.

#### **9. Agree date and agenda for next meeting**

- Review minutes of previous meeting
- Skills audit - brainstorm ideas
- Music Evening
- Feedback on handwriting/pen certificates
- Tracking of music lessons
- AoB

#### **Date of next meeting:**

9am Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February - Community room